

7 PM COMPILATION

3rd and 4th Sep, 2024

Features of 7 PM compilation

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

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Food vs Cars Dilemma- Concerns and Solutions- Explained Pointwise

After the long-standing 'food versus fuel' debate, a similar dilemma has now emerged in the form of 'food vs cars'. The food versus fuel dilemma highlighted the conflict between using crops like sugarcane, rice, maize, palm, and soybeans for ethanol and biodiesel production. The 'food vs cars' dilemma reflects the increasing diversion of phosphoric acid for electric vehicle (EV) battery production, instead of its use in production of di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) fertilizer.



Source- The Indian Express

What is the Food vs Cars Dilemma?

Food vs Cars Dilemma- This dilemma mainly centres around the diversion of Phosphoric acid for the production of lithium-iron-phosphate (LFP) batteries, from their usage in the production of di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) fertilizer.

Manufacture of Phosphoric Acid- Phosphoric acid is manufactured from rock phosphate ore after grinding and reacting with sulphuric acid.

Use of Phosphorous

a. Use in Fertiliser- Di-ammonium phosphate (DAP), is India's second most consumed fertiliser after urea. DAP contains 46% phosphorous (P). Phosphorous is an important nutrient that crops need at the early growth stages of root and shoot development.

b. Use in LFP Batteries- Phosphoric acid is also used the source of Phosphorous 'P' in lithium-iron-phosphate (LFP) batteries. The LFP batteries are gaining market share from normal nickel-based NMC and NCA batteries.

(The market share of LFP batteries have increased to 40% of the global EV capacity demand in 2023 from a modest 6% in 2020).

What is the Global Trend towards Food Vs Car Dilemma?

- 1. Increasing market share of LFP batteries-** LFP batteries are gaining popularity due to their lower cost, longevity, and safety. The LFP batteries use phosphorous in their development.
- 2. Switch towards LFP batteries in US and Europe-** The US and European EV manufacturers are switching to EV batteries that are less dependent on critical minerals such as cobalt. The world reserves of Cobalt are only 11 MT, of which 6 MT are in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- 3. Increasing sales of LFP batteries in China-** Two-thirds of EVs sold in China in 2023 had LFP batteries. China has one of the largest reserves of rock phosphate. The increasing diversion of Phosphorous for LFP battery development instead of fertiliser further aids to Food vs Car Dilemma.
- 4. Increasing investments in Phosphorus mineral rich countries-** Countries like Morocco, which have rich deposits of rock phosphates, are attracting huge investment for LFP battery production.

What are the implications of food vs Car Dilemma on India?

- 1. India's dependence on DAP as fertiliser-** India consumes 10.5-11 million tonnes (MT) of DAP annually, next only to the 35.5-36 MT of urea. The diversion of phosphorous creates fertiliser insecurity for India.
- 2. India's Phosphate Dependency-** India has limited phosphate reserves (31 million tonnes) and relies on imports for its agricultural needs. India's reliance on phosphorous relies heavily on imports from countries like China, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco. The diversion of phosphorous for battery systems will increase India's import dependency.
- 3. Increased Dependency on China-** China is a leading DAP supplier to India. The increase in China's phosphoric acid use towards LFP batteries, will reduce the phosphorous availability for manufacturing DAP fertilizers, and will further exacerbate India's fertiliser crisis.

TABLE 1**IMPORTS OF DI-AMMONIUM PHOSPHATE***(lakh tonnes)*

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
China	15.91	20.43	11.97	22.87
Saudi Arabia	18.89	19.33	21.28	15.86
Morocco	14.98	12.13	16.79	10.49
Russia	3.03	1.97	9.69	3.41
Jordan	3.04	2.46	1.81	1.74
US	0.45	0	2.86	0.31
Australia	0	0.52	1.51	0
Tunisia	0	0.44	0.85	0
Egypt	0.84	0.68	0	0.30
TOTAL*	58.00	58.60	66.77	55.96
VALUE**	1,948.90	4,007.50	5,569.51	3,109.86

*Includes other countries; **Million US dollars; Source: Department of Commerce

Source- The Indian Express

4. Impact on Indian Agriculture- The decline in DAP imports may affect the Indian crop production, impacting **mustard, potato, chickpea, and wheat planting**.

5. Increase in Landed Cost of DAP fertilizers- The diversion of Phosphorous for EV manufacturing has increased the DAP prices. The landing cost of DAP has increased to **Rs 61,000 per tonne**. This is leading to huge losses for Indian fertiliser firms.

What Should be the way Forward?

1. Promotion of Complex fertilizers instead of DAP- The Government must promote complex fertilizers with **lower nutrient content instead of DAP**. DAP (which has 46% P plus 18% N) must be replaced with complexes having less P (20:20:0:13, 10:26:26:0 and 12:32:16:0). This will be a sustainable move for a country with limited phosphorous resources.

2. Securing supplies of raw materials- India must **secure supplies of raw materials**, especially phosphates, through overseas joint ventures and buy-back arrangements. Indian companies must establish more plants which manufacture phosphoric acid like in **Senegal, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia**.

3. Improving nutrient use efficiency- India must aim to incorporate lesser N, P, K, and S, and achieving higher nutrient use efficiency.

4. Handholding DAP sellers- India should also handhold DAP fertiliser producing companies and compensate their losses on account of increasing prices of DAP worldwide.

Read More- [The Indian Express](#)

UPSC Syllabus- GS 3 Indian Economy

Political Empowerment of Women- Significance and Challenges- Explained Pointwise

With the historic passage of the **Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam (Women's Reservation Bill), 2023**, the Rajya Sabha Chairman and Vice president of India has introduced a **slew of progressive measures** in the proceedings of the Upper House and the Rajya Sabha Secretariat. These measures **aim to promote political empowerment of Women**. The Vice President has held that these measures will send a powerful message to the world at large, and it would symbolise that women held a 'commanding position' during this epochal period of political empowerment in India.

What has been the status of political representation of Women in India?

a. Representation of Women in Parliament over the Years

1. Women made up just **4.41%** of the strength of the **Lower House** in **1952**. The number increased to **more than 6% in the Lok Sabha** held a decade later.
2. However, the number **dipped to below 4% in 1971**, ironically, with **Indira Gandhi, India's first and only woman Prime Minister**, at the helm.
3. There has been a slow, but steady rise in women's representation (with a few exceptions). The women representation crossed the **10% mark in 2009** and peaked **at 14.36%** in 2019.
4. Of the 74 women MPs elected in 2024, **43 are first time MPs**. Women MPs have an average age of 50 years and are younger as compared to the overall age of the House, which is 56 years. These women MPs are as educated as their male counterparts, with 78% completing under graduation.

CHANGE IN WOMEN'S STRENGTH IN LOK SABHA OVER THE YEARS

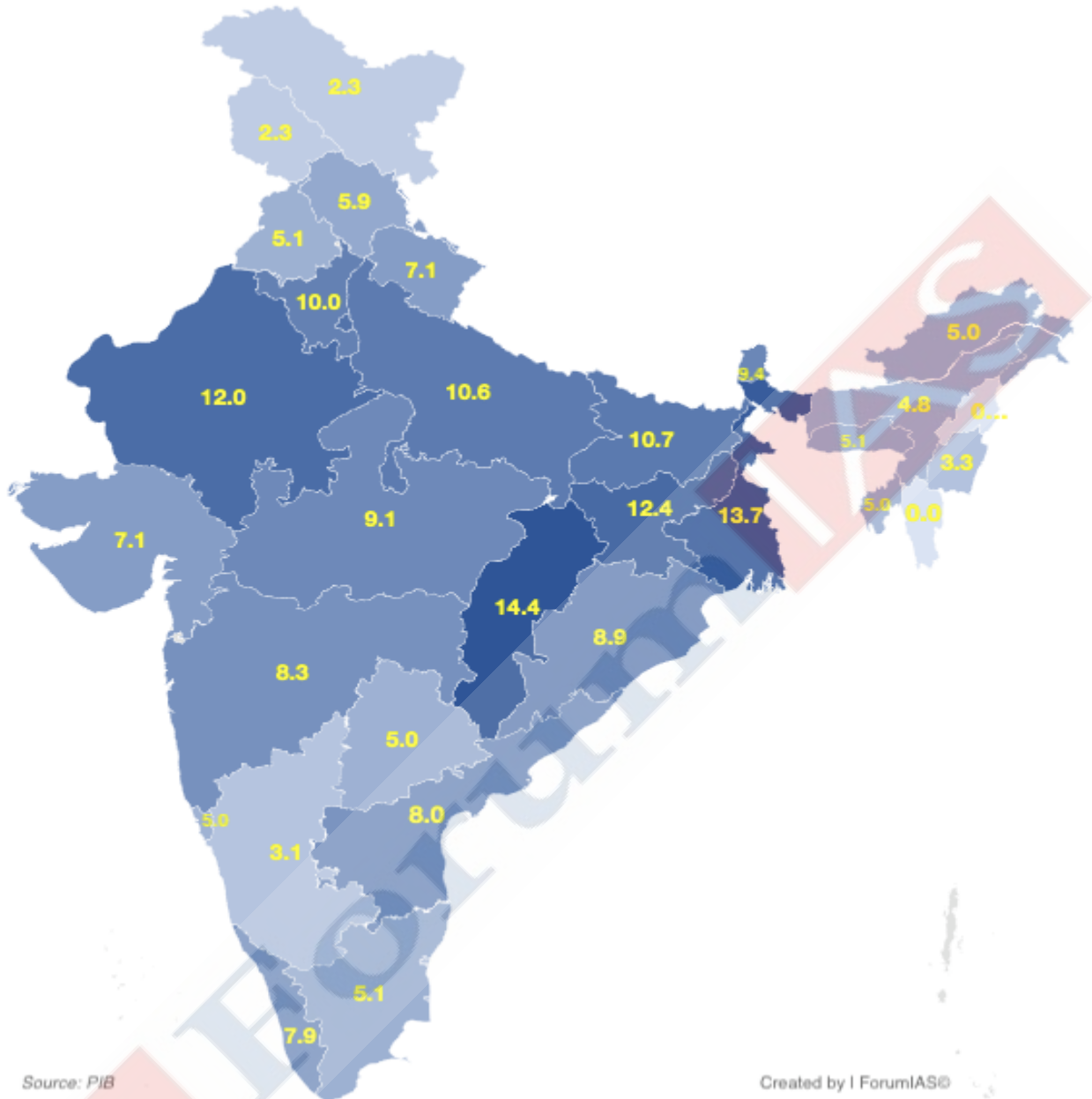


Women in Lok Sabha 2024. (Data via PRS Legislative Research)

Source- The Indian Express

b. State Legislative assembly representation

The representation of women in State Legislative Assemblies has been low. The highest is in **Chhattisgarh** (14.4%) followed by **West Bengal** (13.7%) and **Jharkhand** (12.4%).



Source: PIB

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Source- PIB. Percentage of Women Representatives in State Legislative Assemblies as on December 31, 2021. The proportion for Jammu and Kashmir/Ladakh is based on last elections held in 2014.

c. Comparison with Global Standards

According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) 'Women in Parliament' Report (2021), the **global percentage of women** in parliament was **26.1%**. India **ranks lower than 140 other nations** in terms of the number of women serving in their national legislatures. Even though the representation of women in Lok Sabha has increased post independence (~16% in 17th lok Sabha), India is **behind a number of countries of Africa and South Asia** (like Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka).

Why is there a need for greater political empowerment of Women in India?

1. Accountability and Gender-sensitive Governance- Political empowerment of women facilitates **direct engagement in public decision-making** and is a means of **ensuring better accountability to women**. It helps in **undertaking reforms** that can help make **all elected officials more effective at promoting gender equality in public policy** and ensuring their implementation.

2. Breaking the Patriarchal mould of Indian Politics- Indian Politics has been patriarchal with top party positions and positions of power have been occupied by male. Increase in women representation in parliament, **dismantles the patriarchal nature** of Indian politics.

3. Focus on Gender issues- According to UN Women, higher numbers of women in parliament generally contribute to stronger attention to women's issues. This ensures appropriate policy response to **address gender issues** and **introduce women-sensitive measures**.

4. Gender Equality- Women's political participation is a **fundamental prerequisite** for gender equality and genuine democracy. It helps **establish public enquiries on women's issues** and use findings to place issues on **government agendas** and **within legislative programmes**.

5. Change of Stereotypes- Enhanced representation helps in cooperation with the women's movement and the media to **change the stereotyped image of women** as only 'homemakers', to change it to 'lawmakers'.

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

What are the reasons behind low political representation of women in India?

1. Gender Gaps in Political Ambition- Gender conditioning leads to lack of political ambition in women:

(a) Women are **less encouraged** to run for office/election than men.

(b) Women's **tendency to shy away from competition** also plays a role since the political selection process is likely perceived as highly competitive.

(c) The fear of '**big politics**' and factors such as **self-doubt**, **stereotypes** and **personal reservations** prevent even the most politically gifted women from entering government

(d) Women's **willingness to advance in their political careers** can also be influenced by family and relational considerations. **For ex-** In Sweden, **female politicians who are promoted to mayor** (i.e. the highest office in municipal politics) **experience a significant increase** in the likelihood of divorcing their partner, whereas this is not the case for men.

2. Patriarchal Society- The patriarchal nature of Indian politics also prevents the increase in women participation in India.

(a) **Gender Disparities-** There are still many obstacles in the way of women in positions of leadership due to gender inequality in areas like as **education**, **access to resources**, and **the persistence of biased views**.

(b) **Sexual division of labour-** Women are responsible for the **majority of housework and child care**. This creates hindrance for them to enter politics.

(c) **Cultural and Social Expectations-** Cultural and Social Expectations are **forced upon women** which prevent women from participating in politics.

3. Cost of Contesting Election- Cost of contesting elections is rising with times. **Lack of access to resources and assets** means that women are much less likely to be able to raise the funds for contesting elections than men.

4. Male politicians as Gate-keepers- Party leaders generally prefer to promote male rather than female candidates. There is a general bias in the thinking regarding winnability of female candidates preventing them from selecting women leaders for election.

5. Growth of criminalisation and corruption- The exodus of women from politics can also be attributed to a lack of political education coupled with the growth in criminalization and corruption.

What measures have been undertaken for political empowerment of Women and increasing their participation?

Legislative Measures

1. Nari Shakti Vandana Adhiniyam (Women reservation Act)- It has been passed to provide 33% reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies.

2. 73rd and 74th amendment Act- This amendment act provided 33% reservation to women in local bodies. Some states like Bihar have increased the women reservation in the local bodies to 50%.

3. Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women- In 1997 (11th Lok Sabha), the Committee on Empowerment of Women was formed to advance the position of women

4. Gender-Neutral Rules of Lok Sabha- The rules of the Lok Sabha were made completely gender-neutral in 2014 under the leadership of Meira Kumar. Since then, every document has called the head of a Lok Sabha Committee as the Chairperson.

Constitutional Measures

1. Article 14- It has established equality as a fundamental right. It inevitably necessitates equal opportunity, as stated in Article 15.

2. Article 46- It puts on the state the responsibility to safeguard vulnerable groups against social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

3. Article 243D- It ensures participation of women in Panchayati Raj Institutions by mandating at least 33% reservation for women in total seats and the offices of chairpersons of Panchayats.

4. Article 326- Elections to the House of the People and to the Legislative Assemblies of States to be on the basis of adult suffrage.

International Covenants

Globally, several international commitments have been made, for achieving gender equality and these have emphasized on enhancing women's representation in political sphere.

1. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)- Upheld women's right to participate in public life.

2. Beijing Platform for Action (1995), Millennium Development Goals (2000) and Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030)- All these called for removing barriers to equal participation and also took into account increasing women's representation in parliament to measure progress towards gender equality.

Political Participation of Women: International Conventions

- **Basic Human Right:** The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) declare **Political Participation as a basic human right**.
- **Eliminate Discrimination:** Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) adopted by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 1979.
 - Article 7 calls for the State parties to **take appropriate steps to eliminate discrimination against women** in the political sphere.
 - Women must have equal right to vote and be eligible to hold public office, participate in policy formulation and implementation.
- **Women Participation:** The 4th World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) considered 'Women in power and decision making' as one of the 12 critical areas in its **Platform of Action**.
- **30% Representation at Decision Making Level:** The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) endorsed a **30% target of women participation** at decision-making levels (1995).

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What Should be the Way Forward?

1. **Checks on the criminalisation of politics-** We must address the larger issues of electoral reforms such as measures to check **criminalisation of politics** and **influence of black money** to achieve the desired results of women reservation.
2. **Intra party democracy-** Institutionalisation of Intra party democracy will make available a wider pool of women candidates.
3. **Nomination to Rajya Sabha and State Legislative Councils-** Every Political Party must **nominate 33% women** and **67% men** for every election to **Rajya Sabha and State legislative councils** to achieve true women representation.
4. **Promotion of women participation at panchayat level** through strengthening women self-help groups. This will ensure able women candidates for MP/MLA elections.
5. **Strengthening women's agencies and organizations** for building a progressive society with equality of opportunities among all citizens.
6. **Promotion of girl's participation in College/Universities** student political parties and political debate to increase their political prowess for future.
7. **Reaffirmation to G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration-** India must be committed and should reaffirm to the G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration which **underscores investment in political empowerment of women and girls** as it has multiplier effects in the implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
8. **Gender Sensitisation and Internships-** Gender sensitisation workshops, internships acquainting them with the political process will help in the creation of a healthy culture of gender parity in the political sphere.

Read More- The Hindu

UPSC Syllabus- GS 1 Issues related to women, GS II, Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Bulldozer Justice- Concerns and Way Forward- Explained Pointwise

Recently, the Supreme Court of India criticised the practice of 'Bulldozer Justice', which is becoming a norm in the country. The Supreme court has stayed demolition drives through bulldozers till October 31. The Supreme Court has criticised the practice of the practice of demolishing properties based on criminal accusations.

In this article, we will look at the meaning of Bulldozer Justice and its application in India in the recent past. We will also look at the state's arguments in favour of these actions. We will also delve into the concerns and implications surrounding these actions.



Source- Indian Express

What is Bulldozer Justice? What is the recent history of this action?

Bulldozer Justice- It refers to a controversial practice in India where authorities use bulldozers and heavy machineries, to demolish properties belonging to individuals accused of serious crimes like communal riots, rapes, and murders. The action is often carried out without following due legal process, provided for the demolition of immovable properties.

Instances of Bulldozer Justice

The practice of Bulldozer Justice has been reported in several Indian states, including Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Assam, and Maharashtra.

Uttar Pradesh	The use of bulldozer against the immovable properties of individuals accused to be involved in serious crimes, has been rampant since 2017. Ex- Demolition of Immovable properties of Vikas Dubey, Atiq Ahmed.
Madhya Pradesh	Use of bulldozer to demolish 16 houses and 29 shops across four locations in Khargone, following communal clashes.

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Haryana	Bulldozer action in Nuh after communal violence.
Maharashtra	Demolition of a part of actor-turned-politician Kangana Ranaut's bungalow in Pali Hill in Mumbai, after her controversial comments of comparing the city with Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK).
Delhi	Bulldozer justice in North West Delhi's Jahangirpuri , in April 2022 following the communal clashes.

What are the arguments of the state in favour of Bulldozer Justice?

- 1. Fulfilment of Legal Compliance-** State Government officials assert that bulldozer demolitions are **carried out in accordance with existing municipal laws and regulations laid down in cases of** illegal constructions. **For ex-** UP government officials contend that actions are carried out by adhering to legal protocols established under acts like the **U.P. Municipal Corporation Act** and the **U.P. Urban Planning and Development Act**.
- 2. Creation of Effective Deterrence-** State Governments contend that '**bulldozer action**' is part of a broader strategy to deter **illegal criminal activities** and **maintain public order**.
- 3. Restoration of law and order-** State governments contend that **demolition of illegal properties of those accused in communal tensions**, helps to restore order and calm tensions during incidents of communal violence or mass unrest. **For ex- Haryana Government's Bulldozer action after Nuh Violence.**
- 4. Universal and not against specific communities-** Solicitor General of India has stated that demolitions in states like **Madhya Pradesh** were not targeted against any specific minority communities. It also included **properties owned by individuals from various communities**, including Hindus.
- 5. Fulfilment of Public demand for visible action-** Supporters often claim that bulldozer justice is a **decisive step** and serves as an **effective response mechanism to public demand** for **quick, visible action** against criminals.

What are the concerns with Bulldozer Justice in India?

- 1. Violation of the Rule of Law-** Bulldozer demolitions without due process violate the rule of law and the principles of natural justice, that governs state actions in a country. **For ex- Demolitions without serving proper advance notices** and right of representation.
- 2. Violation of Fundamental Rights-** The hasty bulldozer justice of demolition of private homes is violation of Right to Shelter which has been recognized as a part of the **right to life**, guaranteed by **Article 21 of the Indian Constitution**.
- 3. Violation of the established principle of Presumption of Innocence-** Demolition of properties based on **alleged criminal charges** violates the principle of **presumption of innocence until proven guilty**.
- 4. Specific targeting of Minorities-** Several reports highlight the selective targeting of minority communities, especially Muslims, by the use of bulldozer demolitions. **For Ex-** Amnesty International reported that **128 properties, mostly owned by Muslims**, were demolished in between April and June 2022, affecting 617 people.
- 5. Promotes authoritarianism-** According to some critics, bulldozer action reflects a **troubling shift towards authoritarianism** by making it a **means of political retribution against dissenters** or marginalized groups.
- 6. Ethical issues-** Bulldozer justice conflates the roles of judge, jury, and executioner, and **goes against the constitutional principle of separation of power**. Further, there are ethical concerns of **disproportionate punishments** involving innocent family members of the accused.

What are the Observations of the Supreme Court in Cases of Demolitions?

Maneka Gandhi vs Union of India, 1978	SC held that the executive procedures must be fair, just, and reasonable .
Municipal Corporation of Ludhiana vs Inderjit Singh, 2008	SC held that no authority can directly proceed with demolitions , even of illegal constructions, without providing notice and an opportunity of being heard to the occupant .
Olga Tellis vs. Bombay Municipal Corporation, 1985	SC emphasised the necessity of due process and ruled that eviction without notice violates the right to livelihood under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution.
Punjab and Haryana High Court's intervention in Nuh demolitions	The Punjab and Haryana High Court intervened to stop demolitions in Nuh, by citing lack of due process and potential ethnic targeting .

What Should be the Way Forward?

- 1. Adequate surveys before Demolition-** The Supreme Court has mandated the administration to undertake a survey before carrying out demolitions. Also, the enforcement of basic procedural protocols, like **giving sufficient advance notices**, must be followed by the authorities.
- 2. Pan-India procedural guidelines-** Pan India guidelines should be incorporated into **relevant legislation** and **rules of the municipal authorities**. Proper procedures must be followed during the pre-demolition, demolition and post-demolition phase.
- 3. Shifting the Burden of Proof-** The burden of proof should be **shifted to the authorities to justify demolition and displacement**. This will ensure protection of the basic human right of right to shelter.
- 4. Independent Review Mechanism-** An independent committee with judicial and civil society representatives should be constituted to **review the legality of proposed demolitions**.
- 5. Focus on Rehabilitation-** Proper guidelines should be drafted for rehabilitation of innocent victims of the accused families in cases of bulldozer actions. International human rights standards also **emphasise the right to adequate housing and compensation for forced evictions**.

Read More- [The Indian Express](#)

UPSC Syllabus- GS 2- Governance Issues

Indus Water Treaty- Concerns and Way Forward- Explained Pointwise

Eighteen months after New Delhi's initial request to modify the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) in January 2023, India has issued another formal notice to Pakistan, now seeking a '**review and modification**' of the agreement. The **new notice**, issued under **Article XII (3)** of the **Indus Water Treaty (IWT)**, significantly differs from last year's notice. The new notice, which includes the word '**review**', signals New Delhi's intent to **revoke** and **renegotiate** the 64-year-old treaty. **Article XII (3)** allows for modifications through a **new, ratified agreement** between both governments.

Indus Water Treaty **negotiated in 1960** between India and Pakistan is a **landmark transboundary water-sharing mechanism**. However, disagreements have persisted among both India and Pakistan over the treaty. India had called for amendments in the treaty last year due to its **dissatisfaction over the dispute resolution process**, blaming Pakistan's continued '**intransigence**' in implementing the treaty. Pakistan has also raised objections regarding India's construction of **Kishenganga** and **Ratle** hydroelectric projects.

This calls for an analysis of the provisions of the Indus Water treaty, the associated concerns and the Way Forward to address these concerns.

INDUS WATER TREATY

Key Provisions

River Water Distribution	Eastern Rivers- Ravi, Sutlej, and Beas with India. Western Rivers- Chenab, Indus and Jhelum with Pakistan India's Share- 20% and Pakistan's Share- 80%
Western River Water utilization permitted for India	Non Consumptive Use of Western River Water like construction of Run of River Hydroelectric Plants Permitted to India.
Dispute Resolution Mechanism	3 stage Dispute Resolution Mechanism Stage 1- Permanent Commission Stage 2- Neutral Expert (NE) Stage 3- Court of Arbitration

Significance of the Treaty

- Successful Model-** Only **cross border water sharing treaty** between two nations in **Asia**. Treaty between two rivals.
- Generous towards lower riparian state-** Pakistan's share is about **90% greater than Mexico's share in the 1944 treaty with US**.
- Passed the Crisis test-** The Permanent Commission has met even during the **1965 and 1971 wars**.

Concerns with the Treaty

India's Concerns

- Dispute over India's Hydroelectric Projects-** Pakistan has raised objections on **Ratle and Kishanganga Projects**.
- Climate Change Impact-** Indus River System is the **most water stressed** according to NASA.
- Loss to Indian States in the Indus Basin-** J&K and Punjab Complain of million dollar losses

Pakistan's Concerns

- Lower Riparian Concerns-** infrastructure developments will **reduce downstream flows**
- Accusations of 'Water Terrorism'**- Pakistan has raised objections regarding the **Shahpurkandi barrage project**.

Way Forward

- Integration of Ecological Perspectives and Recognition of Climate Change Impacts.**
- Enhanced Water Data-Sharing**
- Incorporation of International Legal Standards like 1997 UN Watercourses Convention and 2004 Berlin Rules on Water Resources for sustainable water use**
- Pro activeness on India's Part in utilization of allocated water share like desilting of canals and run-off river hydroelectric plants.**

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What is the History behind the introduction of the Indus Water Treaty? What are its main provisions?

History Behind the Indus Water Treaty

History Behind the Indus Water Treaty

Pre Independence	Preceding partition , the six rivers of the Indus basin , which originated in the Himalayas/Tibet (Indus, Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, Jhelum and Chenab) was a common network, for both India and Pakistan.
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At the Time of Partition	The partition of India raised questions about the distribution of water between the two nations . Since the rivers flowed from India, Pakistan felt threatened by the prospect of control of river waters by India.
Inter-Dominion accord (May 4, 1948)	The Inter-Dominion accord of May 4, 1948 laid out that India would release enough water to Pakistan in return for annual payments (by Pakistan). However, the problems of this arrangement were soon realized and it was considered necessary to find an alternative solution.
Indus Water Treaty 1960	India and Pakistan signed the Indus Water Treaty with the intervention of the World Bank in 1960. Precise details were laid out regarding the way in which the waters would be distributed .

Main Provisions of the Indus Water Treaty

Eastern Rivers with India	Under the Indus treaty, all the waters of 3 eastern rivers namely Ravi, Sutlej, and Beas (with a mean annual flow of 33 Million Acre-feet (MAF)) were allocated to India for exclusive use.
Western Rivers with Pakistan	Pakistan gets control of 3 Western Rivers (Chenab, Indus and Jhelum) with a mean annual flow of 80 Million Acre-feet (MAF) .
Western River Water utilization permitted for India	The Indus River treaty allows India to utilize the waters of Western Rivers for a. Limited irrigation use b. Non-consumptive use - For applications such as power generation, navigation etc. This, allows India to generate hydroelectricity through a run-of-the-river projects (without the storage of waters) on the western rivers, subject to specific criteria for design and operation. c. Storage level permitted - India can store up to 3.75 MAF of water of the Western Rivers for conservation and flood storage purposes.
Water Division Ratio	The Indus Water treaty gives India 20% of the water from the Indus River System and the rest 80% of the water to Pakistan.
Dispute Resolution Mechanism	The Indus Water Treaty provides a three step dispute resolution mechanism . a. Permanent Commission - The disputes of the parties can be resolved at the Permanent Commission , or can also be taken up at the inter-government level . b. Neutral Expert (NE) - In case of unresolved questions or 'differences' between the countries on water-sharing, such as technical differences , either side can approach the World Bank to appoint a Neutral Expert (NE) to come to a decision. c. Court of Arbitration - If either party is not satisfied with the Neutral Expert's decision or in case of 'disputes' in the interpretation and extent of the treaty , matters can be referred to a Court of Arbitration.

What has been the significance of the Indus Water Treaty?

The Indus Waters Treaty has been **largely successful in maintaining water cooperation** between India and Pakistan for over 60 years, despite periods of political tensions and conflict between the two countries.

- 1. Only cross border water sharing treaty in Asia-** The Indus water Treaty is the **only cross border water sharing treaty** between two nations in Asia.
- 2. Generous towards lower riparian state-** It is the only water pact that compels an upper riparian state to defer to the interests of a downstream state. **Pakistan** has been given **80% share** in the river water system. This is **90 times greater volume of water** than **Mexico's share under a 1944 pact** with the US.
- 3. Passed the Crisis test-** The **Permanent Commission** set up as a part of the Dispute Resolution Mechanism under the treaty **has met even during the 1965 and 1971 wars** between India and Pakistan.
- 4. India's Generosity-** India's respect for the **values trans-boundary river treaty** is also a major factor behind the successful functioning of the treaty. India chose not to invoke the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, to withdraw from the Indus Water Treaty in the face of terror attacks like Indian Parliament in 2001, Mumbai in 2008, Uri in 2016 and Pulwama in 2019.
- 5. Successful Model-** The Indus Water Treaty serves as a successful model of cooperation between two rival countries.

What are the concerns with the Indus Water Treaty?

India's Concerns

- 1. Most Generous treaty-** Experts have termed this the **most generous water sharing** treaty. The treaty has resulted in unequal sharing of the waters with **80% allotment to Pakistan**. It is the **only water-sharing pact in the world** that **compels upper riparian State** to defer to the interests of the downstream State.
- 2. Prevents India from building any storage systems on Western Rivers-** Despite the Indus water treaty providing for **certain exceptional circumstances** for building storage systems on Western Flowing Rivers, Pakistan has deliberately stopped such efforts. The extensively technical nature of the treaty allows Pakistan to stall legitimate Indian Projects.
- 3. Pakistan's continued "intransigence" in India's Hydroelectric Projects-** In recent times disputes over the **Kishenganga** and **Ratle hydroelectric projects** have intensified, with **Pakistan** directly seeking arbitration at The Hague, **bypassing treaty-compliant proceedings**. Pakistan's proposal for a PCA mechanism in these hydropower projects is in contravention to the graded dispute settlement mechanism provided in Article IX of the IWT.
- 4. Old and Outdated Treaty-** According to the **Departmentally Related Standing Committees on Water Resources report of 2021**, present day pressing issues such as climate change, global warming and environmental impact assessment have not been taken into account by the Treaty. The Indus basin, which has been **ranked as the world's second most over-stressed aquifer by NASA in 2015**, has been severely **affected by climate change**. India seeks renegotiation and amendments to the treaty for sustaining its burgeoning population.
- 5. Loss to Indian States in the Indus Basin-** There have been substantial economic losses to the Indian States in the Indus River Basin. **For ex- According to J&K Govt's hired consultant report, J&K has been suffering economic losses to the tune of hundred of millions annually** due to the Indus Water Treaty.

Pakistan's Concerns

- 1. Lower Riparian Concerns-** As a lower riparian state, **Pakistan fears infrastructure developments** will **reduce downstream flows**.

2. Accusations of 'Water Terrorism'- Pakistan accused India of “water terrorism” for the **Shahpurkandi barrage project**, despite the project’s compliance with the IWT.

3. Environmental Flow Issues- Pakistan insists on **maintaining environmental flows**, supported by the **2013 Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling on India’s obligation** to release flows downstream of the **Kishanganga project**.

Read More- [Need to amend the Indus Waters Treaty](#)

What are the Concerns with the termination or abrogation of the IWT?

Renegotiating or abrogating the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) between India and Pakistan could have serious consequences for the region:

1. Escalation of Geopolitical Tensions- Attempts at renegotiating the treaty or abrogation of the treaty is likely to escalate political tensions between India and Pakistan. This might heighten the **risk of water conflicts** between the **two nuclear-armed neighbors**.

2. Threat to Regional Stability- The Indus river basin is shared by **India, Pakistan, China** and **Afghanistan**. Instability in the IWT could have **ripple effects on water cooperation in the wider region**.

3. Damage to India’s International Standing- Unilaterally suspending or withdrawing from the IWT **could damage India’s image as a responsible global power**. It may be a **setback for future negotiations of water treaties**, like the **Teesta Water Treaty** with countries like Bangladesh.

What Should be the Way Forward?

1. Integration of Ecological Perspectives- The ecological perspectives must incorporate Environmental Flows (EF) to sustain the Indus Valley ecosystems, as suggested by the **Brisbane Declaration** and the **2013 Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling on Kishanganga**.

2. Recognition of Climate Change Impacts- Strategies must be developed to manage climate change effects. **India should explore the possibility of using climate change** as a ‘**change in circumstances**’ to initiate conversation on renegotiation of the IWT.

3. Enhanced Water Data-Sharing- A World Bank-supervised, legally binding data-sharing framework should be established to monitor water quality and flow changes. Such estimates **would add to the accuracy of each side’s dependence on the other** in sharing the waters of these rivers.

4. Incorporation of International Legal Standards- The treaty provisions must be aligned with the **1997 UN Watercourses Convention** and the **2004 Berlin Rules on Water Resources** for sustainable water use.

5. Pro activeness on India’s Part in utilization of allocated water share- As suggested by the **standing committee of water resources**, the **canal systems in Punjab and Rajasthan** should be **repaired to increase their water carrying capacity**. Also, India should take steps to **completely utilize its entitlement of waters** of Western Rivers.

6. Use of pressure tactic in case of escalation- As suggested by some experts, in case of escalation of hostilities by Pakistan in future, India can suspend the meetings of Permanent Commission. If the first state of dispute redressal is not functional, the subsequent two steps of 3-tier dispute redressal don’t kick in.

Read More- [The Indian Express](#)

UPSC Syllabus- GS 2 India and its neighbourhood Relations

One Nation One Election- Significance and Concerns- Explained Pointwise

Recently, The Union Cabinet has accepted the recommendations of the **Ramnath Kovind led High Level Committee on One Nation, One Election**. The committee has envisaged **simultaneous Lok Sabha and State Assembly elections** as the **first step**, followed by municipal and panchayat polls within 100 days of the general election. According to the roadmap presented by the committee headed by former President Ram Nath Kovind, simultaneous elections will require **18 amendments to existing laws**, including **15 amendments to the Constitution**.

In this article we will look at the issue of one nation one election. We will look at the recommendations of the Ramnath Kovind led panel. We will look at the arguments supporting the idea and the criticisms of the idea of one nation one election.



Constitutional Amendment Recommendations of Kovind Panel Report on Simultaneous Elections

The committee has suggested **15 amendments to the Constitution of India** to be carried out through **two Constitution Amendment Bills**

1. FIRST CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT BILL

This Bill deals with the **transition to a simultaneous election system**, and the **procedure for fresh elections to Lok Sabha or a state Assembly** before the expiration of their stipulated five-year term.

Passage of the Bill- The Bill can be passed by Parliament without the requirement for consultation with state governments or ratification by state Assemblies.

Provisions of the Bill

- 1. Insertion of a new article 82A-** Article 82A will **establish the process** by which the country will move to a **system of simultaneous elections** for Lok Sabha and state Assemblies.
- 2. Amendment of Art 327-** Power of Parliament under Article 327 should be **expanded to include "conduct of simultaneous elections"** as well
- 3. Amendments to Art 83 and 172-** To ensure simultaneous elections when Lok Sabha or state Assembly **is dissolved before 'full term' ends**
- 4. Amendment of Laws of UT for Simultaneous Election-** Amendment of the following UT laws for simultaneous elections- a. The Government of Union Territories Act, 1963, b. The Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991 and c. The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019.

2. SECOND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT BILL

This bill deals with municipal and panchayat elections, which fall under Entry 5 of the State List titled 'Local government'.

Passage of the Bill- This bill needs to be **ratified by at least half of the state legislatures** in the country before it can be passed by the Parliament.

Provisions of the Bill

- 1. Inclusion of a new Article 324A-** **Empower the Parliament to make laws to ensure that municipality and panchayat elections are held simultaneously with the General Elections (to Lok Sabha and state Assemblies)**
- 2. Addition of Article 325(2)- Single Electoral Roll** for Lok Sabha, State legislature and local bodies

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What is the One nation one election?

Definition- One nation one election refers to the **idea of holding simultaneous polls for State Assemblies and the Lok Sabha** instead of separate and continuous elections.

Historical Background-

One Nation one election was the norm in India until 1967. Simultaneous elections were conducted for the Lok Sabha and the state assemblies in 1952, 1957, 1962, and 1967.

However, due to the premature dissolution of some Legislative Assemblies in 1968 and 1969 the simultaneous election cycle got disrupted. Further, in 1970, the Lok Sabha was dissolved prematurely, and fresh elections were held in 1971.

All these events led to the breakdown of the cycle of simultaneous elections in India.

What is the Kovind Panel on One Nation One Election?

About the Committee- The Union government on **September 2, 2023** had constituted a committee under the headship of former President of India Ram Nath Kovind to look into the **feasibility of 'one nation one election'**.

Members of the Committee- The Committee was headed by Ramnath Kovind. The members include- Home Minister **Amit Shah**, former Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha **Ghulam Nabi Azad**, former Finance Commission chairperson **N K Singh**, former Lok Sabha secretary-general **Subhash C Kashyap**, senior advocate **Harish Salve** and former Chief Vigilance Commissioner **Sanjay Kothari**.

What are the recommendations of the Kovind Panel Report on One Nation One Election?

To give effect to its recommendation, the committee has suggested **15 amendments to the Constitution of India**- in the form of both new provisions and changes to existing provisions- to be carried out through **two Constitution Amendment Bills**.

FIRST CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT BILL

Deals with the **transition to a simultaneous election system**, and the procedure for fresh elections to Lok Sabha or a state Assembly before the expiration of their stipulated five-year term.

Passage of the Bill- The Bill **can be passed by Parliament without** the requirement for **consultation with state governments** or **ratification by state Assemblies**.

Provisions of the Bill

1. Insertion of a new article 82A- Article 82A will **establish the process** by which the country will move to a **system of simultaneous elections** for Lok Sabha and state Assemblies.

Provisions of Article 82A(1)	The President will issue a notification bringing Article 82A into effect , on the date of the first sitting of the House of the People after a general election. The date of this notification " shall be called the Appointed date ".
Provisions under Article 82A(2)	All the Legislative Assemblies constituted in any general election held after the appointed date shall come to an end on the expiry of the full term of the House of the People .
Provisions under Article 82A(3)	ECI to hold General elections to the House of the People and the Legislative Assemblies simultaneously

7 PM Compilation September (Fourth Week) 2024

Provisions under Article 82A(4)	If the ECI believes that elections to any legislative assembly cannot be conducted simultaneously , “it may make a recommendation to the President, to declare by an Order, that the election to that Legislative Assembly may be conducted at a later date”
Provisions under Article 82A(5)	Even in cases where the state Assembly election is deferred, “the full term of the Legislative Assembly shall end on the same date as the end of the full term of the House of the People constituted in the General Election ”

2. Amendment of Art 327

Art 327 gives **Parliament the power to make laws** relating to elections to **Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, and state legislatures**, including the preparation of electoral rolls and delimitation of constituencies.

Kovind Panel Report on Simultaneous Elections has recommended that the **power of Parliament under Article 327** should be **expanded to include “conduct of simultaneous elections”** as well.

3. Amendments to ensure simultaneous elections when Lok Sabha or state Assembly is dissolved before ‘full term’ ends

Amendment of 83(2) (Duration of Houses of Parliament) and 172 (1) (“Duration of the State Legislatures”)- The committee has recommended that the **five-year duration** of the House of people and state legislatures should be referred to as “**the full term**”.

Amendments to Articles 83(3) and 172(3)- If Lok Sabha or a state Assembly is dissolved before the expiry of the full term, the remaining period will be referred to as the ‘**unexpired term**’.

Addition of Articles 83(4) and 172(4)- Lok Sabha or state Assembly that replaces the previously dissolved Lok Sabha or state Assembly **will serve only for the remaining ‘unexpired term’**.

4. Amendment of Laws of UT for Simultaneous Election

Kovind Panel on Simultaneous elections has recommended amendment of the following UT laws for simultaneous elections.

- The Government of Union Territories Act, 1963
- The Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991
- The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019

SECOND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT BILL

This bill deals with **municipal and panchayat elections**, which fall under Entry 5 of the State List titled ‘Local government’.

Passage of the Bill- This bill needs to be **ratified by at least half of the state legislatures in the country** before it can be passed by the Parliament.

Provisions of the Bill

1. Inclusion of a new Article 324A

It would empower the **Parliament to make laws** to ensure that **municipality and panchayat elections are held simultaneously with the General Elections** (to Lok Sabha and state Assemblies).

2. Amendment of Article 325

a. Addition of Article 325(2)- This new sub-clause proposed by the committee will create a **Single Electoral Roll** for every territorial constituency for election to the House of the People, Legislature of a State or to a Municipality or a Panchayat.

b. Addition of Article 325(3)- The single electoral roll shall be made by the Election Commission in **consultation with the State Election Commissions**. It shall substitute any electoral roll prepared earlier by either the **Election Commission under Art 325** or the **State Election Commissions under Art. 243K and Art. 243ZA**.

What are the arguments in favour of 'One Nation One Election'?

1. Reduction of Financial burden on state exchequer- Continuous election cycles are a **financial burden on the state exchequer**. 'One Nation One election' will reduce the overall expenditure on political process by ECI. **For ex-** The 2014 Lok Sabha polls cost Rs 3,870 cr to the exchequer and the 2015 Bihar elections alone cost the exchequer 300 cr. ECI has estimated the cost of 'one nation one election' to be around Rs.4500 cr.

2. Better utilisation of financial resources by political parties- Simultaneous elections will reduce the campaign expenditure of political parties and the candidates. This will **help smaller regional parties** in better management of financial resources.

3. Reduced duration of 'model code of conduct'- Frequent imposition of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) during polls stalls all development work for months at a time. It will **reduce 'policy paralysis'** that results from the imposition of the Model Code of Conduct during election time.

4. Focus on governance instead of being in 'election mode'- One nation one election will ensure continuity of policies and programmes of the central and state governments. It will **reduce disruption of normal public life**, as political rallies will be kept to a minimum. It will **improve the delivery of essential services to the public**.

5. Increase of administrative efficiency- During elections the entire state machinery as well as high-ranking officers from other States are also deputed as observers in the poll-bound State. 'One nation one election' will increase efficiency of administrative system.

6. Improvement of Internal security- **Frequent deployment of security forces during elections** use a considerable size of armed police forces, which can otherwise be better deployed for better management of internal security problems like **naxalism**.

7. Reduced use of 'black money'- Elections involve **considerable expenditure by prospective candidates, most of which is black money**. 'One nation one election' will reduce the circulation of black money in the economy.

8. Reduction of populist measures- **Frequent elections** forces the political class to think in terms of **immediate electoral gains rather than focus on long-term programs and policies**, which impacts the focus of governance and policymaking. Simultaneous elections would reduce the populist measures.

9. Increase of voter turnout- According to the Law Commission, **simultaneous elections will increase voter turnout** because it will be easier for people to cast many votes all at once.

10. Improvement in social harmony- **Frequent elections perpetuate caste, religion, and communal issues across the country** as elections are polarising events that have accentuated casteism, communalism, and corruption. Simultaneous elections would **reduce the fault lines between communities** created due to multiple elections.

What are the arguments against 'one nation one election'?

- 1. Reduced Accountability-** Regular elections ensure that the government is under an obligation to listen to the will of the people regularly. Regular state elections serve as feedback mechanism for the political parties. Critics argue that if the government is assured of a fixed term it might lead to autocratic tendencies.
- 2. Undermining of Federal Power-** In recent years, issues affecting the states have gained political value, which is demonstrated with more regional parties forming state governments like DMK in Tamil Nadu, TDP in Andhra Pradesh & Biju Janata Dal in Odisha. Due to simultaneous elections union elections might overshadow the state election.
- 3. Disadvantage for regional parties-** Critics argue that simultaneous election would hamper the prospects of regional parties as national issues would dominate the political narrative instead of local issues. Regional parties would not be able to compete against national parties in both money and election strategies.
- 4. Against Spirit of Democracy-** Critics argue that forcing simultaneous elections is against democracy because trying to force an artificial cycle of elections and restricting the choice for voters is not correct.
- 5. Influences choices and electoral behavior-** Voters may vote for the same party both at the national and state level which might put regional parties at a disadvantage. According to research report by IDFC Institute, if elections are held simultaneously, there's a 77 percent likelihood of voters favoring the same political party or alliance for both state assemblies and the Lok Sabha. This figure drops to 61 percent if elections are held six months apart.
- 6. Threat to internal security-** Deployment of heavy security forces for simultaneous elections is a logistical challenge and might endanger the internal security in the country.
- 7. Tampering with the democratic will-** The present system has been consciously chosen by our forefathers to uphold the will of democracy by providing for regular elections so that people can express their will through the right to vote. Modifying the election system and cycle would mean tampering with the power of people to express their democratic will.

What are the Challenges in the conduct of Simultaneous Elections in India?

The implementation of One Nation, One Election faces significant logistical, financial, and administrative challenges.

Large requirement of additional electoral equipments- For simultaneous elections in 2029, the ECI has estimated a requirement of 53.76 lakh ballot units, 38.67 lakh control units, and 41.65 lakh VVPATs. This would necessitate adding 26.55 lakh ballot units, 17.78 lakh control units, and 17.79 lakh VVPATs to the current inventory.

Large lead time for manufacture- The manufacturing of additional electoral equipments by Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) and Electronics Corporation of India Ltd (ECIL) would require significant lead time.

High cost to the exchequer- The ECI has estimated the manufacturing of these additional units to be Rs. 7,951.37 crore, excluding transportation and warehousing costs. It would cost a huge sum to the public exchequer.

Large requirement of security personnels- The smooth conduction of one nation one election, will increase the requirement of number of security personnel. The ECI had estimated a need for 4,719 companies of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) in 2024 general elections, which was a 50% increase from the 2019 requirement.

Practical Challenges of Simultaneous Elections- The ECI has faced difficulties in holding simultaneous elections due to security, weather, and festival-related constraints. For ex- Elections in Jammu and Kashmir

could not be held concurrently with the Lok Sabha elections due to high security needs. Around 400-500 additional companies of security forces were required, making it logistically challenging.

What Should be the Way Ahead?

- 1. Build All party Concensus-** The government must build an all party consensus **before introducing the two constitutional amendment bills** as recommended by the Kovind Panel Report on Simultaneous Elections.
- 2. 22nd Law Commission Report on simultaneous polls-** The government must also **wait for the recommendations** of the 22nd Law Commission Report on simultaneous polls before moving ahead with the idea.
- 3. Public awareness-** Public awareness must be created around the issue of simultaneous election through media deliberations.

Simultaneous election is an idea whose time has come. However, since the issue is concerned with the federal structure of the Constitution, it needs to be **discussed and debated properly across the political spectrum to assuage the concerns of regional parties.** This will make it easier to implement the idea in the country.

If India opts for 'one nation, one election', the world's biggest democracy will set another unique example as **India will be the 4th country in the world after Belgium, Sweden and South Africa which will conduct simultaneous election.**

Read More- [The Indian Express](#)

UPSC Syllabus- GS 2- Issues related to elections

HC verdict on Fact-Check Unit- Explained Pointwise

The Bombay High Court **struck down a provision in the 2021 IT Rules** allowing the government to identify 'fake news' on social media through a **Fact Check Unit (FCU)**. The ruling, with a 2-1 majority, deemed the amended provision of the IT Act which provided for the establishment of Fact Check Unit, as unconstitutional.

Earlier this year, Government of India had **notified the PIB's Fact-Check Unit (PIB-FCU)** under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) as the fact check unit of the Central Government. **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** had notified the **PIB's FCU** as the fact check unit under the provisions of Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, Amendment Rules, 2023.



PIB's Fact-Check Unit (PIB-FCU)

Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has notified the PIB's FCU as the fact check unit under the provisions of Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.

ESTABLISHMENT- The Fact Check Unit was established under PIB in November 2019.

OBJECTIVE- Its objective is of acting as a deterrent to creators and disseminators of fake news and misinformation.

MANDATE

1. The PIB-FCU is mandated to counter misinformation on Government policies, initiatives and schemes either suo motu or under a reference via complaints.
2. The PIB-FCU actively monitors, detects, and counters disinformation campaigns, ensuring that false information about the Government is promptly exposed and corrected.

FACT CHECKING PROCEDURE

The PIB fact-check unit categorises any information received by it into three categories- fake, misleading, and true

Fake News- If a piece of information is completely false and can “deceive or manipulate the audience, with or without the intention to cause potential harm”, it is classified as ‘fake news’.

Misleading- If a content uploaded has “selective presentation of facts or figures or with distortion of facts or figures” and can mislead or deceive readers, it is classified as ‘misleading’ by the fact-check unit.

True- Content that the fact-check unit finds factual after review is classified as ‘true’.

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What is the background of the Case?

Introduction of IT rule amendment	The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MEiTY) introduced the IT (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Amendment Rules, 2023, which amended the 2021 IT Rules.
Provision of the Amendment	The amendment broadened the definition of ‘fake news’ to cover ‘government business’. Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) notified the PIB's FCU as the fact check unit under the provisions of the amended rules.
Aim of FCU	The FCU would flag any social media posts it deemed ‘fake,’ ‘false,’ or ‘misleading’ regarding government affairs. It could also compel platforms to remove such content to maintain their “safe harbour” status and legal immunity.

This raised concerns over free speech and the extent of government regulation, as it positioned the government as the sole arbiter of truth regarding its own activities.

What does the Judgement of the Bombay High Court entail?

The Bombay HC held that the amended rules were unconstitutional, with a 2-1 verdict.

a. Restriction of Fundamental Rights- The majority judgement has held that the amended Rule **violated Articles 14, 19(1)(a), and 19(1)(g)** of the Constitution by restricting fundamental rights beyond permissible limits.

b. Vague and Misleading Terms- The verdict holds that the terms like 'fake, false, or misleading' are **vague and overbroad**. It is not the state's role to ensure citizens receive only 'truthful' information.

c. Chilling effect on Freedom of Speech and Expression- The verdict has noted that the **threat to social media platforms of losing their "safe harbour"** status, created a chilling effect on freedom of speech.

d. Overarching powers of the Fact-Check Unit- The verdict criticized the Fact Check Unit's (FCU's) power as overreaching. The verdict holds that the state classifying speech as true or false and forcing non-publication, **tantamounts to censorship**.

What is the PIB's Fact-Check Unit (PIB-FCU)?

PIB's Fact-Check Unit (PIB-FCU)- PIB's Fact-Check Unit was established in **November 2019** with a **stated objective of acting as a deterrent** to creators and disseminators of fake news and misinformation. It aims to provide people with an **easy avenue to report suspicious and questionable information** pertaining to the Government of India.

Functions/Mandate of PIB-FCU

a. The **PIB-FCU is mandated to counter misinformation** on Government policies, initiatives, and schemes either suo motu or under a reference via complaints.

b. The **PIB-FCU actively monitors, detects, and counters disinformation campaigns**, ensuring that false information about the Government is promptly exposed and corrected.

c. When this unit flags a **piece of content as fake, social media platforms** will have to **take it down as part of their due diligence requirement** under the IT Rules. Also, the **internet and telecom service providers like Jio and Airtel** will have to block the web link of a particular fake news information.

What was Govt's rationale for notifying PIB's Fact-Check Unit (PIB-FCU) as the Central Govt's Fact-check Unit?

1. Addressing the issue of fake news- The fact-checking body can help to **address the issue of fake news and misinformation on online platforms**, which can potentially cause harm to society.

2. Improved accountability of Social Media Intermediaries- The notification of PIB's Fact-Check Unit as the Govt's Fact-checking unit will **increase accountability** of social media intermediaries like **Facebook, Twitter** etc., which will now be required to remove false and misleading content.

3. Enhancement of Cybersecurity- PIB's Fact-Check Unit can improve the cybersecurity by preventing the misuse of online platforms for illegal or harmful activities. **For ex- Regulation of Sharing of Deepfakes.**

4. Prevention of Hate Speech and Violence- The Fact-Check unit seeks to ensure compliance with Indian laws like IT Act and laws related to national security. This **helps to prevent the misuse of social media platforms** and other digital media outlets **to incite violence or spread hate speech**.

What were the Concerns with notification of fact-check Unit by the Government of India?

1. 'Chilling effect' on freedom of speech and expression- There were concerns that PIB's fact-check unit and its power to censor content could have a **chilling effect on free speech and expression provided under Art 19(1)(a)**. There were concerns that people would be hesitant to express their opinions online for fear of being censored or facing legal consequences.

2. Potential for Misuse by the Govt- The fact-check unit's power **could be misused by the government to silence dissenting voices or criticism** of government actions. This could have serious implications for democracy and human rights.

3. Conflict of interest- The role played by the fact-checking unit has a significant conflict of interest as it plays the **role of judge, jury, and executioner**.

4. Lack of clarity on what constitutes "fake or false or misleading" information- There is lack of a clear definition of **what types of information qualify as 'fake or false or misleading'**. This lack of clarity **creates ambiguity** and can **lead to arbitrary censorship** by the government.

5. Short-circuiting established legal procedures- The notification of a **fact-checking unit with powers to issue directions to take down content**, short-circuit the procedures, safeguards, and conditions laid out in **Shreya Singhal v. Union of India** and **Section 69A of the IT Act**. The judgement extends the right to free speech into the online space.

What Should be the Way Forward?

1. Final Verdict of the SC- The Bombay HC Verdict in the **Kunal Kamra v. Union of India (2023)** case held the establishment of fact check units under the amended rules as unconstitutional. The SC must deliver final verdict on other concerns of IT Rules, such as **mandates for social media platforms to establish grievance redressal and compliance mechanisms**.

2. Develop a more transparent and participatory process- The government should work with **civil society, media organizations, and other stakeholders** to develop a more transparent and participatory process for **determining what content should be considered fake or misleading**.

3. Need an independent and non-partisan fact-checking body- The government should ensure that **anybody tasked with fact-checking is independent and non-partisan**, with clear guidelines for how decisions are made.

4. Ensure functioning according to judicial and legal guidelines- The government should ensure that any takedown requests are made in accordance with the procedures and safeguards laid out in **Shreya Singhal v. Union of India** or **under Section 69A of the IT Act**. These define and restrict the conditions under which government can take down online content.

Read More- [The Indian Express](#)

UPSC Syllabus-

GS 3 Security Issues – The role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges

GS 2- Government Interventions for regulation of the sector

Quad Grouping- Significance and Challenges- Explained Pointwise

The latest Quad Summit 2024 was held in Delaware, USA, on September 22, 2024. The summit focused on various critical areas aimed at enhancing cooperation among the member countries of the Quad- The United States, Australia, India, and Japan.

Key Outcomes of Quad 2024	
Maritime Initiatives	
MAITRI Initiative	It is a new regional maritime initiative for training the Quad Partners to monitor and secure their waters, enforce their laws and deter unlawful behaviour. The inaugural symposium will be hosted by India in 2025.
Quad Coast Guard Cooperation	This initiative seeks to improve interoperability among coast guard forces of member nations. Also, a Quad-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission has been scheduled for 2025.
Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief	
Indo-Pacific Logistics Network Pilot	A joint airlift capability will be developed to enhance the efficiency of humanitarian assistance and disaster response operations in the Indo-Pacific region.
Health Initiatives	
Quad Cancer Moonshot Initiative	This initiative aims to combat cervical cancer by promoting increased HPV vaccinations, expanding access to screenings, and enhancing treatment options across the Indo-Pacific region.
Education and Research	
Quad Scholarships	India has announced a new initiative offering fifty scholarships worth \$500,000 for students from the Indo-Pacific to pursue education in various fields.
Quad BioExplore Initiative	This Quad initiative will focus on joint research of utilizing AI for agricultural advancements across member countries.
Infrastructure and Connectivity	
Centre for Cable Connectivity and Resilience	This centre will focus on developing and managing undersea cable networks critical for global data traffic, enhancing regional digital infrastructure.
Climate Change and Clean Energy	
Q-CHAMP	The Quad Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Package (Q-CHAMP) initiative aims to enhance resilience against climate impacts across the region.

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What is the Quad Grouping? What is the History of its formation and the objectives of the grouping?

Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD) or Quad- It is an **informal strategic forum** among like-minded democracies across the Indian and the Pacific Ocean, which is aimed to ensure and support a ‘**free, open and prosperous**’ Indo-Pacific region. It comprises-the USA, India, Japan, and Australia.

History of Quad

Quad 1.0 (Origin of Quad)	
2004	The grouping traces its genesis to 2004 , when the four countries, came together to coordinate relief operations in the aftermath of the tsunami.
2007	The idea of Quad was initiated in 2007 by the Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe. But it was dropped with the withdrawal of Australia, due to the political pressure from the Chinese government and in the wake of the growing conflict between the US and China in the Asia-Pacific region.
Quad 2.0 (Revival of Quad)	
2012	The Japanese PM emphasised the idea of Asia’s ‘ Democratic Security Diamond ’ comprising the US, Japan, India, and Australia.
2017	The resurgence of the Quad began in 2017 , coinciding with changing geopolitical dynamics and increasing assertiveness from China in the South China Sea and along its borders with India.
2021	The first formal summit of the Quad began in 2021. The Official declaration was laid out in March 2021. The declaration states that the Quad aims to create a region that is free, open, inclusive, healthy , anchored by democratic values , and unconstrained by coercion .

What are the recent Outcomes of the Quad Summit 2024?

Maritime Security

- MAITRI maritime initiative-** It is a new regional maritime initiative for **training the Quad Partners to monitor and secure their waters, enforce their laws and deter unlawful behaviour**. The inaugural symposium will be hosted by India in 2025.
- Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA)-** The Quad will expand this partnership to **enhance regional capabilities against illicit maritime activities** through improved training and resources.
- Quad Coast Guard Cooperation-** This initiative seeks to improve interoperability among coast guard forces of member nations. Also, a **Quad-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission** has been scheduled for 2025.

Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief

- Indo-Pacific Logistics Network Pilot-** A joint airlift capability will be developed to **enhance the efficiency of humanitarian assistance and disaster response operations** in the Indo-Pacific region.
- Aid and Assistance for Cyclone Yagi-** \$4 million in humanitarian assistance has been announced for Vietnam following Typhoon Yagi.

Health Initiatives

- Quad Cancer Moonshot Initiative-** This initiative aims to combat cervical cancer by promoting **increased HPV vaccinations**, expanding **access to screenings**, and enhancing **treatment options** across the Indo-Pacific region.

Education and Research

- Quad Scholarships-** India has announced a new initiative offering **fifty scholarships worth \$500,000 for**

students from the Indo-Pacific to pursue education in various fields.

2. Quad BioExplore Initiative- This Quad initiative will focus on joint research of utilizing AI for agricultural advancements across member countries.

Infrastructure and Connectivity

1. Centre for Cable Connectivity and Resilience- This centre will focus on **developing and managing undersea cable networks** critical for global data traffic, enhancing regional digital infrastructure.

2. Quality Infrastructure Development- The Quad is committed to improving connectivity through sustainable infrastructure projects, including **training initiatives for telecommunications readiness in South Pacific nations**.

Climate Change and Clean Energy

1. Quad Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Package (Q-CHAMP)- The Q-CHAMP initiative aims to **enhance resilience against climate impacts** across the region.

What is the Significance of the Quad Grouping?

1. Strategic Counterbalance to China- The Quad serves as a counterbalance to China's growing influence and assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific. This cooperation aims to uphold a '**free and open Indo-Pacific**', which is critical for maintaining regional stability and security.

For ex- The Quad's statements and joint declarations often emphasise support for **ASEAN centrality, UNCLOS** (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea), and **peaceful resolution of disputes** like the **South China Sea Dispute**.

2. Maritime Security- The grouping aims to enhance maritime security through **joint exercises** and **coordinated responses** to potential threats.

For ex- The creation of **Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA)**, conduction of **Malabar exercise** on an annual basis which aim to secure **rule based order in the Indo-Pacific region**.

3. Economic Cooperation- The Quad countries collaborate on economic issues, which includes infrastructure development and economic resilience in the Indo-Pacific.

For ex- Establishment of the **Quad Infrastructure Coordination Group** to identify, design, and fund infrastructure projects in the region, and to **provide alternatives to China's Belt and Road Initiative**.

4. Technology and Supply Chain Resilience- The Quad grouping aims to **create more resilient supply chains**, particularly for **critical technologies, components, and minerals**.

For ex- Launch of initiatives like the **semiconductor supply chain Initiative, Quad Partnership for cable connectivity and resilience** to secure the critical supply chains of materials and technologies.

5. Public Goods provisions- The grouping has evolved to address broader issues beyond security, which includes health security.

For ex- Launch of initiatives like the **Quad Vaccine Partnership** and **Quad Cancer moonshot initiatives** which aims to secure common public goods like vaccines.

6. Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)- The HADR operations of the Quad group aims to provide disaster relief to the countries of the Indo-Pacific.

For ex- **Indo-Pacific Logistics Network Pilot** and **aids during the times of devastating cyclones like Cyclone Yagi**.

What is the Significance of the Quad Grouping for India?

1. Strengthening of India's Global Standing- India's active role in the Quad has positioned it as a **key player in the Indo-Pacific**. It has enhanced its **influence in international forums** and with other major powers. It has also helped India to become the **Voice of the Global South**.

2. Support for India's vision of Free and Open Indo-Pacific- India's 'Act East' policy and its **Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative** (IPOI) find resonance in the Quad's commitment of **promoting regional stability and prosperity** in the Indian Ocean region. This enables India to pursue its strategic interests in Southeast Asia and beyond.

3. Strategic Counterbalance to China- The Quad's initiatives on **infrastructure development and alternative financing** provides India with options to **effectively counter** Chinese investments under the **Belt and Road Initiative** (BRI).

4. Access to Advanced Technologies- The Quad's focus on creating resilient supply chains for semiconductors and rare earth elements is beneficial for India, as it seeks to **boost its own tech industry** and **reduce dependency on imports**.

5. Collaboration on Health and Vaccine Distribution- The **Quad Vaccine Partnership**, which aims to expand vaccine manufacturing in India and distribute vaccines across the Indo-Pacific, reinforces India's position as the '**pharmacy of the world**.'

What are the Challenges faced by the Quad grouping?

1. Perception of Anti-China Alignment- The grouping is often perceived as an '**anti-China alliance**'. China has criticized the grouping as a '**mini-NATO**' and accused it of sowing discord in the region.

2. Divergent Strategic Interests Among Members- The Quad countries have different strategic priorities and threat perceptions. **For ex-** Even though the U.S., Japan, and Australia expressed support for India during the **2020 Galwan Valley clashes** between India and China, **their direct involvement was limited**. This reflects divergent levels of strategic commitment.

3. Lack of Institutionalization- The Quad remains an informal grouping **without a formal secretariat or institutional framework**. This limits its ability to execute long-term strategic projects or maintain consistent policies.

4. Economic Dependencies on China- All Quad members, particularly **Australia, Japan, and India**, have significant economic ties with China. This **economic interdependence** often **constraints their ability to fully align on anti-China measures**.

For ex- Australia's experience of **severe trade disruptions in 2020** after **China's imposition of tariffs and trade restrictions** in response to Australia's call for an independent investigation into the origins of COVID-19.

5. Lack of Consensus on Security Issues- India's **traditional wariness of formal military alliances** and preference for strategic autonomy, impedes the further deepening of cooperation on security issues.

6. Challenges in expansion of membership- Expansion of the Quad grouping to include other like-minded countries like **South Korea, Vietnam, or New Zealand**, poses challenges such as the **risks of dilution of the group's cohesion and focus**.

7. ASEAN concerns- Some ASEAN members, like **Indonesia and Malaysia**, have expressed concerns that the Quad could increase regional polarization. Quad poses a threat to **ASEAN's role as the primary platform** for regional dialogue and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

What Should be the way forward?

- 1. Strengthening Institutionalization-** The Quad should consider establishing a **more formal institutional framework**, such as a **secretariat** or regularized meetings at multiple levels (e.g., working groups, ministerial, and leaders' summits).
- 2. Enhancing Military and Security Cooperation-** The Malabar naval exercise should be expanded to include more complex joint operations, such as **anti-submarine warfare** and **amphibious operations**.
- 3. Engaging with ASEAN and Other Regional Partners-** Initiating a **Quad-ASEAN dialogue** could help align efforts on issues like maritime security, infrastructure development, and economic resilience.
- 4. Establishment of Quad Economic framework-** A Quad economic framework must be established to include **initiatives for digital trade**, investment in **high-tech industries**, and collaboration on **setting international standards for emerging technologies**.
- 5. Expansion of membership for better collaboration-** A '**Quad Plus**' dialogue can be launched on infrastructure development which could include countries like South Korea, Vietnam, and Singapore.

Read More- [The Indian Express](#)

UPSC Syllabus- GS 2- International Organisations- Their structure and Mandate

White Revolution 2.0- Significance and Challenges- Explained Pointwise

Recently, Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah announced plans for '**White Revolution 2.0**', which aims to further revolutionize the dairy industry. Also, the Ministry of Cooperation unveiled standard operating procedure (SOPs) for White Revolution 2.0. It will be on the line of Operation Flood, which was **launched in 1970** catalysed the White Revolution, and transformed India's dairy sector.

White Revolution 2.0 focuses on **expanding the cooperative model**, which was the backbone of Operation Flood. The government plans to increase milk procurement by cooperatives from **660 lakh kg per day in 2023-24** to **1,007 lakh kg per day by 2028-29**.



Source- Indian Express

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What is the current status of dairy sector in India?

Milk Production Data	India is the world's leading milk producer . The milk production has reached 230.58 million tonnes in 2022-23, up from 17 million tonnes in 1951-52. The per capita availability of milk in India is 459 grams per day , surpassing the global average of 323 grams per day .
Milk Sector contribution to Agri GDP	The milk sector (milk consumed or sold in liquid form, ghee, butter, and lassi produced by producer households) contributed almost 40% (Rs 11.16 lakh crore) to agriculture and related sectors.
Top Five Milk producing states in India	The top five milk-producing states- Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh - contribute over 53% of the country's total milk production.
National Average Yield and production data	The national average yield is 8.55 kg per animal per day for crossbred animals and 3.44 kg for indigenous ones . Indigenous buffaloes account for 31.94% of production , followed by crossbred cattle at 29.81% .
Handling of milk	The organized sector, led by cooperatives, manages about one-third of the marketable milk. The unorganized sector handles the remaining two-thirds.

What is the government's roadmap for achieving White Revolution 2.0?

Expansion of Cooperative reach	Presently, there are 1.7 lakh dairy cooperative societies (DCSs) covering 2 lakh villages (30% of the country's villages, and 70% of India's districts). However, only 10-20% of villages are covered in states like Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Madhya Pradesh, while states like West Bengal, Assam, and Odisha have less than 10% coverage. The National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) plans to establish 56,000 new multipurpose DCSs and strengthen 46,000 existing ones over the next five years, particularly in Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Andhra Pradesh.
Planned Expansion	A pilot project was launched in February 2023, with a budget of Rs 3.8 crore, to set up dairy cooperatives in uncovered gram panchayats across Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, and Karnataka.
Funding	National Programme for Dairy Development (NPDD) 2.0 will provide primary funding for White revolution 2.0. This scheme will provide financial assistance for village-level milk procurement systems, chilling facilities, and capacity-building , targeting 1,000 Multipurpose Primary Agricultural Credit Cooperative Societies (MPACSS) with Rs 40,000 each.

What is the Significance of White Revolution 2.0?

1. Increase in the share of agri and allied sector GDP- White revolution 2.0 will lead to enhanced milk production, which will add to the growth of the agri and allied sector in India. **For ex-** Currently, the milk sector (milk and its derivative products) contribute to **around 40% (Rs 11.16 lakh crore)** to agriculture and related sectors.

2. Generation of rural employment and women empowerment- White revolution 2.0 will generate employment and contribute to the empowerment of women in the process. **For instance-** The Indian dairy industry today, **directly or indirectly**, supports over **8.5 crore people, predominantly women**.

3. Improving Market Access and Income for Farmers- **White Revolution 2.0** will enable more farmers to participate in the **organized dairy market by providing market access to farmers** in areas previously uncovered by cooperatives. This will ensure better prices for their produce and more stable incomes.

4. Reducing Regional Disparities- White Revolution 2.0 aims to address regional disparities in cooperative coverage. The initiative will target the underserved regions of **Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, and West Bengal**, and hence will ensure more equitable development across the country.

5. Food and nutritional security- The initiative aims to increase daily milk procurement by dairy cooperatives from **660 lakh kg to 1,007 lakh kg by 2028-29**. This expansion will **enhance the availability of milk**, contributing to both food security and nutritional needs in the country.

What are the challenges in achieving White Revolution 2.0?

1. Uneven Presence of Cooperative- While states like **Gujarat** and **Kerala** have well-established cooperative networks, others like **West Bengal, Assam, and Jharkhand** have less than **10% coverage**. This imbalance limits the ability to scale up production uniformly across the country.

2. Declining annual growth rate of milk production- The annual rate of milk production has declined from **6.47% in 2018-19 to 3.83% in 2022-23**.

3. Variability in yield and per capita availability across states- States like West Bengal and Odisha have much lower milk yields compared to states like Punjab and Gujarat. **For ex-** While **Punjab** boasts a high yield of **13.49 kg** per animal per day, **West Bengal's** yield is only **6.30 kg**.

4. Low cattle Productivity- As per Integrated Sample Survey, **average annual productivity of cattle in India during 2019-20 is 1777 kg per animal per year**, as against the world average of **2699 kg per animal per year** during 2019.

5. Prevalence of Diseases- There has been a surge in the prevalence of contagious diseases among cattles. **For ex-** Outbreak of **Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD), Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Black Quarter infection**.

6. Feed and fodder scarcity- The Jhansi-based Indian Grassland and Fodder Research Institute has estimated that there is a deficit of **12% green fodder, 23% dry fodder, and 30% grains-based concentrated animal feeds**.

7. Inadequate policy support- The bulk of the agricultural subsidies by the central and state governments goes to the crops sector. **For ex-** In the 2023-24 Union Budget, **the allocation for the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying is merely Rs 4,328 crore** while well over **Rs 4 trillion** has been **allocated to food, fertiliser, and other agricultural subsidies**.

8. Lack of marketing support- Milk and milk products lack price and marketing support that are enjoyed by the crop-based commodities in the form of **MSP and official state procurement by FCI**.

9. Lack of Institutional finance- The **share of livestock in the total agricultural credit** (short-term, medium-term and long-term) is only **around 4%**.

10. Greenhouse gas contribution- The dairy sector is a major contributor to the greenhouse gases like **Methane**, which have a very **high global warming potential (GWP)**.

11. **Lack of advancements in technology-** Fewer artificial inseminations, lower-quality germplasm and insufficient technical staff have inhibited the development of high quality cattle breed.

What are the other government schemes for the development of dairy sector?

Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM)	It is being implemented for development and conservation of indigenous bovine breeds since December 2014. Its aim is to enhance milk production and to make it more remunerative to the farmers.
National Livestock Mission (NLM)	National Livestock Mission (NLM) scheme has been restructured for 2021-22 to 2025-26 . The scheme focuses on entrepreneurship development and breeds improvement in poultry, sheep, goat and piggery , including feed and fodder development.
National Artificial Insemination Programme	To suggest novel methods of bringing about impregnation in female breeds and prevent the spread of certain diseases which are genital in nature.
National Cattle and Buffalo Breeding Project	To genetically upgrade important indigenous breeds on a priority basis with a focus on development and conservation.
National Animal Disease Control Programme	Implemented to control FMD and Brucellosis by completely vaccinating cattle, buffalo, sheep, goat and pig populations against Foot & Mouth Disease (FMD) and bovine female calves of 4-8 months of age against Brucellosis.
Animal Husbandry Startup Grand Challenge	To appreciate innovations coming from the villages to expand the dairy sector in India.

What Should be the Way Forward?

- 1. Expansion of Cooperative led procurement in the organised sector-** Presently, about **two-thirds of the marketable milk is in the unorganised sector**, where **informal middlemen** dominate the supply chain. The potential for **expanding organized sector's share in marketable milk** (which is led by the cooperative sector) must be explored.
- 2. Providing sufficient feed and fodder resources-** Providing **sufficient feed & fodder** and **drinking water** is the need of the hour to increase productivity of cattle stock in India, particularly in the rain-shadow region.
- 3. Value addition and Marketing-** The milk producers should be given the requisite support to enter into **value-added segments** such as **ice cream, yogurt, cheese**, and **whey**. These segments have profit margins of 20%, which is much higher than the 3-5% margin in the case of simple milk produce.
- 4. Promoting indigenous breeds-** Our indigenous breed of cattle must be promoted, like the **genetic enhancement of Badri Cow**.
- 5. Research and development-** Government should focus on **Research & Development in livestock sector** to **increase per livestock productivity** to provide more benefits to small & marginal farmers.

Read More- [The Indian Express](#)

UPSC Syllabus- GS 3- Economics of animal rearing

The Issue of Overwork in India – Explained, Pointwise

The issue of overwork in India has gained significant attention recently, particularly following the tragic death of Anna Sebastian Perayil, a 26-year-old employee at Ernst & Young (EY). Her parents allege that the overwhelming work stress she experienced contributed to her untimely demise. This incident highlights a growing concern regarding employee welfare and the unsustainable demands placed on workers in India, where long hours and high expectations have become normalized.

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In September 2023, a series of media reports highlighted the severe toll of overwork on employees in India's tech sector, with burnout being cited as a leading cause of resignation from major IT firms.

All these incidents and facts necessitates the reasons behind the widening issue of overwork in India.

[ToC]

Data and Facts Related to Issue of Overwork in India

Country	Share of employed working 49 or more hours per week
Bhutan	61 percent
India	51 percent
Bangladesh	47 percent
Mauritania	46 percent
Congo	45 percent
Burkina Faso	41 percent
Pakistan	40 percent
United Arab Emirates	39 percent
Lebanon	38 percent
Myanmar	38 percent

Average Working Hours: According to the **Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)**, an Indian worker typically works **48–52 hours per week**, far exceeding the international standard of **40 hours per week**. It is also very high compared to the global average of 34–36 hours.

Overwork related mortality: An ILO and WHO report found that overwork led to **745,000 deaths globally in 2016**, due to ischemic heart disease and stroke, and India was among the top contributors.

India's ranking: India is ranked as the **second most overworked country** globally, with an average of **46.7 hours per week** per employed person. Bhutan tops the list, with **61%** of its workforce working more than 49 hours weekly.

Stress and Burnout: As per a report by digital healthcare platform MediBuddy and CII, around 62 percent of Indian employees experience burnout. It is triple the global average of 20 percent, due to work-related stress and poor work-life balance.

What are the legal aspects of overwork in India?

Ambedkar on Overwork: Ambedkar actively advocated for an **eight-hour work day**, which became a cornerstone of his legacy. In the 7th Indian Labour Conference in New Delhi on November 27, 1942, he

emphasised the necessity for humane working conditions. During his tenure, Factories Act of 1934 was amended to include provisions for betterment of workers which also included provisions for working hours.

Factories Act, 1948:

- Limits working hours to 48 hours a week and mandates rest days.
- Provides for overtime pay at twice the regular wage rate if an employee works beyond 9 hours a day or 48 hours a week.
- Applicable to workers in factories, this law ensures that employees aren't burdened with excessive working hours without due compensation.

ILO's convention on working hours: According to ILO's Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919, the working hours of persons employed in any public or private industrial undertaking shall not exceed 8 hours in the day and 48 hours in the week.

What are the Reasons Behind Overwork in India?

Concurrent List: Labour matters fall under the Concurrent List, both Parliament and state legislature hold the authority to enact relevant laws. There multiple laws for every state, therefore, bringing uniformity in labour laws becomes a difficult task.

Economic Pressures: Many sectors in India, particularly tech, finance, and gig economy jobs, demand extended working hours due to fierce competition and economic pressures to deliver results.

Toxic Work Environments: Companies often foster environments where long hours are expected and rewarded, discouraging employees from taking breaks or prioritizing personal time.

Hustle Culture: Hustle culture is defined as one that encourages employees to work more than normal working hours. The idea that success requires relentless work and long hours, was promoted by Silicon Valley entrepreneurs. The idea of working long hours as a sign of dedication and hard work is deeply embedded in Indian work culture. Employees often feel pressured to stay longer at the office to impress superiors.

Lack of Regulation: India has **insufficient regulation** on maximum working hours, especially in white-collar sectors. Although the Factories Act (1948) sets limits for industrial workers, there are no strict laws governing overtime for IT, service sectors, or gig workers.

Work-from-Home Trend: The pandemic-induced shift to remote work increased the **working day by 1-2 hours** for many employees, as reported by several surveys. The lack of work-life balance and the expectation to be always available has exacerbated this issue.

Government backing: Many governments are favoring longer working hours. For example, recently Karnataka government proposed an amendment to the Karnataka Shops and Commercial Establishment Act that increased the maximum length of the workday from the previously mandated 10 to 14 hours.

What are the Impacts of Overwork?

Physical and Mental Health Issues: Overwork is associated with health problems such as **hypertension, heart disease, and sleep disorders**. Mental health conditions like **depression, anxiety, and burnout** are increasingly being reported among employees.

Impact on Personal Life: Overwork severely affects **work-life balance**, with employees finding less time for family, social engagements, or personal development. It leads to a cycle of dissatisfaction both at work and home.

Reduced Productivity: While longer hours may initially lead to increased output, sustained overwork often results in **diminished productivity**, as employees become physically and mentally fatigued. On the contrary, Countries with shorter working weeks often report higher employee satisfaction and productivity levels, demonstrating the benefits of a balanced approach.

Economic Costs: The economic cost of overwork is substantial, with **increased absenteeism, healthcare costs, and high turnover rates**. It is estimated that burnout could cost Indian companies billions annually in lost productivity.

What are the International Best Practices Regarding Overwork?

Japan's "Karoshi" Laws: After decades of grappling with "Karoshi" (death by overwork), Japan introduced measures to limit overtime. Companies are required by law to ensure employees do not work more than **45 hours of overtime per month**, and employees can report overwork directly to labor authorities.

France's "Right to Disconnect": In 2017, France implemented a law allowing workers the **right to disconnect** from work-related emails and calls outside of office hours, ensuring a balance between work and personal life.

Germany's Work-Life Balance: German companies, especially in tech and manufacturing, have a culture of respecting **short working hours and strict rules** around overtime. In fact, employees in Germany work fewer hours but maintain higher productivity levels.

Nordic Model: Scandinavian countries such as Denmark and Sweden prioritize **shorter working hours and flexible work policies**. Their focus on **worker welfare** has led to better productivity and work satisfaction.

What are the Suggestions to improve the situation of overwork in India?

Legal Framework: India needs to revise its **labour laws** to include clear limits on working hours for all sectors, not just industrial workers. An updated **overtime regulation** for white-collar and gig workers is essential.

Cultural Shift: A significant shift in **corporate culture** is needed, where companies reward productivity over long hours. Encouraging **employee well-being** and introducing **flexible work hours** can improve morale and reduce burnout.

Government Intervention: The government could introduce policies such as **mandatory annual leaves, caps on weekly working hours, and compulsory breaks** for employees in stressful sectors.

Corporate Responsibility: Corporations should focus on employee welfare through initiatives like **employee assistance programs, mental health support, and wellness initiatives** to address the problem of overwork.

Embracing Technology for Work Management: Companies can use **time management tools** and other technological solutions to monitor employee workloads and avoid overburdening staff.

Promoting Work-Life Balance: Both employers and employees need to actively promote and **maintain work-life balance**, which includes recognizing when employees are overworked and taking proactive steps to redistribute tasks.

[Read More – The Indian Express](#)

UPSC Syllabus – GS 3- Indian Economy – Issues related to Employment

India-Sri Lanka Relations- After Elections in Sri Lanka- Opportunities and Challenges- Explained Pointwise

In the recent elections held in Sri Lanka, **Anura Kumara Dissanayake** has been elected as the new president. Dissanayake, is the leader of the **National People's Power (NPP)** and is known for his **leftist and populist stance**. The NPP is a coalition of interest groups around the **left-wing Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP)**. The JVP was traditionally an **anti-capitalist nationalist movement** with an anti-Indian focus. Dissanayake's party has historically espoused **Sinhala nationalism** and has been **critical of Indian influence** in Sri Lanka.

However, following the **recent economic crisis** and **widespread public protests** that led to significant political changes, Dissanayake appears to recognize the importance of **maintaining a pragmatic relationship** with India. The election of Dissanayake introduces both opportunities and challenges for India, reflecting a complex geopolitical landscape.



Figure 1. Source- The Indian Express

What is the NPP group? What has been its stance towards India? What has been India's approach towards NPP in recent times?

NPP- The NPP is a **coalition of interest groups** like artists, business people, academics, and women's groups, who want a change from the traditional parties and their discredited and

corrupt ways. It is centred around the left-wing **Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP)**. The JVP was traditionally an anti-capitalist nationalist movement with an anti-Indian focus.

NPP's and Anura Kumara Dissanayake's Relationship with India

1. Refutation of anti-India bias- Anura Kumara Dissanayake (AKD) **has visited India earlier this year** on invitation and met with the External Affairs Minister, and the National Security Advisor. He has been **prompt in responding to PM Modi's congratulatory message** and has promised to work together. The **Indian High Commissioner in Colombo** was among his **first visitors** after his election.

2. Acknowledgement of India's support during Sri Lanka's economic crisis- AKD acknowledges that **India has supported Sri Lanka at a critical time in 2022** with a **massive infusion of finance and materials**.

3. Emergence of India as a positive factor in the recent elections- India has not been portrayed in a negative light in the recent Sri Lankan election. **India's timely help** and the **willingness to partner Sri Lanka's debt restructuring** has had a positive influence across all party lines.

What has been the history of relationship between India and Sri Lanka?

Ancient Ties and Cultural Relations	India and Sri Lanka have a shared legacy of historical, cultural, religious, spiritual and linguistic ties that is more than 2,500 years old. Buddhism is one of the strongest pillars connecting the two nations and civilizations from the time of the Great Indian Emperor Ashoka.
Civil War and Indian Intervention	Relations between India and Sri Lanka began to sour in the 1980s due to the Sri Lankan Civil War. The war primarily involved the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).
Indo-Sri Lankan Accord (1987)	In an effort to resolve the conflict, India signed the Indo-Sri Lankan Accord with Sri Lanka, which aimed to provide regional autonomy to Tamil areas. This included deployment of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to maintain peace. However, this intervention faced significant backlash and ultimately led to India's withdrawal in 1990 after considerable military engagement and casualties.
Post-Civil War Relations	After the end of the civil war in 2009, India played a crucial role in reconstruction efforts in Sri Lanka . However, tensions resurfaced due to India's stance on human rights violations during the civil war and the subsequent UN resolutions.

India's help during the recent economic crisis in Sri Lanka

During Sri Lanka's severe economic crisis in 2022, India played a crucial role in providing substantial support. India extended a credit support amounting to approximately **\$4 billion**.

Credit Lines and Currency Support- India also extended **\$400 million currency swap** and deferrals on trade liabilities worth about **\$500 million** due to imports from India.

India's support during Debt restructuring- India was the first country to provide a **letter of support for Sri Lanka's debt restructuring to the International Monetary Fund (IMF)**, facilitating the start of the IMF process.

Humanitarian Aid- The humanitarian aid included the **essential goods and services** aimed at alleviating the immediate hardships faced by the Sri Lankan population.

All this good will and radically improved India's bargaining power with Sri Lanka. India's efforts had also resulted in some tangible outcomes-

- a. India signed a deal with Sri Lanka to develop **Trincomalee oil tank farm**.
- b. India's National Thermal Power Corporation is also going to develop a **100-megawatt power plant in Sampur**, a strategic point at the Trincomalee's natural harbour.
- c. Sri Lanka cancelled a **Chinese company's licence to build a micro electricity grid close to India**.

What is the importance of Sri-Lanka for India?

1. Strategic location- Sri Lanka is strategically located in the Indian Ocean. The **East-West maritime route** passing around the island state carries around **two-thirds of the world's oil** and **half of the world's container transportation**.

2. Maritime security- Sri Lanka is home to ports that have the potential to become important maritime hubs (**Hambantota Port**) and securing the strategic Sea Lanes of Communication in the Indian Ocean.

3. Geographical proximity to India- Sri Lanka is located very close to India. Moreover, India has **invested heavily in Sri Lanka after the end of the civil war in 2009**, and after the **unprecedented economic crisis in 2022**. Hence, it wants to safeguard its strategic interest.

4. Maintenance of stability, peace, and security- The recent rising aggressive footprint of China in the Indian Ocean region makes Sri Lanka even more **significant in terms of maintenance of stability, peace, and security**.

What has been the other positive developments in India-Sri Lanka Relations?

1. Commercial Relations- India and Sri Lanka enjoy a vibrant and growing economic and commercial partnership, which has witnessed considerable expansion over the years.

a. **India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISFTA)-** India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISFTA) in 2000 has contributed significantly towards the expansion of trade between the two countries.

b. **Bilateral trade-** India was Sri Lanka's largest trading partner, with an overall bilateral trade of **USD 5.5 billion** in 2022.

c. **FDI Investment from India-** India is also one of the largest contributors to **Foreign Direct Investment** in Sri Lanka. According to the Central bank of Sri Lanka, the total FDI from India so far exceeds **US\$ 2.2 billion**.

2. Development Cooperation- Sri Lanka is one of India's major development partners and this partnership has been an important pillar of bilateral ties between the two countries over the years.

a. **Grant commitments-** The overall commitment by India is more than **USD 3.5 billion**. Grant projects cut across sectors such as education, health, livelihood, housing, industrial development etc.

b. **Demand driven development partnership-** Demand-driven and people-centric nature of India's development partnership with Sri Lanka have been the cornerstone of this relationship.

3. Cooperation in Maritime Security-

a. **Joint Exercises-** The **SLINEX naval exercises** have become one of the most visible manifestations of Indo-Sri Lanka cooperation in maritime security.

b. **Partnership in regional maritime security architecture-** Sri Lanka is a part of India's regional maritime security architecture, with Sri Lankan coastal surveillance radars being integrated to the **International Fusion Center – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR)** at Gurugram in India.

What are India's concerns with Sri-Lanka?

1. Rising Chinese Footprint- China is spreading its tentacles in Sri Lanka by **bagging the project** to develop an **airport in capital Colombo**. India remains concerned due to lack of a level playing field for economic projects in Sri Lanka, with the Sri Lankan government at times openly siding with the Chinese.

2. India's security concerns- The regular movement of Chinese naval vessels, particularly submarines and the so-called research ships, is a **matter of grave security concern** to India.

3. Safeguarding India's strategic interests- The environmental groups, which are an important part of the NPP, have demanded the **scrapping of the Adani group backed renewable energy project**. India is concerned about protecting its strategic interest in the island nation, especially after giving millions of rupees in aid and loan to Sri Lanka.

4. Exclusion of minority groups- India is concerned regarding the **exclusion of Tamils and Muslims** from the governance structure of the newly formed government.

5. Fishing disputes- Despite reaching an agreement 47 years ago through the **1974 Indo-Lanka Maritime Boundary Agreement**, India and Sri Lanka have not yet resolved their maritime disputes, like **Katchatheevu Island dispute**. Indian fishermen continue to cross the maritime border into Sri Lanka in the **Palk Strait**, resulting in encounters with the Sri Lankan Navy, leading to tensions and assaults.

6. Tamil issue- There is concern regarding Sri Lanka's lack of measurable progress in fulfilling its commitment to finding a political solution to the Tamil issue. The Tamil community in Sri Lanka has been demanding the **implementation of the 13th Amendment** that provides for devolution of power to it.

What Should be the Way Forward?

- 1. Addressal of India's security concerns-** India's security concerns must be taken care of and the newly elected Sri Lankan government must take care that the **China does not disrupt Indian shipping movements** or use **visits to Sri Lanka for spying on India**.
- 2. Use of Diplomatic Skills-** India should use its diplomatic skills to ensure that a **power project** awarded to Adani Energy in northern Sri Lanka **is not reviewed**.
- 3. Wait and Watch Policy-** India must follow a wait and watch policy like done in the case of Maldives, and should refrain from hasty diplomatic decisions and rush.
- 4. Operate within the established framework-** India's relationship with Sri Lanka is framed within India's '**Neighbourhood First**' policy and '**SAGAR**' framework. Both the nations, must aim to work within the laid down framework.

Read More- [The Indian Express](#)

UPSC Syllabus- GS 2- India and its neighbourhood relations

Indian Pension System- Significance and Challenges- Explained Pointwise

Indian pension system has evolved through three key phases- from the the **Old Pension Scheme (OPS)**, to the **New Pension Scheme (NPS)**, and to the proposed **Unified Pension Scheme (UPS)**. Each pension scheme marks a shift in policy and impacts retirees differently.

The OPS was considered more secure, while the NPS tied retirement funds to market fluctuations. However, amid a global retreat from neoliberalism, India has re-examined its approach to pension schemes and has come up with the **Unified Pension Scheme (UPS)**.

What are the different Pension Schemes introduced in India? What are their provisions?

Pension Scheme	Applicability	Features
Old Pension Scheme (OPS)	Applicable to all government employees appointed before January 1, 2004 .	<p>a. It is a 'defined benefit scheme' as the government employees were paid 50% of their last drawn salary plus Dearness Allowance (DA) as pension after their retirement.</p> <p>b. Under this scheme, the entire pension amount was borne by the government while fixed returns were guaranteed for employee contribution to the General Provident Fund (GPF).</p>
National Pension System (NPS)	<p>a. Introduced on January 1, 2004. All central government employees joining after January 1, 2004, were compulsorily enrolled in NPS</p> <p>b. It was voluntary for the state governments to join the NPS. Almost all the states except for West Bengal and Tamil Nadu migrated to the NPS.</p> <p>c. Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand,</p>	<p>a. The scheme is a "defined contribution scheme" as the government employees have to make defined contribution of 10% of basic pay and dearness allowance (DA). There is matching contribution by the government.</p> <p>b. There is no defined benefit. The pension benefit is determined by factors such as the</p>

	Punjab, and Himachal Pradesh announced a shift back to the OPS.	amount of contribution made, the age of joining, the type of investment and the income drawn from that investment. c. It remained voluntary for the workforce in the unorganized sector.
Unified Pension Scheme	<p>a. It will be applicable from April 1, 2025 to all those who have retired under the NPS from 2004 onwards.</p> <p>b. Employees can still opt to remain under the NPS.</p> <p>c. Currently for central government employees, but states can also adopt it.</p>	<p>a. It is an assured Pension Scheme and does not leave things to vagaries of market forces.</p> <p>b. The structure of Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) has the best elements of both OPS and NPS. Like OPS, it provides an assured pension and, like NPS, it has provisions of employee contribution to the pension corpus.</p> <p>c. The UPS is a funded contributory scheme, while the OPS is an unfunded non-contributory scheme.</p>

What were the concerns with the Old Pension Scheme which led to the introduction of the NPS?

1. Limited Coverage of the Old Pension Scheme(OPS)- The Old Pension Scheme(OPS) covered only the government employees, which formed ~12% of the total workforce of the country. National Pension Scheme aim was to provide pension coverage to even the workers of the unorganised sector. Workers of the unorganised sector could also join the NPS voluntarily.

2. Huge Fiscal burden on the Central and State Governments due to OPS- With every new pay commission awards, the basic salaries of the Government servants were increasing. This was increasing the burden on the Union and state exchequers in making pension payments under OPS scheme. **For instance-** According to the India Pension Research Foundation, the expenditure on Union civil service pensions was around be 2.31% of the GDP in 2004-05 and the implicit pension debt of the Government of India was around 56% of the GDP.

3. Burden on the future Generation due to OPS- Under the OPS Scheme, contributions of the current generation of workers were explicitly used to pay the pensions of pensioners. Hence, OPS scheme involved direct transfer of resources from the current generation of taxpayers to fund the pensioners.

4. Disincentivised Early Retirement- The OPS scheme used to disincentivise early retirement, as the pension was fixed at 50% of the last drawn salary. Hence, even the disinterested government employees used to linger around to reach till their retirement age to avail maximum pension. This resulted in massive under utilisation of human resources.

What advantages were sought by the introduction of NPS?

1. Flexibility- NPS allowed the subscriber to choose the fund manager and the preferred investment option, including a 100% government bond option. A guaranteed return option could also be considered to provide an assured annuity.

2. Simplicity and portability- Opening of account with NPS provided a Permanent Retirement Account Number (PRAN) which remained valid throughout the lifetime of the subscriber. The NPS is also portable across jobs, as PRAN account remains the same.

3. Well Regulated Scheme- An NPS Trust was also **constituted to regularly oversee performance of fund managers**, with a trustee bank to efficiently manage fund flows. A custodian was also appointed to hold the securities, with subscribers being beneficial owners of the assets.

What were the issues with the introduction of NPS?

1. Market Volatility/Uncertainty- Contributions under the NPS scheme were invested in the markets through the fund managers. There were **apprehensions that the new NPS will not deliver the same benefits as the old scheme**. The returns were prone to the market volatility and uncertainty. As per SBI report, **NPS asset growth has been affected by the Ukraine-Russia conflict** and may fall short of the declared target of Rs 7.5 lakh crore by March 2022.

2. Increased burden on Employees- Under the old pension scheme, all the burden of pension was borne by the government. There was no requirement of monthly contribution from employees in the pension fund. Hence, the employees used to get greater disposable monthly income in their hands along with an assurity of pension.

NPS had **decreased the disposable monthly income in the employees hands** as 10% of their basic pay and DA is deducted every month.

3. No General Provident Fund (GPF) benefits- Under the Old Pension Scheme (OPS), fixed returns were guaranteed for employee contribution to the General Provident Fund (GPF). However, **NPS had no General Provident Fund (GPF) provisions**.

4. No assured Family Pension- There were **no provisions for assured family pension in the NPS**, unlike the OPS. The pension was dependent on the pension corpus.

5. No indexation for Inflation- The NPS **lacked any indexation** to account for inflation. The pension was entirely market linked.

What is the Significance of the Unified Pension Scheme?

1. Assured Pension- UPS provides a fixed, assured pension amount, unlike the market-linked returns of the NPS.

Employees who have served for at least 25 years will receive 50% of their last drawn salary from the previous 12 months as pension.

2. Higher Government Contribution- The **government's contribution rate in UPS is 18.5%**, which is higher than the 14% in NPS. This increased contribution can significantly boost the pension corpus, providing greater financial security in retirement.

3. Inflation Indexation- Employees who have served for over 25 years will be eligible for post-retirement inflation-linked increments to their pension. This **protects the real value of the pension** against rising prices.

4. Assured Family Pension- UPS includes an assured family pension of 60% of the employee's basic pay, payable to dependents upon the employee's death.

5. Combination of Defined Benefits and Contributions- UPS **blends the guaranteed pension features of OPS with the investment flexibility and portability of NPS**. This balanced approach offers both stability and growth potential for retirement benefits.

What are the Concerns with the Unified Pension Scheme?

1. Increased Fiscal Burden- The introduction of a **defined pension** could significantly increase the financial burden on the government. **For ex- The expenditure on arrears will be Rs 800 crore in the first year of implementation,** and would cost the exchequer roughly Rs 6,250 crore.

2. Potential for Unsustainable Liabilities- As the UPS combines features of both the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) and the National Pension System (NPS), there is concern that it may lead to unsustainable liabilities for the government. The **defined benefits could constrain spending on other essential services,** as a larger portion of the budget may need to be allocated to cover pension costs.

3. Inequitable Benefits- The scheme primarily **benefits a small section of the workforce,** the central government employees. While the NPS was voluntary for the workforce in the unorganized sector, there are no such provisions in the UPS.

4. Transition from NPS- This transition raises questions about the **management of the existing NPS corpus** and the potential for **reduced participation in the NPS.**

5. Concerns of lower returns- Critics argue it **offers lower returns compared to the OPS** and leaves retirees vulnerable to market risks. There are concerns about underfunding which may lead to delayed payouts.

6. Disadvantageous for late joiners- The requirement of 25 years of service for a full pension under UPS is disadvantageous for late joiners.

7. Exclusionary- The UPS currently **covers only Union government employees,** and excludes many public sector workers, which may hinder further pay commissions.

What is the comparative analysis of the three pension schemes?

Features	Old Pension Scheme (OPS)	National Pension System (NPS)	Unified Pension (UPS)
Pension Amount	50% of last drawn salary.	Market-linked pension. There is no defined pension and the pension value depends upon the performance of the selected investment funds.	Guaranteed pension of 50% of the average basic pay from the last 12 months before retirement.
Inflation Indexation	Adjusted for inflation through Dearness Allowance (DA).	Not applicable, the pension is market linked.	Indexed for Inflation based on the All India Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (AICPI-IW)
Employee Contribution	No contribution from employee.	Defined contribution of 10% of basic pay and dearness allowance (DA).	Defined contribution of 10% of basic pay and dearness allowance (DA).
Government Contribution	Full Funding	Defined contribution of 14% of the employee's basic pay and dearness allowance.	Defined contribution of 18.5% of the employee's basic pay and dearness allowance.
Family Pension	Yes. Continues after retirees death.	Corpus Dependent	Yes. It is 60% of employee's pension.
Risk	No market risk	Market risk	Lower risk than NPS

Flexibility	Low, fixed benefits	High, with investment choice flexibility	Limited, with assured pension
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What Should be the Way Forward?

1. Inclusion of informal labor under UPS- The government should focus on increasing the government's contribution and expanding the scheme to include informal labor. UPS must **broaden its scope to provide pension security for all citizens**, not just government employees.

2. Regular Assessments- Periodic evaluations should be conducted to ensure that the scheme remains financially viable. The **government contributions should be adjusted** based on these assessments to **maintain a balance between employee benefits and fiscal responsibility**.

3. Stakeholder Consultations- There must be **regular engagement with government employees, unions, and other stakeholders** to gather feedback and address concerns regarding the UPS. This can help in refining the scheme.

4. Performance Metrics- The government should aim to establish **clear performance metrics** to evaluate the effectiveness of the UPS in meeting its objectives. Regular monitoring can help in making informed decisions about necessary adjustments to the scheme.

A restructured UPS could offer a balance between state responsibility and market participation, protecting retirees from market risks while ensuring a robust welfare system.

Read UPSC Syllabus- GS-3 Indian Economy	More-	The	Hindu
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India's increasing Imports from China – Reasons and way forward- Explained Pointwise

The “Make in India” initiative was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on **September 25, 2014**, with the vision to transform India into a global manufacturing hub. This year, this program has completed it's 10 years. Therefore, it becomes important to analyse the achievements and challenges during 10 years of make in India Program. Now let's start with the introduction of the same.

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What were the objectives of Make in India?

- **Boost Manufacturing** Aims to raise manufacturing sector growth to 12-14% per annum, create 100 million additional jobs by 2022, and increase manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP to 25% by 2025
- **Global Competitiveness:** Improve India's competitiveness by attracting foreign direct investment (FDI), modernizing infrastructure, and simplifying bureaucratic processes.
- **Focus Sectors:** 25 sectors, including **automobiles, textiles, electronics, pharmaceuticals, defence manufacturing, renewable energy**, and more.
- **Now, with the “Make in India 2.0” phase**, it includes 27 sectors, the program continues to drive forward with significant achievements and renewed vigour.
- Designed to transform India's economic trajectory and generate employment opportunities for the vast young workforce

Pillars of 'Make in India':

1. **New Processes** It identified 'Ease of Doing Business' as crucial for promoting entrepreneurship. Measures like Streamlined processes, simplified regulations, and reduced bureaucratic hurdles were implemented to enhance the business environment for startups and established enterprises.
2. **New Infrastructure:** Under this government focussed on development of industrial corridors and smart cities with state-of-the-art technology, high-speed communication and creating world-class infrastructure to support industrial growth. It also focussed on improving intellectual property rights (IPR) infrastructure.
3. **New Sectors:** In included opening up various sectors for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).
4. **New Mindset:** Government embracing a role as a facilitator rather than a regulator. It created partnership with industry to drive the country's economic development.

What are the key Initiatives taken under 10 Years of Make in India?

Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme:

PLI scheme was launched to **incentivize domestic manufacturing** and **reduce imports**. It was aligned with India's vision of becoming 'Atmanirbhar' (self-reliant). The primary goals of the PLI Schemes are to attract substantial investments, incorporate advanced technology, and ensure operational efficiency.

It covers 14 sectors, including **electronics, solar panels, and pharmaceuticals**, aiming to create large-scale manufacturing ecosystems.

The scheme was launched with an incentive outlay of ₹1.97 lakh crore and ₹1.23 lakh crore worth of investment was realized by companies by March 2024.

PM Gati Shakti: The Plan launched in Oct 2021 to create multi-modal and last mile connectivity infrastructure, aimed at US\$5 trillion economy by 2025.

The plan is driven by 7 engines, namely: 1. Railways 2. Roads 3. Ports 4. Waterways 5. Airports 6. Mass Transport 7. Logistics Infrastructure.

The government has focused on developing **industrial corridors, including: Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC), Bengaluru-Mumbai Economic Corridor (BMEC), etc.,**

Semiconductor Ecosystem Development – Semicon India Programme launched with outlay of ₹76,000 crore to develop sustainable semiconductor and display ecosystem. It resulted in projects like Tata's joint venture with Taiwan's Powerchip in Dholera.

National Logistics Policy – Launched in Sept 2022 to improve logistics efficiency and reduce costs, targeting top 25 rank in Logistics Performance Index by 2030.

Boost in FDI: Several reforms have been implemented to ease the flow of FDI, including raising the **FDI cap** in critical sectors like **defence (from 26% to 74%), insurance, and railways**. This has led to a consistent increase in FDI inflows, with **\$84 billion received in 2021-22**, making India one of the largest FDI destinations globally.

Skill Development Initiatives: To meet the demand for skilled labor, the government launched initiatives like **Skill India** and the **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY)**, which have trained **millions of youths** across India .

Startup India: launched for building a robust startup ecosystem, and transforming India into a country of job creators instead of job seekers. As of September 25, 2024, India boasts the third-largest startup ecosystem in the world, with 148,931 DPIIT Recognized Startups, which have created over 15.5 lakh direct jobs.

Tax Reforms: It included implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on July 1, 2017. Simplification of the tax reforms lowered production costs, making local manufacturing more competitive.

Unified Payments Interface: India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has emerged as a frontrunner in the global digital payments landscape. UPI processed nearly ₹81 lakh crore in transactions between April and July 2024 alone.

What are the achievements in 10 Years of Make in India?

Vaccines: India supplies nearly 60% of the world's vaccines, meaning every second vaccine globally is proudly made in India. India not only achieved COVID-19 vaccination coverage in record time but also became a major exporter of much-needed life-saving vaccines.

Rise in Mobile Manufacturing: India is now the **second-largest mobile phone manufacturer** globally. From having **two mobile manufacturing units** in 2014, the country now hosts **over 200 units**, producing 99% of the mobile phones used in India. Mobile exports surged from **₹1,556 crore to ₹1.2 lakh crore** in 2024.

Defence Manufacturing: India has made significant strides in defence production, particularly in reducing imports. For example, **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)** and other domestic players are producing key military equipment like **fighter jets and submarines**. In 2023-24, defence production has soared to ₹1.27 lakh crore, with exports reaching over 90 countries, showcasing India's growing strength and capability in this critical area.

Semiconductor and Chip Manufacturing: The semiconductor sector, once nearly absent, attracted investments worth ₹1.5 lakh crore with five semiconductor fabrication plants in the pipeline. These plants are set to have a combined daily capacity of **7 crore chips**.

Railway infrastructure: Vande Bharat Trains, India's first indigenous semi-high-speed trains, are a shining example of the success of the 'Make in India' initiative. Featuring state-of-the-art coaches, these trains offer passengers a modern and enhanced travel experience.

Renewable Energy Growth: India has emerged as the **4th largest renewable energy producer globally**. The country has witnessed a meteoric rise from 76.38 gigawatts (GW) in 2014 to an impressive 203.1 GW in 2024.

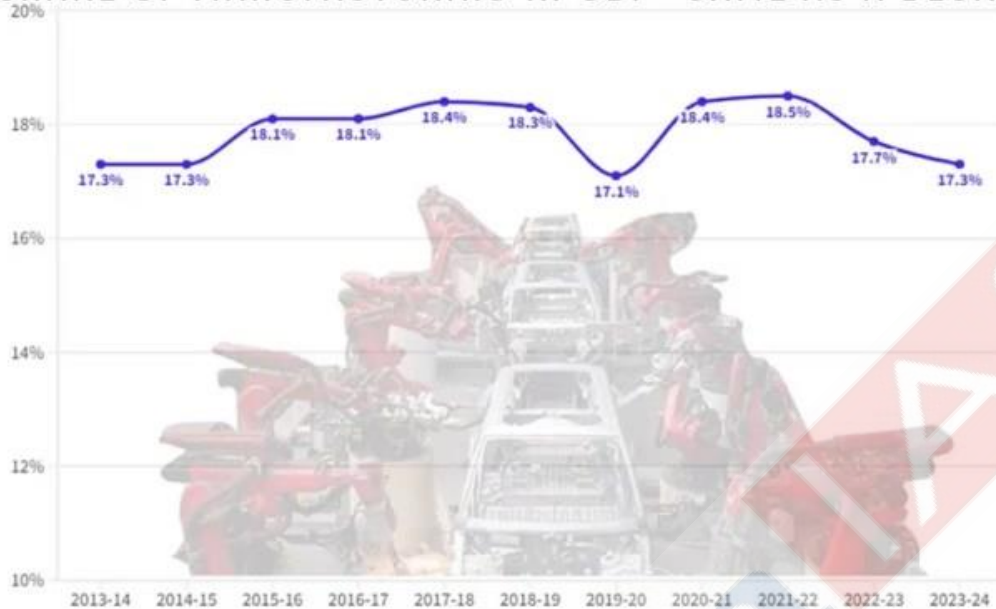
Steel Production: India became a **net exporter of finished steel**, with production increasing by **50%**. This is a direct impact of the policy focus on domestic capacity building.

Automobile Industry Growth: India is now a global leader in **automotive manufacturing**, particularly in two-wheelers and electric vehicles (EVs). The EV market, valued at **\$3 billion**, grew substantially after 2014, contributing to sustainable mobility goals.

What are the challenges faced by Make in India program during last 10 years?

Slowing growth rate: According to the National Accounts Statistics (NAS), the manufacturing real gross value added (GVA) growth rate has slowed down from 8.1 during 2001-12 to 5.5% during 2012-23.

SHARE OF MANUFACTURING IN GDP- SAME AS A DECADE AGO



Note: Data is in constant prices.

Source: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

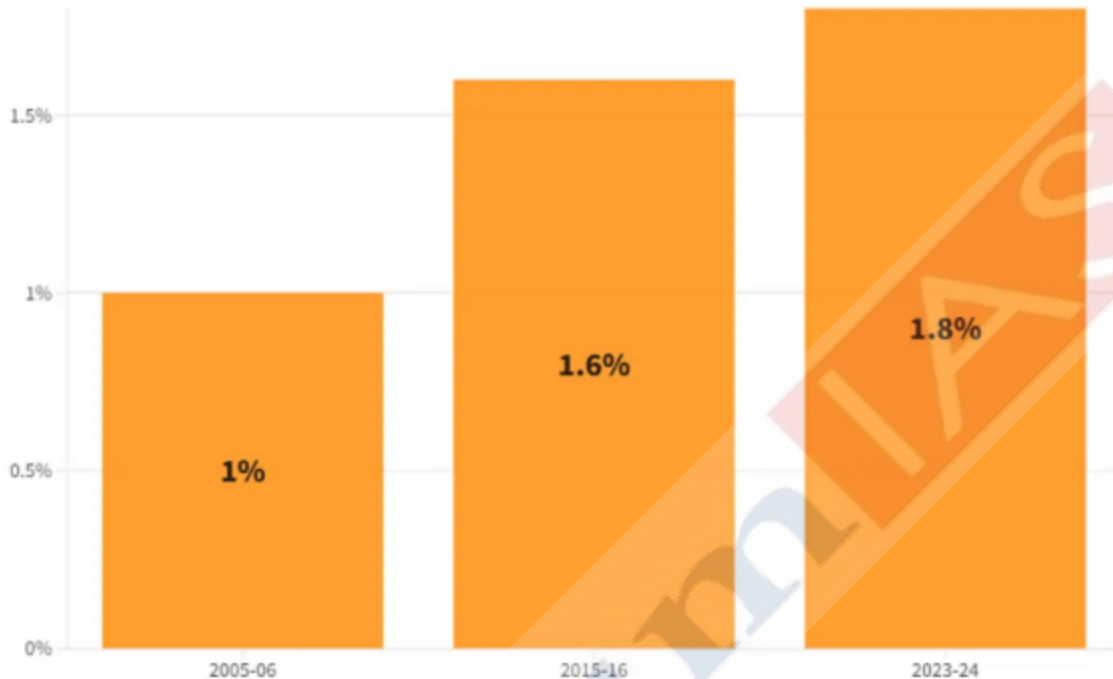
Image Credit: The Print

Lagging Manufacturing Share in GDP: The sector's GDP share has stagnated at 17%-18% over the last three decades, though it is slightly higher in the latest GDP series due to methodological changes. This is still far from 25% target.

Limited Job Creation: The growth in output has not been mirrored by growth in employment. As per the NSSO sample surveys, manufacturing employment has declined from 12.6% in 2011-12 to 11.4% in 2022-23. Agriculture's share in the workforce increased from 42.5% in 2018-19 to 45.8% in 2022-23. As per surveys of unincorporated sector enterprises, employment in Unorganised or informal sector manufacturing still accounts for most employment. But, still, it was reduced from 38.8 million in 2015-16 to 30.6 million by 2022-23.

Exports: India's exports as a share of GDP has fallen from 25.2 percent in 2013-14 to 22.7 percent in 2023-24. India's contribution to global exports has increased at a slow pace, in 2005-06, India contributed 1 percent to global exports. By 2015-16, this had grown to 1.6 percent. However, by 2022-23, it stood at just 1.8 percent — a significantly lower increase.

INDIA'S SHARE IN GLOBAL GOODS EXPORTS HAS SLOWED ITS INCREASE



Source: The print

What are causes of challenges faced during 10 Years of Make in India?

Supply Chain and Infrastructure Bottlenecks: While industrial corridors and infrastructure projects have progressed, certain areas still suffer from **inadequate logistics**, poor connectivity, and inefficient supply chains .

Complexity in Regulatory Environment: Although reforms have eased some processes, **bureaucratic hurdles** and delays in approvals remain in specific sectors, leading to challenges for businesses.

Overdependence on Imports: Several critical components, especially in high-tech sectors like **electronics and semiconductors**, are still heavily dependent on imports, limiting India's self-reliance in strategic areas . Furthermore, trade imbalance is growing from 2020-21 to 2023-24.

High Logistics cost: Logistics cost in India is higher at 13% to 14% of GDP compared to 8% to 9% of GDP in other developed economies such as the USA. Higher logistics cost reduces the competitiveness of 'Made in India' products in global markets.

R&D: The India Innovation Index 2021 has found that the overall spending on R&D by India has been relatively low across the country. The funding is less than 1% of the GDP. Further there are no extra provisions for R&D in the sunrise sectors. The best talent of our country migrates to foreign countries resulting in brain drain.

GFCF: As per National Accounts Statistics (NAS) and Annual Survey of Industries (ASI), Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) reduced from 4.5% in 2012-13 to 0.3% in 2019-20.

FDI: FDI in India did not grow at a required pace, even though India's rank in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business (EDB) index, improved from 142 in 2014-15 to 63 in 2019-20.

What more can be done?

R&D: India must aim at investment-led growth and technological catching up. They must be supported by domestic R&D to promote adaptive research and the indigenisation of imported technology.

Finance: Publicly funded development finance institutions or "policy banks" are needed to provide affordable long-term credit. It will be beneficial for socialising the risks of learning and catching up with the technological frontier.

Deepening Domestic Value Chains: India needs to build **backward linkages** in manufacturing sectors such as electronics and automotive by promoting domestic production of key components and raw materials .

Enhancing Innovation and R&D: Greater emphasis is needed on **research and development (R&D)**, especially in areas like **semiconductors, electric vehicles, and clean energy**. Establishing **R&D hubs** and offering greater tax incentives for innovation will help .

Strengthening Skill Development: Expanding the scope and depth of skill development programs, with a focus on **digital and high-tech skills**, will enable India's workforce to better align with the demands of modern industries .

SME Empowerment: Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) should be provided targeted support through **financial incentives, easier credit access, and technological support** to help them integrate into global supply chains .

Focus on Green Manufacturing: With increasing focus on **sustainable development**, promoting **green manufacturing** practices by incentivizing renewable energy use, energy-efficient technologies, and eco-friendly production methods can boost India's standing in the global market .

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UPSC Syllabus – GS 3- Indian Economy – Changes to industrial Policies