



FORTUNE WEEKLY DIGEST



> Food Security

> India-Ukraine Relations

> Kurukshethra: Tribal Art & Culture

18th AUGUST - 24th AUGUST, 2024

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EDITOR'S NOTE

As UPSC aspirants, it is essential to stay updated on current affairs to excel in the examination. This **Fortune Weekly Digest (ForWarD)** brings you the latest news and developments from around the world, carefully curated and analyzed to help you prepare for the Civil Services (Main) Examination.

We understand that time is precious, and we have made sure to present the information in a concise and easy-to-understand manner.

The magazine is divided into different sections. Mains relevant topics have been covered in detail with a UPSC previous year question perspective. The jot downs are examples and interesting facts to enrich your answer writing. Cherrypicks has some key words from the week, helpful again in answer writing and essay. We have also included essay topics and sample questions to help you gauge your preparation.

We have designed this magazine to best supplement the daily current affairs notes we have launched by the name of **FIND (Fortune IAS News Daily)** and **FINDER (Fortune IAS News Daily Explainer)** and the **Fortune Prelims Precise** monthly compilation. This magazine will be explained in detail and your queries addressed in a live class we conduct.

At a time when there is no dearth of current affairs materials, our hope is help you get a one-stop solution for all your current affairs needs.

This magazine is a work in progress and your feedback will be appreciated.

We hope that this magazine will serve as a valuable resource for your exam preparation and contribute to your success in the UPSC examination.

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**FIRST ATTEMPT TOPPERS FROM
OUR PRELIMS CUM MAINS BATCH**

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INDIA-UKRAINE RELATION

Syllabus: GS II - International Relations

PYQ MAPPING

Q) Indian diaspora has a decisive role to play in the politics and economy of America and European Countries'. Comment with examples. **(2020)**

Q) "If the last few decades were of Asia's growth story, the next few are expected to be of Africa's." In the light of this statement, examine India's influence in Africa in recent years. **(2021)**

Q) Clean energy is the order of the day.' Describe briefly India's changing policy towards climate change in various international fora in the context of geopolitics. **(2022)**

SHORT TAKES

BHISHM Cubes:

- **Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita & Maitri (BHISHM) Cubes** are innovative mobile medical units developed by India to provide emergency medical care, particularly in conflict zones and disaster-affected areas
- Each BHISHM Cube consists of medicines and equipment for the first line of care for all kinds of injuries and medical situations.
- It also includes **surgical equipment** for a basic Operation Room that can manage 10-15 basic surgeries per day.
- The Cube has the capacity to handle about 200 cases of diverse nature in emergency situations such as trauma, bleeding, burns, fractures, etc.
- It can also generate its own power and oxygen in limited amounts.

WHY IN NEWS

Recently, the Indian Prime Minister visited Ukraine at the invitation of Ukraine's President. It was the first Indian head of state to visit Ukraine since its independence in 1991.

INTRODUCTION

India-Ukraine relations have gained significant attention following the Indian Prime Minister's historic visit to the war-torn country, which aimed to deepen bilateral ties of both nations. The visit, focused on defence cooperation, came just six weeks after his trip to Moscow, highlighting India's efforts to balance its position on the Russia-Ukraine war.



KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE VISIT

➔ India's Position on the Russia-Ukraine War:

- o India's Prime Minister has clarified that the country has never maintained a neutral stance regarding the Russia-Ukraine conflict, consistently advocating for peace.
- o India calls for genuine engagement among all parties involved to discover practical solutions for a swift resolution to the conflict.

➔ Establishment of an Intergovernmental Commission:

- o An Intergovernmental Commission has been set up between India and Ukraine **to revive**

and strengthen bilateral trade and economic relations, aiming to restore them to pre-conflict levels.

- o Bilateral trade reached USD 3.386 billion in the 2021-22 fiscal year.

➔ BHISHMA Cubes Presented to Ukraine:

- o India has donated four **BHISHMA cubes** (Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita & Maitri), to Ukraine.
- o These cubes are intended to offer emergency medical care through mobile hospitals.

- o This initiative falls under **Project Aarogya Maitri**, which focuses on supplying critical medical resources and ensuring the swift establishment of medical facilities in emergency situations.

→ Defence cooperation:

- o The sides agreed to hold the 2nd meeting of the Indian-Ukrainian Joint Working Group on Military-Technical Cooperation, established under the 2012 Defence Cooperation Agreement, in the near future in India.

→ Signing of MoU's:

Memorandum of Understanding were signed for various subjects:

- o MoU on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture and Food Industry;
- o MoU on Cooperation in the field of Medical Products Regulation;
- o MoU on Indian Humanitarian Grant Assistance for Implementation of High Impact Community Development Projects; and

- o MoU on the Programme for Cultural Cooperation for 2024-2028.

→ Cultural cooperation:

- o The sides welcomed the conclusion of the **bilateral Programme of Cultural Cooperation**, and the decision to hold festivals of culture in India and Ukraine.
- o The Leaders emphasised the importance of sustaining and further expanding people-to-people and cultural exchanges, including through scholarships offered under the **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation programme** and the **General Cultural Scholarship Scheme of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations**.

→ Solidarity with Lives Lost:

- o The Prime Minister visited the multimedia Martyrologist exhibit on children at the National Museum of History of Ukraine in Kyiv, expressing his sorrow over the tragic loss of young lives by placing a toy in their memory as a mark of respect.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE VISIT

☀ Historic visit:

- o Narendra Modi is the first Indian Prime Minister to visit Ukraine since its independence in 1991.

☀ Advocacy for Peaceful Resolution:

- o The Prime Minister's visit underscored India's commitment to dialogue and diplomacy as means to resolve the Ukraine-Russia conflict, highlighting India's preference for a peaceful solution while remaining impartial.

☀ Re-engagement with European Security:

- o Prime Minister Modi's visit to Ukraine represents a notable shift in India's focus on European security, an area that has been largely neglected in recent

decades.

☀ Broader Foreign Policy Shift:

- o Modi's upcoming visit to Kyiv and recent trip to Moscow signal a strategic realignment towards active global diplomacy, enhancing India's role in European peace and security efforts.

☀ Shift of Production bases to India:

- o Close cooperation between India and Ukraine can help in shifting production bases of Ukrainian manufacturing companies in India.
 - For ex- Shifting of the gas turbine manufacturing company, Zorya-Mashproekt's base in India.

AREAS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN INDIA AND UKRAINE

Trade and Economic Relations:

- o **Bilateral Trade:** As of 2021-22, trade between the two countries reached USD 3.386 billion.
 - **India imports :** chemicals, machinery, and equipment from Ukraine.
 - **Ukraine imports:** pharmaceuticals, ores, and minerals from India

- o **Economic Projects:** The establishment of an Intergovernmental Commission focuses on deepening economic ties and addressing trade barriers.

Defence Cooperation:

- o Ukraine has been a source of military technology and equipment for India since its independence.
 - **Example:** Ukraine manufactured R-27 air-to-

air missiles are used on the **SU-30MKI fighters** operated by Indian Air force (IAF).

- o India has also started exporting defence equipment to Ukraine, during its war with Russia.

Agriculture:

- o **Technology Exchange:** India and Ukraine have collaborated on agricultural technology and practices to improve productivity.
 - For instance, joint projects have focused on enhancing crop yields and agricultural techniques.
- o **Agricultural Cooperation Agreements:** Agreements have been signed to promote cooperation in agricultural research and development.

Cultural Cooperation:

- o Events such as Indian cultural festivals and exhibitions have been held in Ukraine to showcase Indian art, music, dance, and cuisine.
 - For example, the annual "**Indian Culture Festival**" in Kyiv highlights India's diverse cultural heritage.
- o Educational Initiatives: Scholarships and educational exchanges have been established to enhance academic collaboration and cultural ties.

Humanitarian Assistance:

- o India has provided 12 consignments measuring 99.3 tons of humanitarian medical assistance to Ukraine in the wake of the Ukraine-Russia war.
- o Indian Pharmaceutical Companies have donated more than USD 8 million worth of medical aid and financial assistance to Ukraine.

CHALLENGES

Geopolitical Tensions:

- o **Conflict Impact:** The ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict has significantly affected India-Ukraine relations.
 - India's neutral stance on the conflict has occasionally strained relations, particularly with Ukraine's increasing reliance on Western support and assistance.

Economic and Trade Barriers:

- o **Declining bilateral Trade:** The volume of India-Ukraine trade has dropped from \$3.39 billion in 2021-22 to \$0.71 billion in 2023-24, due to the ongoing Russia-Ukraine Crisis.
- o **Economic Disruptions:** The Ukraine conflict has led to disruptions in key economic sectors, including agriculture and energy, affecting trade dynamics.
 - **Example:** Impact on the supply chain of sunflower oil, has led to rising inflation in the country.

Limited Strategic Engagement:

- o **Defence Cooperation:** Although there have been some collaborations in defence technology, such as the joint development of defence systems, the scale of defence cooperation is limited compared to other strategic partnerships.

Ukraine's criticism of India's Policies in the past:

- o Ukraine's criticism of India's Nuclear Test and India's Kashmir policy has also been an irritant in India's full steamed engagement with Ukraine.

Humanitarian and Political Issues:

- o **Humanitarian Concerns:**
 - The Ukraine conflict has created a complex humanitarian situation, with significant impacts on civilian populations.
 - India's humanitarian assistance, like the donation of BHISHMA cubes, reflects its support but also highlights the broader humanitarian challenges.
- o **Political Sensitivities:** India's cautious approach to international conflicts, including its neutral stance on the Russia-Ukraine war, can sometimes create diplomatic sensitivities and challenges in bilateral relations.

WAY FORWARD

* Deepening Economic Cooperation:

- o **Diversifying Trade:** Focus on diversifying trade beyond traditional sectors. Explore opportunities in **technology, pharmaceuticals, and renewable energy**.
 - **Example:** Encouraging Ukraine to become a member of the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**.
- o **Investment Initiatives:** Encourage bilateral investments in key sectors such as infrastructure, agritech, and defence. Develop joint ventures and collaborative projects to boost economic ties.

* Leveraging Global South Solidarity:

- o India should engage with other Global South countries to build a coalition that promotes peace and development in conflict regions like Ukraine.

* Enhancing Strategic Engagement:

- o **Defence and Security Collaboration:** Expand cooperation in defence technology and security.
 - Explore joint defence projects and strategic dialogues to address mutual security interests.
- o **Strategic Partnerships:** Strengthen partnerships with other key players in Europe to enhance strategic support for Ukraine and align with India's broader foreign policy objectives.

* Expanding Cultural and Educational Exchanges:

- o **Cultural Programs:** Increase cultural exchange

programs, including festivals, art exhibitions, and performing arts.

- Promote mutual understanding through cultural diplomacy.

- o **Educational Partnerships:** Develop more exchange programs and collaborations between universities and research institutions. Increase scholarships and academic partnerships to enhance educational ties.

* Addressing Humanitarian Issues:

- o **Humanitarian Aid:** Continue providing humanitarian support and explore new ways to assist in crisis situations. Strengthen coordination with international organisations for effective aid delivery.
- o **Conflict Resolution Support:** Support diplomatic efforts for conflict resolution and peace-building. Advocate for dialogue and constructive engagement in international forums.

* Strengthening Diplomatic Relations:

- o **Enhanced Diplomatic Engagement:** Increase diplomatic visits and high-level exchanges to build stronger political ties.
 - Regular consultations and joint working groups can address bilateral issues and opportunities.
- o **Building Consensus:** Work towards aligning on global and regional issues, fostering a more cohesive approach to international diplomacy.

CONCLUSION

Despite challenges, India-Ukraine relations can be strengthened through economic cooperation, strategic engagement, cultural exchanges, and defence collaboration. This approach will not only foster a mutually beneficial partnership but also bolster India's role as "**Vishwa Bandhu**" and expand its relations with major global powers.

SAMPLE QUESTION

Q) Discuss the key areas of India-Ukraine relations, and how can both countries overcome challenges to strengthen their partnership in defence, economic cooperation, and cultural exchange? **(10 marks)(150 words)**

LATERAL ENTRY

Syllabus: GS II - Role of Civil Service in a democracy

PYQ MAPPING

Q) “Institutional quality is a crucial driver of economic performance”. In this context suggest reforms in Civil Service for strengthening democracy **(2020)**

Q) “Traditional bureaucratic structure and culture have hampered the process of socioeconomic development in India.” Comment **(2016)**

SHORT TAKES

Sectoral Group of Secretaries (SGoS): A collaborative body within the Indian government, consisting of secretaries from various ministries, grouped by sector to facilitate coordinated policy-making and implementation. Their primary role is to develop integrated strategies, oversee the execution of government initiatives, and provide sector-specific recommendations to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet.

INTRODUCTION

Lateral entry involves recruiting individuals from outside the traditional government service cadres, like the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), to fill mid and senior-level positions in government departments. This practice was officially introduced during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration, with the first set of vacancies announced in 2018. It represented a significant shift from the conventional approach, where senior bureaucratic roles were mainly filled by career civil servants.

WHY IN NEWS

Recently, the Central government directed the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) to retract its advertisement for lateral recruitment to senior bureaucratic positions at the Centre. Opposition party leaders had criticised the policy for omitting reservations for Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC) candidates.

HISTORY OF LATERAL ENTRY

- ➤ **1950s:** The practice of lateral entry began during Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's tenure, with professionals from various fields being appointed to senior government positions.
 - **Example:** IG Patel, who transitioned from the IMF to become the Economic Affairs Secretary and later the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India.
- ➤ **1971:** Manmohan Singh, then a professor at the Delhi School of Economics, was appointed as the Economic Adviser to the Ministry of Commerce, marking another significant instance of lateral induction.
- ➤ **2002:** The Vajpayee government appointed R.V. Shahi from the private sector as Power Secretary to drive electricity reforms, continuing the tradition of lateral entry.
- ➤ **2005:** The Second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC), chaired by Veerappa Moily, formally recommended lateral entry during the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government.
 - The ARC emphasised the need for professionals from the private sector, academia, and PSUs to fill roles requiring specialised knowledge that traditional civil services could not provide.
- ➤ **2017:** NITI Aayog released a **three-year Action Agenda** proposing the inclusion of lateral entrants in middle and senior management roles within the central secretariat.
 - The Sectoral Group of Secretaries (SGoS) on Governance supported this recommendation in their report.
- ➤ **2018:** The central government initiated the lateral entry process by advertising positions for Joint Secretaries.
 - Over time, additional posts such as Director and Deputy Secretary were also made available for lateral entry.
- ➤ **2024:** By 2024, the process continued to evolve with specific appointments being made at key levels in the government, emphasising the need for domain expertise and addressing manpower shortage

DATA

So far, 63 appointments have been made through lateral entry out of which 35 appointments were from the private sector. At present, 57 officers are in positions in ministries/departments, according to the latest data.

BENEFITS

- ☀ **Specialised knowledge and skills:** Lateral entry brings in experts with domain-specific knowledge in areas like **disaster management, semiconductors, FinTech, and emerging technologies.**
 - o Regular IAS officers may lack this specialised expertise, making lateral entrants crucial for effective policy making in these sectors.
- ☀ **Policy Innovation and Fresh Perspectives:** Lateral entrants can introduce innovative ideas and fresh perspectives, which may be lacking in traditional bureaucratic processes.
 - o Their experience outside the government can help in formulating more dynamic and forward-looking policies.
- ☀ **Bridging Knowledge Gaps:** Certain posts require highly specialised knowledge that generalist civil servants might not possess. Lateral entrants can fill these knowledge gaps, ensuring that policies are informed by the **latest developments and best**

practices in specific industries.

- ☀ **Faster Integration of New Technologies:** In rapidly evolving sectors like **digital economy, cybersecurity, and renewable energy**, lateral entrants can help the government stay ahead by quickly integrating new technologies and strategies into policy frameworks.
- ☀ **Addressing Shortage of Officers:** There is a shortage of officers at certain levels in the government due to the reduced intake of IAS officers between the 1996-2002 batches.
 - o Additionally, state governments have been reluctant to release officers for service in the Union government.
- ☀ **Strengthening Policymaking at the Union Level:** Lateral entry enhances the Union government's ability to **craft well-informed policies by bringing in specialised expertise**, particularly in areas where traditional administrative experience may be insufficient.

CRITICISM

- ⚡ **Reservation Exemption:** Lateral entry positions are exempt from reservations as they are treated as single post cadres, similar to deputation, which raises concerns about inclusivity.
- ⚡ **Dilution of Merit-Based Recruitment:** The **absence of rigorous testing and reliance solely on resumes and interviews** for selecting lateral entrants raises concerns about the erosion of merit-based recruitment, leading to potential cronyism and nepotism.
- ⚡ **Political Manipulation:** Lateral entry can be misused as a tool for political favouritism, where ruling parties appoint loyalists to key positions under the guise of bringing in specialists.
 - o **Example of Pakistan:**
 - In 1972, Pakistan's Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto introduced lateral entry to bring

specialisation into the civil services, but it led to the **appointment of party loyalists** in key positions.

- After Bhutto's fall, General Zia Haq dismissed these appointees and further politicised the system by inducting military personnel, ultimately resulting in a **dysfunctional and ineffective civil service** in Pakistan.
- ⚡ **Risk of Spoils System:** Without stringent checks, lateral entry can devolve into a spoils system which can lead to **inefficiency and corruption** within the civil services.
- ⚡ **Impact on Career Bureaucrats:** The introduction of lateral entrants into existing posts of Joint Secretary, Director, and Deputy Secretary can negatively affect the promotion prospects of career bureaucrats, leading to potential demotivation and dissatisfaction.

✧ **Uncertainty with loyalty:** Lateral entrants, often appointed for shorter tenures, may **lack the long-term commitment** and loyalty that permanent civil servants develop. Moreover, potential conflicts of interest between public service and private sector backgrounds could influence decision-making.

✧ **Impact on Public Trust:** Lack of full transparency in the recruitment process could lead to perceptions of favouritism or nepotism, eroding public trust in the

system.

✧ **Integration Challenges:** Integrating lateral entrants into the existing bureaucratic structure may be difficult, as traditional civil servants might resist due to differences in work culture and values.

✧ **Mismatch in Focus:** The private sector's emphasis on short-term results may clash with the long-term goals required in government, leading to frustration and potential inefficiency.

How have lateral entries kept out of reservation?

- 🌀 **13-Point Roster System:** Reservation in public jobs follows the "13-point roster," which allocates vacancies based on quota percentages for SC, ST, OBC, and EWS groups.
 - **Calculation:** It divides the total number of vacancies by the percentage quota for each category to determine how often candidates from each reserved category should be appointed.
 - For example, with a 27% OBC quota, OBC candidates should fill every 4th vacancy ($100/27 \approx 3.7$).
 - **Quota Allocation:** OBC candidates fill every 4th post (27% quota), SC candidates fill every 7th post (15% quota), ST candidates fill every 14th post (7.5% quota), and EWS candidates fill every 10th post (10% quota).
- 🌀 **Single Post Exemption:** The 13-point roster does not apply to single-post cadres, meaning each lateral entry position is treated as a separate post.
 - **DoPT RTI Response:** Documents obtained from the Department of Personnel and Training indicate that reservations do not apply to single-post positions, as stated in the RTI response.
- 🌀 **Current Recruitment:** The latest UPSC advertisement for 45 posts is treated as separate single-post vacancies, thus bypassing the reservation policy.
 - By treating each vacancy as a single post, the policy effectively excludes reservations for SC, ST, OBC, and EWS candidates.

LATERAL ENTRY IN OTHER COUNTRIES

- ♣ **Revolving Door Model:** This system involves a fluid movement between government positions and roles in the corporate sector, known as the "revolving door," where officials may transition to lobbying or corporate roles and vice versa.
 - **Regulated Lateral Entry:** Countries like the **United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and Belgium** have institutionalised lateral entry into administrative roles, allowing professionals from outside traditional government pathways to enter public service.
 - **Cooling-Off Periods:** In the U.S., there are typically "cooling off" periods required before former government officials can engage in lobbying or corporate roles, though regulations vary by State.

WAY FORWARD

- * **Selective Lateral Entry at Senior Levels:** Consider lateral entry primarily at the highest levels, such as Secretary or Joint Secretary, where the expertise of individuals is beyond doubt and crucial for effective policymaking.
- * **Rigorous Selection Process:** Introduce a comprehensive selection process for lateral entrants that includes written exams, domain-specific tests, and detailed background checks in addition to interviews.
- * **Systematic Support for Entrants:** Provide tailored training, mentorship, and clear communication to integrate lateral entrants effectively into existing structures. Ensure organisational policies and leadership are committed to facilitating their smooth transition.
- * **Judicial Oversight:** Establish mechanisms for judicial review or oversight in the selection process, allowing legal recourse in cases of suspected bias or irregularities in appointments
- * **Clear Role Definitions:** Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of lateral entrants to ensure that they have the necessary authority and accountability within the government structure, similar to career civil servants.
- * **Regular Performance Audits:** Conduct regular performance audits of lateral entrants to ensure they are delivering on their roles effectively and to justify the continuation of such recruitment practices.
- * **Balanced Approach:** Adopt a balanced approach by reserving a certain percentage of lateral entry posts for underrepresented groups such as women, SCs, STs, and OBCs, to ensure diversity and inclusion in senior government positions.
- * **Reform Recruitment Process:** Establish an independent Civil Services Board to oversee appointments and transfers, ensuring that the most qualified individuals are placed in key positions, thereby enhancing bureaucratic efficiency and reducing political interference.
 - o **Cross-Verification of Credentials:** Implement strict cross-verification of candidates' qualifications and experience to **prevent cases like Puja Khedkar's**, where fraudulent identities were not detected

CONCLUSION

Lateral entry can bring fresh ideas, expertise, and a results-driven approach to India's often slow and resistant bureaucracy, potentially transforming governance. Success depends on integrating these entrants effectively, aligning their goals with public values, and ensuring strong oversight. With proper support, it can make government operations more agile, innovative, and responsive to modern challenges.

SAMPLE QUESTION

Q) Evaluate the impact of lateral entry on the meritocracy and efficiency of the bureaucratic system. Suggest ways to balance merit-based recruitment with the infusion of external expertise. **(10 marks)(150 words)**

SPECIAL TOPIC

NUCLEAR DOCTRINE OF INDIA

Syllabus: GS III - Defence & Security

PYQ MAPPING

Q) How is the S-400 air defence system technically superior to any other system presently available in the world? (2021)

WHY IN NEWS?

August 17 marks 25 years since the drafting of India's nuclear doctrine, which remains highly relevant, with ongoing discussions about its continued significance.

INTRODUCTION

India's nuclear doctrine is a foundational element of its national security strategy, designed to ensure a credible deterrent against nuclear aggression, maintain strategic stability, and uphold global non-proliferation commitments through a policy of No First Use (NFU) and minimum deterrence.

SHORT TAKES

➤ NON PROLIFERATION TREATY (NPT)

- Signed in 1968, the NPT is a multilateral treaty aimed at limiting the spread of nuclear weapons including three elements:
 - non-proliferation,
 - Disarmament
 - peaceful use of nuclear energy
- It de-legitimised 'proliferation' of nuclear weapons and related technology by the non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS) while recognising that five nuclear weapon states (NWS)- namely the US, Russia, the UK, France and China, can continue to possess nuclear weapons and commit not to transfer nuclear weapons to other states.
- India did not sign the NPT.

➤ COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN TREATY (CTBT)

- Adopted at the UN General Assembly in 1996, the treaty prohibits all nuclear testing and will enter into force after all 44 States listed in Annex 2 to the Treaty will ratify it.

- India has yet to sign the treaty.

➤ TREATY ON PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS (TPNW)

- Adopted in 2017 at the UN General Assembly, the treaty entered into force in October 2020, It prohibits States Parties from developing, testing, producing, manufacturing, acquiring, possessing, or stockpiling nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

➤ CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT (CD)

- It was formed in 1979 as the single multilateral disarmament negotiation forum of the international community, after agreement was reached among Member States during the first special session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) devoted to disarmament (1978).

➤ Nuclear Suppliers Group (1975):

- It is a group of 48 nuclear supplier countries that commit themselves to exporting sensitive nuclear technologies only to countries that adhere to strict non-proliferation standards.

EVOLUTION OF INDIA'S NUCLEAR DOCTRINE

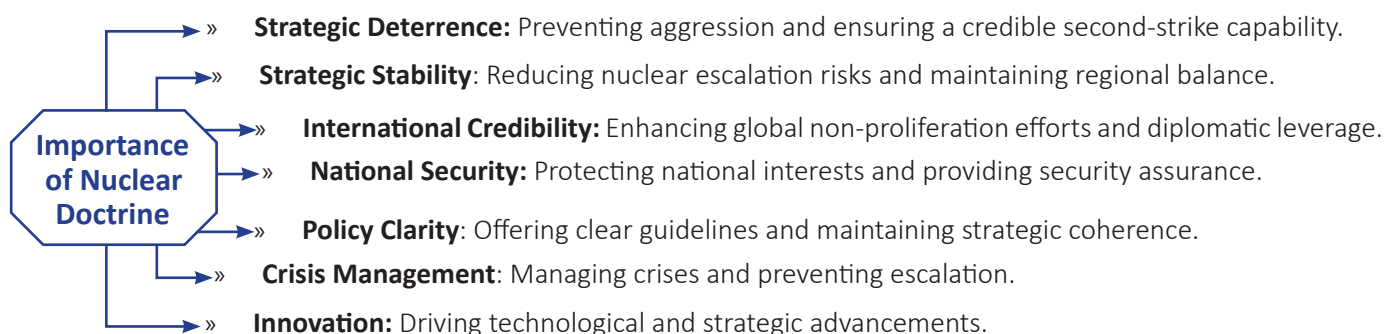
- ➤ **Initial Restraint and Non-Weaponization (1947-1974)**
 - **Early Commitment to Peaceful Uses:** After gaining independence in 1947, India, under the leadership of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, emphasised the peaceful use of nuclear energy.
 - **Establishment of Atomic Energy Commission:** In 1948, India established the **Atomic Energy Commission (AEC)** to oversee nuclear research and development.
 - The focus was on using nuclear technology for energy production and other peaceful purposes.
 - **First Nuclear Test (1974):** The shift began when India conducted its first nuclear test, code-named "Smiling Buddha," on May 18, 1974.
 - Though termed a "peaceful nuclear explosion," this test demonstrated India's capability and strategic intent to develop nuclear weapons.
- ➤ **Post-1974 Ambiguity and moving towards Weaponization (1974-1998)**
 - India's 1974 nuclear test was condemned by many countries as a violation of the peaceful-use agreements underlying U.S. and Canadian-supplied nuclear technology and material transfers, and was a major contributing factor to the formation of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).
 - After initial moratorium, negotiations over **Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)** and indefinite extension of the **Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT)** reignited domestic political pressure to conduct further tests.
 - To confront nuclear-armed China and Pakistan, India conducted nuclear tests at **Pokhran in 1998 and declared itself a nuclear-armed state.**
 - But at the same time, India continued to support efforts for nuclear disarmament by submitting an **Action Plan for a Nuclear-Weapons-Free and Non-Violent World Order** to the United Nations General Assembly.
- ➤ **Explicit Weaponization and Declaration of Doctrine (1998-2003)**
 - **Pokhran-II Nuclear Tests (1998):** In May 1998, India conducted a series of five nuclear tests, known as the Pokhran-II tests. This was a significant shift as India openly declared itself a nuclear-armed state, ending the policy of ambiguity.
 - **Draft Nuclear Doctrine (1999):** Following the tests, India released a draft nuclear doctrine, laying down the principles of its nuclear strategy. The key elements included No First Use (NFU), maintaining a credible minimum deterrence, and massive retaliation in case of a nuclear attack.
 - **Official Doctrine (2003):** In 2003, India formalised its nuclear doctrine, reiterating the principles laid out in the 1999 draft.

INDIA'S NUCLEAR DOCTRINE

- 🇮🇳 India's nuclear doctrine was entirely retaliatory. Following the 1998 nuclear test, India implemented a "**No First Use**" policy for nuclear weapons.
- 🇮🇳 **Brajesh Mishra**, the Indian National Security Advisor, issued a draft nuclear policy on August 17, 1999.
 - Despite its lack of official status, India's nuclear arsenal has mostly followed the guidelines outlined in the draft treaty (Arms Control Association, 2007).
- 🇮🇳 India's nuclear doctrine can be summarised as follows:
 - Building and maintaining a credible **minimum deterrence.**
 - A posture of "**No First Use**" nuclear weapons will only be used in retaliation against a nuclear attack on Indian territory or on Indian forces anywhere;
 - **Nuclear retaliation to a first strike will be massive** and designed to inflict unacceptable damage.
 - Nuclear retaliatory attacks can **only be authorised by the civilian political leadership** through the Nuclear

Command Authority.

- o **Non-use of nuclear weapons** against non-nuclear weapon states;
- o However, in the event of a major attack against India, or Indian forces anywhere, by biological or chemical weapons, **India will retain the option** of retaliating with nuclear weapons;
- o A continuance of **strict controls on export** of nuclear and missile related materials and technologies, participation in the Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty negotiations, and continued observance of the moratorium on nuclear tests.
- o Continued **commitment to the goal of a nuclear weapon free world**, through global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament.



QUESTION OF WHETHER INDIA SHOULD CHANGE ITS NUCLEAR DOCTRINE OR NOT

Arguments for changing the Doctrine

- o **Evolving Security Environment:**
 - **Regional Threats:** With the increasing sophistication of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal, including tactical nuclear weapons, and China's expanding nuclear and conventional capabilities, some argue that the current doctrine may not sufficiently address these threats.
 - **Proactive Deterrence:** Changing the **No First Use (NFU) policy** to allow for a more proactive stance could deter adversaries who might misinterpret India's NFU commitment as a sign of weakness or hesitancy.
- o **Technological Advances:**
 - **Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD):** The development of BMD systems could undermine the credibility of India's second-strike capability.
 - A shift in doctrine might consider these technological advances, ensuring that India's deterrent remains robust.
 - **Cyber and Space Warfare:** The increasing role of cyber and space domains in warfare requires that India adapt its nuclear strategy

to new forms of threats, which might include changes in the doctrine.

- o **Strategic Autonomy and Credibility:**
 - **Flexibility in Doctrine:** A doctrine that allows flexibility would give policymakers more options in crisis situations, enhancing India's strategic autonomy.
 - This could make India's deterrent posture more credible and adaptive to specific scenarios.
- o **Signalling to Adversaries:**
 - **Ambiguity in Response:** Moving away from a rigid NFU stance could introduce ambiguity, making adversaries uncertain about India's response to nuclear or conventional threats, potentially enhancing deterrence.

Arguments against changing the Doctrine

- o **Maintaining Strategic Stability:**
 - **Avoiding Arms Race:** The current NFU policy contributes to regional stability by reducing incentives for a nuclear arms race.
 - A shift could lead to a security dilemma, prompting neighbours to enhance their nuclear arsenals.

- **Reducing Escalation Risks:** NFU minimises the risk of a nuclear conflict by lowering the chances of preemptive strikes.
- A change could increase the likelihood of a nuclear exchange, even by accident or miscalculation.
- o **Global Non-Proliferation Image:**
 - **Responsible Nuclear Power:** Adhering to NFU aligns with India's image as a responsible nuclear power committed to global non-proliferation.
 - Changing the doctrine could undermine India's diplomatic efforts and its standing in global arms control negotiations.
- o **Deterrence is Sufficient:**
 - **Credible Deterrence with NFU:** India's current doctrine, supported by a survivable second-strike capability, is deemed adequate for deterring nuclear threats.
 - The development of a nuclear triad ensures that India can respond effectively to any nuclear aggression.
 - **No Historical Evidence of NFU Failure:** Since the doctrine's adoption, there has been no historical evidence suggesting that NFU undermines India's deterrence.
 - Both Pakistan and China remain deterred by India's nuclear capabilities.

India's present Nuclear Standing

- ♣ Not signed the **Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)** and **Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT)**.
- ♣ India has also opposed the recent enforcement of **Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)** which India believes is not a comprehensive instrument on disarmament as it excludes the verification of nuclear armaments.
 - o India maintains that the Geneva-based **Conference on Disarmament (CD)** is the single multilateral disarmament negotiation forum.
- ♣ India has a facility-specific safeguards agreement in place with the **International Atomic Energy Agency (AEA)** and a waiver from the **Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)** allowing it to participate in nuclear cooperation agreements with other countries.
- ♣ India has been actively pursuing membership into the **NSG** and has received explicit support for its membership from many current NSG members including the United States, Russia, Switzerland and Japan (except China).

COMPARISON WITH GLOBAL LEADERS

| | INDIA | USA | CHINA | RUSSIA | PAKISTAN |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|
| Nuclear Posture | Credible Minimum Deterrence | Flexible nuclear posture, triad-based deterrence | focuses on maintaining a credible second-strike capability, ensuring that it can retaliate if attacked. | Emphasis on nuclear weapons, nuclear triad | Credible minimum deterrence, full-spectrum deterrence |
| First Use Policy | No First Use (NFU) | No NFU, first use option in certain scenarios | No First Use (NFU) | No NFU, first use option in response to conventional threat | No First Use (NFU) |
| Deterrence Strategy | Nuclear triad, second-strike capability | Nuclear triad, both strategic and tactical weapons | | | |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--|-----------|--|---|
| Doctrine Flexibility | Fixed NFU, periodic reviews for relevance | Flexible doctrine, adaptive to threats | Fixed NFU | Flexible doctrine, adapts to both nuclear and conventional threats | Flexible doctrine, includes tactical options for deterrence |
|-----------------------------|---|--|-----------|--|---|

WAY FORWARD

* Review and Adapt:

- o Continuously review the nuclear doctrine to ensure it addresses current and emerging threats effectively.
 - Reconsideration of India's doctrinal positions: This include adopting a "global NFU" norm instead of a "conditional NFU" (which is India's current principle)
 - A global NFU would provide a clear, unequivocal commitment to not using nuclear weapons first under any circumstances, which can enhance credibility and reduce uncertainty.

* Dedicated defence technology programs:

- o With India continuously playing defence technological catch-up with other nuclear powers like China, the Nuclear Doctrine does not get the technological support needed for its effective enforcement.
 - For example, limited range of ballistic missile capability vis-à-vis China.

- o In this light, dedicated programs on the lines of Integrated Missile Development Programmes can be started in order to ensure capacity building alongside technological developments.

* Strategic Ambiguity:

- o Introduce limited strategic ambiguity carefully to enhance deterrence without compromising stability.

* Diplomatic Engagement:

- o Strengthen regional and global diplomatic efforts to build confidence and support non-proliferation goals.

* Integrated Strategy:

- o Develop an integrated strategy that combines conventional and nuclear deterrence for effective crisis management.

* Command and Control:

- o Enhance the security and effectiveness of nuclear command and control systems.

CONCLUSION

India's 'Nuclear Doctrine' has provided both tangible and intangible benefits, but it is crucial to continually reassess its relevance in light of changes made by geostrategic adversaries. This reassessment is necessary to prevent the doctrine from becoming outdated and to ensure it adapts to evolving threat perceptions. Additionally, updating the doctrine could turn nuclear policy into a strategic tool for advancing India's global ambitions and addressing national security threats more effectively.

SAMPLE QUESTION

Q) How can India's 'Nuclear Doctrine' be reassessed to remain relevant in the face of evolving threats and adversarial changes, and how might an updated doctrine support India's global ambitions and national security? **(15 marks)(250 words)**

WORKPLACE SAFETY IN THE CONTEXT OF HEMA COMMITTEE REPORT AND DOCTOR ATTACK

Syllabus: GS II - Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population

PYQ MAPPING

Q) What are the continued challenges for Women in India against time and space? **(2019)**

Q) Is the National Commission for Women able to strategize and tackle the problems that women face at both public and private spheres? Give reasons in support of your answer. **(2017)**

SHORT TAKES

- **Women in Cinema Collective (WCC):** An advocacy group formed by women professionals in the Malayalam film industry in 2017 to address gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, and inequality within the industry.
- **Casting Couch:** The casting couch is a practice where individuals, often in positions of power in the entertainment industry, require or offer sexual favours as a condition for professional opportunities.
- **The National Medical Commission (NMC):** Established by the National Medical Commission Act, 2019, it replaced the Medical Council of India and aims to enhance medical education quality, ensure equitable healthcare access, and maintain high ethical standards.

INTRODUCTION

Ensuring women's safety in the workplace remains a significant challenge, as incidents of harassment and discrimination persist despite legal safeguards. Many women feel compelled to remain silent due to inadequate reporting systems and potential backlash, which perpetuates a culture of fear and inequality. Addressing these issues requires a broader cultural change that prioritises respect, inclusion, and accountability across all levels of employment.

WHY IN NEWS

The Hema Committee report on the Malayalam film industry, recently released, exposed alarming cases of sexual abuse, widespread gender discrimination, and the degrading treatment of women within the industry, causing widespread outrage across Kerala. The revelations have sparked intense debate and calls for accountability, with many questioning the systemic failure to protect women in the workplace.



ABOUT HEMA COMMITTEE REPORT

- ➔ **Formation and Purpose:** The Hema Committee was established in **2017** by the Kerala government to **investigate sexual harassment and gender inequality in the Malayalam film industry**, following a **petition by the Women in Cinema Collective (WCC)**.
- ➔ **Committee Composition:** The committee consisted of retired High Court Justice K. Hema, former actor Sharada, and retired IAS officer K.B. Valsala Kumari.
- ➔ **Trigger for Formation:** The formation of the WCC and the subsequent creation of the Hema Committee were prompted by the abduction and sexual assault allegations made by a Malayalam woman actor in Kochi.
- ➔ **Focus of Investigation:** The government specified **seven-point "terms of reference"** for the committee to study
 - o Issues faced by women in cinema
 - o Service condition and remuneration of women in cinema
 - o Measures to enhance the participation of women in all fields connected to cinema
 - o How to bring more women into the technical side of cinema

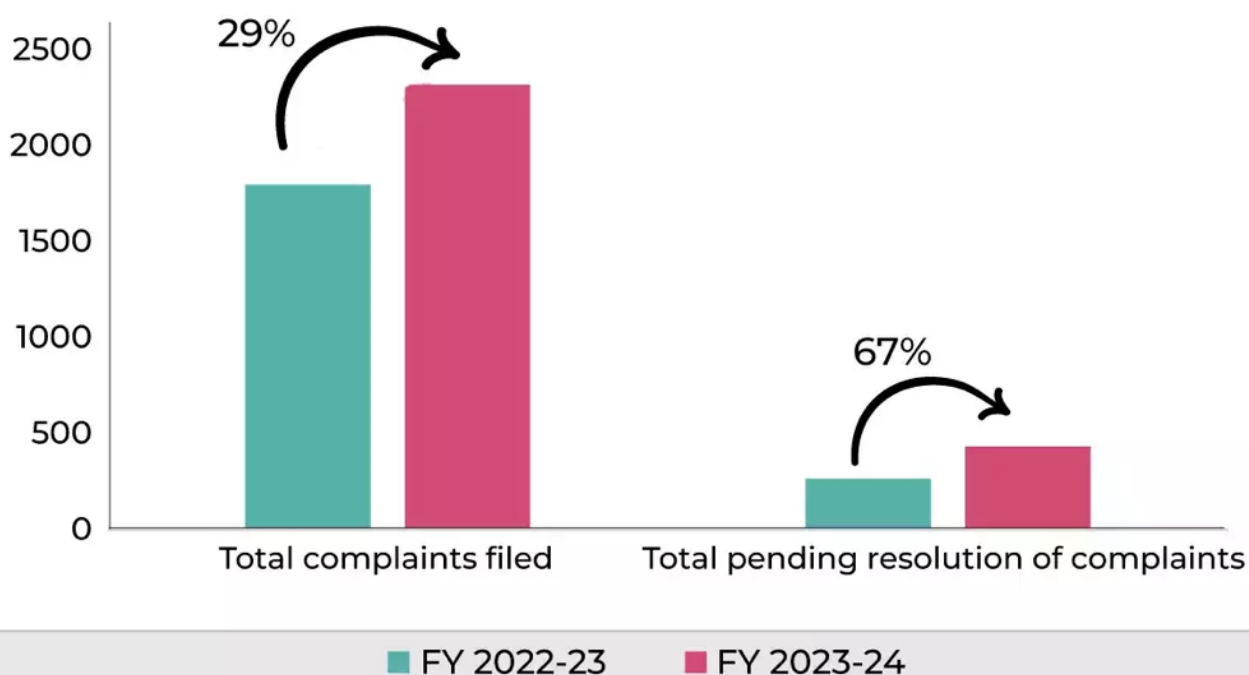
- o How to help women in cinema when they have to remain out of work for delivery and childcare
- o How to ensure gender equality in the content of cinema
- o How to encourage cinemas in which 30% women are engaged in production activities”.
- ➔ **Confidentiality Measures:** The 300-page Justice K Hema Committee report was **typed out by its members to ensure confidentiality** and preserve the integrity of its direct evidence on the discrimination and exploitation faced by women in the Malayalam film industry.
- ➔ **Report Submission:** The committee submitted its report to the Kerala government in December 2019.
- ➔ **Formation of Panel:** In January 2022, the Kerala government established a panel to devise a plan for implementing the recommendations of the Hema Commission report.
 - o **Draft Recommendations:** The panel produced vague draft recommendations in May 2022, prompting Right to Information (RTI) activists and media personnel to seek further details
- ➔ **Controlled Release Order:** On July 6, 2024, the Kerala State Information Commission (KSIC) ordered a controlled release of the report, with 63 pages redacted, prior to its scheduled release on August 14.
- ➔ **High Court Stay:** The Kerala High Court initially stayed the report’s release due to a petition by film producer Saji Parayil, who **claimed that publication would infringe on privacy rights and expose individuals to potential retaliation**.
 - o The High Court's stay petition was eventually dismissed, allowing the report to proceed towards release.
- ➔ **Final Release:** Despite the legal challenges and delays, the report was ultimately released on August 14.
- ➔ **Special Investigation Team (SIT):** An SIT consisting of senior women police officers has been constituted for conducting a preliminary inquiry into allegations of sexual harassment against a few actors of Malayalam cinema.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE REPORT

- 👁 **Sexual Favours as a Passkey:** The report highlights that sexual favours have long been viewed as a means of gaining entry and success in the Malayalam film industry.
- 👁 **Existence of a Power Group:** The industry is allegedly controlled by a 'power group' that wields significant influence, perpetuating practices like the 'casting couch.'
- 👁 **Fear of Retribution:** Victims are deterred from reporting harassment due to fear of retribution, including cyber harassment from toxic fan clubs, as highlighted by Justice Hema’s observation of well-founded fears among those interviewed.
- 👁 **Impact on Diverse Roles:** These practices affect a wide range of women in the industry, including actors, technicians, make-up artists, dancers, and support staff.
- 👁 **Lack of Essential Facilities:** The report points out the absence of basic amenities such as toilets, changing rooms, safe transportation, and accommodation at shooting locations, violating women's right to privacy.
- 👁 **Remuneration Discrimination:** It also reveals significant gender-based disparities in pay, with women often receiving lower remuneration than their male counterparts.
- 👁 **Lack of Binding Contracts:** The report criticises the industry for not providing binding contractual agreements, which further exposes women to exploitation and unfair treatment.

CURRENT SCENARIO OF WORKPLACE SAFETY IN INDIA

POSH Complaints vs Pending Resolutions



Source: Udaiti Foundation

- ♣ **Record Number of Complaints:** In 2022, the National Commission for Women (NCW) received around 31,000 complaints of crimes committed against women, marking the highest number since 2014.
- ♣ **Increase in POSH Complaints:** Complaints under the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Act rose significantly from 1,807 in 2022-2023 to 2,325 in 2023-2024, reflecting a 29% year-on-year increase.
 - **Rising Pending Complaints:** The number of pending POSH complaints surged from 260 in 2022-2023 to 435 in 2023-2024, indicating a 67% year-on-year increase in unresolved cases.
 - **Sector-Specific Data:** The services sector reports the highest number of POSH cases per 1,000 women, followed by the construction materials, metals, and mining sectors, highlighting that industries with high physical presence or fieldwork face more complaints.

ISSUES FACED BY WOMEN IN WORKPLACE

- ✿ **Sexual Harassment:** Women often face unwanted advances, inappropriate comments, and other forms of sexual harassment, impacting their safety and dignity at work.
- ✿ **Gender Pay Gap:** Women frequently receive lower wages compared to their male counterparts for similar roles and responsibilities, reflecting systemic inequality.
- ✿ **Lack of Career Advancement:** Women may encounter barriers to promotion and leadership roles due to biases and unequal opportunities for advancement.
- ✿ **Workplace Discrimination:** Gender-based discrimination can manifest in biased hiring practices, unequal job assignments, and exclusion from key projects or decision-making processes.

✧ **Public Transport Safety Concerns:** Women face daily safety issues during their commute, including lack of police presence and general insecurity, especially when travelling late in the evening.

- o **Example:** Women encounter safety and comfort issues with cab services, including unsafe routes and arguments with drivers, which leave them feeling vulnerable.

✧ **Insufficient Work-Life Balance Support:** Women often struggle with inadequate maternity leave, lack of flexible working arrangements, and insufficient support for balancing work and family responsibilities.

Entertainment Industry

✧ **Prevalence of the Casting Couch:** Women in the entertainment industry are often pressured into providing sexual favours to secure roles or opportunities, commonly referred to as the "casting couch" phenomenon.

✧ **Disparity in Remuneration:** Female actors and crew members frequently receive significantly lower pay than their male counterparts for the same work, reflecting a persistent gender pay gap.

✧ **Inadequate On-Set Facilities:** Many film sets lack basic facilities for women, such as secure and private changing rooms, toilets, and safe transportation options, leading to a hazardous work environment.

Medical Sector

✧ **Workplace Harassment:** Female doctors may encounter harassment from colleagues, patients, or superiors, including inappropriate comments, unwanted advances, or even physical harassment.

- o **Example:** Dr. Vandana Das, a young house surgeon in Kerala, was tragically stabbed to death by a patient she was treating at a government hospital. The incident highlighted that adequate security measures are lacking in medical facilities.

✧ **Late-Night Shifts and Travel Risks:** Women doctors, especially those working night shifts, face safety concerns when travelling to and from work, including the risk of harassment or assault during commutes as well as during work.

- o **Example:** In a shocking incident in RG Kar Medical College in Kolkata, a female doctor trainee was raped by a colleague. This case brings to light the grave safety and security issues that women doctors can face within their own workplaces.

GOVERNMENT MEASURES

✧ **Mandatory FIR Filing:** The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has mandated that the **head of a healthcare institution must file an FIR within six hours of any incident of violence** against healthcare workers, ensuring prompt legal action and accountability.

✧ **National Medical Commission Directives:** The NMC has instructed medical colleges to create comprehensive safety policies and ensure that any violence against medical students is investigated promptly, **with FIRs lodged and action reports submitted to the NMC within 48 hours**

✧ **SHe-Box portal**

- o The SHe-Box portal by **Ministry of Women and Child Development** allows women to file and track sexual harassment complaints across both government and private sectors.
- o The portal features a **designated nodal officer for real-time monitoring**, ensuring that complaints are processed promptly and efficiently.
- o By offering a **streamlined process for grievance redressal**, the portal advances the government's efforts to create safer workplaces for women

✧ **Nirbhaya Fund**

- o A non-lapsable fund set up by the Government of India to support initiatives to improve the safety and security of women in India. The fund was announced in the 2013 Union Budget in response to the 2012 Delhi gang rape.

LEGAL PROVISIONS FOR WORKPLACE SECURITY

- ✦ **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013:** It directed the establishment of the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) for addressing workplace harassment and defined “workplace” including industries like film-making.
- ✦ **Vishaka Guidelines (1997):** The Vishaka Guidelines originated from a landmark Supreme Court case in India, **Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan (1997)**, which highlighted the need for comprehensive measures to address sexual harassment at the workplace.

NEED FOR CENTRAL LAW FOR DOCTORS

- ✦ **Protection Against Violence:** A central protection act is essential to address the growing incidents of violence against healthcare workers in India, ensuring their safety and security
 - o **Example:** U.S. classifies assaults on healthcare workers as felonies in certain states.
- ✦ **Uniform Legal Framework:** A centralised law would provide a uniform legal framework across all states, eliminating discrepancies in the protection of healthcare workers and ensuring consistent enforcement.
- ✦ **Mandatory Safety Measures:** The law should require healthcare facilities to implement safety measures, including security personnel, panic buttons, and mandatory de-escalation training, **drawing from Australian hospitals' practices.**
- ✦ **Support for Healthcare Workers:** The law should also include provisions for psychological support and counselling for healthcare workers affected by violence, promoting their mental well-being.

WAY FORWARD

- ✦ **Strengthen Enforcement of Existing Laws:** Ensure that workplace safety laws such as the POSH Act and the Maternity Benefit Act are effectively implemented.
 - o Regular inspections and audits by regulatory bodies to verify compliance, prompt legal actions against violators, and continuous updates to the legal frameworks is needed to address emerging challenges.
- ✦ **Establish Effective Internal Complaints Mechanisms:** An Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) should be established and it should have clear procedures for lodging complaints, conducting investigations, and resolving issues impartially and promptly, with protections in place to prevent retaliation against complainants.
- ✦ **Enhance Awareness and Training:** Regular and comprehensive training programs should be conducted to educate employees about workplace safety protocols, harassment prevention, and their rights under the law.
- ✦ **Promote Gender Diversity and Inclusivity:**

Organisations should actively work to increase gender diversity by implementing policies to support women’s career advancement and ensuring fair pay.

- ✦ **Encourage External Audits:** Regular external audits by independent bodies should be conducted to evaluate compliance with safety and legal standards. These audits can provide an unbiased assessment of an organisation’s adherence to safety regulations and identify areas for improvement

Entertainment Industry

- ✦ **Enhance Workplace Safety and Facilities:** Improve safety measures on set, including secure transport, adequate changing rooms, and basic amenities, to create a more supportive and respectful working environment for women.
- ✦ **Enforce Zero-Tolerance Anti-Harassment Policies:** Mandate industry-wide implementation of anti-harassment policies and establish confidential reporting channels and support services for survivors, ensuring all complaints are investigated thoroughly.

Medical Sector

- * **Declare Healthcare Centers as Safe Zones:** Legally designate healthcare centres as safe zones to provide mandatory security entitlements and protect medical professionals from violence.
- * **Improve Working Conditions:** Overhaul the working and living conditions for resident doctors to ensure they have adequate rest spaces and manageable duty hours, addressing concerns of fatigue and safety.

CONCLUSION

Creating a safe and equitable workplace for women is not just a legal obligation but a moral imperative that requires concerted efforts from employers, employees, and society at large. By fostering an environment where women can work without fear of harassment or discrimination, we can unlock their full potential, leading to more innovative and productive workplaces.

SAMPLE QUESTION

Q) Given the increasing prevalence of sexual exploitation in the Indian entertainment industry, what are the root causes of this issue and what effective measures can be implemented to address it and protect women in the workplace? **(15 marks)(250 words)**



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FOOD SECURITY

Syllabus: GS III - Food Security

PYQ MAPPING

Q) Food security bill is expected to eliminate hunger and malnutrition in India. Critically discuss various apprehensions in its effective implementation along with the concerns it has generated in WTO (2013)

Q) What are the reformative steps taken by the government to make the food grain distribution system more effective? (2019)

Q) What are the major challenges of the Public Distribution System (PDS) in India? How can it be made effective and transparent ? (2022)

SHORT TAKES

➤ Core inflation:

- It refers to the measure of inflation that excludes certain volatile items from the Consumer Price Index (CPI), specifically food and energy prices.
- By removing these items, core inflation provides a clearer view of the underlying and persistent trends in inflation, helping policymakers understand the more stable components of price changes.

➤ Headline inflation:

- It refers to the total inflation within an economy, measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which includes all components of the CPI basket such as food, energy, housing, and other goods and services.
- Unlike core inflation, headline inflation does not exclude volatile items like food and energy, making it a comprehensive measure of the overall change in price levels.

INTRODUCTION

- Food security encompasses both the availability of food and people's access to it. It ensures that individuals have sufficient food throughout the year and that this food is safe and nutritious.
- According to the **World Food Programme**, 195 million people in India are undernourished, and 43% of children in India suffer from chronic undernutrition.
- In the **Global Food Policy Report 2023**, India is ranked 94th among 113 countries, indicating significant challenges in food security and nutrition.

WHY IN NEWS

Recent report from the United Nations' State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) report states that more than half of India's total population (55.6 percent) is unable to afford a healthy diet.



Food Security can be understood through four dimensions

➡ **Availability:** This refers to the production and supply of food.

➡ **Access:** This pertains to people's ability to obtain food.

➡ **Utilisation:** This involves how people use and consume food.

➡ **Stability:** This is about the resilience of the food system to withstand shocks and stresses.

CHALLENGES RELATED TO FOOD SECURITY IN INDIA

▼ Population Growth:

- o With India's population surpassing 1.4 billion, ensuring adequate food supply is increasingly difficult.
- o According to the 2023 **Global Hunger Index**, India ranked 111 out of 125 countries, highlighting the difficulty in feeding its growing population.

▼ Low Agricultural Productivity

- o Due to outdated farming practices, limited mechanisation, and inadequate access to high-quality inputs.

▼ Invasive Weed Threats:

- o In the past 15 years, India has faced more than 10 major invasive pest and weed attacks.
 - Fall Armyworm (Pest) destroyed almost the entire maize crop in the country in 2018. India had to import maize in 2019 due to the damage caused by the pest in 2018.
 - In 2020, locust attacks were reported in districts of Rajasthan and Gujarat.

▼ Climate Change

- o Unpredictable weather patterns, extreme temperatures, and natural disasters affect crop yields.
- o The **IPCC Synthesis Report**, also says that the rate of rise in agricultural productivity has declined over the past 50 years due to climate change, with "related negative impacts mainly in mid- and low-latitude regions".
 - **Example:** In August 2022, Punjab, Haryana and Uttarakhand witnessed the spread of the dwarf virus in paddy, due to rise in temperature.
- o **Leads to food inflation:**
 - The study conducted by **Patra** brings out the fact that in recent decades, climate events have become the dominant reason for food price rise.
 - In the period 2016-2020, the average food inflation was 2.9 per cent. This has more than doubled in the 2020s to an average of 6.3 per cent.

▼ Land Degradation

- o Soil erosion, salinization, and overuse of chemical fertilisers reduce soil fertility and agricultural

productivity.

- A key element of food production is healthy soil because nearly 95% of global food production depends on soil.

- o **Example:** In the **state of Punjab**, excessive use of chemical fertilisers has led to soil health degradation, causing long-term reductions in crop productivity, which poses a threat to food security.

▼ Water Scarcity

- o Over-extraction of groundwater, inefficient irrigation methods, and water pollution lead to water scarcity, affecting agriculture.
- o **Example:** The **Cauvery river dispute** between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu highlights the challenge of water scarcity, affecting millions of farmers dependent on the river for irrigation and leading to reduced crop yields.

▼ Post-Harvest Losses

- o Lack of proper storage facilities, transportation, and cold chain logistics lead to significant food loss after harvest.
- o **Example:** According to the **Ministry of Food Processing Industries**, India loses about 30-40% of its fruits and vegetables annually due to inadequate post-harvest infrastructure, affecting both food availability and farmer incomes.

▼ Economic Inequality:

- o High poverty levels restrict access to sufficient and nutritious food.
 - The **Global food policy report 2024: Food systems for healthy diets and nutrition** had found that at least **38 percent of the Indian population ate unhealthy foods**, while only 28 per cent ate all five recommended food groups, which include at least one starchy staple food, one vegetable, one fruit, one pulse, nut or seed and one animal-source food.

▼ Food Distribution Systems

- o Corruption, inefficiency, and leakage in the **Public Distribution System (PDS)** prevent food from reaching those in need.
 - India lacks a strict management framework for food security.
 - The Public Distribution System faces challenges like leakages and diversion of food-grains,

inclusion/exclusion errors, fake and bogus ration cards, and weak grievance redressal and social audit mechanism.

▼ Nutritional Security

- o In 2020, the **National Family Health Survey** revealed that over 35% of children under five were stunted, and nearly 20% were wasted, indicating severe malnutrition despite the availability of food.

▼ Policy and Governance Issues


- o Ineffective implementation of agricultural and food security policies.
- o **Example:** The implementation of the **Pradhan**


Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (crop insurance scheme) faced hurdles such as delays in compensation payments and lack of awareness among farmers, which limited its effectiveness in securing farmers' incomes and ensuring food security.


▼ Political and Social Issues


- o Farmer protests and disputes over land rights can disrupt agricultural production and supply chains.
- o **Example:** The year-long **farmer protests** against the three farm laws in 2020-2021 led to disruptions in the supply chain, affecting the movement of agricultural produce to markets and creating uncertainty in the agricultural sector.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE

 **National Food Security Act (NFSA):** Enacted in 2013, the NFSA guarantees legal entitlements to food for a significant portion of India's population, ensuring a specified quantity of food grains is available to eligible beneficiaries at subsidised rates.

 **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS):** Launched on October 2, 1975, the ICDS Scheme is a major government initiative offering comprehensive early childhood care and development services, and is one of the largest programs of its kind globally.

 **Public Distribution System (PDS):** This system distributes food procured by the Food Corporation of India (FCI) to disadvantaged or poorer segments of society.

 **Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY):** Introduced in December 2000, the AAY targets the poorest families

within the Below Poverty Line (BPL) category, identified through a survey conducted by the State Rural Development Department.

Other Initiatives:

- » **Eat Right India Movement:** Promotes healthier eating habits across the country.
- » **POSHAN Abhiyan:** Focuses on improving nutrition outcomes among children, pregnant women, and lactating mothers.
- » **Food Fortification:** Enhances the nutritional quality of food by adding essential vitamins and minerals.
- » **National Innovations in Climate Resilient Agriculture (NICRA):** Aims to develop climate-resilient agricultural practices.

WAY FORWARD

✦ Strategic Planning for Agriculture up to 2047

- o **Future Demand Projections:** The total demand for food grains in 2047-48 is projected to range from 402 million tonnes to 437 million tonnes.
 - Under a Business-As-Usual (BAU) scenario, production is expected to exceed demand by 10%-13%, indicating that India can meet its food demand if current practices continue.
- o **Need for Investment:** To meet future food demand sustainably, significant investments in agricultural research, infrastructure, and policy support are required.

- The 2024-25 Budget allocation of ₹20 lakh crore for targeted agricultural credit and the establishment of the Agriculture Accelerator Fund are steps towards fostering agricultural innovation and growth

✦ Promote Sustainable Agricultural Practices

- o **Adopt Climate-Resilient Farming:** Encourage the use of climate-resilient crop varieties and farming techniques to withstand extreme weather conditions, such as drought-resistant crops and water-efficient irrigation systems (e.g., drip irrigation).

- o **Organic Farming:** Promote organic farming practices that reduce dependency on chemical fertilizers and pesticides, enhancing soil health and sustainability.

* **Diversify Crop Production**

- o **Encourage Nutritious Crops:** Support the cultivation of a diverse range of crops, including traditional and underutilised crops like millets, pulses, and other nutrient-rich foods.
- o These crops are often more resilient and provide essential nutrients missing from staple cereals.

* **Improve Food Distribution and Storage**

- o **Enhance Storage Infrastructure:**
 - Develop better storage facilities, including cold chains, to reduce post-harvest losses.
 - Modernising warehouses and implementing advanced storage technologies can help preserve food quality and extend shelf life.
- o **Efficient Supply Chains:** Strengthen supply chain management to ensure that food reaches the market efficiently and reduces waste during transportation.

* **Strengthen the Public Distribution System (PDS)**

- o **Reduce Leakages:** Implement technology-based solutions like biometric authentication and digital tracking to reduce corruption and leakages in the PDS, ensuring that food grains reach the intended beneficiaries.
- o **Incorporate Nutrient-Rich Foods:** Include nutrient-rich foods such as pulses, millets, and fortified foods in the PDS to improve the nutritional quality of food distributed.

* **Invest in Agricultural Research and Development**

- o **Innovation in Farming:** Invest in research and development to innovate new farming techniques, high-yield crop varieties, and sustainable practices.
 - Collaboration with research institutions and universities can drive innovation in agriculture.
- o **Agri-Tech Solutions:** Leverage technology, such as **precision farming, artificial intelligence, and data analytics**, to improve crop productivity,

optimise resource use, and predict crop failures due to weather changes.

* **Policy and Governance Reforms**

- o **Comprehensive Food Policies:** Develop integrated food and nutrition policies that consider food security, health, and environmental sustainability. Policies should encourage diversified agriculture and make healthy foods affordable.
- o **Subsidy Reforms:** Redirect agricultural subsidies to support the production of **nutrient-rich crops rather than just staple cereals**.
 - This can incentivize farmers to grow a wider variety of crops.

* **Address Socio-Economic Inequalities**

- o **Income Support Programs:** Implement targeted income support programs to reduce poverty and ensure that vulnerable populations can afford nutritious food. Direct cash transfers and food vouchers can be effective tools.
- o **Empower Women:** Empowering women, who play a crucial role in household nutrition, through education and economic opportunities can enhance food security and improve family health outcomes.

* **Global Best Practices:**

- o Learn from global best practices in food security and nutrition. Collaborate with international organisations, such as the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)** and **World Food Programme (WFP)**, to adopt successful models and strategies.

* **Disaster Preparedness:**

- o Develop strategies for disaster preparedness and response to protect food security during natural calamities. This could involve creating food reserves and early warning systems.

* **Reintroduce Traditional Foods:**

- o Encourage the consumption of traditional foods that are inherently nutritious and well-suited to local ecological conditions.
- o Public awareness campaigns and incentives for growing and consuming traditional foods can help revive these practices.

FOOD INFLATION IN INDIA

- ➔ Food inflation in India, driven by supply-side factors like adverse weather affecting crops, has remained at around 8% year-on-year since November 2023 and is unlikely to ease any time soon, despite early arrival of monsoon rains and forecasts of above-normal rainfall.
- ➔ Elevated prices of food, which accounts for nearly half of the overall consumer price basket, has kept headline inflation above the central bank's target of 4%, preventing it from cutting interest rates.

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE

♣ Supply-Side Constraints

- o **Weather-Related Disruptions:** Unseasonal rains, droughts, floods, and other extreme weather events can damage crops and reduce agricultural output.
 - Climate change has increased the frequency and severity of such events, impacting food supply.
- o **Poor Infrastructure:** Inadequate storage facilities, inefficient transportation systems, and a lack of modern supply chain infrastructure lead to significant post-harvest losses. **Crop Production Variability:** Dependence on monsoons and limited irrigation facilities make crop production in India highly variable.
 - A weak or delayed monsoon can severely impact agricultural output, leading to supply shortages and higher prices.

♣ Demand-Side Factors

- o **Rising Population:** With a rapidly growing population, the demand for food is continually increasing.
 - This places pressure on existing food supplies, driving up prices.
- o **Changing Dietary Patterns:** As incomes rise, there is a shift in dietary preferences from staple cereals to more protein-rich foods like fruits, vegetables, dairy, and meat.
 - This change in consumption patterns can drive up prices for these items, particularly if supply does not keep pace with demand.

♣ Cost of Production

- o **Rising Input Costs:** The cost of agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilisers, pesticides, and labour has been increasing. Higher fuel prices also raise transportation costs, further pushing up the final price of food items.
- o **Labour Shortages:** Migration to urban areas and

other employment sectors reduces the availability of labour for agricultural activities. This shortage can increase labour costs, contributing to higher food prices.

♣ Government Policies

- o **Minimum Support Prices (MSP):** While MSP aims to provide fair prices to farmers, it can lead to higher procurement prices for certain crops, pushing up overall food prices.
 - Increased MSP can also distort market dynamics, leading to overproduction of certain crops and underproduction of others.
- o **Food and Fertilizer Subsidies:**
 - While these subsidies help farmers reduce production costs, inefficiencies and leakages in subsidy distribution can lead to market distortions and black-market activities, affecting food prices.
- o **Export and Import Restrictions:** Government-imposed restrictions on the export or import of certain food items to stabilise domestic prices can sometimes backfire.
 - For example, restricting onion exports to control domestic prices may lead to shortages and higher prices globally, which can impact domestic prices indirectly.

♣ Global Factors

- o **Global Commodity Prices:** India imports various food items like edible oils, pulses, and certain spices.
 - Fluctuations in global prices of these commodities, due to factors like international demand-supply imbalances, geopolitical tensions, and global economic conditions, directly impact food prices in India.
- o **Currency Exchange Rates:** Depreciation of the Indian Rupee against major currencies makes imports more expensive, contributing to higher food inflation, especially for items India heavily

imports like edible oils and pulses.

can also lead to price volatility.

♣ **Hoarding and Speculation:**

- o Traders and middlemen sometimes hoard essential commodities to create artificial shortages and drive up prices.
 - Speculative activities in commodity markets

♣ **Fuel Prices:**

- o **Impact of Oil Prices:** Fuel costs directly impact transportation costs for food items. Rising global oil prices lead to higher costs of food transportation and distribution, thus contributing to food inflation.

IMPACTS OF RISING FOOD INFLATION

☀ **Impact on Households**

- o **Reduced Purchasing Power:**
 - Rising food prices force households to spend more on necessities, reducing disposable income for healthcare, education, and transportation, which lowers living standards.
- o **Nutritional Insecurity:**
 - Higher food prices can force families, especially low-income households, to opt for cheaper, less nutritious food options, leading to malnutrition and associated health problems.
- o **Increased Poverty:**
 - Rising food costs disproportionately affect the poor and vulnerable sections of society.

☀ **Impact on the Economy**

- o **Reduced Economic Growth:**
 - High food inflation can lead to reduced consumer spending on non-food items, as households adjust their budgets to accommodate higher food prices.
 - This can slow down overall economic growth, as consumer spending is a significant component of GDP.
- o **Inflationary Pressures:**
 - High inflation can erode the value of money,

reduce purchasing power, and create uncertainty, discouraging investment and savings.

o **Interest Rates and Monetary Policy:**

- Central banks, like the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), may raise interest rates to curb inflation.
- Higher interest rates can lead to increased borrowing costs, affecting investment in businesses and consumer spending, which may slow down economic growth.

☀ **Impact on Government Finances**

- o **Increased Subsidy Burden:**
 - To manage food inflation and support the poor, the government may increase subsidies on food items, fertilisers, and agricultural inputs.
 - While this can provide temporary relief, it can lead to increased fiscal deficits and impact public spending on other essential services like infrastructure, healthcare, and education.
- o **Strain on Public Distribution System (PDS):**
 - Rising food prices put additional pressure on the Public Distribution System to provide food grains at subsidised rates.
 - Maintaining these subsidies can be costly and may lead to inefficiencies, corruption, and wastage within the system.

ECONOMIC SURVEY ON DELINKING FOOD INFLATION FROM INFLATION TARGETING

☞ **RBI Inflation Targeting:**

- o In March 2021, the government retained the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)'s flexible inflation target of 2-6% for five years, to March 2026.
- o Under this framework, introduced in 2016, RBI targets headline inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

☞ **Suggestions of Economic Survey:**

- o The Economic Survey 2023-24 suggested excluding food inflation from India's inflation targeting framework.
- o Food makes up 46% of CPI Headline Inflation in developing countries, thus controlling food prices is key to managing overall inflation.
- o In June 2024, overall inflation was 5.1%, food inflation was 9.4%, and core inflation was 3.1%.

PROS OF TARGETING CORE INFLATION

✓ Enhanced Stability:

- o **Reduced Policy Volatility:** By concentrating on core inflation, the RBI can mitigate the risk of overreacting to short-term price fluctuations in food and fuel. This approach leads to more stable and predictable monetary policy, minimising unnecessary economic disruptions.
- o **Better Long-Term Planning:** Focusing on core inflation allows central banks to base their policies on more reliable indicators of long-term economic trends, thus improving the effectiveness and foresight of monetary interventions.

✓ Improved Credibility:

- o **Policy Consistency:** Targeting core inflation supports the maintenance of consistent policy measures.
- o This approach helps reinforce the RBI's credibility and fosters greater trust among investors and market participants.



CONS OF TARGETING CORE INFLATION

✖ Misses Volatility in Essentials:

- o Core inflation excludes volatile categories like food and energy, which can significantly impact the cost of living.
- o Ignoring these can lead to a distorted view of actual inflationary pressures affecting consumers.

✖ Disregards Supply Shocks:

- o Food and energy prices are often subject to supply shocks (e.g., weather events, geopolitical issues).
- o Core inflation targeting might overlook these important factors, potentially leading to inadequate policy responses.

✖ Consumer Impact:

- o Since food and energy are essential for daily life, excluding them from inflation measures can lead to policies that don't address the real cost pressures faced by households.

✖ Policy Lag:

- o Relying solely on core inflation might result in delayed responses to overall inflationary trends.
- o By the time core inflation reflects broader inflationary pressures, it might be too late to take effective action.

✖ Potential for Misdirected Policy:

- o If central banks focus too much on core inflation, they might implement policies that are not fully aligned with the broader economic environment or consumer needs.

CONCLUSION

India must implement targeted strategies to manage food inflation while enhancing food security. This includes improving agricultural productivity, modernising supply chains, supporting vulnerable populations, and adapting policies to better handle food price volatility. Coordinated efforts across government, industry, and communities are essential to create a more resilient and equitable food system, ensuring that all citizens can achieve consistent access to nutritious food and secure their well-being.

SAMPLE QUESTION

Q) Discuss the impact of rising food inflation on food security in India. How do the four dimensions of food security—availability, access, utilisation, and stability—help in understanding the challenges and formulating effective policies to address them? **(10 marks)(150 words)**

KURUKSHETHRA - JUNE 2024

Tribal Art and Culture

INTRODUCTION

Tribe is generally a group of people who live and work together in a shared geographical area and has a common culture, dialect, religion etc and is relatively isolated both geographically and culturally from the rest of the society.

Tribal art that comprises a wide range of art forms such as wall paintings, tribal dances, tribal music etc is in fact a reflection of the rich culture and heritage of these groups. Being a land of cultural diversity, it is important in India to understand the rich glory of tribal culture that largely remains neglected.

INNOVATIVE SCIENCE PROJECTS TO PRESERVE THE TRIBAL CULTURE

Science for Equity Empowerment and Development (SEED):

- ➔ It is a division of the Department of Science and Technology (DST) that provides opportunities for scientists and technologists to work on location-specific projects.
- ➔ The division's goals include developing technologies to create sustainable livelihoods and empowering Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) communities.



North East Centre for Technology Application & Research (NECTAR):

- ➔ NECTAR is an autonomous society, set up under Department of Science & Technology, Government of India with its headquarter at Shillong, Meghalaya
- ➔ This includes expansion of honey production in Nagaland, improvement of the traditional terracotta and pottery business in Asharikandi and Dhubri in Assam, preservation of heritage art of coil pottery in Imphal- East Manipur etc.

National Mission for Green India (GIM):

- ➔ It is a mission under India's National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) that aims to protect, restore, and improve the country's forest cover and respond to climate change.
- ➔ The mission's objectives include Increasing carbon sinks, Adapting to climate change, Improving forest quality etc.

Joint forest management (JFM):

- ➔ The Indian Forest Policy of 1988 emphasises involving local communities in forest management, aligning their interests with sustainable development.
- ➔ JFM creates a partnership between state governments and local communities to manage and protect forests, especially degraded areas, with shared responsibilities and benefits.
- ➔ Communities form committees under JFM to oversee forest conservation, emphasising decentralised and community-driven governance.

THEYYAM: THE TRIBAL CULTURE DANCE

Theyyam

- ➔ Theyyam, meaning "God," is a ritualistic art from North Kerala, performed in regions like **Kasargod, Kannur, and Kozhikode**, and known as **Kaliyattam** or **Bhuta Kola** in Karnataka.
- ➔ It involves **specific lower-caste communities**, each performing the Theyyam of their deity.
- ➔ The makeup uses **natural materials**, and traditional instruments like Chenda and Elathalam are played.
- ➔ There are around **400 forms of Theyyam**, including female deities, historical figures, tribal cultures, and animalistic forms.
- ➔ Thottam Pattu, the initial segment, involves narrating the myth of the deity. In 2018-19, Kerala announced a Theyyam-Kala-Academy in Thalassery to preserve this cultural heritage.



VITAL ROLE OF TRIBAL ART IN SAFEGUARDING CULTURAL IDENTITY

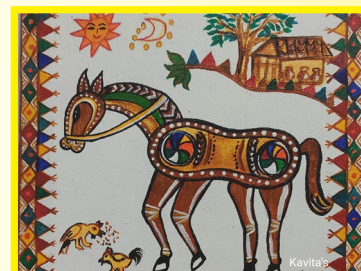
Muria dance in Chattisgarh:

- ➔ The Muria tribe, a subcaste of the Gond tribe, are known for their folk dances, which are a way to celebrate life's simple joys.
- ➔ Murias exhibits the strategy and tactics of hunting of Gaur (also called Indian Bison) in this dance
- ➔ It combines Folk Dance and Drama and it is specially performed during religious festivals and Melas for entertainment.



Pithora paintings:

- ➔ These wall murals are traditionally created by the **Rathwa, Bhils, and Bhilala tribes of India** as offerings to the Hindu deity of marriage, Pithora.
- ➔ The paintings are usually made in the roofed gallery of a house, on walls prepared with a mixture of cow dung and mud.
- ➔ The paintings are often done to seek blessings before special occasions like weddings, festivals, or the birth of a child.
- ➔ The Rathwa tribe believe that the paintings can also banish adversity and change their fortune.



Dhokra brass sculptures of Odisha:

- ➔ Dhokra is a traditional metal casting craft in Odisha, India that uses **brass, nickel, and zinc to create sculptures and other artefacts**.
- ➔ The word "Dhokra" refers to the nomadic tribesmen who first practised the art.
- ➔ The process involves mixing clay and chaff from agricultural waste to create a mould in the shape of the desired object, then using the lost wax method to cast the metal.

Bankura pottery of West Bengal:

- ➔ A craft from the Bankura district of West Bengal, India, that is known for its simple yet dynamic artistry.
- ➔ The pottery is made from baked clay that is coloured with clay and fired in kilns using dry eucalyptus leaves.



Bhimbetka cave paintings:

- ➔ Prehistoric paintings in the **Raisen district of Madhya Pradesh**, India.
- ➔ They are found in over 750 rock shelters, and are considered to be the earliest evidence of art in South Asia.
- ➔ The paintings depict scenes from the **lives of hunter-gatherers during the Upper Paleolithic and Mesolithic periods**, when humans were nomadic and animals were not yet domesticated.
- ➔ The paintings also show ritual practices, women digging rats, and men and women foraging for fruits and honey, dancers, warriors on horseback, and religious symbols.

Indigo Dabu fabric prints of Rajasthan:

- ➔ Known for its rustic charm and intricate designs, Dabu printing is a mud-resist technique used to print fabric mostly in earthy tones.
- ➔ The verb "*dabaana*" which means to press, is where the name Dabu comes from.
- ➔ The majority of practitioners of this craft are located in the Rajasthani cities of Akola, Udaipur, and Bagru.



Warli painting in Maharashtra:

- ➔ A traditional tribal art form that originated in the North Sahyadri Range of Maharashtra, India and is still practised today.
- ➔ The Warli tribe, one of India's largest tribes, is located outside of Mumbai.
- ➔ Warli paintings are known for their vivid contrast expressions, basic geometric shapes, and intricate patterns.

Pattachitra art of Odisha:

- ➔ A traditional style of hand painting that originated in Odisha, India in the 12th century B.C.
- ➔ The word "pattachitra" comes from the Sanskrit words patta, meaning canvas, and chitra, meaning picture.
- ➔ They are typically painted on cloth or palm leaf and depict religious and mythological scenes, such as the life events of deities and people from the period

Jadopatia painting of Jharkhand:

- ➔ The Santhal tribes' Jadopatia paintings are vertical scroll paintings that were originally done on fabric but were subsequently done on paper.

These paintings were popular in Jharkhand, West Bengal's Murshidabad, Birbhum, Bankura, Hooghly, Burdwan, and Midnapore districts, and Bihar's Santal Parganas.

- ➔ The predominant colours of the Jadopatia paintings are golden yellow, purple, and blue, which are taken from natural materials such as the leaves of certain plants, soil, and flowers that are widespread and abundantly found in the region.
- ➔ The brushes these artists used were made up of bunches of goat hair attached to a tiny stick or porcupine quill.



Saura painting of Odisha:

- A style of wall mural paintings associated with the Saura tribes of the state of Odisha in India.
- These paintings, also called ikons, are visually similar to Warli paintings and hold religious significance for the Sauras.



TRIBAL CULTURE: THE POTENTIAL FOR GLOBAL REPRESENTATION

Warli paintings of Maharashtra:

- It is notable for its use of **monochromatic motifs and rhythmic geometric patterns** that narrate tales of social gatherings, harvests and tribal cosmology.
- It employs a circle, triangle and square, symbolising different elements of nature and reflecting their deep connection with nature.



Champa silk of Chhattisgarh:

- Also known as Kosa silk, it is known all over the world for its soft texture and purity.
- It is drawn out of cocoons which are especially grown on specific trees known as Arjun, Saja and Sal.
- It received the geographical indication tag of India in 2010.



Living museums:

- They serve as dynamic platforms for the preservation and demonstration of tribal culture, art and traditions.
- They offer interactive experiences to the visitors.
- In India, Dakshinachitra in Tamil Nadu, the tribal museum in Madhya Pradesh etc are examples.

AGRICULTURE FESTIVALS: INTEGRAL PART OF TRIBAL CULTURE

Bhagoria Haat:

- Bhagoria tribal festival is celebrated by Bhils and Bhilalas tribes during the month of march every year in Madhya Pradesh.
- It celebrates the completion of harvests in fields.
- It is one of the oldest festivals of this region greatly enjoyed in Jhabua, Dhar, Alirajpur and Khargone.
- It is notable for its unique haat (tribal market) that sells silver jewellery.



Agricultural festivals of Mising tribe of Assam:

- Mising tribe of Assam celebrates two major agricultural festivals namely **Ali-Aye-Ligang and Porang**.
- Ali-Aye-Liyang, celebrated on the first wednesday of the month of Phalgun.

- ➔ Porag is celebrated with rejoice and joy as a post harvest festival in the months of Aghan and Phalgun.
- ➔ Generally villagers celebrate it after a gap of 3-4 years and is also known as Nora Siga Bihu.

Hareli of Chhattisgarh:

- ➔ It is a popular tribal festival celebrated in Chhattisgarh, dedicated to crop harvests, trees and greenery.
- ➔ It is celebrated by the **Gond tribes** on the new moon day in the month Shravan.
- ➔ The **goddess “Kutki Dai” is worshipped** during this festival.
- ➔ Several rituals are associated with this. It includes keeping Bhelwa tree branches on fields for protection of crops, hanging neem branches on homes against diseases, embracing sal tree wood- known as Pat Jatra etc.
- ➔ It has various regional names like Rai - Sagan in Garhwal region, Hariyali or Rhiyali in Himachal Pradesh, Dakhrali in Jubbal and Kinnaur etc.



Aelong festival:

- ➔ Celebrated in Nagaland, it is celebrated after sowing of new seeds in the fields to seek blessings for harvest.
- ➔ It is a 5 day Celebration done every year mainly by the Konyak tribe.

Moatsii Mong festival:

- ➔ Locally known as Moastu, the 3 day long festival is celebrated in the month of may.
- ➔ It is celebrated by the people of Ao tribe after sowing seeds and cleaning the fields.
- ➔ As a part of it, they light a fire called Sangpantu and sit around it in their traditional attire.



Mopin:

- ➔ Agricultural festival celebrated by the Galo tribe of the central arunachal pradesh
- ➔ Celebrated on 5th april every year, it involves rituals with rice flour as paddy is a staple food of the tribe.

TRIBAL FOLK DANCES OF NORTHEAST INDIA

Rikham pada:

- ➔ A folk dance form by the Nyishi tribe of Arunachal pradesh.
- ➔ The dance is performed by women to express their love for their husbands and to honour the gods

Cham:

- ➔ Cham form an important part of the religious rituals of the Monpa people of Arunachal Pradesh who profess mahayana buddhism.
- ➔ During the Torgya Festival, the dances are performed with great sanctity and spiritual quest, by selected Monks of the Tawang Monastery
- ➔ A total of 22 different kinds of Cham are performed during the festival some of which are described below
- ➔ Pha cham:performed by a single person in monk's dress wearing a mask to pacify the gods.



- ➔ Shanag cham: performed by twelve dancers who represent tantric priests.
- ➔ Gon-nyin cham: performed by eleven dancers each holding a ritual bell in one hand and damaru in the other, representing Dakinis who are protectors of buddhist faith.

Nongkrem dance:

- ➔ Performed by the khasis of Meghalaya.
- ➔ Dedicated to indigenous deity called U Lei Shyllong and it is performed by women of the group.

Mizo folk dances:

- ➔ Performed by various groups of Mizoram they are expressions of their joyful spirit.
- ➔ Cheraw, often called the bamboo dance, is the oldest Mizo dance and is believed to have started by the 1st century AD.
- ➔ Khaullam meaning “ dance of the guest” - is a part of Khuangchawi, a ceremony comprising community feasting, dance and music.
- ➔ Chheih lam embodies the spirit of joy and exhilaration. A group of people sit in a circle and sing and dance to the song called Chheih hla.



Luivat pheizak:

- ➔ Performed by the Tangkhul people of Manipur.
- ➔ It depicts various stages of cultivation and is performed during all traditional festivals.



Shim Lam:

- ➔ Also known as fly dance, it is performed by the Kabui tribals of Manipur.
- ➔ It is performed during the gang-ngai festival and depicts the story of Tajuibon, a flying insect with shiny wings.

Sovi kehu:

- ➔ Performed by the Angami tribes of nagaland.
- ➔ It is a community dance which takes place in an open stage in the centre of the village.

Yimdongsu tsungsang:

- ➔ Folk dance of the Ao tribe in nagaland.
- ➔ It is a celebration of heritage and spirituality where dancers traverse village streets.



Hozagiri dance:

- ➔ Performed by the Reang tribes of Tripura during the Hozagiri festival or lakshmi puja.
- ➔ It represents the cycle of jhum cultivation.

EMBRACING DIVERSITY: CULTURAL HERITAGES OF TRIBES IN INDIA

Tribal legends:

- ➔ The legend of Thakur Jiu- depicts the heroic deeds of the revered figure of the Santhal Tribes.
- ➔ The story of pithoro- a story of Bhils that venerates a deity that protects fertility and protection.
- ➔ Sing Bonga- Gond folklore that praises the spiritual essence of nature.
- ➔ Langhan Baba - A Munda tribal legend that praises a mythical figure with extraordinary abilities.
- ➔ U Thlen- A cautionary tale of greed and consequence by Khasis.
- ➔ Legend of Pu Lallula- A folk story that entertains with its clever trickster antics in Mizo folklore.
- ➔ The myth of Bera- an Oraon folklore that speaks of the wise spirit guiding their path.



Traditional dramas:

- ➔ Pirama- Santal play showcasing bravery and leadership.
- ➔ Karmabai- Gond play showing struggles against injustice.
- ➔ Laokhowa - Play of Bodos during the new year festival celebrating love and nature.
- ➔ Hudhud- Koya tribes narrates adventures of a mythical bird.
- ➔ Pandavani- Storytelling form of Gonds that retells episodes of Mahabharatha.
- ➔ Jaduranga- It is a Ho drama that explores love .
- ➔ Gandha Madana- Santal drama that delves into the themes of love and betrayal.
- ➔ Bhawariya- Bhil drama that emphasises bravery and social justice.
- ➔ Hachchiya- Drama of Oraon tribes that celebrates love and community life.



ETHICS - CASE STUDY

Q) As the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of a state facing upcoming elections, you are tasked with addressing the low voter turnout, as only a small percentage of the population participates in voting. The Central Election Commission is also concerned about the growing number of MPs and MLAs with criminal backgrounds in the parliament and assemblies. In response, they have directed all CEOs to take proactive measures to address these issues. You have been granted extensive authority to implement strategies.

- a. Analyse the ethical dimension of growing criminal elements in politics.
- b. Suggest strategies to address these issues, providing justifications for each.

ETHICS - EXAMPLES

1. **Humility:** 18-year-old Olympic gymnast Zhou Yaqin, who won a silver medal at the Paris Olympics, was seen helping at her family's restaurant in Hengyang City, China. A viral video shows her serving food in her Olympic uniform, highlighting her humble return home.
2. **Determination, social media:** Archana Patil from Ahmedabad, who had never ridden a bicycle, became a cab driver after her husband fell ill, taking over his job to support her family. Her inspiring journey, shared by a Facebook user after his encounter with her as his Ola driver, has since gone viral.
3. **Work Culture/Harassment:** The Justice Hema Committee report, reveals significant issues of discrimination and exploitation faced by women in the Malayalam film industry. The report highlights problems such as the casting couch, lack of basic facilities on sets, pay disparities, and ostracism for refusing to comply with exploitative demands.
4. **Lack of Social Capital, social ethics:** A Class 10 student in Udaipur died after being stabbed by a schoolmate, leading to heightened communal tensions and the extension of mobile internet suspension in the area. The incident sparked protests, resulting in arson and vandalism, while local authorities demolished the accused's family's home, citing encroachment on forest land.
5. **Neglect of Duty:** Gurugram's Government Primary School Gopalpur Khera, despite its poor condition and lack of amenities, remains operational with just seven students, mostly migrant labourers' children. The school's only teacher is often absent, leaving a substitute to teach the children, who study in the verandah due to a lack of power.
6. **Technology in Social Reform:** In 2008, social workers Tatwashil Kamble and Ashok Tangde discovered a 17-year-old girl's death was due to child marriage, not just maternal complications, prompting him to fight against this practice in Beed, Maharashtra. They used WhatsApp to speed up communication and coordination with authorities, while working to prevent child marriages and rehabilitate survivors.
7. **Innovation:** Two Mumbai teenagers, Rahi Shah and Hriday Boriawala, developed Walkfit, an innovative system attached to walking sticks to prevent falls by analysing gait and diagnosing lower limb disorders. Their work, combining robotics, AI, and machine learning, has earned them accolades, including a provisional patent.
8. **Inclusivity, determination:** Sweta Mantrii uses stand-up comedy to address disability issues, inspired by her own experiences with her medical condition called spina bifida. Despite initial doubts about climbing the stage, she has now completed over 300 standup comedy shows and works to make public spaces more inclusive for people with disabilities.

MODEL ESSAY

"When the winds of change blow, some people build walls and others build windmills"

Introduction

- Quote by English historian and philosopher Lord Acton
- Define federalism: A system of government where power is divided between a central authority and constituent units.
- Meaning: Federalism can act as a check on democratic impulses, providing stability and protecting individual rights.

Need for federalism

- **Prevents tyranny of the majority:** By dispersing power, it ensures that no single group dominates, protecting minority rights. **Eg:** Protects the rights of minority groups like African Americans and Native Americans in US
- **Promotes regional autonomy:** Allows different regions to address unique needs and preferences, fostering diversity and experimentation. **Eg:** States like Kerala and Tamil Nadu implementing their own education policies
- **Encourages cooperation:** Necessitates collaboration between different levels of government, leading to more inclusive and responsive policies.
- **Flexibility and adaptability:** Federal systems are able to adapt to changing circumstances and evolving needs.

Issues with Federalism

- **Potential for gridlock:** The division of power can lead to stalemates and delays in decision-making.
- **Unequal distribution of resources:** Can result in disparities in funding and services across different regions.
- **Accountability challenges:** The complexity of federal systems can make it difficult to assign responsibility for policy failures.
- **Overlapping jurisdictions:** The division of power

between different levels of government can lead to confusion and overlapping jurisdictions.

- **Complex Policy Implementation:** The division of powers in federal systems can complicate the implementation of nationwide policies.

Best Examples of Federalism

United States:

- The division of power between the federal government and states has ensured individual liberties-preventing the dominance of any single faction.
- The Supreme Court's role in interpreting the Constitution has helped to maintain a balance

Canada:

- Accommodated the diverse cultural and linguistic identities of its population.

India:

- Preserving the country's unity amidst its vast diversity-devolution of power to states -empowered local communities -promoted regional development

Conclusion

- Federalism is an essential mechanism for curbing the excesses of democracy-benefits of federalism ultimately outweigh the costs.
- By distributing power, promoting regional autonomy, and encouraging cooperation, federalism safeguards individual rights, fosters diversity, and ensures a more stable and just society.

Sample Quotes

- *Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely- Lord Acton*
- *The power of the people is stronger than the people in power- Wael Ghonim*
- *Democracy is not the law of the majority but the protection of the minority- Albert Camus*

MAINS JOT DOWN



GS- I - IMPORTANT PERSONALITIES

- Great social reformer from Kerala **Sree Narayana Guru** was remembered on his **170th Birth Anniversary**
- Born in Chempazhanthy (near present-day Thiruvananthapuram) in Ezhava family.
- He was a saint, seer, philosopher, poet, and social reformer who led movements against the caste system and its consequences.
- **Contributions:**
 - Advocated for social equality, emphasising the principle of **"One caste, One Religion, One God for all human beings."**
 - **Aruvippuram Movement (1888):** He installed the Shiva idol at the village in Trivandrum. It serves as a symbol of resistance against social injustice, as traditional norms restricted temple entry to higher castes.
 - **Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana (SNDP)** Yogam was founded under his guidance by Dr. Palpu Padmnabhan.
 - He organised India's first such **All Religion Conference in 1923** at Aluva Adwaita Ashramam.
 - **Literary works:** Advaitha Deepika, Atmavilasam, Daiva Dasakam, Brahnavidya Panchakam, etc.



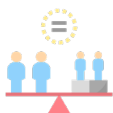
GS- III - ECONOMY

- Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) launched the **All India Initiative on Creative Economy (AIICE)**.
- It conceptualises a forum where India's creative industries could come together and collaborate on various matters related to the creative economy.
- **Creative Economy (or orange economy)**
 - It is an evolving concept which builds on the interplay between human creativity and ideas and intellectual property, knowledge and technology.
 - It includes advertising, architecture, arts and crafts, design, fashion, performing arts, electronic publishing etc.
 - India's creative economy is worth \$30 billion and employs 8% of working population



GS- III - FOOD SECURITY

- The **Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution** launched a pilot project for transformation of **60 Fair Price Shops (FPS)** into **Jan Poshan Kendras**.
- FPSs are shops licensed to distribute essential commodities issued under the **Essential Commodities Act (1955)** to the ration card holders under Targeted Public Distribution System.
- **Jan Poshan Kendras Kendras:**
 - They will offer a diverse range of nutrition-rich food items to consumers as well as provide an additional source of income to the FPS dealers.
 - They have to store 50% products under the category of nutrition while the rest for keeping other household items.
 - The pilot will cover states of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh.



GS- I - SOCIETY

- **Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR)** released a report on sitting MPs/MLAs with Declared Cases Related to **Crimes against Women 2024**.
 - Overall, 151 MPs/MLAs have such charges, with one-third from the ruling party at the centre.
 - There are 16 sitting MPs and MLAs who have declared cases related to rape.



GS- III - AGRICULTURE

- ➔ The **Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying** recently reviewed measures taken towards achieving the goal of **Foot and Mouth Disease FMD-Mukt Bharat by 2030**.
- ➔ **Foot and Mouth Disease**
 - It is a highly contagious viral vesicular disease of cloven hoofed animals such as cattle, buffaloes, sheep, goats and pigs etc.
 - It does not affect horses, dogs, or cats. FMD is caused by an Aphthovirus of the family **Picornaviridae**.
 - Symptoms: Fever and blisters on tongue and lips, in and around mouth, on mammary glands, and around hooves.



GS- III - ENVIRONMENT AND POLLUTION

- ➔ **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** launched an innovative project to tackle growing concern of microplastic contamination in food.
- ➔ Project is named **"Micro-and Nano-Plastics as Emerging Food Contaminants: Establishing Validated Methodologies and Understanding Prevalence in Different Food Matrices."**
- ➔ Aim: Developing standard protocols for microplastic analysis, conducting intra- and inter-laboratory comparisons, and generating critical data on microplastic exposure levels among consumers.



GS- II - INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- ➔ India hosted the **3rd Voice of Global South Summit (VOGSS)** to bring together countries from the Global South to share their perspectives on a wide range of issues, guided by the philosophy of **'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'** (the world is one family).
- ➔ The term "Global South" refers to nations often categorised as "developing," "less developed," or "underdeveloped," and is distinguished from the "Global North" (wealthier nations) by the Brandt line.
- ➔ India also hosted the 1st and 2nd VOGSS in January and November 2023.
- ➔ **Key Highlights of the 3rd VOGSS:**
 - **Theme:** "An Empowered Global South for a Sustainable Future."
 - **Virtual Participation:** A total of 123 countries participated virtually, with China and Pakistan not invited.
 - **Global Development Compact (GDC):** India introduced the GDC in response to concerns about nations burdened with debt under the guise of development finance. The Compact will emphasise trade for development, sustainable growth, technology sharing, and other areas.
 - **Special Initiatives:** India announced a special fund of \$2.5 million to support trade promotion activities and a Trade Policy Training Fund of \$1 million aimed at capacity building.



GS- III - INFRASTRUCTURE

- ➔ Recently, the **Union Minister of Power** launched three online portals for the Power sector.
 - **DRIPS (Disaster Resilient Infrastructure for Power Sector):** To serve as a single point of contact for all stakeholders for managing inventory of specific Power System equipment and critical supplies.
 - **Jal Vidyut Detailed Project Report Portal:** For Monitoring Survey and Investigation Activities of Hydro Electric Projects and Pumped Storage Projects.
 - **Portal for Online Monitoring Of Projects – Thermal (PROMPT):** To facilitate real-time tracking and analysis of thermal power projects.



GS- III - SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- ➔ Indian Researchers **Develop 4D-Printed Artificial Blood Vessels for Advanced Medical Grafts.**
- ➔ 4D printing
 - 4D printing evolves from 3D printing by adding the **dimension of time**.
 - » 3D printing, or Additive Manufacturing, constructs a three-dimensional object from a digital model by adding material layer by layer, unlike subtractive manufacturing, which cuts away material from a solid block.
 - 4D printed objects can change shape or function over time in response to environmental stimuli such as heat, light, or moisture etc.
 - **Applications:**
 - » Medical Application: Drug delivery, tissue fabrication, and organ regeneration etc.
 - » Soft Robotics: Due to its Flexibility, deformability with respect to Environment.
 - » Aerospace: By enabling low-cost, durable parts that adapt to extreme conditions. E.g. Nitinol alloy manufacturing.
 - » Others: sensors and flexible electronics, active origami art, self-evolving structures etc.
- ➔ India's first **Reusable Hybrid Rocket named RHUMI-1** developed by Tamil Nadu-based startup Space Zone India in collaboration with Martin Group, was launched from Thiruvudandhai in Chennai.
- ➔ It was launched using a **mobile launcher** and carried **3 Cube Satellites and 50 PICO Satellites**, which will collect data on global warming and climate change.
 - Cube satellites are a class of nanosatellites, weighing between 1-10 kg.
 - Pico satellites are small satellites that typically weigh between 0.1 and 1 kg.

➔ Features of RHUMI-1 Hybrid Rocket Engine:

- RHUMI-1 is a **hybrid rocket engine** that uses a combination of solid and liquid propellants to improve efficiency and reduce operational costs.
- **Adjustable Launch Angle:** Precise adjustments from 0 to 120 degrees allow for meticulous control over its trajectory.
- **Electrically Triggered Parachute System:** An innovative, cost effective, and eco-friendly descent mechanism ensures safe recovery of rocket components.
- **Environment Friendly:** RHUMI is 100% pyrotechnic-free and 0% TNT.

CHERRYPICKS OF THE WEEK

INPUT TAX CREDIT (ITC)

- ITC is one of the key features of **Goods and Services Tax** as a mechanism to avoid cascading of taxes (tax on tax).
- ITC allows businesses to claim a credit for the GST already paid on goods or services purchased for business use or as inputs.
- This credit can then be used to offset the GST payable on the sale of goods or services.

QUANTUM NONLOCALITY

- It is the apparent **ability of quantum particles** to instantaneously know about each other's state and correlate, even when **separated by large distances**.
- This is in direct contravention of "principle of locality", the idea that distant objects cannot influence each other. Nonlocality occurs due to the phenomenon of entanglement, whereby particles that interact with each other become permanently correlated, or dependent on each other's states and properties.

HAYFLICK LIMIT

- It is the **number of times a cell population can divide** until it attains a cell cycle arrest.
- It depends on the length of chromosomal telomeres, which decreases in standard cells with every cell division.
 - The telomere is the region of repetitive DNA sequences at the end of a chromosome.
- The "Hayflick limit" is around 125 years for humans. Beyond this, no amount of diet, exercise, or genetic tweaking against diseases can extend the human lifespan.

TOKENIZATION

- Tokenization refers to **replacement of actual card** details with alternate code called "**token**", which is unique for a combination of card, token requestor and a device.
- Tokens can be used for online transactions, mobile point-of-sale transactions or in-app transactions.
- Tokenization can be performed by the authorised card network or by the card issuer.

SURETY BOND

- It is a **risk transfer mechanism** wherein an insurer provides a guarantee to a beneficiary or obligee that the principal or contractor will meet his contractual obligations.
- Three parties involved in a surety guarantee:
 - Principal: Could be the owner or contractor
 - Obligor: Government entity or person requiring principal to be bonded.
 - Surety: Provides financial guarantee to obligee on behalf of principal.
- Unlike traditional bank guarantees, surety bonds provide a more comprehensive and efficient solution for different sectors, particularly in construction, etc.