




# MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS CAPSULE (UPSC)

OCTOBER 2023



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## PREFACE

Hello PRAYAAS' Students Community,

Fear of current affairs among UPSC students is justified due to the vastness of the current affairs, the dynamic nature of current events, the unpredictability of the exam, the need for a deep understanding, and the pressure to stay updated.

From above, we recognize that the UPSC examination demands a thorough understanding of current affairs and their implications on a broader scale. **Therefore, "PRAYAAS PRABHAV" is not merely a compilation of news headlines but a gateway to a deeper comprehension of the interconnected world we live in.**

Each article in this magazine is designed to foster critical thinking and analytical skills, essential for excelling in the UPSC examinations and becoming an astute civil servant.

As you delve into the pages of this magazine, we encourage you to engage actively with the content, ponder over the implications, and form your independent viewpoints.

At the end of Magazine, you will get **QR Code of weekly lectures by our faculty (Dhananjay Sir)**. These lectures are available **Free of Cost** to all Sincere Aspirants. In that lectures you will thoroughly understand each topic of these Monthly Compilation. Make Most use of it to understand topic better.

Till, December, we are Specifically focusing on Mains perspective. Mains focus will be on how to develop that thinking abilities and how to decipher topics for mains.

Start from January till prelims, we will shift our focus specifically on Prelims Perspective here our special focus on linking Current with Static.

The UPSC examinations not only assess your factual knowledge but also value your ability to analyse, synthesize, and present coherent arguments. **Let "PRAYAAS PRABHAV" be your ally in honing these essential skills.**

We are hopeful that this efforts from PRAYAAS will bring more clarity in Your UPSC Journey. As in the name of our institute "PRAYAAS Institute of Excellence", it will bring excellence in your current affairs and over all journey of UPSC.

Your Thankful,

Team PRAYAAS

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## GS 1

### Nari Shakti Vandan

#### Why in the News?

- Recently, Parliament passed Constitution (106th Amendment) Act, 2023, to provide for one-third reservation to women in the Lok Sabha, State Assemblies, and the assembly of NCT of Delhi.

Syllabus of Mains – GS 2- Indian Constitution—historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions, and basic structure.

GS 1 - Role of women and women's organization

#### Women Representation in Parliament: India and the world

- There are 82 women MPs In Lok Sabha (15.2%) and 31 women in Rajya Sabha (13%).
- While the number has increased significantly since the 1st LS (5%) but is still far lower than in many countries.
- According to data, Rwanda (61%), Cuba (53%), Nicaragua (52%) are the top three countries in women representation. Bangladesh (21%) and Pakistan (20%) as well are ahead of India in case of female representation.

#### What are the Key features of the Act?

##### Articles inserted: -

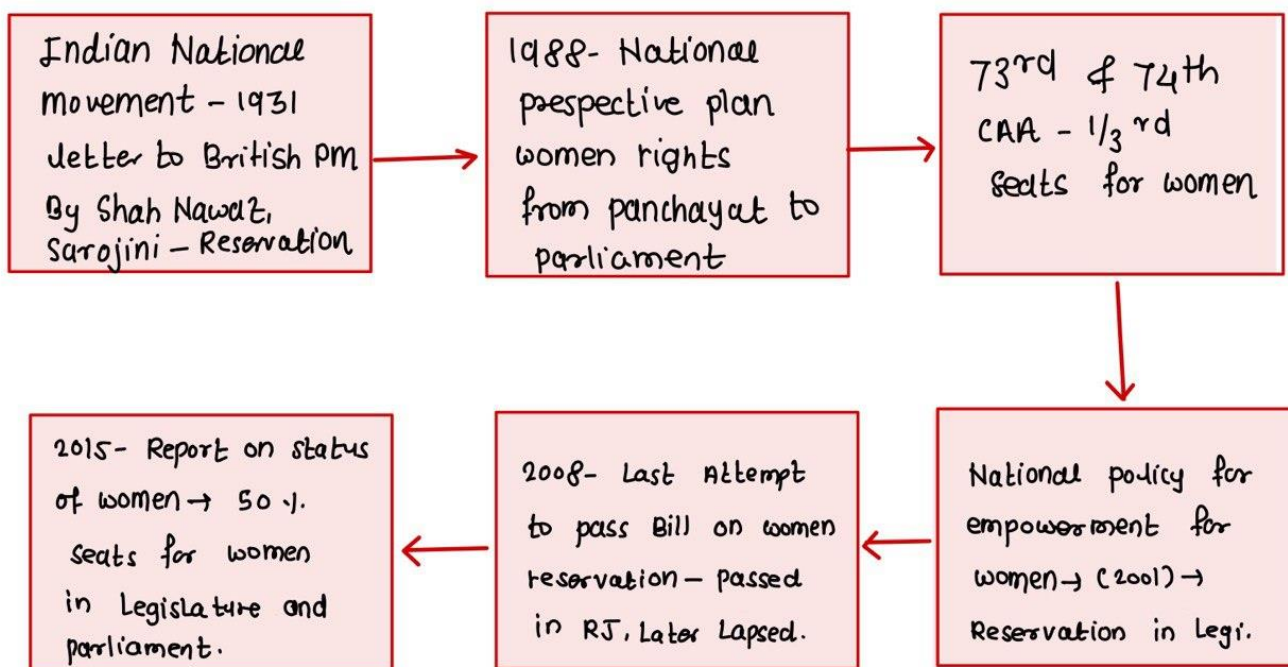
- Article 330A:** Reservation of 1/3rd seats for women in the House of People (Lok Sabha).
  - It also includes reservation of 1/3rd seats for women under total number of seats reserved for SCs/STs under Article 330.
- Article 332A:** Reservation of 1/3rd seats for women in the Legislative Assembly of every State.
  - It also includes reservation of 1/3rd seats for women under total number of seats reserved for SCs/STs under Article 332.
- Article 334A:** Provisions of this act shall come into effect after delimitation after the first census taken after the commencement of this act.
  - Sunset clause:** Reservation of seats for women shall cease to have effect after the expiration of 15 years, however, can be extended by the Parliament by law.



- Periodic rotation of seats reserved for women after each subsequent delimitation as Parliament may by law determine.
- Provisions of this act shall not affect any representation in legislative assemblies and the Lok Sabha until their dissolution.
- **Reservation for Women in NCT of Delhi (New clause in 239AA):** Article 239AA to the constitution grants special status to the Union Territory of Delhi as national capital with regards to its administrative and legislative functioning.
  - Article 239AA(2)(b) was amended by the bill accordingly to add that the laws framed by parliament shall apply to the National Capital territory of Delhi.

**Background: -**

**History of political empowerment of women**



**Need for women’s reservation in legislature: -**

**Under-representation of women in legislature:**

- Only about 14% of the members in Indian Parliament are women, the highest so far.
- Average representation of women in state assemblies in around 8% only, and some States like Mizoram have no women legislators.

- According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, India has a *fewer percentage of women in the lower House than its neighbours such as Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh.*
- Political under-representation of women is a major reason for India's poor performance in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap report (127th out of 146 in 2023).

#### **Gender-sensitization of public policy:**

- Women representation in the decision-making process is essential to address problems like lower female labour force participation, increasing crime rates against women, etc.

#### **Diverse Perspectives:**

- A more diverse legislature that includes a significant number of women can bring a broader range of perspectives to the decision-making process. This diversity can lead to better policy formulation and governance.

#### **Patriarchal nature of political parties:**

- Affirmative action for women is imperative to better their condition since political parties are inherently patriarchal.
- It would also help overcome the entry barriers like money and muscle power, for women leadership at the State and national level.

#### **Evidence from the reservation at local level:**

- According to assessments by Oxfam India, reservation for women at local level led to a significant increase in the reporting of crimes, improved access to basic amenities like drinking water, schools, etc.

#### **Promotion of Women's Issues:**

- Women in politics often prioritize and advocate for issues that directly affect women, such as gender-based violence, women's health, education, and economic empowerment. Their presence can lead to the prioritization of these issues in policy discussions.

#### **Nudging Women-led development:**

- It can enable greater participation of women as public representatives in policymaking at the national and state level.

#### **Role Models:**

- Women leaders in politics can serve as role models for young girls, encouraging them to aspire to leadership positions in various fields. Representation in politics can break stereotypes and inspire future generations.
- Indira Gandhi served as the first and only women Prime Minister of India from 1966 to 1977
- Sushma Swaraj was the second woman external affairs minister of India after Indira Gandhi.

## Arguments against Reservation OR Concerns with the Act: -

### Impact on voter's choices:

- Reservation of seats for women in legislature restricts voter's choices and runs counter the idea of self-determination.

### Non-homogeneous group:

- Women are not a homogeneous community, such as a caste group. Therefore, the arguments made for caste-based reservations cannot be made for women.

### Less impact on political empowerment of women:

- There are larger issues of electoral reforms such as criminalization of politics, internal democracy in political parties, etc., that might act as an impediment to political empowerment of women.

### Against inequality:

- Idea of reservation runs counter to the principle of equality enshrined in the Constitution, as women may not be competing on merit.
- Reserving seats for women are opposed by some who claim that doing so violates the Constitution's guarantee of equality. If there is a reserve, they claim, women won't be competing on merit, which could decrease their status in society.

### Disparity across states:

- The act provides for reservation of 1/3rd seats across all Lok Sabha seats as against provision of reserving 1/3rd seat in each State/UT as mentioned in 2008 bill.

### Rotation of seats:

- The act provides for rotation of seats after every delimitation exercise as against after every general election to the Parliament/ State legislative assemblies.

### **Reservation in Rajya Sabha and Legislative Councils:**

- Act does not contain any provision for reservation for women in Rajya Sabha and Legislative Councils of the States.
- **Geeta Mukherjee Committee (1996) recommended** providing reservation for women in Rajya Sabha and Legislative Councils as well.

### **Challenges regarding Implementation of this Act?**

#### **Issues related to Delimitation:**

- The reservation shall come into effect only after delimitation is undertaken and delimitation will be undertaken only after the relevant figures of the next census are published.
- The date of the next census is entirely undetermined. So, the delimitation is doubly indeterminate.

#### **OBC Issue with the bill:**

- The women's reservation bill, which reserves 33% of seats for women in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies, does not include a quota for women from the OBCs.
- **Geeta Mukherjee Committee (1996) recommended** extending women reservation to OBCs.

### **Conclusion: -**

- It is our privilege that we witnessed history in the making. The passage of women's quota bill will be discussed for generations. Women reservation is not an ordinary law. it is a testament to "Naya Bharat". Some decisions can change the course of a country's future. The successful passage of the women's reservation bill in Parliament is one such decision.
- From smoke-filled kitchens to flood-lit stadiums, the Indian woman's journey has been a long one. But she has finally reached her destination. Any delay in implementing women's reservation bill will be gross injustice to Indian women. Immediate implementation of women's reservation bill by removing all obstacles not only necessary but also possible.
- तू खुद की खोज में निकल, तू किस लिए हताश है, तू चल तेरे वजूद की समय को भी तलाश है, जो तुझ से लिपटी बेड़ियाँ समझ न इनको वस्त्र तू ये बेड़ियाँ पिघाल के बना ले इनको शस्त्र तू .....!!!



## Women Health: Cancer

### Context: -

- A new Lancet Commission report on gender inequity in cancer care shows a grim picture of the cancer care of Indian women.

### Findings of the Report: -

- In Indian women, 63% of early cancer deaths could have been prevented through screening and diagnosis, while 37% was preventable through prompt and optimal treatment.
- Despite men having a higher risk of certain gender-neutral cancers, cancer incidence and mortality among women remain high.
- Globally, women make up 48% of new cancer cases and 44% of cancer deaths, despite some cancers in women (like breast and cervical cancers) being highly preventable and treatable.

### OVER THE YEARS

YEAR	INCIDENCE	MORTALITY
2020	13.92 lakh	7,70,230
2021	14.26 lakh	7,89,202
2022	14.61 lakh	8,08,558
2025	15.69 lakh (projected)	

Source: National Cancer Registry data presented in Parliament; ICMR National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research study

### INCIDENCE PER 1 LAKH, 2020\*



### COMMON CANCER SITES

**MALE:** Lung, mouth, prostate, tongue, stomach (36% of all cancers)

**FEMALE:** Breast, cervix, ovary, uterus, lung (53% of all cancers)

### FOR WOMEN, SCREENING MATTERS

**BREAST & CERVICAL**, the two most common cancers in women, are highly preventable and treatable.

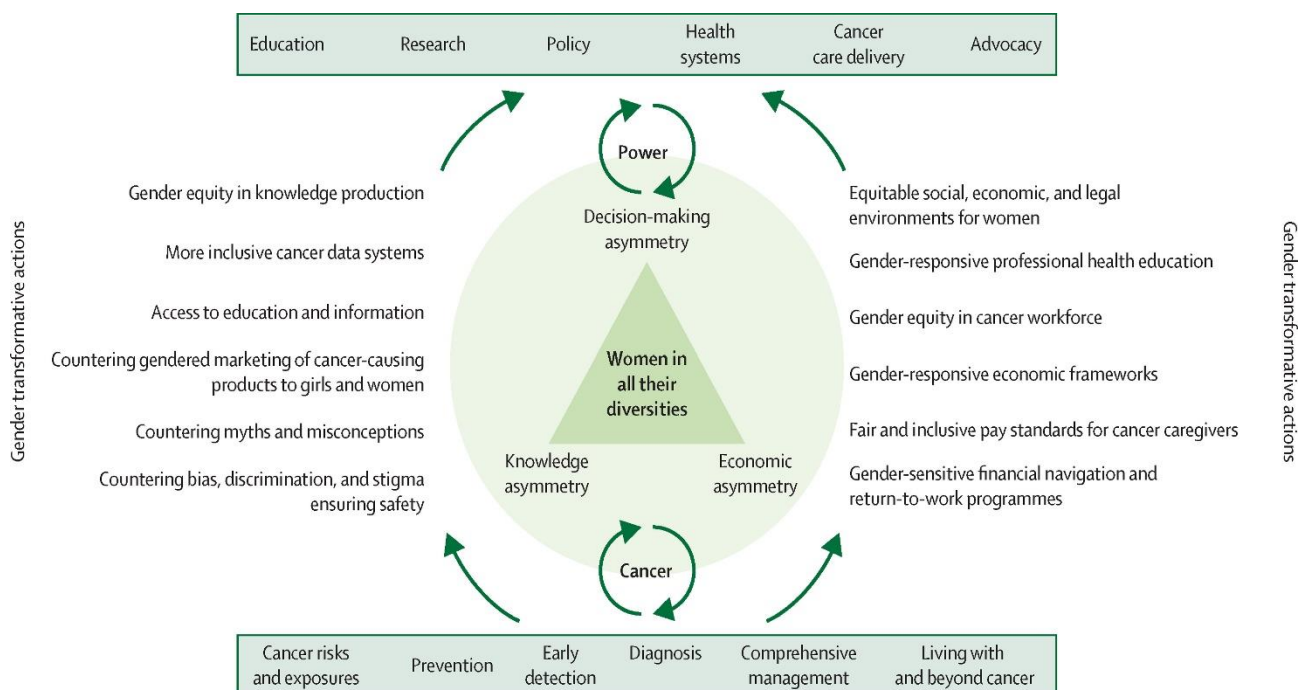
**SELF-EXAMINATION** of breasts every month, and a clinical examination by a doctor every year, is important. Women who detect any lumps during self-examination must consult a doctor immediately. Women over age

40 should get a mammography once a year.

**A PAP SMEAR TEST** to check for pre-cancerous growth in the genitals is recommended for women ages 25-60.

**HPV TEST** to detect human papilloma virus that causes the majority of cervical cancers, can be done every 5-10 years.





## Reasons Behind Poorer Cancer Care for Women in India

### **Limited Awareness:**

- Lack of awareness among women about cancer risk factors, symptoms, and the importance of early detection can lead to delayed diagnosis and treatment.

### **Lack of Decision-making Power:**

- In most Indian households, the decision-making power rests with the males. Due to this, women cannot make decisions regarding their health at an individual level.

### **Financial Barriers:**

- Most of the women are not financially independent. They also constitute the most significant unpaid workforce.

### **Cultural and Social Stigma:**

- Cultural beliefs and social stigma can deter women from seeking cancer care. Some women may avoid screening or treatment due to fear, shame, or cultural norms.

**Gender Bias:**

- The health of the males is prioritised over females. Women's symptoms may be dismissed or not taken as seriously as men's, leading to delayed diagnosis and treatment.

**Insufficient Healthcare Resources:**

- In some areas, there may be a shortage of healthcare facilities (like in NE states), trained healthcare professionals, and medical equipment.

**Socioeconomic Disparities:**

- Women from disadvantaged groups have the least access to healthcare.

**Healthcare Policy and Funding:**

- Inadequate funding for cancer care and healthcare policies that do not prioritise women's health can contribute to suboptimal care.

**Way Ahead****Awareness campaigns:**

- To educate women to remove socio-cultural stigmas associated with cancer.

**Cancer Research:**

- Cancer care and research are dominated by men, so equitable access to cancer research resources, leadership, and funding opportunities for women should be created.

**Human papillomavirus vaccines (HPV) Vaccination:**

- An indigenous vaccine for the human papillomavirus that causes cervical cancer is already available. (There are no vaccines for other cancers)

### Cervical Cancer

- Cervical cancer starts in the cervix and is caused by Human Papilloma Virus (HPV).
- HPV is a sexually transmitted infection.
- Cervix: It connects the vagina (birth canal) to the upper part of the uterus (womb).
- Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer in women.
- It occurs mainly in women over age 30.
- It is a preventable and curable disease (if detected early and managed effectively).
- HPV vaccine can prevent cervical cancer if given before girls or women are exposed to the virus.

### Cervavac

- Cervavac is India's first indigenously developed Quadrivalent Human Papillomavirus (qHPV)vaccine against cervical cancer.
- qHPV vaccine: It protects from 4 types of HPV, which cause 80% of cervical cancer.
- Cervavac will be administered to girls between 9 and 14 years to prevent cervical cancer.

### Significance:

- Globally, India contributes the largest share of cervical cancer cases.
- It is also the second most common cancer in Indian women.

## Consanguinity

### Context: -

- Recent studies delves into the influence of consanguinity on genetics and health.
- It elucidates how this widespread tradition affects disease susceptibility and the development of human traits within global populations.

### What is Consanguinity?

- Consanguinity encompasses both social and genetic aspects. Socially, it pertains to the act of marrying close relatives like cousins or siblings, while genetically, it involves unions between individuals who are closely related,

commonly known as inbreeding. This concept holds significance in both family and population genetics.

### key findings from studies related to consanguinity:

- Around 15-20% of the global population engages in consanguineous marriage, with higher rates in regions such as Asia and West Africa.
- Some ancient civilizations like the Egyptians and Incas are thought to have practiced consanguinity.
- India has over 4,000 endogamous groups, where people marry within the same caste, tribe, or group, providing a rich context for consanguinity research.
- Studies have shown that consanguinity is **associated with elevated mortality rates and an increased prevalence of recessive genetic diseases** in populations where it is practiced.

### Benefits of consanguinity:

#### **Preservation of Cultural and Social Traditions:**

- Marital unions within the family structure help uphold enduring cultural and social customs, which hold significant value in many societies.

#### **Social Safety Net:**

- Consanguineous relationships establish an inherent system of social support. Relatives are inclined to aid one another during periods of financial, emotional, or medical hardships, diminishing the reliance on external social services.

#### **Reduced Risk of Incompatibility:**

- In some instances, marrying close relatives can lower the likelihood of disparities in cultural, religious, or social backgrounds, promoting more stable and harmonious marital unions.

#### **Genetic Improvement in Breeding Programs:**

- Within controlled breeding environments, the mating of closely related individuals is a widely utilized method for strategically eradicating detrimental genetic traits and amplifying desirable characteristics in plants and animals.
- Through this approach, more robust and productive strains are cultivated, culminating in enhanced agricultural yields and superior quality of livestock.

## Challenges of Consanguinity:

### Increased Risk of Genetic Disorders:

- Consanguinity significantly heightens the likelihood of offspring inheriting genetic disorders, as they may share common recessive genes. Conditions like cystic fibrosis are more prevalent among children of close relatives.

### Limited Genetic Diversity:

- Marrying close relatives can result in reduced genetic diversity within a population, potentially diminishing overall resilience to diseases and environmental changes.

### Complex Family Dynamics:

- Consanguineous families often experience intricate family dynamics, as multiple roles and relationships intersect.
- This can lead to conflicts and tensions regarding decision-making and family hierarchies.

### Potential Erosion of Individual Autonomy:

- In closely-knit consanguineous communities, there may be a tendency for individual autonomy to erode. Decisions related to marriage, family planning, and other life choices can be heavily influenced by the family or community, potentially restricting personal freedom.

### Silenced Voices in Domestic Violence Cases:

- In consanguineous relationships, women may face discouragement from reporting domestic violence due to familial and cultural pressures to preserve family honour and respect.
- This silence can perpetuate the cycle of abuse, making it difficult to seek help or intervention in cases of domestic violence.

## Conclusion: -

- It's important to approach this issue with sensitivity, recognizing the cultural significance of consanguinity in some societies, while also prioritizing the health and well-being of individuals and communities.



## GS 2

### Caste-Based Survey by Bihar

#### **Context: -**

- The Bihar caste survey showed that the Other Backward Classes and the Extremely Backward Classes constituted 63% of the State's population.
- According to the report, the population of Bihar is 13.07 crore in which Hindus comprise 81.9% of the population, while the Muslim share is 17.7%.
- This caste census may lead to the demand for the caste census at an all-India level.
- It may lead to division among OBCs at the national level.

Class/ Caste	Population (%)
Other Backward Class (OBC)	27.1%
Extremely Backward Class (EBC)	36.01%.
Scheduled Caste	19.6%
Scheduled Tribe	1.68%
General Caste population	15.5%.

Syllabus of Mains – GS 1- Population and associated issues

GS 2- Government policies and interventions

#### Basic -

##### Census and Caste data

- The 1931 Census was the last that officially collected full caste data.
- Every Census in independent India from 1951 to 2011 has published data on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes but not on other castes.

##### Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC)

- In 2011, the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) in rural areas and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MoHUPA) in urban areas started SECC.
- The SECC data, excluding caste data, was finalised, and published by the two ministries in 2016.

#### Arguments in Favour of Caste Census: -

- To determine who requires affirmative action.
- To take affirmative steps in favour of disadvantaged sections of society.
- To assess the effectiveness of affirmative action.

- To make evidence-based policies.
- The data on caste is necessary to analyse, monitor and eradicate the caste.
- To address social inequality and uplift marginalized communities.
- To Ensure Equitable Distribution of Resources
- To Provide a **Comprehensive Picture of Indian Society**
- **Constitutional Mandate:** Our Constitution too favours conducting a caste census. Article 340 mandates the appointment of a commission to investigate the conditions of socially and educationally backward classes and make recommendations as to the steps that should be taken by governments.

## Arguments against the Caste Census: -

### **Reinforces the Caste System:**

- Opponents of a caste census argue that caste-based discrimination is illegal and that a caste census would only reinforce the caste system.

### **Difficult to Define Castes:**

- Defining castes is a complex issue, as there are thousands of castes and sub-castes in India. A caste census would require a clear definition of castes, which is not an easy task.

### **Leads to Further Social Divisions:**

- Some argue that a caste census could lead to further social divisions and that it is better to focus on promoting social harmony instead.

### **Other:**

- It may deepen the caste system and shift the focus away from casteless society.
- Caste **may play a decisive role in politics**.

## Effect on Reservation

- In the **Indira Sawhney vs. Union of India case (1992)**, the SC accepted the **50% ceiling on reservations** in jobs and educational institutions.
- This **caste census** can open the door for challenging the ceiling of 50% reservations in jobs and educational institutions.
- In the EWS quota case, *Justice Dinesh Maheshwari (now retired)* said that the 50% ceiling limit was neither inflexible nor inviolable for all times to come. And Reservation by affirmative action by the State cannot be seen as damaging the Basic Structure of the Constitution.

### Way Forward: -

- Independent studies at district and state level can be conducted to acquire the data of castes and subcastes at those levels.
- The data must not become a weapon for deepening fault lines and increasing polarisation to win elections.
- It should not lead to the splintering and shrinking of the very notion of representation in a large and diverse democracy.
- Use of technologies such as Artificial intelligence and machine learning can help in analysing data.
- Subcategorization of OBCs to provide representation to underrepresented subcastes of OBCs for which **Justice Rohini commission** had recently submitted the report.

### Conclusion: -

- The caste system, when properly understood can ensure a harmonious and balanced society. A caste census can also help monitor the effectiveness of affirmative action policies and provide a comprehensive picture of Indian society but the same time it should not be used for short term political gains as it will hurt the nation in long term.

## Appointment of Judges

### Context-

- The Article “**Judiciary is losing talent as government sits on names: Supreme Court**” which was published in the Hindu.
- The Supreme Court expressed concern that the judiciary is experiencing an unprecedented loss of fresh talent due to prolonged delays in government decisions.
- The SC said when there are differences between the SC and the government, it may not be “advisable” to hold up the entire judicial appointment process.

Syllabus of Mains – GS 2- Separation of powers between various organs dispute redressal mechanisms and institutions.

Structure, organization and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary—Ministries and Departments of the Government

### Concerns regarding the appointment of Judges in higher Judiciary

#### Favouritism in Appointments:

- The lawyers who left their law practices to become judges have been affected by the government’s favouritism in the selection process without clear reasons.

#### Segregation of names:

- The government continues to segregate names with impunity despite the Collegium forbidding the practice.
- There are 70 names recommended by High Court Collegiums for judgeships, and these names have been waiting for government approval for over 10 months.
- The government has not responded to the Supreme Court (SC) Collegium’s recommendation for 26 transfers.

#### Pending Government Approval:

- Seven other names, which the Collegium has recommended again for High Court positions, are still awaiting government action, causing uncertainty.
- The Collegium’s recommendation to appoint the Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court as the Chief Justice of the Manipur High Court is still awaiting government approval.



## Procedure of Appointment of Judges: -

### For Supreme Court Judges

#### Recommendations by collegium:

- All appointments must be recommended by the collegium.

#### Government approval:

- This recommendation is then sent to the Central government via the law minister and then the prime minister before ending up at the President's desk for approval and appointment.

### For High Court Judges

#### Recommendations of Collegium:

- High Court collegium – the chief justice of the High Court(outgoing) along with its two senior-most judges – must send a recommendation to the chief minister and the governor of the state.

#### Recommendations of state executive:

- The governor, based on the advice received from the chief minister, will send the recommendation to the Union Minister of Law and Justice, who after consideration will forward the recommendation to the CJI.

#### Government's approval:

- The CJI, after being informed by the two senior-most judges of the Supreme Court, should send the recommendation to the Union Minister of Law and Justice.
- He then puts the recommendations before the Prime Minister who will advise the President about the appointment.

## What is the Collegium system?

- It is a group of the senior-most judges who appoint the judges of the higher judiciary.
- The collegium system doesn't find any mention in Indian Constitution or not by an Act of Parliament, instead, it has evolved through judgments of the Supreme Court.
- Its legal basis is in three judgments called 'Judges Cases'.
- These judgments made their way into the present Memorandum of Procedure to appoint judges.
- The government can also raise objections and seek clarifications regarding the Collegium's choices, but if the Collegium reiterates the same names, the government is bound to appoint them to the post.



## Constitutional Provisions for Judicial Appointments

Articles	Constitutional Provisions
Article 124	Supreme Court judges should be <u>appointed by the President after consultation with such judges</u> of the High Courts and the Supreme Court as the President may deem necessary. The CJI is to be consulted in all appointments except his or her own.
Article 217	High Court judges should be <u>appointed by the President after consultation with the CJI and the Governor of the state</u> . The <u>Chief Justice of the High Court concerned too</u> should be consulted.

### Article 50 of IC

- **Separation of judiciary from the executive**- The State shall separate the judiciary from the executive in the public services of the State.

### Genesis of the collegium system in India

#### **S P Gupta Vs Union of India, 1981 (First Judge Case):**

- Supreme Court held that consultation in the process of appointing judges does not require concurrence, and instead only involves the exchange of views.
- The Executive has the ultimate and final say in the appointment of judges.
- The SC decided that the recommendation of the CJI did not bind the President.

#### **Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association Vs Union of India, 1993 (Second Judge Case):**

- The Supreme Court reversed its previous and altered the definition of consultation to mean concurrence.
- It was decided that the advice tendered by the CJI regarding the appointment of judges to the Supreme Court is binding on the President.
- Further, the CJI is required to consult with two of his most senior colleagues before tendering such advice.

#### **Third Judge Case, 1998:**

- Supreme court stated that the consultation process to be adopted by the CJI requires **consultation of plurality judges**.
- The CJI should **consult a collegium of four senior most judges of the Supreme Court**.
- Even if two judges give an adverse opinion, they should not send the recommendation to the government.

### **Fourth Judges Case (Supreme Court Advocates on Record Association And Anr. v. Union of India) 2016:**

- The Supreme Court held the 99th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2014 and by which the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) Act, 2014 unconstitutional and void.
- Citing the independence of the judiciary, the act was held unconstitutional by the Supreme Court, and it restored the collegium system for the appointment of judges in India.

#### **What is NJAC?**

- National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) was introduced by the 99th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2014 to regulate the appointment of judges and empower the commission.
- The NJAC consisted of the Chief Justice of India (as Chairman), two seniors most judges of the Supreme Court, the Law and Justice Minister and two eminent persons.
- The Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court declared National Judicial Commission (NJAC) Unconstitutional citing that it violates Basic Structure of Constitution of India.

#### **Challenges with the Collegium system (Why It is criticized?): -**

- The Collegium's functioning has been criticised for being opaque.
- It does not have fixed criteria to evaluate the judges considered for appointment to the SC.
- It fails to fulfil basic demands of transparency and accountability and remains prone to **charges of nepotism**.
- **Lack of statutory timeframe limit:** The SC in 2021 set a maximum of 18 weeks for the government to review the names submitted by the High Courts, after which they should be forwarded to the Supreme Court Collegium for final approval. Since, the guideline is not mandatory, it is rarely followed.
- The Gol is sitting on recommendations. It would affect the seniority of judges.
- The Gol ignored reiterations by the collegium, which, as per the law, are binding on the government.
- Lack of social diversity in the appointments of Judges. Out of 537 appointments to high courts in the five-year period, 424 (79%) were from the general category (upper caste), 57 (11%) were from Other Backward Castes (OBCs), 15 (2.8%) were from Scheduled Castes (SCs) and 7 (1.3%) were from Scheduled Tribes (STs).

- The **CJI D.Y. Chandrachud, while defending** the Collegium system, said that not every system is perfect, but this is the best system developed by the judiciary.

## What steps have been taken to improve the process of judicial appointments?

### **99th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2014:**

- It provided for the National Judicial Commission (NJAC) to replace the collegium system for the appointment of judges.

### **Memorandum of Procedure (MoP):**

- The MoP is the list of rules and procedures for the appointment of judges to the Supreme Court and the high courts. It is a document **framed by the government and the judiciary together.**
- The Union government framed a MoP on 30 June 1999
- It states that all appointments of judges to the Supreme Court must be recommended by the Collegium, composed of the Chief Justice of India and the four senior-most judges of the Supreme Court. This recommendation is then sent to the central government. The law minister will forward it to the prime minister, who is to advise the President on the appointment.

### **Revised MoP:**

- In 2015, the Supreme Court instructed the central government to develop a new MoP to ensure transparency in the collegium's proceedings. In 2017, although the MoP was finalized, the government did not adopt it, citing a need to reconsider the matter.

## Way forward to streamline judicial appointments in India: -

### **Reforming the MoP:**

- The existing MoP should be reformed. This can include involving representatives from both executive and judiciary in decision-making for judges' appointments to ensure checks and balances.

### **Statutory backing to MOP:**

- This will streamline the process and procedure of appointment of judges.

### **External oversight mechanism:**

- It will provide checks and balances on the collegium system.

### **Search and evaluation committee:**

- As recommended by the union law ministry, it should have representation from the central and the state governments in the selection of judges for the Supreme Court and the High Courts respectively.

#### **Reservation for marginalized communities:**

- Provision for reservation for marginalised communities to ensure social diversity.

#### **Increasing transparency:**

- A list of candidates, who had applied, nominated, or considered by the members of the collegium on their own, should be maintained.
- All opinions of the collegium can be exchanged in writing.
- Proceedings of the collegium should be documented and recorded in the minutes.

#### **Law Commission of India recommendations:**

- There should be an equal role for the judiciary and the executive in the selection and appointments of judges to High Courts and the Supreme Court.
- The retirement age of the Judges of the High Court should be increased to 65 years, and that of the Judges of the Supreme Court should be increased to 68 years.
- Article 124(3) contemplates the appointment of judges of the Supreme Court from three sources. However, in the last fifty years, not a single distinguished jurist has been appointed. From the Bar also, less than half a dozen judges have been appointed. It recommended that suitably meritorious persons from these sources are appointed.

#### **International Practices of Appointment of judges**

- **US:** Judges of the Federal Court are appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate.
- **UK:** The independent Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) oversees the process of judge's appointments.
- **France:** Judges are appointed by the President on the recommendation of the Higher Council of the Judiciary.

#### **Conclusion: -**

- Though the collegium system is flawed, the Judiciary in the hands of the executive is a threat to the existence of the judiciary. The SC should voluntarily take up reforms to the collegium system and create a new MoP by incorporating the legitimate concerns of the government and stakeholders.



- It is time to think of a permanent, independent body to institutionalise the process with adequate safeguards to preserve the judiciary's independence **guaranteeing judicial primacy but not judicial exclusivity.**
- It should ensure independence, reflect diversity, demonstrate professional competence and integrity.

**PYQ Mains: -**

- Q) Critically examine the Supreme Court's judgment on 'National Judicial Appointments Commission Act, 2014' with reference to appointment of judges of higher judiciary in India. (2017)

**PYQ Prelims: -****Q) Consider the following statements:(2019)**

1. The 44th Amendment to the Constitution of India introduced an article placing the election of the Prime Minister beyond judicial review.
2. Supreme Court of India struck down the 99th amendment to the Constitution of India as being violative of the independence of the judiciary.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Q. With reference to the Indian judiciary, consider the following statements: (2021)**

- 1) Any retired judge of the Supreme Court of India can be called back to sit and act as a Supreme Court judge by the Chief Justice of India with the prior permission of the President of India.
- 2) A High Court in India has the power to review its own judgement as the Supreme Court does.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2



## Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) Act

### Context: -

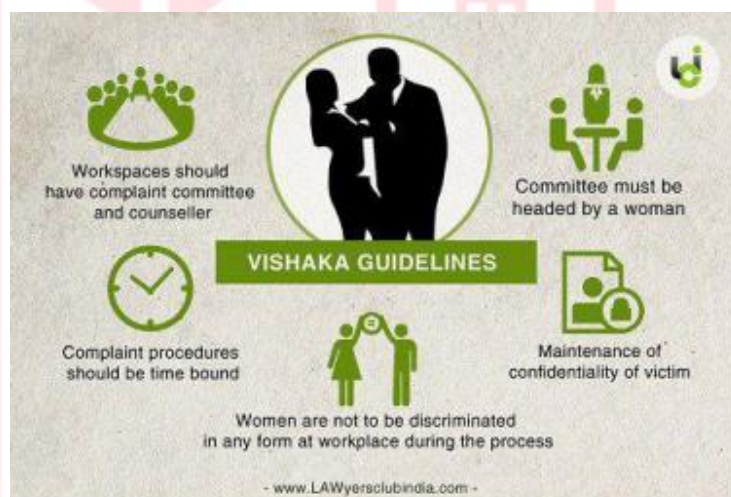
- SC recognised that women could not access the protection provided by the POSH Act because they had **not appointed officers in every district** as required by the law.
- In a recent judgment, the Supreme Court expressed concerns about the implementation of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) (PoSH) Act, 2013.
- The court emphasized the serious lapses and uncertainties surrounding the Act, leading to many working women feeling compelled to leave their jobs.
- Study found that 75% of women living in London, 79% of women living in Indian cities, 86% in Thailand, and 89% in Brazil have been subjected to harassment or violence in public.

Syllabus of Mains – GS 2- Vulnerable Sections – Women

GS 1- Social empowerment

### Basics: -

- The Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) Act or Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition & Redressal) Act was enacted in 2013 to implement the Vishakha guideline.
- It covers concepts of quid pro quo (a favour or advantage granted in return for something) harassment and hostile work environment as sexual harassment.
- A woman can file a written complaint to the internal or local complaints committee **within three to six months** of the sexual harassment incident.
- It also makes the employer duty-bound to organise regular workshops and awareness programmes to educate employees about the Act and conduct orientation and programmes for ICC members.



- If the employer fails to constitute an ICC or does not abide by any other provision, they must pay a fine of up to ₹50,000, which increases for a repeat offence.

### **Vishaka Guidelines**

- Vishaka Guidelines were stipulated by the SC, in Vishaka and others v State of Rajasthan case in 1997, regarding sexual harassment at the workplace.
- SC stated that these guidelines would be implemented until legislation is passed.

### **SHe-Box**

- It is an online platform to file complaints related to sexual harassment at the workplace, hence ensuring effective implementation of the PoSH Act.
- The Ministry of Women & Child Development has launched Sexual Harassment electronic Box (SHe-Box).

### **The PoSH Act defines sexual harassment to include: -**

- Unwelcome acts such as physical contact and sexual advances,
- A demand or request for sexual favours,
- Making sexually coloured remarks,
- Showing pornography and
- Any other unwelcome physical, verbal, or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature.

### **Key Provisions of the Act**

#### **Wide Coverage**

- The Act covers both organised and unorganised sectors, and applies to all women, irrespective of their age or employment status.
- Domestic workers, students, research scholars, patients, customers, clients, and tourists are also included.
- Offices, factories, stores, hotels, restaurants, educational institutions, hospitals, sports facilities, transportation services, entertainment venues, and houses are all covered by the Act.

### **Internal Complaints Committee (ICC)**

- Every employer is required to constitute an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) at each office or branch with 10 or more employees.
- At least one-half of the members of the ICC should be **women**.
- The ICC is made up of a presiding officer (a senior woman employee), two other workers (ideally committed to women's rights), and one external member (from an NGO or legal background).
- The ICC oversees receiving and investigating complaints of sexual harassment from female employees and proposing appropriate action to the employer.

### **Local Complaints Committee (LCC)**

- The Act also provides for the **constitution of a Local Complaints Committee (LCC) by the District Officer** for cases where the complaint is against the employer or where the **workplace has less than 10 workers.**
- For a company having less than 10 employees, it is not mandatory to have ICC.
- Any woman who has been subjected to sexual harassment at the workplace can file a complaint within 3 months of the incident or series of incidents to the ICC or LCC, as applicable.
- The LCC has the same powers and functions as the ICC.

### **Responsibilities of the Employer**

- To provide a safe working environment for women.
- Display the penal consequences of sexual harassment.
- Organize awareness programs and workshops.
- Assist the complainant if she chooses to file a criminal case against the respondent.

### **Investigation and Action**

- The ICC or LCC is required to complete the inquiry into the complaint within 90 days and submit a report with its recommendations to the employer or district officer.
- The employer or district officer is required to act on the recommendations of the ICC or LCC within 60 days and inform the complainant and respondent about it.

### **Protection against false Complaints**

- The Act provides for penalties for false or malicious complaints, non-compliance with the provisions of the Act by the employer or ICC or LCC members, and victimization or retaliation against the complainant or witness.

## Lacunae of POSH Act: -

- **Gender Neutrality:** The PoSH act is not Gender Neutral. The safeguards under the POSH Act do not apply to 'men victims.
- **Appointment of District Officers:** The SC directed appointing district officers in each district within their territorial jurisdiction, as contemplated under Section 5 of the POSH Act.
- **Awareness and Accessibility:** There is a need to spread awareness of the existence of local committees and make them approachable to the unorganised sector.

## How can we improve the PoSH Act: -

### Defining workplace:

- The PoSH policy should clearly define a 'workplace', which today extends to an employee's home and should cover employees, clients, vendors, and trainees of the organisation.

### Inclusion of Both Genders:

- Companies should review the policy to include men and women.

### Clear Articulation for Filing a Complaint:

- The policy should clearly articulate how the aggrieved can file a complaint (via e-mail or phone) and provide a strict timeframe to investigate the same.

### Awareness Generation:

- Companies can generate awareness for preventing sexual harassment by conducting regular training and workshops.

### Helpline Support:

- Providing helpline support via phone or e-mail to employees by a third-party counsellor can be beneficial.

### Zero-tolerance policy:

- Advocating a zero-tolerance policy can give way to a safe working environment.

### Setting up an Employment Tribunal:

- The Justice Verma committee recommended an employment tribunal under the PoSH Act instead of the ICC.
- The employment tribunal would work as a civil court but may choose its procedure to deal with each complaint to ensure faster disposal of cases.



## Recommendations of the Justice Verma Committee on Sexual Harassment at Workplace: -

- Domestic workers should be included within the purview of the PoSH Act.
- It proposes a conciliation process where the complainant and the respondent are initially encouraged to resolve the issue through negotiation and agreement.
- The employer should pay compensation to the woman who has suffered sexual harassment.
- Setting up of an Employment tribunal instead of an internal complaints committee (ICC) in the PoSH Act.

## Initiatives Related to Women's Safety: -

- One Stop Centre Scheme
- **UJJAWALA**: A Comprehensive Scheme for Prevention of trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Re-integration of Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation
- SWADHAR Greh (A Scheme for Women in Difficult Circumstances)
- Nari Shakti Puruskar

## Conclusion: -

- Sexual harassment of women in the workplace is a violation of human rights and dignity. It affects not only the individual but also the organization and society at large. PoSH Act 2013 is a progressive law that aims to prevent and redress sexual harassment in the workplace.
- However, *many challenges hamper its effective implementation. These challenges need to be addressed urgently by all stakeholders through collective efforts and actions.* Only then can we create a safe, respectful, and equitable workplace for all.
- In era of feminist tradition "The stronger the woman, the more protection she deserves." "Respect woman and protect her always, she is greatest treasure of mankind."



## LGBTQ+ Rights in India

### Context: -

- A five-judge bench of the Supreme Court that was headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, unanimously ruled against legalising same sex marriage in India (October 17). The bench also ruled in a 3:2 verdict against civil unions for non-heterosexual couples.

### What is the Observation of the Supreme Court (SC)?

#### Against Constitutional Validity:

- A five-judge Constitution Bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice of India ruled in a 3:2 verdict against giving constitutional validity to same-sex marriages.
- All five judges on the Bench, agreed that there is no fundamental right to marry under the Constitution.

#### Domain Of Parliament:

- The CJ, in his opinion, concludes that the court can neither strike down or read words into the Special Marriage Act (SMA) 1954 to include same sex members within the ambit of the SMA 1954.
- The top court said it is for Parliament and state Legislature to formulate laws on it.

#### Other Observations:

- However, at the same time, the SC says the relationship of marriage is not a static one.
- SC holds that queer persons have an equal right and freedom to enter a "union".

#### CJI and Justice Kaul (Minority Opinions): Favoured extension of Civil Union to same-sex couples:

- A 'civil union' refers to the legal status that allows same-sex couples specific rights and responsibilities that are normally conferred upon married couples. Although a civil union resembles a marriage, it does not have the same recognition in personal law as marriage.
- However, the majority opinion said the government is not obligated to recognise the bouquet of rights flowing from such a Union.

**On Trans persons' Rights:**

- The majority opinion of the Bench affirmed that transgender individuals have the right to marry within the existing legal framework.
- The judgment emphasized that gender identity is distinct from sexual orientation, highlighting that transgender individuals can be in heterosexual relationships like cisgender individuals.
- Therefore, such marriages can be legally registered under marriage laws. Additionally, the judgment recognized that intersex individuals who identify as either male or female also have this right.
- The Court affirmed the Madras High Court decision in Arun Kumar v. Inspector General of Registration (2019), which declared marriage between a Hindu male and a transwoman a valid union.

**On Adoption Rights:**

- The majority opinion refused to strike down the Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) regulations that **restrict queer couples from joining in adopting a child.** While it noted that these regulations are discriminatory and violative of Article 14, the majority opinion did not support adoption rights for same-sex couples, citing the need to explore all areas for the benefit of children in need of stable homes.

**On Entitlements:**

- The court acknowledges the need for equal rights for queer couples in areas like ration cards, joint bank accounts, pensions, and gratuity. However, there is a disagreement on whether the judiciary or the legislative and executive branches should address these issues.

**On Sex, Gender, and Discrimination:**

- The verdict rejected the government's argument that same-sex unions are unnatural or non-Indian. It acknowledged that queer love has existed in India for a long time and that the constitutional legitimacy of same-sex relations is not undermined by societal acceptability.

**Issues related to the Judgement: -****Violation of Fundamental Rights:**

- The verdict goes against the fundamental rights of LGBTQIA+ individuals as recognized by the Supreme Court in previous judgments. These rights include equality, dignity, and autonomy, which have been affirmed as fundamental in the past.

- The Supreme Court in **various judgements** such as Lata Singh vs State of UP (2006), Safin Jahan vs Ashokan (2018), Shakti Vahini vs Union of India (2018) and Laxmibai Chandarangi vs State of Karnataka (2021) has held **that choosing a life partner is a Fundamental Right under Article 21.**

#### **Ignoring Lived Realities:**

- The verdict fails to consider the real-life experiences of LGBTQIA+ individuals who often face discrimination, violence, and stigma in society due to their sexual orientation and gender identity.

#### **Undermining Constitutional Morality:**

- The critics argue that the verdict undermines the principle of constitutional morality. They say that the state should respect the diversity and plurality of its citizens, rather than imposing the views of the majority on minority groups.

#### **Denial of Legal Benefits:**

- The verdict denies LGBTQIA+ couples the social and legal benefits of marriage, such as inheritance, adoption, insurance, pension, etc. The lack of legal recognition for same-sex marriage results in these couples being deprived of the rights and privileges enjoyed by heterosexual couples.

#### **Contradiction with International Human Rights Standards:**

- The verdict contradicts international human rights standards and norms. It claims that international standards uphold the right to marry and establish a family for all individuals, irrespective of their sexual orientation and gender identity. The verdict, in this view, is not in alignment with these global norms.

### **What is the Legality of Same-Sex Marriages in India?**

- The right to marry is not expressly recognized either as a fundamental or constitutional right under the Indian Constitution but a statutory right.
- Though marriage is regulated through various statutory enactments, its recognition as a fundamental right has only developed through judicial decisions of India's Supreme Court. Such declaration of law is binding on all courts throughout India under Article 141 of the Constitution.

### **Earlier Views of Supreme Court on Same-Sex Marriages:**

- **Marriage as a Fundamental Right (Shafin Jahan v. Asokan K.M. and others 2018):** While referring to Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Right and the Puttaswamy case, the SC held that the right to marry a person of one's choice is integral to Article 21 of the Constitution.

- **LGBTQ Community Entitled to all Constitutional Rights (Navjet Singh Johar and others v. Union of India 2018):** The SC held that members of the LGBTQ community “are entitled, as all other citizens, to the full range of constitutional rights including the liberties protected by the Constitution” and are entitled to equal citizenship and “equal protection of law”.

## What is the Special Marriage Act (SMA) 1954?

### About:

- Marriages in India can be registered under the respective personal laws Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, Muslim Personal Law Application Act, 1937, or under the Special Marriage Act, 1954.
- It is the duty of the Judiciary to ensure that the rights of both the husband and wife are protected.
- The *Special Marriage Act, 1954 has provisions for civil marriage for people of India and all Indian nationals in foreign countries, irrespective of religion or faith followed by either party.*
- When a person solemnized marriage under this law, then the marriage is not governed by personal laws but by the Special Marriage Act.

### Features:

- Allows people from two different religious backgrounds to come together in the bond of marriage.
- Lays down the procedure for both solemnization and registration of marriage, where either of the husband or wife or both are not Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, or Sikhs.
- Being a secular Act, it plays a key role in liberating individuals from traditional requirements of marriage.

## Arguments in Favour of Same Sex Marriage: -

### Equal Rights and Protection Under the Law:

- All individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation, have the right to marry and form a family.
- Non-recognition of same-sex marriage amounted to discrimination that struck at the root of the dignity of LBTQIA+ couples.

### Strengthening Families and Communities:

- Marriage provides social and economic benefits to couples and their families which will also benefit the same-sex people.

### Cohabitation as a Fundamental Right:



- The Chief Justice of India (CJI) acknowledged that cohabitation is a fundamental right, and it is the government's obligation to legally recognize the social impact of such relationships.

**Biological gender is not 'absolute:**

- The Supreme Court of India says that biological gender is not absolute, and that gender is more complex than just one's genitals. There is no absolute concept of a man or a woman.

**Global Acceptance:**

- Same-sex marriage is legal in many countries around the world, and denying this right to individuals in a democratic society goes against the global principles.
- In 32 countries, same-sex marriage is legal.

**Arguments Against Same Sex Marriage: -****Religious and Cultural Beliefs:**

- Many religious and cultural groups believe that marriage should only be between a man and a woman.
- They argue that changing the traditional definition of marriage would go against the fundamental principles of their beliefs and values.

**Procreation:**

- Some people argue that the primary purpose of marriage is procreation, and that same-sex couples cannot have biological children.
- Therefore, they believe that same-sex marriage should not be allowed because it goes against the natural order of things.

**Legal issues:**

- There are concerns that allowing same-sex marriage will create legal problems, such as issues with inheritance, tax, and property rights.
- Some people argue that it would be too difficult to change all the laws and regulations to accommodate same-sex marriage.

**Issues with Adoption of Childrens:**

- When queer couples adopt children, it can lead to societal stigma, discrimination, and negative impacts on the child's emotional and psychological well-being, especially in Indian society where acceptance of the LGBTQIA+ community is not universal.



## Way Forward: -

### Raise Awareness:

- The purpose of awareness campaigns is to promote equality and acceptance of all sexual orientations and expand public opinion about the LGBTQIA+ community.

### Legal Reforms:

- Amendments in the Special Marriage Act, 1954 to allow same-sex couples to legally marry and enjoy the same rights and benefits as opposite-sex couples.
- Meanwhile bring the contract like agreement so that homosexual people can enjoy similar rights like heterosexuals.

### Dialogue and Engagement:

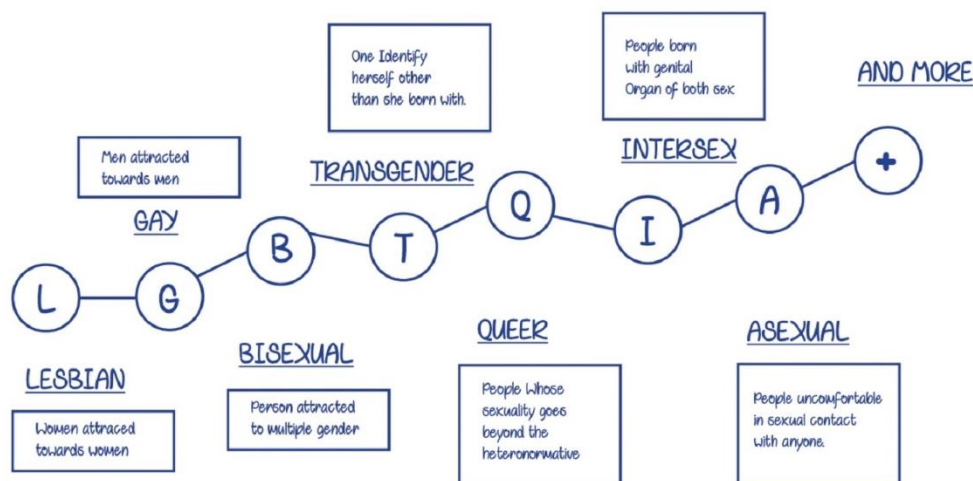
- Engaging in a dialogue with religious leaders and communities can help bridge the gap between traditional beliefs and modern attitudes towards same-sex relationships.

## Conclusion

- The Court denied the right to marry for same-sex couples, going against expectations of non-discrimination in marriage and passed on this responsibility to the legislature. While there are legal requirements for marriage, the personal choice to seek validation through it is protected by the Constitution, with some statutory limits. **The majority opinion of the SC bench opposed the adoption for queer couples but supports trans persons in heterosexual marriages.**
- All judges agree on the right of same-sex couples to cohabit without coercion. The Legislature may feel hesitant in legalizing same-sex marriages due to opposition based on religious and cultural reasons. The LGBTQIA+ community can find hope in the Court's call for a government committee on queer couples' rights, but the path to legal equality remains challenging.

## Basics: -

- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, make up the abbreviation LGBTQ. They are the individuals who do not identify with the cisgender heterosexual "ideals".
- The Hijras are a distinctive social group and part of the LGBTQ community in



India. They are either "neither men nor women" or men who act like women, depending on the culture. They are referred to as the Third Gender at the moment.

- In India, there are over 6 lakh transgender persons, according to the 2011 census.

## Issues related to LGBTQ : -

### Family:

- Problems with sexual orientation and gender identity lead to arguments and disturbances in families. The miscommunication and lack of understanding between parents and their LGBTQ children exacerbates family discord.

### Discrimination:

- One of the main causes of socioeconomic disparity in the LGBTQ population is employment discrimination.

### Health Issues:

- Criminalizing homosexuality leads to discrimination and denies LGBTQ individuals access to proper or necessary medical care. Additionally, it raises obstacles for HIV prevention, testing, and treatment programs to be made available and used.

**Drug abuse and isolation:**

- They gradually lose confidence and self-esteem, and they isolate themselves from friends and family. These people develop drug, alcohol, and cigarette addictions in an effort to cope with stress, prejudice, and rejection.

**Important Judgements Related to LGBTQ**

- **Naz Foundation Govt v. NCT of Delhi:** The High Court of Delhi determined in 2009 that Section 377 of the IPC placed an arbitrary limitation on two adults having consensual intercourse in private in the case of Naz Foundation Govt v. NCT of Delhi.
  - As a result, it was a clear infringement of their fundamental rights, which are guaranteed by Indian Constitutional Articles 14, 15, 19, and 21.
- **Suresh Kumar Koushal vs Naz Foundation:** In 2013, the Supreme Court reversed the Delhi High Court's decision and reinstated the crime of homosexuality.
- **NALSA Judgement:** The Supreme Court established the 'third gender' status for hijras or transgender people in its seminal decision.
  - Earlier, transgender persons were compelled to identify as either male or female, but following the verdict, they were free to boldly declare their transgender status.
  - But aside from this, **what made this verdict so exceptional was that it established the guidelines for ensuring the transgender community a broad range of fundamental human rights.**
- **Navtej Singh Johar V. Union of India:** The court decided that Section 377 is unconstitutional because it violates people's basic rights to intimacy, autonomy, and identity.
- It decriminalized homosexuality by excluding consensual relations between adults who are the same sex or gender under Section 377.

**Schemes for LGBTQ: -**

**SMILE (Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise):**

- Focus on rehabilitation, access to medical facilities, counselling services, assistance with basic documentation, educational opportunities, and skill development programs.

**Garima Greh Scheme:**

- The establishment of shelter homes specifically designed to support destitute and vulnerable transgender persons.

**SWEEKRUTI:**

- To ensure equitable justice for transgender persons and create an enabling environment for equal opportunities, social justice, and empowerment of transgender persons.

**National Portal for Transgender Persons**

- To help applying for a Certificate and Identity card digitally from anywhere in the country.

**Conclusion: -**

- It is crucial that the government put aside its conservatism and take decisive action to end the stigma, prejudice, and abuse that surrounds LGBTQIA+ persons.
- It is past time for the government to create new laws or change current ones governing marriage, adoption, guardianship, inheritance, employment, etc. for the benefit of LGBT+ people's education, social security, and health, with a specific focus on Transgender People.

**Right to Freedom of Expression vs. Review Bombing****Context: -**

- Malayalam director approached the Kerala High Court seeking a gag on social media and YouTube reviews following a film's release to protect it from review bombing.

Syllabus of Mains – GS 2- Indian Constitution—historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure.

**What is Review Bombing?**

- Review bombing is the act of posting numerous negative reviews, often coordinated, to harm the reputation of a product, service, or content.
- Mainly linked to media and entertainment, review bombing extends to other areas like online marketplaces, apps, and businesses
- It can be done for various reasons, such as:
  - Protest or grievance
  - Promote competitors' product.
  - Personal vendettas
  - Social or political motivations



## What is the Freedom of Expression?

- Freedom of expression is a fundamental right guaranteed by Article 19(1)(a) of Indian Constitution.
- It states that all citizens have the right to freedom of speech and expression, subject to certain reasonable restrictions.

## Key Elements of Freedom of Expression

- It is solely available to a citizen of India, not to a foreign national.
- It includes the right to express one's views and opinions about any issue.
- It includes the right to express in any medium, such as by words, writing, printing, etc.
- This right is not absolute; Govt can impose reasonable restrictions in cases which involve:
  - Sovereignty and integrity of India
  - Security of the state
  - Friendly relations with foreign nations
  - Public order, decency, and morality
  - Contempt of court
  - Defamation and incitement to an offence.

## Why Review Bombing Should be Protected?

- To hold businesses and creators accountable
- To raise consumer awareness
- To hold as a protest against powerful businesses and creators

## Why Restrictions on Review Bombing is Not Violation of Freedom of Expression?

- It can mislead consumers seeking accurate information.
- It can unfairly harm the reputation and livelihood of creators, businesses, or developers.
- Coordinated review bombing can suppress the genuine opinions of users.
- It is susceptible to manipulation by trolls, competitors, or individuals with malicious intent.
- Prolonged and widespread review bombing can erode trust in online review systems.
- Review bombers often escape accountability, making addressing this practice's misuse difficult.

## Way Forward

- There is a grey area between review bombing and freedom of expression.
- If review bombing is motivated by genuine reasons, it can be a form of freedom of expression.
- But if review bombing is motivated by malicious intent, it misuses freedom of expression.
- So, the interests of creators, businesses, etc., should be protected from review bombing but not at the cost of freedom of expression. So, a **proper regulatory body is the need of the hour.**

## PRAGATI

### Context (PIB):

- The **PRAGATI (Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation) Platform was launched in 2015** to introduce e-transparency and e-accountability in welfare schemes.

### About-

- The platform addresses public grievances and monitors essential government programs.
- It operates on three technologies.
  - 1) Digital Data Management
  - 2) Video-Conferencing.
  - 3) Geospatial Technology

### Working Structure of PRAGATI

- It is a **3-tier system** involving the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Union Government Secretaries, and Chief Secretaries of the States (promotes cooperative federalism).
- The PM holds a monthly program generally on the Fourth Wednesday (PRAGATI Day).
- Union Government and Chief Secretaries provide comments and updates on the flagged issues and grievances within three days.

## India's governance framework – Historical Context

### Bureaucratic Hierarchy:

- Historically, India's governance was characterised by a bureaucratic and hierarchical system, leading to administrative delays and inefficiencies.

**Slow Decision-Making:**

- Decision-making processes within the government were notoriously slow, hindering progress and responsiveness to citizen’s needs.

**Red Tape Challenges:**

- Excessive red tape and administrative complexity were prevalent, resulting in a lack of transparency and accountability.

**Top-Down Approach:**

- A top-down approach to governance was dominant, with centralised decision making that often failed to address local and immediate concerns.

**Ineffective Governance:**

- The historical governance framework was criticised for inefficiency and lack of responsiveness, contributing to public frustration and regulatory bottlenecks.

**How the PRAGATI platform brought a paradigm shift in a traditional governance model: -**

<b>Traditional Governance</b>	<b>PRAGATI Platform</b>
Bureaucratic Hierarchy	Collaborative Structure
Top-Down Decision Making	Decentralised Decision Making
Limited Transparency	Enhanced Transparency
Limited Citizen Participation	Increased Citizen Participation
low Project Implementation	Timely Project Implementation

**Collaborative Structure**

- Pragati has helped reduce bureaucratic delays and inefficiencies by providing a platform for government officials to interact directly with the Prime Minister and key decision-makers.
- This has streamlined communication and expedited decision-making, reducing the bureaucratic hierarchy's negative impact.

**Timely Decision making**

- Pragati aims to ensure timely decision-making and implementation of projects and policies.

- Through regular video conferences and discussions on the platform, issues and projects are tracked and monitored closely, allowing for quicker resolutions and implementation.

### **Red Tape Challenges**

- Pragati has reduced excessive red tape and complexity through transparency and accountability.
- It allows officials to discuss challenges openly, simplifying bureaucratic procedures.

### **Top-Down Approach**

- Pragati challenges the traditional top-down approach by facilitating discussions and interactions between central government officials and state-level authorities.
- This approach ensures that local and immediate concerns are addressed more effectively, moving away from the strictly centralised decision-making model.

### **Pro-active Governance**

- Pragati's focus on proactive governance and timely implementation directly addresses the criticism of historical inefficiency and lack of responsiveness in the governance framework.

### **Conclusion**

- The Pragati platform has shifted the paradigm in India's governance framework by promoting transparency, accountability, and faster decision-making.
- However, Corruption, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and socioeconomic disparities are persistent issues in the Governance system, which still needs further reforms to address these challenges.



## GS 3

### Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF)

**Context: -**

- The Ministry of Home Affairs had mentioned that around 1532 Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) personnel had died by suicide in the last 13 years.

Syllabus of Mains – GS 3- Various Security forces and agencies and their mandate.

**About: -**

- Central Armed Police Forces is the collective name of central police organizations in India under the authority of Ministry of Home Affairs.
- These are technically paramilitary forces formerly known as “Central Para-Military Forces (CPMF)”.
- Since 2011, India adopted the term "Central Armed Police Forces" to drop the word "paramilitary".
- These forces are responsible for internal security and guarding the borders.
- The Central Armed Police Forces refers to seven security forces, all functioning under **the authority of Ministry of Home Affairs**.
- Each of the seven has its own cadre of officers, but they are headed by officers of the Indian Police Service.

Forces	Mandate
Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Created in 1963 guarding Bhutan and Nepal borders.</li> </ul>
Border Security Force (BSF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Created in 1965, guarding India's borders with Pakistan and Bangladesh.</li> <li>• It is also thrusted with <u>Anti Naxal operation, United Nations Peace keeping operations</u>, disaster management and Border Area development programmes.</li> </ul>
Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Created in 1962, guarding India-China borders.</li> </ul>
Assam Rifles (AR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Created in 1835 as ‘Cachar Levy’ to protect British tea estates and was renamed as <u>"AR" in 1917</u>.</li> <li>• It protects the Indo-Myanmar border.</li> <li>• Though <u>the AR functions under the administrative control of the MHA</u>, its operational control rests with <u>the Ministry of Defence</u>.</li> </ul>

Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Created in <u>1939</u> to maintain <u>Rule of Law, Public Order and Internal Security</u> and Promote Social Harmony.</li> </ul>
Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Created in 1969</u>, to provide <u>integrated security cover</u> to certain sensitive public sector undertakings.</li> <li>The CISF also protects important government buildings, monuments, airports, nuclear installations, space establishments and the <b>Delhi Metro</b>.</li> </ul>
National Security Guard (NSG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>Created in 1986</u>, to create a federal contingency force to tackle various manifestations of terrorism.</li> <li>Modelled on lines of the SAS of UK and GSG-9 of Germany, their role is to handle all facets of terrorism in any part of the country.</li> </ul>

**Data: -**

- Around 11 Lakhs is the total sanctioned strength of CAPF's.
- 3.76% is the representation of women in all CAPFs.
- Around 83,000 posts are vacant across all the CAPFs.

**Contributions of paramilitary forces:**

**Disaster:**

- During the 2013 Uttarakhand floods, Indo-Tibetan Border Police was the first to respond to the catastrophe. Kerala floods is also prominent example.

**Organised crime:**

- The paramilitary forces like the BSF, Sashastra Seema Bal, ITBP deployed at borders check smuggling of drugs, fake currencies, and human trafficking along with border security.

**Law and order:**

- The CRPF personnel provides their services when law and order situation goes beyond the control during riots or large scale violence.

**Naxalism:**

- The paramilitary forces are also deployed in fighting insurgencies and violent activities like Naxalism.

## Issues faced by CAPF: -

- Lack of Stress management leading to a high number of suicides as well as an increase in the number of clashes among personnel.
- **Bureaucratisation of Armed Forces** and **decreased level of promotions**: The top positions in CAPFs are occupied by IPS officer, which has a demoralising effect on the force and impacts their effectiveness.
- There is shortage of manpower which increases the workload on existing personnel. It is found that CISF jawans have to do continuous duty for 15-18 hours.
- There is an absence of a dedicated grievance redressal system. **Ex: BSF Jawan video.**
- A paramilitary soldier was against the sahayak/buddy system where soldiers were forced to do personal chores for senior officers of the force.
- Poor working conditions like no housing facilities, poor food and low allowances adds to problems.
- Promotion system lacks a proper path and set indicators to identify the deserving candidate.
- They are **devoid of justice. Armed forces tribunal does not cover them**. Even **Article 33 deters them to approach civilian judiciary**.
- No stability in terms of duration of posting and no peace posting. There are many accompanying services like, VIP security, law and order and election duty.
- **Till lately gallantry awards such as** Paramvir chakra, Shaurya Chakra and Kirti Chakra were reserved only for the armed forces.
- Government does **not accord them the status of a martyr**.
- Lack of capital budget for new procurement schemes, especially 'big ticket' items, is another challenge.
- Lack of modernisation, capital outlay being the lowest in the last ten years. Thus, sheer neglect of the outdated and obsolete weapon systems.
- Pathetic understanding of matters military with political and bureaucratic decision makers, thus a general distrust of what they are asking the CAPF to do.
- The politicisation of the CAPF is taking its toll on a soldier's psyche as he is forced to take sides, instead of remaining apolitical and secular in his thinking and action.
- Prolonged separation from the families, in an increasingly unsafe and polarised countryside.
- **Demand from the States**: The states are heavily dependent on CAPFs in the event of a law-and-order issue in the state.

## Steps to enhance their performance: -

### Special Forces in States:

- The states must develop their own forces to efficiently manage law and order and augment their existing police forces by providing adequate training and equipment. Ex- Force One of MH

### Enhancing the training methods:

- The training methods are to be improved in line with the latest requirements, and the training curriculum be updated.

### Increase the representation of women:

- The percentage of women in the CAPF needs to be increased, and a separate training curriculum be set for them.

### Inclusion of Agniveers:

- The existing limit of 10% reservation for inclusion of Agniveers in the CAPFs, is to be followed along all the CAPFs, and separate drives need to be enhanced to fill the vacancies.

### Grievance redressal:

- An efficient grievance redressal mechanism be implied, which investigates the issues of delayed promotions, clashes within the personnel and harassment at the workplace.

### De-stressing the force:

- Scientific methods to reduce the stress of the personnel are to be introduced along with special intermittent training to improve their morale and well-being.

### One area, one allowance: -

- For equivalence in allowance “one area, one allowance” should be implemented. It gives same allowance for both military and paramilitary deployed in same area.
- Need greater hardship allowance.

### Other demands:

- The demand of the paramilitary forces should be considered for e.g.
- A Military Service Pay
- Timely career promotion
- Better infrastructure



- Martyr status when they die fighting.

### Measure taken by government:

- Improved dispute resolution, communication facility in field areas, yoga etc. have been introduced.
- Increased communication between jawans and officers were part of the 14 measures undertaken by government to boost morale.
- In 2015, Delhi HC ordered government to give pay upgrade to Group A officers of paramilitary according to 6th Central Pay Commission.
- To improve gender equality in the paramilitary –
- The government **permitted reservation of 33% women at the constable rank in CRPF and CISF.**
- It also set a 15% share in the border forces BSF, SSB and ITBP for women.

### Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi Committee recommendation: -

- The Committee on Estimates, chaired by Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, had submitted its report on 'Central Armed Police Forces and Internal Security Challenges – Evaluation and Response Mechanism' in March 2018.

### Deployment of CAPFs –

- The Committee observed that there was heavy dependence of states on central armed police forces (CAPFs), even for everyday law and order issues.
- This was likely to affect the anti-insurgency and border guarding operations, besides curtailing the training needs of these forces.
- The Committee recommended that states must develop their own systems and augment their police forces by providing adequate training and equipment.

### Modernizing of CAPFs –

- The Modernization Plan II (2012-17), approved by the Cabinet Committee on Security, aims at providing financial support to CAPFs for modernizing arms, clothing, and equipment.
- However, the Committee observed that the procurement process under the Plan was cumbersome and time consuming.
- The committee recommended that bottlenecks in procurement should be identified, and corrective action taken.
- Further, the Ministry of Home Affairs and CAPFs should negotiate with ordnance factories and manufacturers in public or private sector to ensure uninterrupted supply of equipment and other infrastructure.

**Stress among CAPF Personnel-**

- According to data provided by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to Parliament recently, 432 personnel of the CAPF died by suicide in the last three years. Overall, 1,532 personnel died by suicide since 2011.
- In April 2023, the MHA had informed the Lok Sabha that the causative factors in most cases of fratricide in the CAPFs are generally –
- **personal and domestic problems, family issues, depression and work-related issues.**
- The Committee emphasized the need of accommodation near the deployment of the respective force, to enable personnel to meet their family members.

**Youth in Jammu & Kashmir –**

- The Committee noted that there was an urgent need to engage with the youth in Jammu and Kashmir, to bring them into the mainstream.
- The central government has introduced schemes to increase employability of youth in Jammu and Kashmir, including Udaan and Himayat.

**Conclusion: -**

- it's essential to acknowledge that the evolving nature of security challenges demands a continued and adaptive approach from both the government and CAPF authorities. Regular assessments and updates to these measures will be crucial to ensure that CAPF remains at the forefront of safeguarding national security.
- As CAPF play major role in India's security like Army-Navy-Airforce taking of our boarder, it is important that we **should see CAPF personnel at par with them and provide all facilities** that they deserve.

## Green Revolution

### Context: -

- **Dr. M. S Swaminathan**, the renowned agricultural scientist known as the **Father of India's Green Revolution**, passed away at his residence in Chennai on September 28 at the age of 98. The Padma Vibhushan awardee was **Director General of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and headed the International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines**

Syllabus of Mains – GS 3- Issues of buffer stocks and food security

### Introduction: -

- M S Swaminathan is no more. But his legacy remains with every student and scientist of agriculture. He is most widely known for **working with Norman Borlaug to usher in the Green Revolution in India in the mid-1960s** when India was facing back-to-back droughts.
- Richard Bradly in 1940 called India a “begging bowl” due to its heavy import dependence of food grains from the USA. Millions would have died of starvation if the country had not experienced the Green Revolution. India was already termed as a “ship to mouth” economy, as the country was importing 10 million tonnes from the US under P.L.480 scheme. And India had no foreign exchange to pay for it.
- The situation was so grave that the then **Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri had given a call to the nation to “skip a meal in a week”**, and wheat products, including wheat chapatis, would not be served at wedding parties.

### What is mean by Green Revolution?

- Initiative that aimed to increase the production and quality of food crops, especially wheat and rice, in India, by introducing new technologies, such as high-yielding varieties of seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation, and mechanization.

### Green Revolution in India: -

- In India, the Green Revolution was mainly led by M.S. Swaminathan.
- In 1961, M.S. Swaminathan invited Dr. Norman Borlaug who suggested a revolution like what has happened in Mexico, Japan, etc in Indian agriculture.
- Green Revolution was introduced with the Intensive Agriculture District Program (IADP) on an experimental basis in 7 districts in India.
- In 1965-66 the HYV program was started which is the starting point of the Green Revolution in India.

- Spreading over the period from 1967-68 to 1977-78, changed India's status from a food-deficient country to one of the world's leading agricultural nations.
- It resulted in a great increase in production of food grains (especially wheat and rice) due to the introduction into developing countries of new, high-yielding variety seeds, beginning in the mid-20th century.

### Why did India need the Green Revolution?

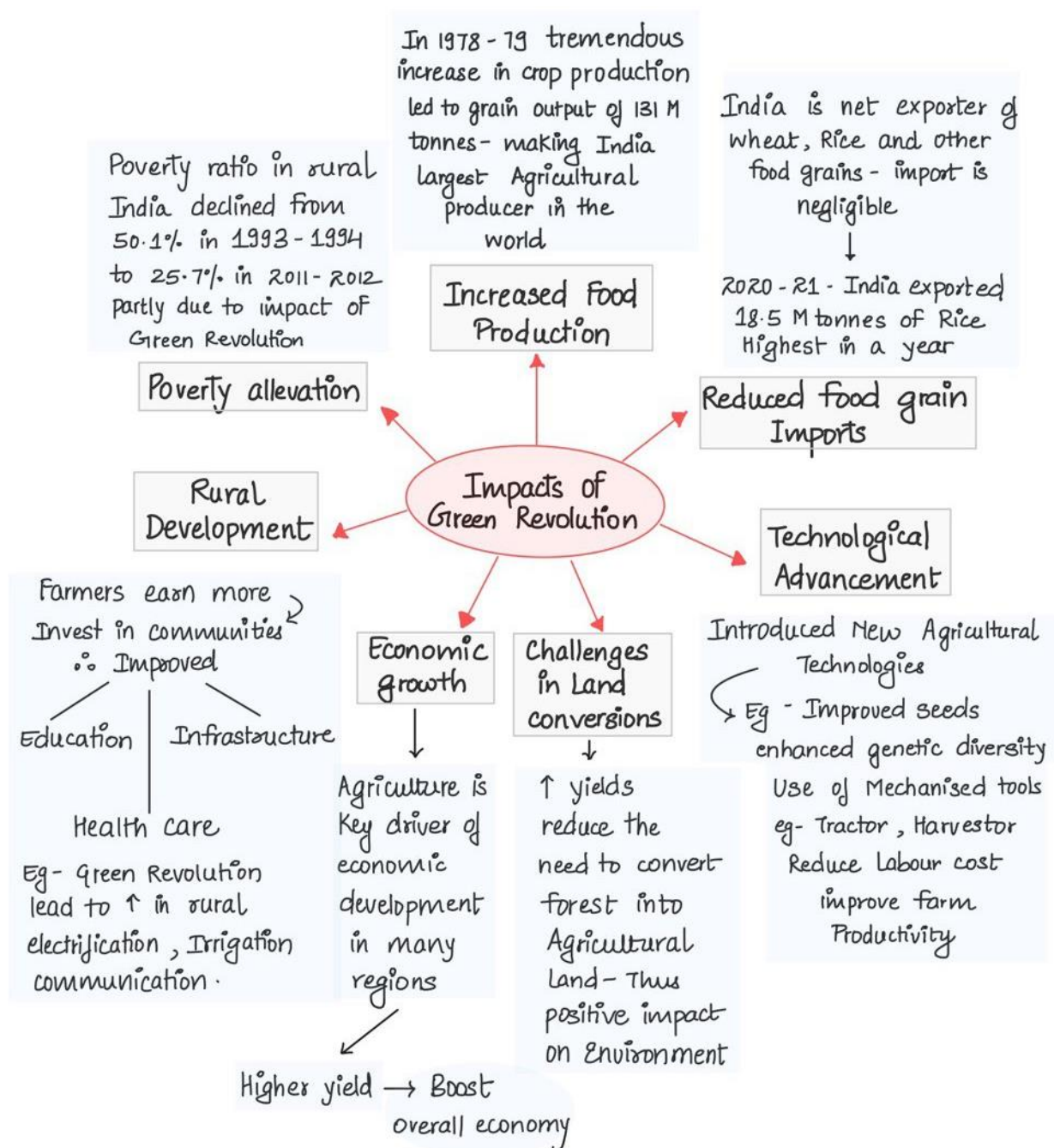
- India was in a dire food shortage stemming from swift population expansion, merger agricultural output, recurrent droughts, and reliance on imported food.
- India was susceptible to external influences and potential political meddling from major food-exporting nations, notably the United States, which employed food aid as a diplomatic tool.
- India's objectives were to attain self-sufficiency and food stability, diminish poverty and malnutrition.
- Revamp its agricultural sector for heightened efficiency, profitability, and international competitiveness.

### Key features:

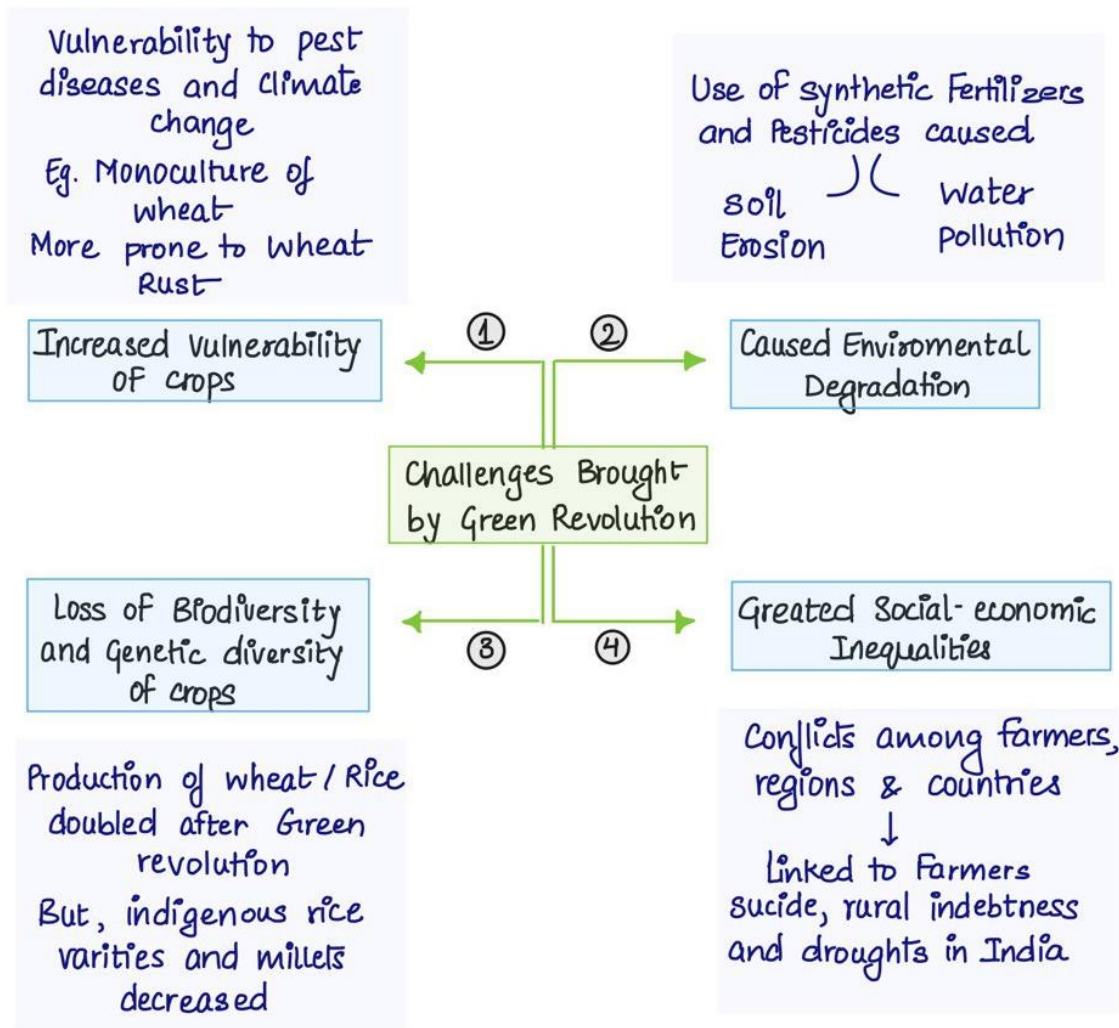
- Using High-Yield Variety (HYV) seeds to increase food production. These seeds were developed by agricultural scientists like M. S. Swaminathan.
- Incorporating various irrigation methods, such as tube wells, canals, dams, and sprinklers, to reduce the dependence on rainfall and ensure regular water supply for the crops.
- Mechanization of major agricultural practices, such as ploughing, sowing, harvesting, and threshing, using tractors, harvesters, and drills, to reduce labour costs and increase efficiency.
- Use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides to enhance soil fertility and protect the crops from pests and diseases.
- Double cropping in the existing farmland, which means growing two crops in the same field in one year, to increase the cropping intensity and yield.
- Expansion of the farming area, by bringing more land under cultivation, especially in the semi-arid and arid regions, using irrigation and HYV seeds.



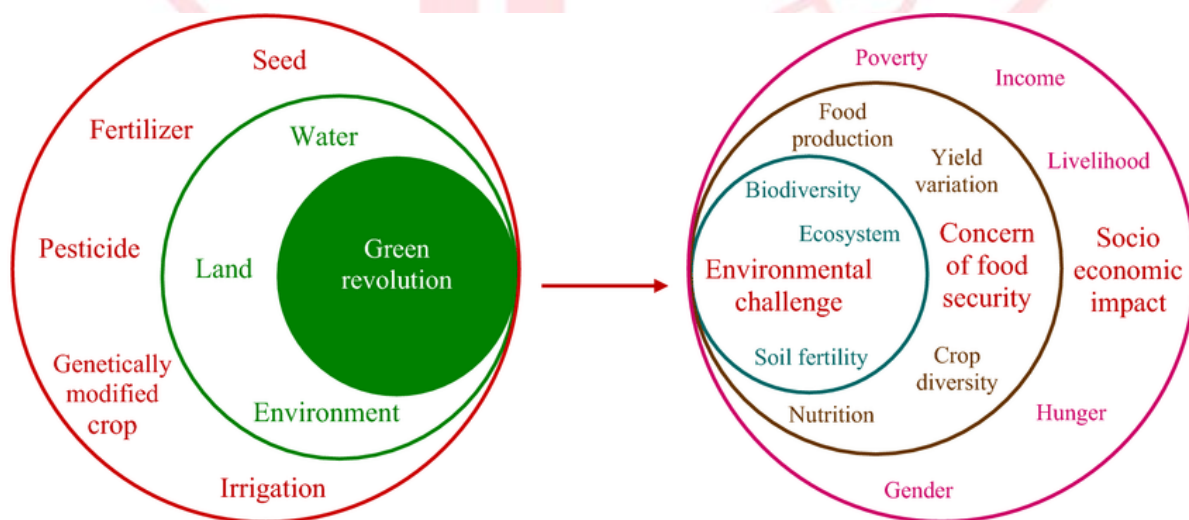
## Impacts of the Green Revolution: -{ Positive }



### Challenges brought by the Green Revolution: - {Negative}



### Green Revolution through diagram:



## Green Revolution 2.0

- Green Revolution 2.0 is seen to make agriculture more adaptive and resilient to the changing climate and socio-economic conditions, and to ensure food and nutrition security for the present and future generations.

**Features of Green Revolution 2.0 are:**

### **Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering:**

- Strong emphasis on biotechnology and genetic engineering to develop crops that are more resilient to climate change, pests, and diseases.

### **Precision Agriculture:**

- It involves the use of advanced technologies like GPS-guided tractors and drones to optimize the use of resources such as water, fertilizers, and pesticides. Precision agriculture can increase efficiency and reduce the environmental footprint of farming.

### **Sustainability:**

- Green Revolution 2.0 prioritizes sustainability by promoting practices that conserve soil health, reduce chemical inputs, and minimize the environmental impact of agriculture. This includes organic farming, agroecology, and integrated pest management.

### **Diversification:**

- Unlike the first Green Revolution, which primarily focused on a few staple crops like wheat and rice, Green Revolution 2.0 promotes crop diversification.
- Encouraging the cultivation of a wider variety of crops can enhance nutrition, reduce risks associated with mono-cropping, and preserve biodiversity.

### **Holistic Approach:**

- Green Revolution 2.0 takes a holistic view of agriculture, recognizing that it's not just about crop production but also includes aspects like soil health, food processing, marketing, and value addition. Integrated approaches address the entire food supply chain.

### **Environmental Considerations:**

- Efforts are made to mitigate the negative environmental impacts associated with modern agriculture, such as soil erosion, water pollution, and greenhouse gas emissions. Sustainable practices aim to minimize these effects.



**Adaptation to Climate Change:**

- As climate change poses new challenges to agriculture, Green Revolution 2.0 seeks to develop climate-resilient crop varieties and practices that can adapt to changing weather patterns and extremes.

**Green Revolution – Krishonnati Yojana: -**

- The government of India introduced the Green Revolution Krishonnati Yojana in 2005 to boost the agriculture sector.
- Government through the scheme plans to develop the agriculture and allied sector in a holistic & scientific manner to increase the income of farmers.

**It comprises of 11 schemes and mission under a single umbrella scheme:**

- Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH)
- National Food Security Mission (NFSM)
- National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA)
- Submission on Agriculture Extension (SMAE)
- Sub-Mission on Seeds and Planting Material (SMSP)
- Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanization (SMAM)
- Sub-Mission on Plant Protection and Plant Quarantine (SMPPQ)
- Integrated Scheme on Agriculture Census, Economics and Statistics (ISACES)
- Integrated Scheme on Agricultural Cooperation (ISAC)
- Integrated Scheme on Agricultural Marketing (ISAM)
- National e-Governance Plan in Agriculture (NeGP-A)

**Evergreen Revolution: -**

- The improvements brought out by the Green Revolution came at the cost of adverse environmental effects in areas subjected to intensive farming.
- However, where population pressure is high, there is no option except to produce more food.
- Hence, the need for the Evergreen Revolution was called out by Dr. M S Swaminathan, the Father of the Green Revolution in India.
- Under the Evergreen Revolution, it is envisaged that productivity must increase, but in ways which are environmentally safe, economically viable and socially sustainable.
- The evergreen revolution involves the integration of ecological principles in technology development and dissemination.



## Conclusion: -

- Green Revolution was directed towards food sufficiency for the country. The goal has been achieved. Thus, now it requires sustainable agricultural pattern. Also, much wider area could be brought under the Green Revolution and **instead of Green Revolution it can be transformed into evergreen Revolution.**
- The green revolution pulled India out of a major food crisis and provided unprecedented food security. The success story helped the country achieve self-sufficiency and even an export market of food grains.

## Gender Gap: Nobel Prize in Economics 2023

### Context: -

- Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel (popularly known as Nobel Prize in Economics), 2023, has been awarded to **Claudia Goldin.**
- She has been awarded for advancing our understanding of the labour market gender gap.
- Ms Goldin is the third woman to win the prize after Elinor Ostrom in 2009 and Esther Duflo in 2019.

### What was Claudia Goldin's Research?

- Goldin's work has shed light on the participation of women in the labour market over the past 200 years and explained the persistent gender pay gap despite women often having higher education levels in high-income countries.
- While her research focused on the US, her findings apply to many other countries.

### Key Findings of Claudia Goldin's Research

#### Economic Growth and Women Employment

- By using 200 years of data, Goldin challenged the prevailing belief among researchers that women's labour force participation increased with economic growth.
- In the agrarian economy, more women were involved in economic activities. But during industrialisation, concentrated work in factories posed challenges for women to commute from their homes. So, women's participation in the economy decreased.
- However, women's economic participation began to rise in the early 20th century due to the growth of the services sector.

## Factors Limiting the Narrowing of Gender Employment Gap

### Limitations of Marriage -

- By the beginning of the 20th century, about 20% of women were employed, but only 5% of married women were in the workforce due to "marriage bars."

### Women's Expectation-

- Women's expectations were influenced by their mothers' experiences, leading to educational and professional choices that did not anticipate long, uninterrupted careers.

### Pay Gap-

- When both men and women worked in factories with pay tied to daily output, the gender pay gap was minimal. However, it widened with the introduction of monthly pay contracts.

### Parenthood-

- One factor that significantly impacted how men were paid versus women was childbirth.
- Women faced pay penalties at work due to their increased parenting responsibilities and a slower ascent up the pay scale.

## Factors Supporting the Narrowing of Gender Employment Gap

### Contraceptive Pills

- By the end of the 1960s, as easy-to-use contraceptive pills became more popular. So, women could exercise greater control over childbirth and plan careers and motherhood.
- Women also ventured beyond the services sector, studying law, economics, and medicine.

### PYQs

- Distinguish between 'care economy' and 'monetized economy'. How can care economy be brought into monetized economy through women empowerment? (Answer in 250 words) 15

## Border Infrastructure

### Context: -

- The defence minister recently inaugurated 90 projects of the Border Road Organisation strengthening the border infrastructure of the country.

### What are the Border Infrastructure Developments?

#### Multi-Pronged Approach:

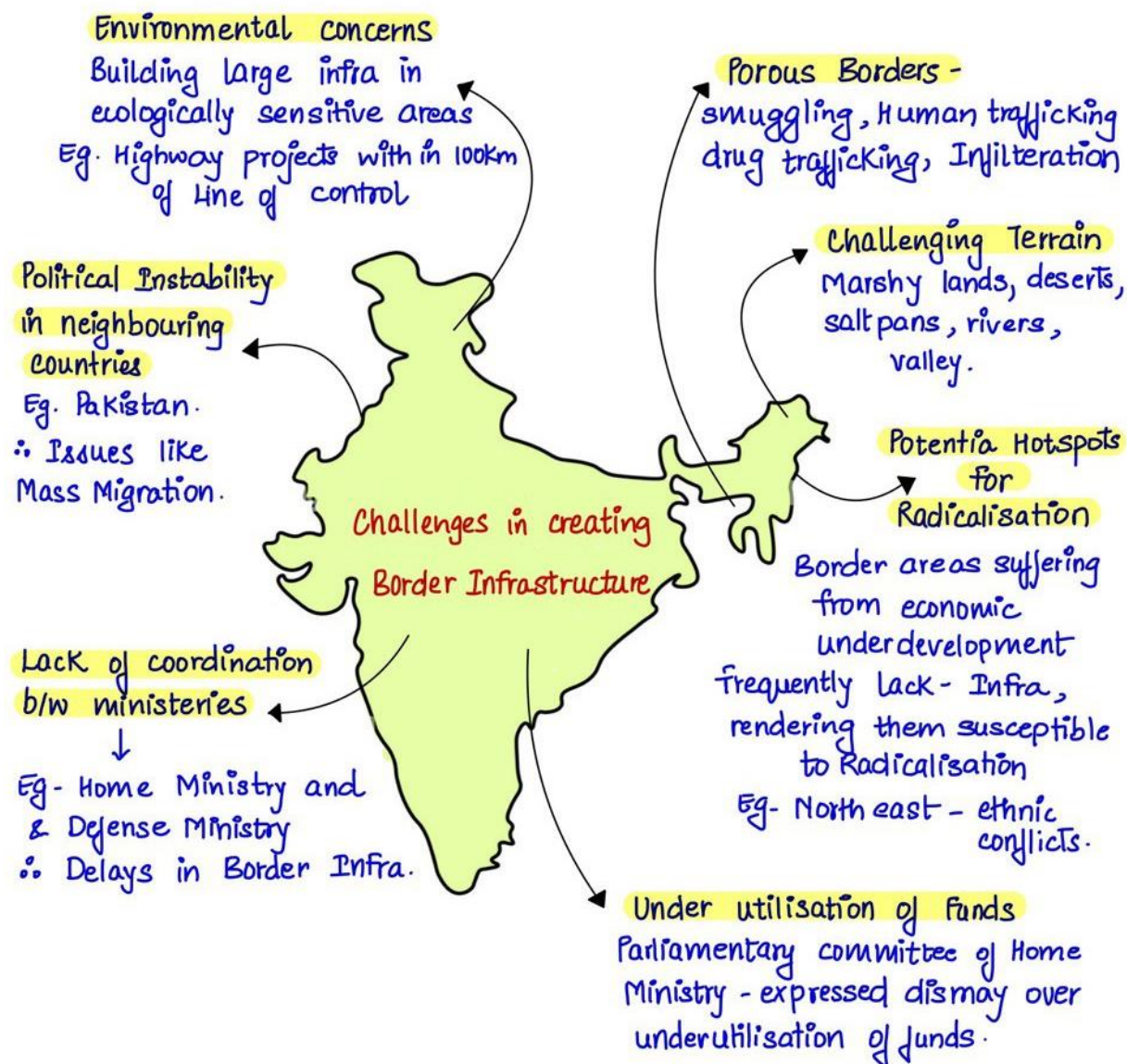
- Improving connectivity to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) through roads, bridges and tunnels.
- For instance, the length of roads constructed in the China border areas in the period from 2014 to 2022 (6,806 km) is almost double the length constructed from 2008-2014 (3,610 km).
- Improving cross-border connectivity to neighbouring countries via highways, bridges, inland waterways, railroads, electricity lines and fuel pipelines.
- Modernising and constructing Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) at all the border crossings to smooth trade, and funding and constructing infrastructure projects in neighbouring countries.

### Need for Strengthening Border Infrastructure: -





## Challenges in creating border infrastructure: -



## Initiatives to Secure Borders: -

### Border Road Organization:

- Founded in 1960, the organisation plays a major role in providing defence infrastructure including roads, bridges, highways, airports, tunnels, buildings and other such structures.

### Vibrant Villages Programme:

- Centrally Sponsored Scheme, which aims to develop the essential infrastructure and creation of livelihood opportunities in certain districts and



border blocks of 4 states and 1 UT namely Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Ladakh.

### **Border Infrastructure and Management (BIM):**

- Central Sector Umbrella Scheme which aims to provide better roads, electricity, and communication infrastructure along the border areas.

### **Comprehensive Integrated Border Management System (CIBMS):**

- An integrated system that utilises high-tech surveillance devices such as sensors, detectors, cameras, radar systems to address the gaps in the present system of border security.
- It is also known as **smart fencing border**.

### **Implementation of recommendations of Shekatkar Committee:**

- It is relating to border Infrastructure like Outsourcing Road construction work, Introduction of modern construction plants, Land acquisition and all statutory clearances etc.

### **Way Forward: -**

- Integrate local communities in border management, and make them as eyes and ears for the forces, promoting better surveillance across the border
- Reducing the distance between inter Border Outposts across open borders, so as to reduce the cases of trafficking, smuggling and fake currencies.
- Utilise Technology, like LIDAR, Laser Fencing, flood lightings, CCTVs, Drone Surveillance etc... in feasible areas of the borders and create Border Protection Grid in every border State.
- Continuous upgradation of the present inventory of equipment and accessories in conjunction with the new project so that they are also utilized optimally.
- Private sector participation should be encouraged, and their capacities can be utilised in the technological up gradation aspects and in context of electronic and surveillance equipment and maintenance.

### **PYQ**

- Border management is a complex task due to difficult terrain and hostile relations with some countries. Elucidate the challenges and strategies for effective border management. **(2016)**

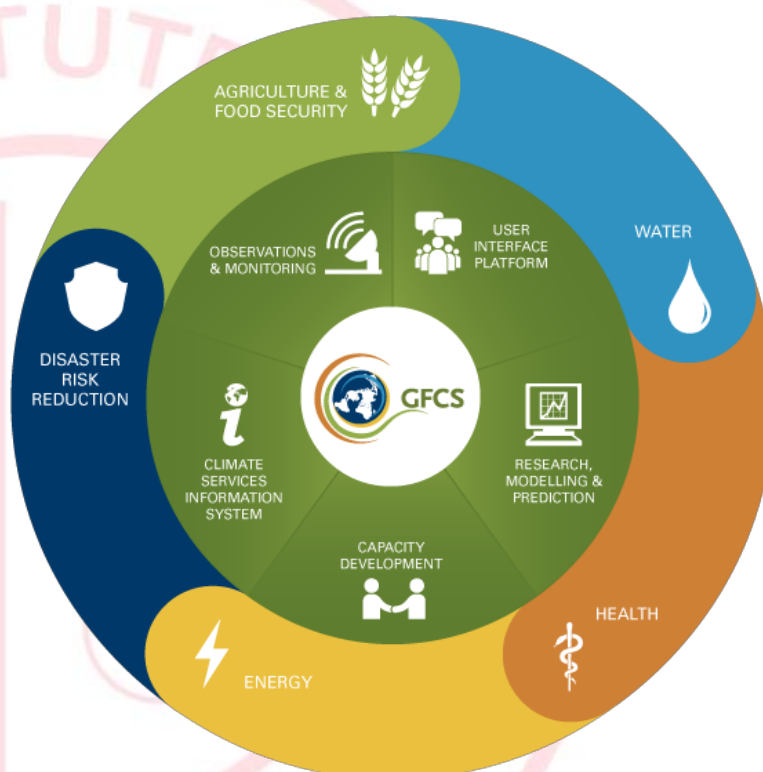
**Q. Department of Border Management is a Department of which one of the following Union Ministries? (2008)**

- a) Ministry of Defence
- b) Ministry of Home Affairs
- c) Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways
- d) Ministry of Environment and Forests

## National Framework for Climate Services (NFCS)

**Context: -**

- India will launch its **maiden national-level framework, the National Framework for Climate Services (NFCS)**, to provide climate services and information.
- **Led by the India Meteorological Department (Ministry of Earth Sciences)**, the NFCS will aim to mitigate climate risks for key sectors: agriculture, energy, disaster management, health, and water.



## Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS)

- NFCS is based on the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS).
- Under **World Meteorological Organisation (WMO)**
- GFCS is a partnership of governments and organisations at a global level for enhanced climate information and service production and utilisation.
- **Aim of GFCS:** to unite climate information users and researchers for informed, actionable decisions and long-term improvement.
- Its establishment was announced during the 3rd World Climate Conference, Geneva (2009).
- GFCS focuses on developing and delivering services in five priority areas:
  1. Agriculture and Food Security

2. Disaster Risk Reduction
3. Energy
4. Health
5. Water

### Role of NFCS

- In lines with the GFCS, the NFCS is based on country-specific weather and stakeholder needs.
- Unlike GFCS, the nodal agency for formulation and implementation of NFCS in India will be IMD.
- Initially, NFCS will bridge gaps between agencies needing climate services. These include hydrology, power, renewable energy, transport, dams, irrigation, and health agencies.

### Benefits of NFCS

- Systematic and accurate collection, analysis, and management of data for informed decision-making
- Resilience building through early warnings and climate predictions.
- Optimized resource allocation, adaptation, and mitigation strategies
- Improved response to climate-related health risks and emergencies
- Capacity building through cross-sectoral integration

### Countries that have launched the NFCS: -

- Switzerland, China, Germany and the UK.

### World Meteorological Organisation (WMO):

- It is an intergovernmental organisation.
- 193 members
- Established in 1950
- It originated from International Meteorological Organization (IMO), which was founded in 1873.
- WMO is the specialised agency of the UN for meteorology (weather and climate), operational hydrology and related geophysical sciences.
- HQ: Geneva, Switzerland
- **India is a member of WMO.**
- Its mandate covers weather, climate, and water resources.
- It is dedicated to international cooperation and coordination on state and behaviour of Earth's atmosphere, its interaction with land and oceans, the weather and climate and distribution of water resources.
- **Reports:** State of Climate report, Greenhouse Gas Bulletin report among others.

## Can Universal Basic Income tackle India's poverty?

### Context: -

- Localised experiments with universal basic income have shown mostly positive outcomes across states, strengthening calls in favour of the social policy.
- Bujjamma and Yellaiah Alankunta are among the 1,250 beneficiaries of the WorkFREE pilot for universal basic income support in the slums of Hyderabad.

### What is UBI?

- UBI is a programme where every adult citizen receives regular, fixed payments as income support.
- Universal Basic Income (UBI) is a social welfare proposal in which all the beneficiaries regularly receive a guaranteed income in the form of an unconditional transfer payment.
- The goals of a basic income system are to alleviate poverty and replace other need-based social programs that potentially require greater bureaucratic involvement.
- UBI is typically intended to reach all (or a very large portion of the population) with no (or minimal) conditions.

### UBI has mainly 4 components:

- **Universality:** It is universal in nature.
- **Periodic:** Payments at regular intervals (not one-off grants)
- **Individuality:** Payments to individuals
- **Unconditionality:** No preconditions attached with the cash transfer.

### Arguments in Favour of UBI in India: -

- Social Justice
- Poverty Reduction
- **Agency:** By taking the individual as the unit of beneficiary, UBI can enhance agency (esp. of women).
- **Employment:** UBI promotes non-exploitative bargaining by freeing individuals from accepting harsh working conditions for survival.
- **Administrative Efficiency:** It will help to overcome the weaknesses of existing welfare schemes (like misallocation, leakages, and exclusion of the poor).
- **Choice:** UBI provides unconditional cash benefits, allowing people to choose and pursue their goals.
- **No exclusion error:** As all individuals are targeted, the exclusion error (poor being left out) is zero.
- **Insurance against shocks:** UBI will provide a safety net against health, income, and other shocks.

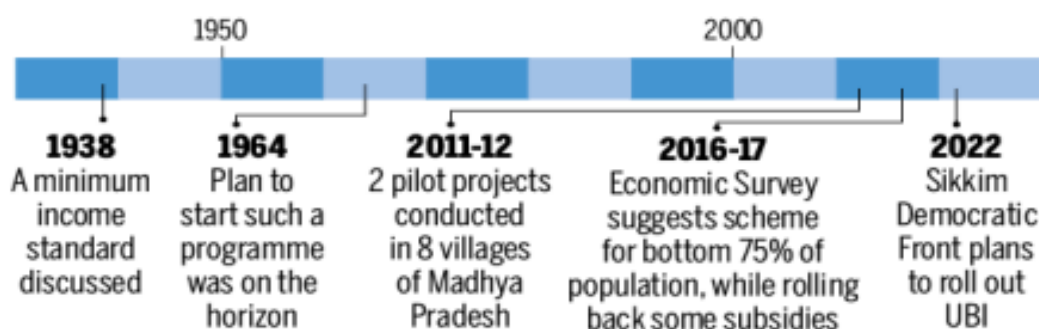


- **Financial inclusion:** Direct benefit transfers will improve financial inclusion.
- **Psychological benefits:** A guaranteed income will reduce the pressures of finding a basic living daily.
- **Ready infrastructure:** When the trinity of Jan-Dhan, Aadhaar, and Mobile (popularly called JAM) is fully adopted, the transfer of UBI benefits will become easy.

### Arguments Against UBI in India: -


- **Conspicuous spending:** Beneficiaries (esp. male) may spend the cash benefit on wasteful activities.
- **Reduction in labour supply:** This guaranteed income might make people lazy and opt out of the labour market (this has happened with MGNREGA).
- **Gender disparity:** Gender norms can influence UBI sharing within households, often with men having more control over spending.
- **Implementation:** A UBI may put too much stress on the banking system (the banking infra is already stressed with Jan Dhan Yojana and various DBT schemes like PM KISAN SAMMAN NIDHI).
- **Fiscal cost:** The UBI's burden on the state exchequer will raise concerns about funding and taxation.
- **Difficulty in exit:** Once introduced, it may become difficult for the government to wind up a UBI.
- **Inflation:** Injecting large amounts of money into the economy through UBI can lead to inflation.
- **Market fluctuations:** Cash transfers, unlike stable food subsidies, can see their purchasing power reduced by market price fluctuations.
- **Diverse Society:** Due to India's diversity, one-size-fits-all initiatives like UBI may fail.

## INDIA'S TRYST WITH INCOME SUPPORT



### UBI ACROSS THE WORLD

<p><b>US</b>   Alaska Permanent Fund distributes part of the state's oil revenues to all residents on per-capita basis</p> <p><b>Stockton, California</b> Secured funding from private non-profits to launch a small project with about 100 participants receiving \$500 a month for about 18 months</p> <p><b>Finland</b>   Scheme started in 2017 to pay 2,000 jobless people assistance of €560 a month stopped last year</p>	<p><b>Kenya</b>   Largest experiment underway with some villages receiving \$0.50-1 a day</p> <p><b>Brazil</b>   Has run experiments</p> <p><b>Canada</b>   Ontario plans to test a basic income scheme</p>	<p><b>France</b>   A senate committee has recommended an experiment</p> <p><b>UK &amp; Germany</b>   Studies have been conducted</p> <p><b>Scotland</b>   Committed funds to conduct an experiment</p> <p><b>Barcelona, British Columbia</b>   Plans to start experiments</p> <p><b>Switzerland</b>   Plan to give everyone right to basic income defeated in 2016</p>
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### Alternatives can India Take in Place of Universal Basic Income: -

- **Quasi UBRI:**
  - QUBRI is a variant of universal basic income (UBI), which is defined as a transfer that is provided universally, unconditionally, and in cash.
  - The idea was proposed by former Chief Economic Adviser to provide a direct cash transfer of Rs 18,000 per year to each rural household in India, except those which are “demonstrably well-off” to tackle agrarian distress.
- **Direct Benefits Transfers (DBT):** Schemes like PM Kisan, Pradhanmantri Jan Dhan Yojana etc are fine examples of success of DBT.
- **Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT):** This is a scheme that provides cash to poor households on the condition that they fulfil certain requirements, such as sending their children to school, immunizing them, or attending health check-ups.
- **Employment Guarantee Schemes:** India already has a successful example of this with the MGNREGA.
- **Skill Development and Training:**
  - Effective implementation of schemes like PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDU-GKY) and PM Rojgar Protsahan Yojana (PMRPY) etc.
- **Inclusive Development:** Focus on creating more opportunities and capabilities for people to participate in and contribute to the economy and society, rather than providing them with a fixed amount of money.

## Universal Basic Insurance vs Universal Basic Income

- Universal basic insurance is a programme in which all citizens receive a basic level of insurance coverage, regardless of their income or employment status.
- Universal basic insurance is a better proposition for India for two reasons.
  - India's insurance penetration (premium as a percentage of GDP) has been hovering around 4% for many years compared to 17%, 9%, and 6% in Taiwan, Japan and China, respectively.
  - Although the economy is mostly informal, data on this sector is now accessible to businesses through GSTIN and unorganised workers through e-Shram.

### Conclusion: -

- Rather than jumping to UBI, focus should be on improving basic infrastructure and accessibility to insurance.
- **"If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. If you teach a man to fish, you feed him for a lifetime"**. Effective education system will produce skilled youth and eliminate the need for UBI.

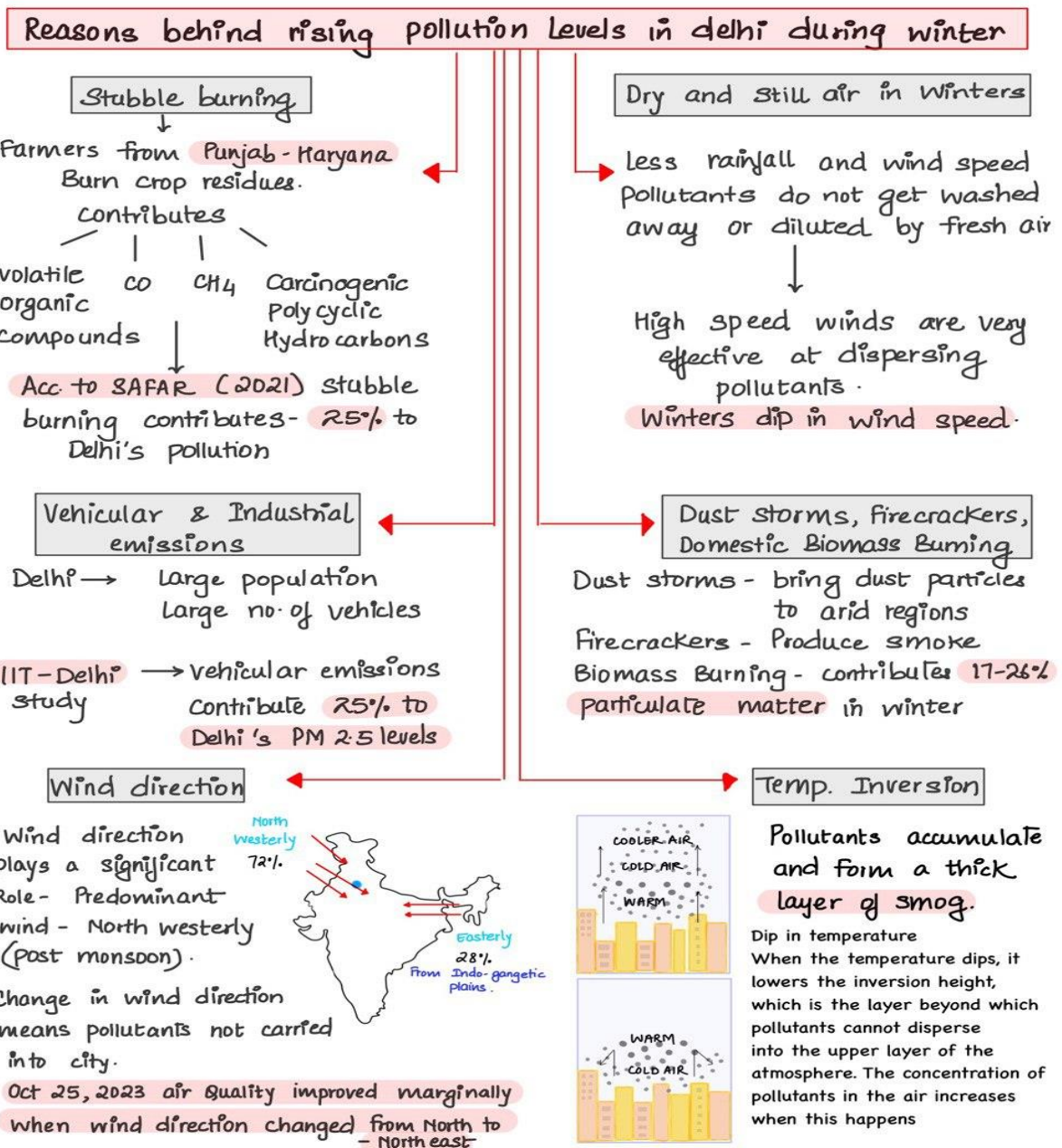


## Delhi's Pollution

### Context: -

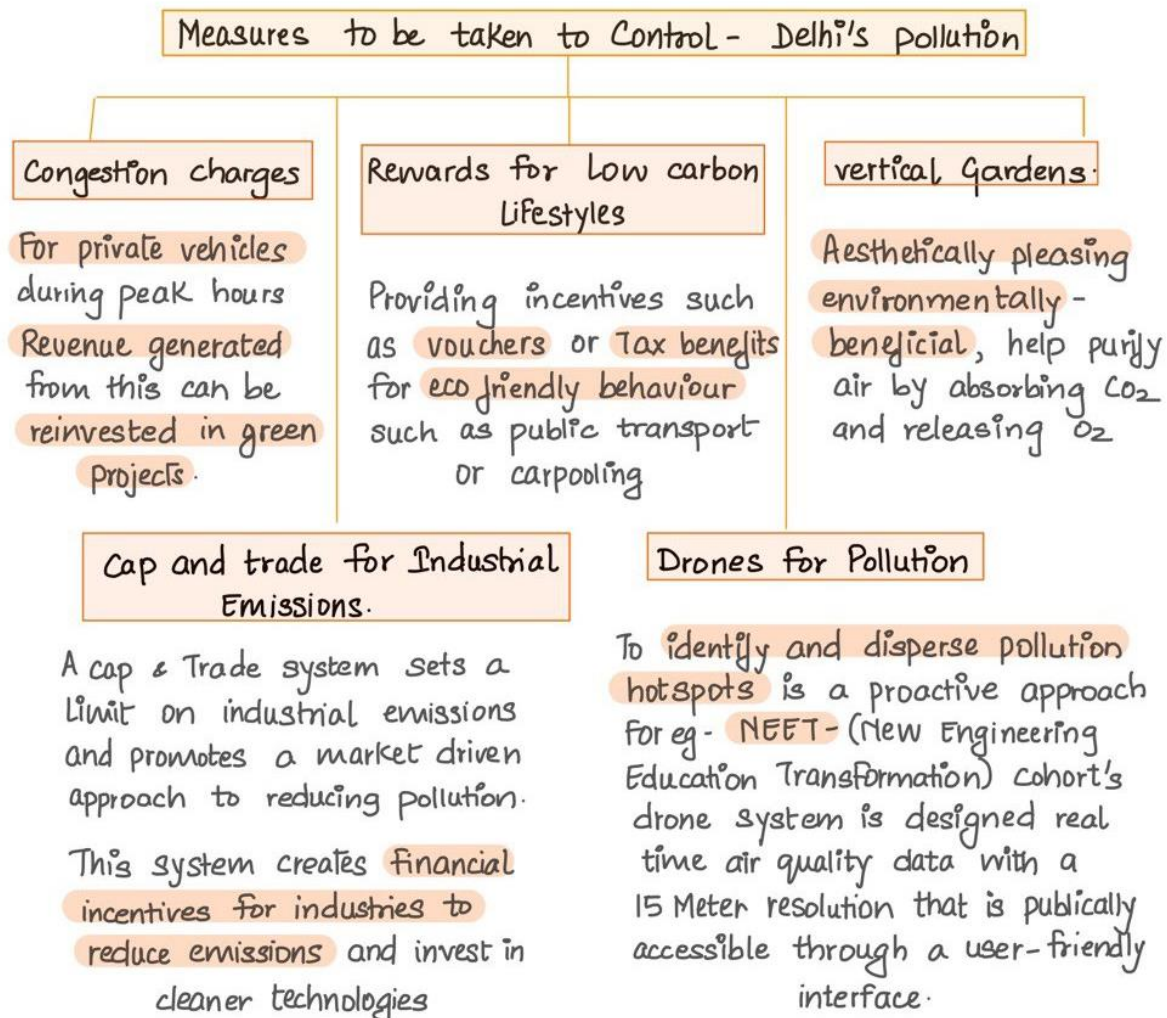
- Delhi's pollution is a serious health hazard that affects millions of people every year. Recently, Delhi got a trailer of the inevitable environmental misery that awaits it in the coming months i.e., Air pollution.
- According to a study by the Indian Council of Medical Research, air pollution was responsible for 1.67 million deaths in India in 2019, and Delhi had the highest per capita mortality rate due to air pollution among all states.

### Reasons behind Rising Pollution levels in Delhi during Winters: -





## Measures should be taken to Control Delhi's Pollution: -



## Government Initiatives to Control Delhi's Pollution: -

### Green War Room:

- A nine-member team that monitors the actions taken by 20 government agencies against pollution on a real-time and daily basis.

### Anti-Pollution Campaign:

- Delhi Government has recently launched a major anti-pollution campaign, Yuddh Pradushan Ke Viruddh, which includes a tree transplantation and other such initiatives.

**Green Delhi App:**

- A mobile app that allows citizens to report any instances of pollution such as garbage burning, industrial emissions, or traffic congestion.

**Bio-Decomposer:**

- A solution developed by PUSA institute that helps farmers decompose the crop residue in their fields without burning it. The government provides free spraying of bio-decomposer in Delhi's farmlands.

**Water Sprinklers:**

- The use of water sprinklers, mechanized road sweeping machines, anti-smog guns, and sprinkling facilities on high-rise buildings to reduce dust and particulate matter in the air.

**Smog Towers:**

- The installation of smog towers that use large fans and filters to purify the air. The first smog tower has been set up at Connaught Place and has shown positive effects.

**Pollution Hotspots:**

- The identification of 21 pollution hotspots in Delhi and deploying special teams to monitor and mitigate the sources of pollution in these areas.

**Conclusion: -**

- Awareness and Proper planning, management and development strategies can help protect the environment.
- What happened in Delhi is now much common sight in important cities in India, so we need to focus on root cause of this and need to work holistically.

## Cloud Seeding

### Context: -

- Cloud seeding **experiment in Solapur of Maharashtra resulted in 18% more rainfall than normal conditions.**
- Solapur falls on the leeward side of the Western Ghats and hence normally gets low rainfall.

### What is cloud seeding?

- Cloud seeding is a weather modification technology that artificially stimulates rainfall by spraying chemical substances into the air that serve as cloud condensation nuclei.
- Cloud condensation nuclei are small particles upon which water vapour condenses to form clouds.
- The chemical substances used are **silver iodides, potassium iodides, dry ice (solid carbon dioxide) or liquid propane.**
- It works only when there are enough pre-existing clouds in the atmosphere.

## OPENING UP THE CLOUDS

### WHAT IS CLOUD SEEDING

A weather-modification technology that can create rain in drought-affected areas and also help fight air pollution

### HOW IT WORKS

Scientists use aircraft or rockets to inject silver iodide or another substance into the atmosphere to mimic ice nuclei

### HELPING HAND

Clouds often lack naturally occurring ice nuclei, so injecting them with silver iodide particles (which are very similar in structure to ice) increases the number of nuclei

### HOW IT HAPPENS

It makes the clouds more efficient at generating ice crystals that either fall as snowflakes or melt to produce raindrops, depending on temperatures in and beneath the cloud. Cloud seeding is also used to disperse fog banks near some airports



The amount of rain or snow a cloud can produce depends on a balance between the number of ice nuclei inside it and the amount of water available to grow around those nuclei



## Cloud seeding works if done correctly

Cloud seeding experiments were carried out in Solapur city, which gets less rainfall, from June to September in 2018 and 2019

- There was 18% increase in rainfall over a 100 sq.km area in Solapur city due to cloud seeding
- Approximate cost of producing water through cloud seeding was 18 paisa per litre. The cost can drop by over 50% if indigenous seeding aircraft are used
- 20-25% of cumulus clouds produce rainfall if cloud seeding is done correctly
- Cloud seeding alone cannot mitigate droughts but can help produce additional rainfall that can partially address water requirements

**Not all:**  
As microphysics of clouds vary widely, not all clouds produce rainfall through cloud seeding

- Calcium chloride flare was used for seeding the clouds. The seeding was done at the base of the warm convective clouds and at a time when the clouds were growing
- The study was carried out for two years to understand the microphysics and characteristics of convective clouds that can be targeted to enhance rainfall
- The work provides elaborate protocols and technical guidance to plan and conduct cloud seeding in India



### Different Cloud Seeding Methods

- **Hygroscopic Cloud Seeding:** Salts are sprayed through explosives in the lower portions of clouds.
- **Static Cloud Seeding:** Chemicals like silver iodide crystals are sprayed into clouds.
- **Dynamic Cloud Seeding:** Vertical air currents are boosted to encourage more water to pass through the clouds which translates into more rain.
- In the Solapur experiment, hygroscopic cloud seeding was used and calcium chloride flare was used for seeding the clouds.

### Applications of Cloud Seeding

- Increases rainfall.
- **Regulates weather:** Creates favourable microclimates by dispersing fog, suppressing hail, and modifying cyclones.
- Controls air pollution and water pollution

### Limitations of Cloud Seeding: -

- **Cannot mitigate drought:** It can simply partially address the water requirements.
- Cannot produce rainfall from all clouds.



- More Costly
- It is not guaranteeing method.
- Sophisticated Technology.
- Imbalance the troposphere.

## Challenges in Cloud Seeding

### Cause abnormal weather conditions:

- For e.g., when naturally less moisture place receives more rainfall, then it may cause flash floods.

### Harmful for environment and health:

- Chemicals used in cloud seeding are toxic.

### Contribute to global warming:

- The chemicals used in cloud seeding are a source of GHGs.

### Conclusion: -

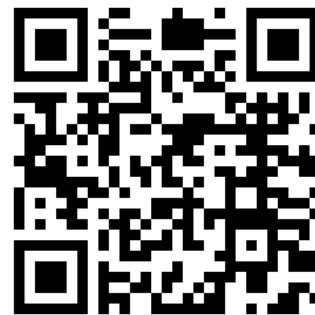
- Cloud Seeding is method which is treating symptoms of disease rather than pathogens of disease. We need to focus on root cause and that is Climate Change.

QR Code of Lectures

Oct First Week



Oct Second Week



Oct 3<sup>rd</sup> Week



Oct 4<sup>th</sup> Week



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