



**UNLOCK IAS
PRESENTS**



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**(GS2, MAINS
CURRENT AFFAIRS)**



Neil
(Founder, Unlock IAS)
HCS (2021, Rank 93)



Unlock IAS Presents Unlocking through 'Sherlocking'

'Sherlocking' inspired by the iconic character Sherlock Holmes, involves using **keen observation** and **logical deduction** to methodically solve complex as well as 'random' questions.

Focus is on developing the right thought process i.e.

Cognition > Memory



AIR 14 (2023) on 'Sherlocking'

Alpha-Beta-Gamma

Reply

My name is Shaurya Arora (AIR 14, CSE 2023). I stumbled upon Neil sir's Telegram group when it was just 1200 members strong.

I was unable to clear my first Prelims attempt in CSE 2022. A major change in strategy took place after I came across Neil sir's 2022 Prelims Sherlocking video on YouTube the next year and it taught me how to properly analyze PYQ's the right way and identify themes, patterns and Heuristics.

I really want to express my gratitude towards Neil sir's guidance; The Sherlocking 2022 YouTube videos really gave me the required tools and insights about using PYQ's, patterns/heuristics and confidence required for the exam. It totally changed my strategy of preparing for the prelims. Thank you very much sir!



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Contact @helpdeskupsc on Telegram for all module-related queries

1. Indian Constitution—Historical Underpinnings, Evolution, Features, Amendments, Significant Provisions and Basic Structure.

1.1. Indian Constitution- Features

1.1.1. Preamble

- Palkhiwala: Identity card of our constitution
- KM Munshi: Horoscope of our Sovereign Democratic Republic
- Pt. Thakurdas: “Soul of the constitution”
- Ernest Barker: Keynote of constitution
- Sir Alladi k. Ayyar: “Preamble expresses what we have thought for so long”

1.1.2. SR BOMMAI JUDGEMENT - Completes 30 years

- **Event:** In 1989, SR Bommai's Karnataka government was dismissed under Article 356, imposing President's Rule.
- **Supreme Court (SC) Role:** A nine-judge bench interpreted Article 356.
- **Ruling:** Limited the misuse of Article 356, ensuring judicial review of President's Rule imposition in states.

Key Principles laid down:

- **Judicial Review:** Presidential proclamation under Article 356 can be reviewed by SC or HC if mala fide or irrelevant.
- **President's Powers:** Requires Parliament's approval to dismiss a state government.

- **Invalidation Consequences:** Restores Council of Ministers and Legislative Assembly.
- **Floor Test Supremacy:** Determines government support.
- **Article 356 Usage:** Only for constitutional machinery breakdown.

Impact:

Restrictive Use: Reduced post-judgment (1950-1994: 100 times, 1995-2021: 29 times).

1.1.3. UNIFORM CIVIL CODE (UCC)

- Shah Bano Case (1985): SC highlighted the need for UCC among religions.
- Paulo Coutinho vs Maria Luiza Valentina Pereira (2019): SC highlights the need for uniform laws for consistency.
- Law Commission (2018): No UCC needed now, amends existing laws. UCC was deemed “neither necessary nor desirable”. Amend and codify existing family laws to tackle discrimination and inequality.
- Law Commission of India (2022): It seeks public and religious input on UCC

1.1.4. Sixth Schedule

The people of Ladakh are protesting for Ladakh to be recognized as a tribal area under the Sixth Schedule.

Constitutional Basis:

- **Articles:** 244(2) and 275(1)

Provisions:

- **Empowers Governor to create Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) and Autonomous Regional Councils (ARCs) in four states (Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram).**
- **Revise powers under 6th Schedule from Laxmikant.**

Benefits Ladakh will get if included in Sixth Schedule

- Address Local Issues + Land Rights + Safeguards for Tradition + Resource Management + Job Opportunities

1.1.5. RESERVATION

Basics:

Art. 15(4); Art. 15(6) and Art. 16(6); Art. 16(4), 16(4A) and 16(4B); Art. 46; Art. 243D; Art. 330; Art. 332

Judicial Pronouncements:

- **Dr. Pradeep Jain v Union of India (1984):** Sons of soil legislation deemed unconstitutional; no express ruling.
- **Indra Sawhney (1992):** exclusion of creamy layer + no reservations in promotions + under 16(4) – should not exceed 50 %
- **M. Nagaraj (2006):** Conditions for reservation in promotions (quantifiable data, inadequate representation, administrative efficiency).
- **Jarnail Singh v Lachhmi Narain Gupta (2018):** No need for quantifiable data in reservation promotions for SC/STs.
- **Janhit Abhiyan (2022):** Upheld EWS reservation based on economic criteria.

EWS

- **Janhit Abhiyan v Union of India, 2022** - Upheld validity of 103rd Constitutional Amendment
- Based on recommendations of **Sinho commission**
- 103rd Amendment Act 2019 inserted Articles 15(6) and 16(6)

Sub-classification in SC, ST for Quota

Supreme Court in **State of Punjab and Ors Vs Davinder Singh and Ors, 2024** ruled that States can sub-classify Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) to provide additional quotas for more disadvantaged groups within these categories.

Local Reservations in Private Sector

Recently, Punjab and Haryana High Court quashed Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Act, 2020.

Dr. Pradeep Jain case (1984): Court opined that "sons of the soil" legislation would be unconstitutional.

Sunanda Reddy v State of Andhra Pradesh (1995): Struck down 5% extra weightage for candidates who studied with Telugu as the medium of instruction.

Maharashtra State Reservation for Marathas

Bill Passed: Maharashtra State Reservation for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes Bill, 2024.

Reservation: 10% for Maratha community.

NARI SHAKTI VANDAN [CONSTITUTION (106TH AMENDMENT)] ACT, 2023

Key provisions of the Act: Reservation of 1/3rd seats for women in Lok Sabha and State legislative assemblies (Article 330A, 332A) + Includes reservation for SC/ST women (Article 330, 332) + Amends Article 239AA for NCT of Delhi + Reservations effective post-delimitation, with provisions ceasing after 15 years (Article 334A) + Periodic rotation of reserved seats.

1.1.6. ONE NATION ONE ELECTION

Committee, headed by former President Shri Ram Nath Kovind: The committee advocated **simultaneous elections for Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies, and local bodies.**

Expert bodies advocated for simultaneous elections

- Law Commission of India (170th Report of 1999, 255th Report of 2015, Draft Report 2018)
- National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution, 2002
- Parliamentary Standing Committee Report in 2015,
- Working Paper of NITI AAYOG in 2017

Need for Simultaneous Elections:

- Avoiding Duplication + Supply Chain Stability + Prevent Policy Paralysis + Focus on Governance + Voter Participation + Legal Burden + Identity Politics

Issues

- Constitutional Amendment + Hung Parliament/Assembly + State Rights + Logistics

1.1.7. Hate Speech

In news: Recently, SC stressed the need for stakeholders to find a long-term solution to the problem of hate speech.

- Curtailed under Article 19(2) on grounds of public order, incitement to offense, and security of State + Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (Section 353(2)) + Representation of People Act, 1951 (Section 8) + Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 (Section 7)
- **Pravasi Bhalai Sangathan vs Union of India, 2014:** The Court recognized the negative impact of hate speech and referred the matter to the Law Commission for an in-depth examination.
- **Shreya Singhal vs Union of India, 2015:** SC held that reasonable restrictions under Article 19(2) on free speech and expression may be imposed only if it incites violence or leads to public disorder.
- **Amish Devgan vs Union of India, 2020:** SC highlights the need to balance the competing interests of free speech and prevent the spread of hatred and communal disharmony.

1.1.8. Electoral Bond Scheme Struck Down by Supreme Court

- **Case:** Association for Democratic Reforms & Anr. v. Union of India (UoI) & Ors.
- **SC Verdict:** Electoral Bond Scheme unconstitutional.

- **Reason:** Violates right to information (Article 19(1)(a)) by anonymizing contributions.
- **Impact:** Amendments to IT Act 1961, Representation of Peoples Act 1951, and Companies Act 2013, for Electoral Bonds, are unconstitutional.

Corporate Funding:

- **Issue:** Unlimited corporate funding to political parties.
- **SC Verdict:** Amendment to Companies Act is arbitrary, violates Article 14.

1.1.9. ELECTORAL FUNDING

- **Income from Unknown Sources:** In FY 2021-22, 66.04% of national parties' income was from unknown sources.
- **Income from Known Sources:** 23.74% of the income was from known sources (declared donations to ECI).
- **Concerns with Electoral Funding:** Huge expenditure in 2019 elections + Disrupts level playing field, deterring small parties + Increased cash transactions with undisclosed donations + Corporate-political nexus influencing politics.
- **Way Forward:** State funding for fairness as per Indrajit Gupta Committee + Transparency through public scrutiny under RTI + Proactive disclosure of donations in audit reports + Tax exemption only for parties winning seats + Public declaration of donors above Rs 2,000 + RTI Act coverage for national and regional parties.

1.1.10. Simultaneous Elections

8-member committee under the leadership of former President Ram Nath Kovind

Arguments for Simultaneous Elections: Impact on Governance (MCC) + Expenditure: (₹10k cr. 2019 Lok Sabha elections) + Security Deployment (not frequent) +

Lesser Public Disruption + Governance Focus

Challenges in Implementing Simultaneous Elections:

Operational challenges (constitutional amendments) + Logistical issues (double EVMs/VVPATs) + National issues overshadowing regional ones + Lack of familiarity since 1960s + Reduced political accountability + Economic impact on grassroots jobs.

Recommendations for Implementation:

Law Commission (1999): Simultaneous elections with delayed result announcements + Parliament Standing Committee (79th report): Two-phase elections (mid-term and end-term) + NITI Aayog (2017): Two-phase elections + Law Commission (2018): Synchronize elections by adjusting timings, conduct elections twice in five years, limit no-confidence motions.

1.1.11. Mass media and elections

Challenges posed by mass media to election process

- **Threats to Sovereignty**
 - **Example:** 2016 US elections: Russia allegedly manipulated outcomes via social media.
- **Misinformation and Sensationalization**
 - **Example:** Facebook's inaction in Sri Lanka (2018) reportedly fueled violence.
- **Online Echo Chambers**
 - Echo chambers worsen societal divisions, leading to polarization.
- **Privacy Concerns and Threat to Voters Opinion**
 - **Example:** 2018: Indian political parties allegedly hired Cambridge Analytica for data mining.

Existing Regulatory Frame for Social Media

- The Information Technology Act, 2000

1.1.12. Internet shutdown

- **Report:** 'Access Now' - 116 shutdowns in 2023, highest globally for six consecutive years.
- **Provisions:** Indian Telegraph Act, 1885.

- **Supreme Court Judgment (Anuradha Bhasin vs. Union of India, 2020):** Shutdowns should be temporary.

Recommendations of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology

- Codifying defined parameters that constitute as public emergency and public safety.

2. Functions and Responsibilities of the Union and the States; Issues and Challenges pertaining to the Federal Structure

2.1. Fiscal Federalism

- Seventh Schedule: Tax Bases Delineated in Union and State Lists (*Article 246*)
- Distribution of Revenue:
 - Article 269: Taxes levied and collected by Centre, assigned to states.
 - Article 269-A: GST in inter-state trade.
 - Article 270: Taxes distributed between Union and states per Finance Commission.
 - Grants-in-Aid: To states by Centre as per *Article 275*.
 - **Article 292:** Union can borrow domestically/internationally.
 - **Article 293:** States can borrow domestically, needing Union consent if indebted to the Centre.
 - **Finance Commission** constituted to adjudicate sharing of resources between Union and States (*Article 280*).

Issues in Centre-State Financial Relations

- **Borrowing Limits:** States limited to 3% of GSDP for 2023-24 (15th Finance Commission).
- **Developmental Expenditure:** Increased from 8.8% of GDP (2004-05) to 12.5% (2021-22).

- **Cess Revenue:** 133% rise in cess collection (2017-18 to 2022-23), not shared with States.
- **Decline in Grants-in-Aid**

2.2. Special Category Status

- Demand by Bihar and Andhra Pradesh.
- 1st introduced – 1969 – on recommendations of 5th FC.
- No provision in Constitution.
- Following the recommendations of 14th FC, SCS have ceased to exist.

2.3. Inter-State Water Disputes in India

Factors Responsible - Asymmetrical Access + Rising Demand + Ambiguous Rights + Fragmented Approach + MSP Impact + Changing Boundaries

Mechanisms to Address Disputes - Constitutional Provisions (State and Union List) + Article 262 (ISWD Act for tribunal referral) + River Boards Act (regulation and development by Central government) + National Water Policy 2012 (addressing scarcity and distribution inequities)

Challenges - Delayed Resolution (e.g., Godavari dispute) + Legal Ambiguity (Article 262 vs. Article 136) + Politicization + Lack of Expertise (tribunals lack multidisciplinary inputs)

2.4. Government of NCT of Delhi (Amendment) Act, 2023

- **National Capital Civil Services Authority (NCCSA):**
 - Established to make recommendations to Delhi's Lieutenant Governor (LG) on service-related matters
 - Composed of Delhi's Chief Minister (chairperson), Principal Home Secretary, and Chief Secretary

- **NCCSA Functioning:**

- Decisions based on majority vote of present and voting members

- **LG's Powers:**

- Can act solely on discretion in matters outside the Delhi Assembly's legislative competence
- Has authority in matters where law requires discretionary or judicial/quasi-judicial action

- **LG's Primacy:**

- Expanded discretionary role
- Can approve or return NCCSA recommendations for reconsideration
- LG's decision is final in case of disagreement with NCCSA

- **Ministerial Matters:**

- Delhi Government ministers must route proposals through Chief Minister and Chief Secretary to LG for opinion before issuing orders
- This applies to matters affecting Delhi's peace and tranquillity, and assembly-related actions (summoning, prorogation, dissolution)

2.5. Language-related developments

Hindi + English = official languages

2011 Linguistic Census = Hindi most spoken (around 43.6 %)

Constitution of India declared Hindi in Devanagari script as Official language of India under Article 343

19,569 mother tongues (Census 2011)

12 out of 36 states and UTs chose Hindi as their first language (Census 2011)

2.6. Cooperative Federalism

Constitutional Provisions for Cooperative Federalism:
7th Schedule demarcates central, state, and concurrent

lists + Article 312 (All India Services) + Article 263 (Inter-State Council) + Article 280 (Finance Commission)

Steps to Foster Cooperative Federalism in India:

Increased states' share in central tax revenue to 41% (15th Finance Commission) + States have autonomy to plan expenditure based on their priorities + Restructured CSS Schemes from 142 to 66, including Flagship Programmes + Launched UDAY scheme for financial sector bailout.

3. DEVOLUTION OF POWERS AND FINANCES UP TO LOCAL LEVELS AND CHALLENGES THEREIN

3.1. Municipal Elections

Why in news? SC invalidated and annulled the outcome of mayoral elections held for Chandigarh Municipal Corporation

Suresh Mahajan v. State of Madhya Pradesh (2022):

State governments do not hold timely elections for urban local governments

3.2. Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)

"The system of democracy at the top cannot be successful unless one builds on it the foundation from below." – Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru

Finances of PRIs:

- **Article 243H:** Allows Panchayats to generate revenue through taxes, duties, tolls, and fees, with State Legislature's authorization for grants-in-aid from the State's Consolidated Fund.
- **Article 243-I:** Requires the formation of a State Finance Commission every five years to assess and suggest improvements for Panchayats' financial status.
- **Article 280(3)(bb):** Directs the Central Finance Commission to propose methods for increasing Panchayat funds, based on State Finance Commission recommendations.

Challenges include Structural Challenges with high dependency on government grants (95% of revenue) + Inconsistent Data with only 46% of Gram Panchayats audited in 2019-20 + Tax Revenue Issues due to a limited tax base, staff shortages, and unclear guidelines + Corruption evidenced by misuse of funds (e.g., Rs 1.58 crore in Vijayawada) + Irregular Formation of State Finance Commissions, with only 9 states regularly constituting SFCs and 2 being active.

Initiatives taken to improve financial ecosystem of PRIs:

e-Gram Swaraj for effective monitoring + Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) under people's Plan Campaign + Capacity Building through Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan (CB-PSA) for training Panchayat Elected Representatives + Rastriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) for sustainable local solutions linked to SDGs.

Sources of Finance for PRIs include Internal/Own Revenue from taxes (e.g., property, service) and non-tax revenue (e.g., market fees) + Transfer of Funds from Central and State Finance Commissions through tied, untied, performance-based, and special category grants + Additional sources from government schemes (e.g., MGNREGA, PMAY) and international grants (e.g., World Bank).

4. SEPARATION OF POWERS BETWEEN VARIOUS ORGANS DISPUTE REDRESSAL MECHANISMS AND INSTITUTIONS.

"I say, that Power must never be trusted without a check." — John Adams.

4.1. Issue of Delegated Legislation

In News: Recently, SC observed that a delegated legislation which is ultra vires the parent Act cannot be given any effect.

Issues in Delegated Legislation: Low scrutiny + High frequency of rule notifications + Undemocratic involvement in rule-making + Potential abuse of executive power + Overlapping legislative functions.

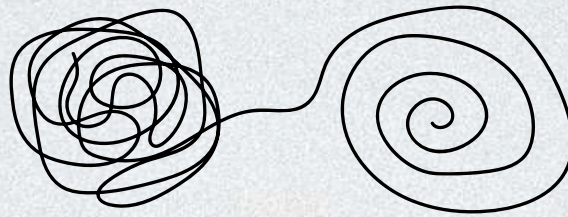
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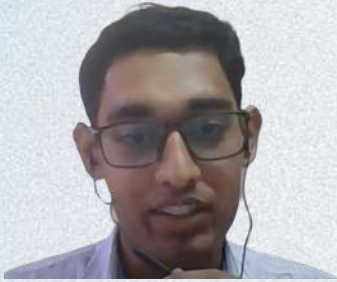


- PYQs-centered module(s) (2011 onwards for GS, 2018 onwards for CSAT)
- Individual Modules available for – History, Geography, Environment, Science & Tech, Polity, Heuristics, CSAT
- Regular live doubt sessions for all modules.

Done with basics but not able to clear Prelims/apply the knowledge?



The Sherlocking Prelims Module(s) will help you **rewire your approach** – teaching you to **leverage common sense** and foundational knowledge



AIR 14 (2023) on 'Sherlocking'

“ I was unable to clear my first Prelims attempt in CSE 2022. A major change in strategy took place after I came across Neil sir's 2022 Prelims Sherlocking video on YouTube the next year and it taught me how to properly analyze PYQ's the right way and identify themes, patterns and Heuristics. ”



AIR 230 (2023) on 'Sherlocking'

Ricky Lohkar Pradhan

@neilcantbirdwahtch thanks a lot for the Sherlocking course. I really could not have cleared prelims if not for Sherlocking.

11:03 AM



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5. Comparison of the Indian Constitutional Scheme with that of Other Countries.

5.1. Impeachment in USA and India

Specification	USA	India
Applicability	President, Vice President, and all civil officers of Federal Government.	Only President (under Article 61).
Grounds of Impeachment	Treason, Bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors.	Violation of Constitution
Process	- Charges: Any member of House of Representatives. - Voting: Simple majority of House of Representatives. - Presiding Officer for trials: Chief Justice of US.	- Charges preferred by: Either House of Parliament provided such charges are signed by at least 1/4th of members of House. - Voting: Resolution needs to be passed by not less than 2/3rd of total membership of each House. - Presiding Officer: Presiding Officer of respective Houses.
Consequence	- Impeachment serves as an indictment, not removal. - After impeachment, Senate (upper house) is convened like a court. President can only be removed if at least 2/3rd of Senate votes for it after hearings. - Andrew Johnson, Bill Clinton, and Donald Trump were impeached but none were removed.	- Impeachment results in removal of President from office. - No President has been impeached so far.

- **Lily Thomas v. Union of India (2013):** SC ruled Section 8(4) of RP Act unconstitutional.
- **Public Interest Foundation v. Union of India (2018):** Political parties must publish candidates' criminal records.
- **Rambabu Singh Thakur v. Sunil Arora (2020):** SC directed EC to report non-compliance by parties.

Way Forward: Lifetime ban for convicts (ECI proposals 2004 & 2016) + **Hybrid electoral system** (170th Law Commission: 75% FPTP, 25% proportional) + **Punishment for false affidavits** (244th Law Commission: 2 years imprisonment) + **Internal democracy** (NCRWC: legislate inner-party democracy) + Amend RP Act, 1950 (debar candidates with pending heinous crime charges) + Other reforms (right to recall, state funding of elections, fast-tracking judicial processes).

6. PARLIAMENT AND STATE LEGISLATURES - STRUCTURE, FUNCTIONING, CONDUCT OF BUSINESS, POWERS AND PRIVILEGES AND ISSUES ARISING OUT OF THESE

6.2. Parliamentary Privileges and Need for Reform

6.1. Criminalization of Politics

- Sitting MPs with Criminal Cases: 40%
- Sitting MPs with Serious Criminal Cases: 25% (including murder, attempt to murder)
- India ranked 85th on the 2022 Corruption Perceptions Index (Transparency International)
- 5,097 cases pending against lawmakers (SC amicus curiae report, 2022).
- **Judicial Pronouncements:**
 - **Union of India vs. ADR (2002):** Electors have a right to know candidates' antecedents.
 - **PUCL v. Union of India (2004):** SC declared Section 33B of RP Act unconstitutional.

Related case laws

- **PV Narasimha Rao vs. State:** SC affirmed immunity for members from civil and criminal proceedings related to their speech or vote.
- **M.S.M. Sharma case:** SC ruled that fundamental rights (Part III) take precedence over privileges (Article 194(3)) in case of conflict.

Immunity Provisions:

- **Articles 105 & 194:** Powers and privileges of Parliament and State legislatures.
- **Freedom of Speech:** Article 105(2) grants MPs immunity for statements/votes in Parliament; limited by Article 121 (judges' conduct).
- **Freedom from Arrest:** Civil cases immunity 40 days before/after session (Code of Civil Procedure, 1908); no immunity in criminal cases.
- **Publication Protection:** No liability for authorized reports/publications.

- **Exclusion Right:** Exclude non-members from proceedings for free discussion (Article 122 prevents court inquiry into procedural irregularities).

- Guilty of election offenses or corrupt practices
- Failure to lodge an account of election expenses

Need for Reform:

- Scope Unclear + Misuse + Lack of Oversight + Procedural Gaps+ Conflict of Interest + Uncodified Powers

6.3. Expulsion of Lawmakers in India

In news: Recently, Lok Sabha has expelled one of its members accused of accepting gifts and illegal gratification.

Disqualification of Members of Either House of Parliament: Art. 102, RPA 1951, 10th Schedule

Authority and Legal Provisions:

- **Parliament's Authority:** Sole authority to determine breaches of privilege or contempt. Judicial scrutiny limited (Article 122).
- **Judicial Intervention:** Raja Rampal case (2007) upheld parliamentary expulsion but noted judicial review if proceedings are tainted by substantial illegality.

Disqualification of Members:

- **Article 102:** Disqualification conditions include:
 - Office of profit
 - Unsound mind (court-declared)
 - Undischarged insolvent
 - Foreign citizenship or allegiance
 - Disqualification under laws made by Parliament

Representation of the People Act, 1951:

- Disqualification if:
 - Convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for two years or more

Tenth Schedule:

- Disqualification on the grounds of defection (52nd Amendment Act, 1985).

6.4. Model Code of Conduct

Relevant provision: Article 324

Genesis: First introduced in **state assembly elections in Kerala in 1960.**

Issues with MCC Implementation: Effectiveness limited by lack of statutory backing and punitive measures (Section 123(4) RPA 1951 covers false statements) + Incomplete guidelines for digital platforms lead to unchecked violations (misinformation, hate speech) + Short duration limits action on violations like hate speech occurring just before MCC + Policy paralysis restricts government from announcing new policies during elections.

Way Ahead: Outline graded punitive measures (e.g., bans on campaigning for repeated violations, up to debarment during MCC) + Penalize political parties (fines or actions under the Election Symbols Order for breaches by members) + Ensure prompt action (penalties within 72 hours, with standardized procedures) + Periodic review of MCC (to address challenges from digital age, AI, and emerging technologies).

6.5. Parliamentary Functioning

17th Lok Sabha (LS) held 274 sittings as compared to 331 sittings in 16th Lok Sabha.

Referral of bills to parliamentary committees: Declining trend, only 16% in 17th LS.

Reducing attendances: On average, MPs had 79% attendance during 17th LS compared to 81% (16th LS).

Reasons for declining parliamentary Functioning:

Dissatisfaction in MPs due to inadequate time for grievances + Sitting hours are not fixed by constitution or rules + Standing Committees anchoring debates outside the house + Unresponsive government and insensitive behaviours of treasury benches towards opposition + Absence of prompt action against disrupting MPs + Political parties not adhering to parliamentary norms and disciplining members.

Improving Parliamentary Functioning: Increase sittings (NCRWC – Minimum sitting should be 120 and 100 for LS and RS) + Provide institutional research support + Extend committee referrals + Encourage responsible opposition.

6.6. Office of Speaker

Art. 93

Issues in Speaker's Functioning: Delays in anti-defection rulings + Controversial money bill declarations (e.g. Speaker's decision to certify Aadhaar bill as money bill) + Allegations of bias and favouritism (suspension of opposition MLAs of Tamil Nadu Assembly in 2016) + Lack of impartiality due to party membership retention.

In **Nabam Rebia case (2016)**, SC held that a speaker or Deputy Speaker facing notice of removal cannot decide disqualification proceedings against legislators.

Suggestions to Reform Speaker's Office: Reduce Speaker's role in anti-defection cases with a permanent tribunal + Adopt Britain's model of not opposing the Speaker during elections + Retain Speaker based on impartiality and efficiency + Restrict future political roles for the Speaker while offering a lifelong pension.

6.7. Anti-defection Law

In news: Maharashtra Assembly Speaker dismissed all petitions seeking disqualification of MLAs under anti-defection law.

Kihoto Hollohan vs Zachillhuase (1992): A Constitution Bench, while upholding the validity of anti-defection law,

held that Speaker's decision was subject to judicial review.

Keisham Meghachandra Singh v The Hon'ble Speaker Manipur (2020): SC held that a decision under anti-defection law should be made within a reasonable period.

2nd ARC recommendation: Issue of disqualification of members on grounds of defection should be decided by President/Governor on advice of EC.

7. STRUCTURE, ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONING OF THE EXECUTIVE AND THE JUDICIARY—MINISTRIES AND DEPARTMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT

7.1. Role of Governor

Constitutional Provisions: Arts. 200, 163

Recent Judgements:

- **SR Bommai Case (1994):** Governor's powers are limited to rare circumstances and are subject to judicial review.
- **Shamsher Singh Case (1974):** Governor must act as per Council of Ministers' advice, including withhold assent or return bills.
- **State of Punjab Case (2023):** Governor's options under Article 200 are limited to granting assent, withholding assent, or referring to President.
- **Vice Chancellor Case (2023):** Governors as University Chancellors are not bound by Council of Ministers' advice.
- **Tamil Nadu Governor Case (2023):** Governor cannot refer bills to President post Assembly re-enactment.

Recommendations:

- **Sarkaria Commission:** Discretionary powers in exceptional cases; Governors should be eminent

outsiders; Not agents of President.

- **Punchhi Commission:** Decision on bills within six months; Independence from politics; Fixed five-year term; Removal by state legislature resolution.
- **Venkatachaliah Commission:** Use Council of Ministers' advice in day-to-day administration.

7.2. Supreme Court of India

In news: Celebrating 75 years.

Pendency: Over 85,000 cases in SC alone (National Judicial Data Grid).

Women in Judiciary: 13.4% and 9.3% of judges are women in HCs and SC respectively (State of Judiciary Report 2023).

At Nearly 50% Cases, Chief Justice Of India Terms Governments As Biggest Litigants

Budgetary allocation to judiciary: 0.08-0.09% of GDP.

- Article 131: Original Jurisdiction
- Article 132-134: Appellate Jurisdiction
- Article 136: Special Leave Petition
- Article 137: Review of Own Judgments
- Article 142: Orders for doing complete justice

Judicial Review: Articles 13(2), 32, 226, 245.

Technology Initiatives:

- **Digital Supreme Court Reports:** Free electronic access to SC judgments.
- **Digital Courts 2.0:** eCourts project initiative for electronic court records.
- **e-Court Mission (2013):** Modernizes courts, improves justice access.
- **New Website:** Bilingual (English and Hindi), user-friendly interface.

7.3. **Judicial Activism:** Creation of Basic Structure doctrine + Law and Order initiatives (ban on tinted glass, Vishakha guidelines) + Creation of uniform

policies (Dengue, Health, Taj Mahal cleanliness) + Cancellation of 2G spectrum and coal blocks + Environment pollution control (Ganga, air pollution).

7.4. **Judicial Over-reach:** SC verdict on CEC/ECs appointments by committee + Mandating collegium formation + Suggesting premium seats in Delhi Metro + NEET declared unconstitutional, later restored + Liquor ban on highways + Amendments to Prevention of Atrocities SC/ST Act (Subhash Kashinath Mahajan vs UoI, 2018) + Amendment of Section 498A to prevent misuse (Rajesh Sharma vs UP, 2017).

7.5. Appointment of Judges

- Article 124, 217

Related Cases:

- **Union of India v Sankalchand Sheth (1977):** SC emphasized "real, substantial, and effective consultation" in judicial appointments.
- **1st Judges Case (SP Gupta vs Union of India, 1981):** Established "executive primacy" in appointments; CJI's role is consultative, not decisive.
- **2nd Judges Case (1993):** Established "consultation" as "concurrence"; CJI has primacy in appointments through the collegium (CJI + 2 senior judges).
- **3rd Judges Case (1998):** Clarified collegium composition as CJI + 4 senior SC judges for SC appointments, and CJI + 2 senior HC judges for HC appointments.
- **NJAC Struck Down (2015):** 99th Amendment, proposing NJAC, was struck down for violating the separation of powers and judicial independence (Basic Structure).

Criticisms of the Collegium System: Lack of transparency in decisions + Allegations of nepotism and favouritism + Lack of diversity in appointments + Delays in judge appointments (37% HC vacancies in 2023) + Lack of

accountability (appointments despite serious allegations).

Merits of the Collegium: Ensures judiciary independence from the executive (Article 50) + Favors majority opinion in appointments + Serious consideration of reservations by two judges + Allows talented lawyers to become judges.

Steps to Ensure Transparency in Judicial Appointments:

Establish Search-cum-Evaluation Committees (SEC) to enhance transparency through the collegium system + Formulate and publicize objective eligibility criteria for judging performance and suitability + Involve Executive and Legislature in the selection process for a fair and transparent appointment system + Publicly disclose SC collegium decisions to reduce secrecy in judicial appointments + Establish a permanent secretariat and subject meeting minutes to RTI + Accept applications for appointments (like in the UK).

7.6. Public Interest Litigation

- **Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan (1997):** Established guidelines for preventing sexual harassment at the workplace.
- **MC Mehta v. Union of India (1986):** Addressed pollution in the Ganga; SC ordered industries to stop dumping effluents.
- **Olga Tellis v. Bombay Municipal Corporation (1985):** Affirmed the right to livelihood as a fundamental right, protecting slum dwellers from eviction without alternative accommodation.
- **Bandhua Mukti Morcha v. Union of India (1984):** Set guidelines for the abolition and rehabilitation of bonded labour
- **Common Cause v. Union of India (2017):** Recognized the right to die with dignity, establishing guidelines for passive euthanasia.

7.7. Judicial Pendency: Over 5.02 crore cases are pending in various courts as reported by the Ministry of Law and Justice.

Reasons for Pendency: Low judge-to-population ratio (21 judges per million) + Frequent adjournments (over 50% exceed 3 adjournment limit) + Lack of infrastructure + Delayed investigations.

Way Forward: Transparent judge appointments + All-India Judicial Services Exam + Use ad hoc judges (Articles 224A and 128) + Promote ADR + Strengthen infrastructure + Implement time limits + Fast-track courts + Enhance judge strength + streamline court procedures + technological integration (e-courts, virtual hearings, digital filing) + establish more fast track courts

National Court of Appeal: Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu has suggested that the Supreme Court institute four regional Benches to tackle the enormous backlog of cases, and to ensure their speedy disposal.

Initiatives Taken:

- **Memorandum of Procedure (2016):** Aimed at transparency in judicial appointments.
- **Project Sahyog:** Reducing pending cases.
- **LIMBS:** Monitoring government-involved cases effectively.
- **Mediation Bill (2023):** Encourages pre-litigation mediation.
- **e-Courts Project:** Enhances access to justice through technology.
- **National Litigation Policy:** Guidelines to reduce litigation.
- **AMRD:** Resolves inter-ministerial disputes.
- **Fast Track Courts (FTCs):** Ensuring swift justice.

7.8. All India Judicial Services (AIJS)

Recently during the Constitution Day celebration, the President of India called for an All-India Judicial Services (AIJS) to recruit judges.

Seeks to centralize the recruitment of judges at level of additional district judges and district judges for all states.

Genesis of AIJS: Proposed in the 14th Law Commission Report (1958) + Constitutionality established via Article

312 through the 42nd Amendment (1976).

- SC directed the creation of AIJS in 1992 (All India Judges' Association v. Union of India) + Shetty Commission (1996) provided a roadmap + SC proposed a "Central Selection Mechanism" in 2017

7.9. NALSA (National Legal Services Authority)

- Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987
- Despite over 80% of the population being eligible for legal aid, only 15 million people have used these services since 1995 (India Justice Report 2019).
- As of December 2022, NALSA operated with only 20 staff members out of its sanctioned 34 positions, affecting its operational capacity.

7.10. Fast Track Courts

- Launched in 2019
- Centrally Sponsored Scheme
- Implemented by the Department of Justice, Ministry of Law & Justice.

7.11. Article 142

Recently, SC nullified the outcome of Chandigarh Mayor Election, **exercising its power under Article 142 (Enforcement of decrees and orders of SC)** of Constitution to ensure "complete justice".

Bhanwari Devi and Ors. vs State of Rajasthan, 2002: SC provided "Vishaka Guidelines" to address workplace sexual harassment, eventually resulting in Prevention of Sexual Harassment Act, 2013.

Vineeta Sharma vs. Rakesh Sharma & Ors., 2020: SC addressed conflicting judgments on daughters' coparcenary rights under Hindu Succession Act.

The Secretary, Ministry of Defense vs. Babita Puniya, 2020: SC granted permanent commission to women officers in Indian Army.

Indira Sawhney V. Union of India (1992): Capped 50% limit on reservation and introduced concept of creamy layer

7.12. MEDIATION ACT, 2023

Defines mediation (including pre-litigation and online) + Introduces voluntary pre-litigation mediation for civil/commercial disputes + Excludes certain disputes (e.g., involving minors, involving criminal prosecution) + Sets a 120-day mediation timeline (extendable by 60 days) + Establishes Mediation Council of India (MCI) for mediator regulation + Defines Mediation Service Providers (recognized by MCI for conducting mediation) + Mediation agreements are enforceable like court judgments, with challenges allowed on specific grounds (fraud, corruption, impersonation)

Concerns with the Act: Limited internet access (55%) and compatible devices (27%) for online mediation (Niti Aayog Report) + Central government approval for Mediation Council regulations may cause conflicts of interest + Lacks enforcement for international mediation settlements outside India + No penalties for breaching confidentiality.

7.13. Free Legal Aid

Articles 14, 22(1), 39A

Government Initiatives for Legal Aid: NALSA (under Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987) + DISHA scheme (2021-2026) + Nyaya Bandhu Platform (connecting pro bono advocates with beneficiaries) + Tele-Law Service (providing legal advice via tele/video conferencing) + Legal Aid Defence Counsel System (LADCS) (engaging full-time lawyers for criminal cases across 676 districts) + Nyaya Mitra program (facilitating disposal of 15-year-old pending cases at district level)

Value Add: Only 15 million have used legal aid since 1995 (India Justice Report 2019).

7.14. Criminal Justice System

Low conviction rates: Murder (43.8%), Rape (27.4%) - NCRB 2022

Low judge-to-population ratio: 21 judges/million

Addressing court pendency: 4.7 crore cases pending in SC, HC, and subordinate courts.

Human resource shortage: 192 police/lakh (UN recommends 222).

Recommendations for police reforms:

Prakash Singh vs. Uoi, 2006:

- Establish State Security Commission to eliminate political interference.
- Merit-based DGP appointments with a minimum two-year tenure.
- Form Police Establishment Board for managing transfers, postings, promotions, and salaries.
- Set up National Security Commission for selecting Chiefs of Central Police Organisations

Recommendations of Malimath Committee

- Right to Silence: Modify Article 20(3) to address self-incrimination.
- Rights of accused: Publish Code schedule in regional languages for awareness.
- Authorize dying declarations, confessions, and audio/video recorded witness statements.
- Public prosecution: Appoint Assistant Public Prosecutors and Prosecutors via competitive examination.

7.15. **Criminal Law Reform Acts**

Acts Involved:

- **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023:** Replaces IPC, 1860
- **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita 2023:** Replaces CrPC, 1973
- **Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam 2023:** Replaces Indian Evidence Act, 1872

Need for Reforms: Modernize outdated laws (IPC, IEA, CrPC) + Address 4.7 crore pending cases + Improve conviction rates through better forensics and policing + Implement committee recommendations (Law Commission, Malimath Committee, Verma Committee).

Key Provisions of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023:

- **Community Service:** Introduced for petty offenses.
- **Sexual Offenses:** Raises gangrape victim classification age to 18; criminalizes deceitful sexual intercourse.
- **Sedition:** Removes sedition, penalizes secession, armed rebellion, subversive activities.
- **Terrorism:** Defines acts threatening national unity, security, or economic stability.
- **Organized Crime:** Covers kidnapping, extortion, contract killing, cybercrime, etc.
- **Group Crimes:** Addresses crimes by groups based on race, caste, community, sex, etc.

Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita 2023

Key Provisions:

Detention of Undertrials:

- Release first-time offenders after one-third of maximum imprisonment.
- Release accused after half of maximum imprisonment on bail (excludes death/life imprisonment and multiple offences).

Forensic Investigation:

- Mandatory for offences with at least seven years imprisonment; use other states' facilities if needed.

Signatures and Finger Impressions:

- Magistrates can order any person to provide specimen signatures, handwriting, fingerprints, and voice samples.

Timelines for Procedures:

- Sets timelines for medical reports, judgments, informing victims, and framing charges.

Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam 2023: Replaces the Indian Evidence Act, 1872.

- Expanded definition of electronic records:
 - Now includes information stored in semiconductor memory
 - Covers communication devices (smartphones, laptops)
 - Includes emails and server logs
- Classification of electronic records:
 - Considered as documents, alongside writings, maps, and caricatures
- Oral evidence:
 - Can be given electronically
 - Includes statements made before courts by witnesses
- Joint trials:
 - Applies to trials of multiple persons for the same offense
 - Includes cases where an accused has absconded or not responded to an arrest warrant

7.16. Prison Reforms

- State Subject
- **Challenges in prison governance:** Difficulty in obtaining bail + overcrowding (130.2% occupancy, 77.1% undertrials) + understaffing (30%) + inadequate prison budget (0.6% on training, 1% on welfare) + low representation of women staff (13.77%).
- **Steps taken by the Centre for Prison Reforms:** Model Prison Manual 2016 (standardizes prison administration) + Model Prisons and Correctional Services Act, 2023 (replaces outdated prison laws and incorporates modern provisions) + E-Prison Project (digitizes and improves efficiency in prison management) + Modernization of Prison Scheme (enhances infrastructure and facilities in jails).

Way Ahead (Parliamentary Committee Recommendations): Implement "Support to Poor Prisoners" (Union Budget 2023 initiative) + Use trackable bracelets for bail monitoring (technology for prisoner tracking) + Renovate colonial prisons (preserve heritage, promote tourism) + Create Prison Development Fund (state-level fund for prisoner welfare)

Mulla Committee Recommendations (1980):

Establish Indian Prisons & Correctional Service (create a specialized All India Service) + Integrate rehabilitation and probation (ensure after-care and probation services) + Allow press/public access to prisons (increase transparency) + Minimize undertrial detention (reduce undertrial numbers, separate from convicts).

7.17. Tribunal System in India

Why in the News? Recently, the Supreme Court (SC) ruled that tribunals cannot direct the government to frame policy and making policy is not in the domain of the Judiciary.

Provisions: Articles 323A, 323B

Chandra Kumar Case (1997): Appeals against decisions of tribunals were allowed in division bench of High Courts.

Concerns with Tribunals:

Lack of judicial independence in selection committees + Case pendency (e.g., 7,500 pending in Motor Accident Claims Tribunal) + Short tenure of members increases executive influence + Overlapping jurisdiction with regular courts + Concerns about technical members lacking legal qualifications.

Way Ahead: Create National Tribunals Commission (NTC) for tribunal administration (2015 Committee and 2020 SC recommendation) + Expedite tribunal member appointments to reduce backlogs + Conduct Judicial Impact Assessment for resource planning.

8. APPOINTMENT TO VARIOUS CONSTITUTIONAL POSTS, POWERS, FUNCTIONS AND

RESPONSIBILITIES OF VARIOUS CONSTITUTIONAL BODIES; STATUTORY, REGULATORY AND VARIOUS QUASI-JUDICIAL BODIES.

8.1. Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners Act, 2023

Key Provisions of the Act: Replaces 1991 Act + CEC and ECs appointed by President on **Selection Committee's** recommendation (PM, Leader of Opposition, nominated Cabinet Minister) + **Search Committee** prepares a panel (headed by Law Minister) + Eligibility: rank of Secretary to GoI with election management experience + Salary equal to SC Judge, 6-year term, no reappointment + Removal similar to SC Judge, ECs removable by CEC recommendation.

Way Forward: Balance Selection Committee (include CJI) + Restrict post-retirement roles for CEC and ECs + Ensure administrative independence with an independent secretariat + Amend Article 324(5) for equal protection and removal procedures for ECs and CEC.

8.2. Electoral Reforms

Reforms for the Betterment of Electoral Process: Promoting transparency (mandatory income declaration) + Increasing voter participation (lowering voting age, postal ballot, Election Laws Amendment Bill 2021) + Leveraging technology (EVMs, NOTA) + Creating a level playing field (model code of conduct, expenditure ceiling, exit poll restrictions)

8.3. Electoral Funding

Recently, SC in **Association for Democratic Reforms vs Union of India (2024)** unanimously struck down Electoral Bonds Scheme (EBS), which aimed to enhance transparency in electoral funding.

By anonymizing contributions, violates the Right to Information under **Article 19(1)(a)** and is therefore **unconstitutional**.

Amendment to Companies Act permitting **unlimited corporate contributions** to political parties is arbitrary and **violative of Article 14**.

EBS not proportionally justified to curb black money

8.4. Delimitation Commission

Art. 82: Parliament enacts a Delimitation Commission after every census.

Art. 170

- Ensures equal representation and fair geographical division.
- Appointed by the President; includes a SC judge as chairperson, CEC nominee, and State Election Commissioner.
- Orders are legally binding and not subject to judicial review.

8.5. NHRC

In news: Recently, United Nations-linked Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) **deferred the accreditation of NHRCI (National Human Rights Commission of India) for second year** in a row.

Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA), 1993

9. DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND THE DEVELOPMENT INDUSTRY - THE ROLE OF NGOs, SHGs, VARIOUS GROUPS AND ASSOCIATIONS, DONORS, CHARITIES, INSTITUTIONAL AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

9.1. SELF HELP GROUP BANK LINKAGES (SHG-BL) PROJECT

The Ministry of Rural Development reports that as of November 2023, SHGs have accessed bank loans amounting to Rs. 7.68 lakh crore since FY 2013-14 under the SHG-BL Project.

Key Factors Contributing to Success

- **Annual Issuance of Master Circular:** By RBI and NABARD.
- **Regular Training:** For staff and community cadres under State Rural Livelihoods Missions (SRLMs).
- **Financial Education:** Provided to SHG members via trained Financial Literacy Community Resource Persons (FLCRPs) at the village level.
- **Bank Sakhis:** 45,746 Bank Sakhis positioned in rural bank branches to facilitate smoother interactions between banks and SHGs.
- **Web Portal:** Created to overcome information asymmetry in SHG-Bank Linkage, incorporating data directly from banks' Core Banking Solution (CBS) database.

9.2. Lakhpa Didi Scheme

Objective: Enable rural SHG women to earn at least Rs. 1 lakh per annum.

Launch: Initiated by the Ministry of Rural Development in 2021, focusing on women-led development.

Activities Covered: Training in skills like plumbing, LED bulb making, operating, and repairing drones.

Major Initiatives to Promote SHGs

- SHG-Bank Linkage Programme (SHG-BLP)
- Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana - National Rural Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NRLM)
- Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP)
- Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)
- Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalaya Yojana (DDU-GKY)

10. WELFARE SCHEMES FOR THE VULNERABLE SECTIONS OF THE POPULATION BY CENTRE AND THE STATES & PERFORMANCE OF THESE SCHEMES MECHANISM, LAWS, INSTITUTIONS AND BODIES

CONSTITUTED FOR THE PROTECTION AND BETTERMENT OF THESE VULNERABLE SECTIONS

10.1. Crime in India 2022 Report (NCRB)

Overall Crime:

- 58.24 lakh cognizable crimes registered, a 4.5% decline.
- Crime rate: 422.2 per lakh population (down from 445.9 in 2021).

Crime Against Women:

- 4.45 lakh cases, a 4.0% increase.
- Dominant categories: cruelty by husband/relatives (31.4%), kidnapping, assault, and rape.

Crime Against Children:

- 1.6 lakh cases, an 8.7% increase.
- 39.7% under POCSO Act.

Crime Against Senior Citizens:

- 28,000 cases, a 9.3% increase.

Crime Against SCs and STs:

- Crimes against SCs up 13%; against STs up 14.3%.
- 8.2% cases under SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act.

Cyber Crime:

- 65,000 cases, a 24.4% increase.
- Majority: cyber fraud (64.8%), extortion (5.5%), sexual exploitation (5.2%).

10.2. PERSON WITH DISABILITY

Census 2011 reports 2.21% of the population with disabilities.

- **Economic Impact:** Inclusion of PwDs could increase GDP by 3-7% (ILO estimate) + India's lack of disability-inclusive policies may result in a \$210 billion lost opportunity.

RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (RPWD) ACT, 2016

Seema Girija Lal & Anr Vs Union of India & Ors case the Supreme Court expressed disappointment at the inadequate implementation of the RPwD Act, 2016 across states.

About Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016 - Enacted to give effect to the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) of 2007**, to which **India is a signatory**.

Key Provisions of the Act

- **Definition of PwD:** Long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairment hindering participation.
- **Recognized Disabilities: 21 types**, including acid attack victims, intellectual disability, and mental illness.
- **Social audit:** Section 48 of the Act requires governments to conduct social audits of all PwD-related schemes and programs.
- **Enumerated Rights for PwDs:** Equality, dignity, and respect + Protection from abuse + Rights to home, family, reproductive health, voting accessibility, and property ownership.

Related data

Only 8.73% of buses were accessible by 2022 (target: 25% by 2018).

Only 48.5% of government buildings were accessible by 2022 (target: 50% by 2018).

Limited budget allocation for accessibility (e.g., Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment received only 0.027% of the total budget for 2023-24).

Over 603 government websites made accessible for visually impaired using assistive technologies.

There are four national legislations dealing with persons with disabilities namely,

- Ministry of Social Justice: Rehabilitation Council of India Act (1992), National Trust Act (1999), RPwD Act (2016).
- Ministry of Health: Mental Healthcare Act (2017).

Schemes: Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan) + Skill Development Programme for PwDs + early diagnostic and intervention centres

10.3. Street Vendors

STREET VENDORS (PROTECTION OF LIVELIHOOD AND REGULATION OF STREET VENDING) ACT, 2014

The enactment of the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act 2014 completed 10 years.

Current status: 10 million street vendors.

Contribution to economy: Street-vending: 14% of urban informal employment.

Key provisions of the act

- Defines Street Vendor (SV)
- Defines vending zones
- Street vending plans (SVPs): Local authorities must frame SVPs.
- Enumerates duties

Key Bodies established under the Act

- Town Vending Committees (TVCs)
- Grievance Redressal Committees (GRC)

10.4. SENIOR CITIZENS

- Senior citizens (60+ years): 10% of the population (~104 million)
- Women: 58% of elderly; 54% are widows
- Rural residency: 70% of elderly

UNFPA India Ageing Report 2023

- **Rapid Ageing:** Significant increase in elderly population from 2010, with a decline in the under-15 age group.
- **Interstate Variation:** Differences in elderly population growth; southern and western India have more elderly compared to central and northeastern regions.

Transforming Ageing Population into Opportunity

- **Promoting Elderly SHGs + Regulating Old Age Homes + Promoting Silver Economy** (Cater to people over 50) + **Leveraging Digital Ecosystem + Awareness Drives:** Only 12% aware of the Maintenance & Welfare Act.

Initiatives Taken

Global

- **Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002**
- **SDG 3:** Ensure healthy lives and well-being at all ages.
- **UN Decade of Healthy Ageing: 2020–2030**

India

- **Constitutional:** Article 41 mandates senior citizen well-being.
- **Legislative and Policies:**
 - **Maintenance and Welfare of Senior Citizens Act, 2007**
 - **National Policy on Older Persons, 1999**
 - **Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund, 2016**
- **Social Security and Welfare Schemes:**
 - **IGNOAPS, 2007**
 - **Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana, 2017**
 - **Atal Vayo Abhyuday Yojana, 2021:** Includes Integrated Programme for Senior Citizens, State Action Plan, Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana, and Livelihood and Skilling Initiatives for Senior Citizens.

10.5. WOMEN

10.5.1. Menstrual Leave Policy

National Level

- No Governing Law
- **Draft Menstrual Hygiene Policy 2023:** Proposes addressing gender discrimination and supporting leave and work-from-home options.
- **The Right of Women to Menstrual Leave and Free Access to Menstrual Health Products Bill, 2022:** Proposes three days of paid menstrual leave.

State Level

- **Bihar (1992):** Two days of paid menstrual leave per month
- **Kerala (2023):** Menstrual leave in state universities.

Private Firms: Companies like Zomato, Swiggy, and Byju's offer paid menstrual leave.

Global Initiatives on Menstrual Leave Policy

- **Japan (1947):** Labor law allows menstrual leave on request.
- **South Korea (2001):** Monthly "physiologic leave" for female workers.
- **Indonesia (2003):** Two days of leave for menstrual pain.

10.5.2. POSH Act, 2013

In news: 10 year of the Act

Achievement: Increased Reporting: 54% rise in registered cases from 2014 to 2017.

Challenges: Non-constitution of ICC + Lack of Monitoring Inaccessibility + Informal sector women workers largely unaware + Underreporting + Lack of Clarity

10.6. CHILDREN

Initiatives for Early Childhood Care and Education in India

- The Integrated Child Development Services, 1975
- Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0
- Palna (PROVISION OF ANGANWADI CUM CRECHES) and Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) Schemes under Mission Shakti.
- Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi launched in 2023.

Global initiatives:

- UNESCO established Global Partnership Strategy for Early Childhood
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1989 and Education for All (EFA) 1990
- The SDG4 - Education 2030

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE MATERIAL (CSAM)

Recent Developments: The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) issued notices to social media platforms to remove CSAM from their platforms in India.

Measures Taken

- **Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000** .
- **Protection of Children against Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012**
- **OCSAE Prevention/Investigation Unit:** Set up by CBI to probe relevant offences.
- **Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC):** Project under Nirbhaya Fund for awareness.
- **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023:** Conditions on data processing entities for children's data.
- **Social Platforms Initiatives:** YouTube uses CSAI Match to remove CSAM proactively.

10.7. LGBTQIA+

- In **Supriyo @ Supriya Chakraborty vs Union of India**, the Supreme Court refused to accord legal recognition to same-sex marriages.

Legal Milestones in LGBTQIA+ Rights

- **2014: NALSA vs. Union of India:** Recognition of non-binary gender identities.
- **2017: Justice KS Puttaswamy (Retd.) vs. Union of India:** Right to exercise sexual orientation.
- **2018: Navtej Singh Johar vs. Union of India:** Decriminalization of Section 377 of the IPC.
- **2019: Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act:** Legal protections for transgender individuals.

11. ISSUES RELATED TO DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF SOCIAL SECTOR/SERVICES RELATING TO HEALTH, EDUCATION, HUMAN RESOURCES

11.1. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- 134 (2022) rank of India in Human development Index (improvement from 135 (2021))
- <5% of workforce (of age 19-24) receives formal vocational education (NEP, 2020) Much below USA (52%) and South Korea (96%).
- 3.2% Life insurance penetration in India (2021) - Almost twice more than emerging markets and slightly above global average.

Development of Social infrastructure by Indian Government

- **Education:** The National Education Policy 2020 + Samagra Shiksha Scheme + Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan
- **Health:** Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri - Jan Arogya Yojana + Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) + National Health Mission
- **Housing:** Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban & Rural)

Way forward: Increase public expenditure on healthcare and education to 2.5% and 6% of GDP in line

with National Health Policy 2017 and National Education Policy 2020 respectively.

11.2. EDUCATION

All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2021-2022

Student Enrolment:

- **Total:** Increased to 4.33 crore (2021-22) from 4.14 crore (2020-21)
- **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER):** 28.4%
 - SC: 25.9%
 - ST: 21.2%
- **Gender Parity Index (GPI):** 1.01
- **Field-wise Enrolment:** Arts (34.2%), Science (14.8%), Commerce (13.3%), Engineering & Technology (11.8%)

Infrastructure:

Availability of different infrastructural facilities in HEIs in 2020-21:

- **Libraries:** 97%
- **Laboratories:** 88%
- **Computer Centres:** 91% (up from 86%)
- **Skill Development Centres:** 61% (up from 58%)
- **National Knowledge Network:** 56% (up from 34%)

11.3. Public Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Rules, 2024

Key provisions of rules include:

- Venue-in-charge to take appropriate action, including FIR filing, if the prima-facie case of unfair means or offense in the conduct of public examination is reported.
- Committee should be constituted by public examination authority if there is involvement of Management or Board of Directors of service provider conducting exam.
- Periodic reporting of all incidents of unfair means in conduct of public examination to public

examination authority by Regional officer along with details of action taken

12. ISSUES RELATED TO POVERTY AND HUNGER

Niti Aayog: India has registered a significant decline in multidimensional poverty in India from 29.17% in 2013-14 to 11.28% in 2022-23.

Niti Aayog: 13.5 crore people exited poverty between 2015-21.

Global Hunger Index 2023: 111/125

Global Hunger Index 2023: Child-wasting rate: 18.7% (world's highest) + Anemia prevalence among women (15-24): 58.1%.

Oxfam: The top 10% of the Indian population holds 77% of the total national wealth

Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES): India's rural poverty level had declined to 7.2% in 2022-23 from 25.7% in 2011-12.

UNICEF: Open Defecation: Reduced significantly by an estimated 450 million people.

Government Initiatives to Address Hunger in India

- National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013 Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY)
- Pradhan Mantri Matri Vandana Yojna
- POSHAN Abhiyan (National Nutrition Mission)
- POSHAN Tracker
- Eat Right Movement

13. IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF GOVERNANCE, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY, E-GOVERNANCE- APPLICATIONS, MODELS, SUCCESSES, LIMITATIONS, AND POTENTIAL; CITIZENS CHARTERS, TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY AND INSTITUTIONAL AND OTHER MEASURES

13.1. Environment Issues and Governance

M.K. Ranjitsinh and Others v. Union of India and Others: Regarding the protection of Great Indian Bustard and its habitat

Maneka Gandhi vs. Union of India (1978): Right to environment, free of danger of disease and infection is inherent in Article 21.

Rural Litigation and Entitlement Kendra vs. State (1988): Recognized the right to live in a healthy environment as part of Article 21 of the Constitution.

M.C. Mehta vs. Union of India (1987): Treated the right to live in pollution-free environment as a part of Article 21.

Vellore Citizens Welfare Forum vs. Union of India (1996): Observed that "the Precautionary Principle" and "the Polluter Pays Principle" are essential features of "Sustainable Development."

13.2. Local Governance

India is 31 % urban according to Census 2011. Indian cities are expected to host over 50% of India's population by 2050.

RBI: The own revenue of Indian municipal corporations was less than 1% of GDP, smaller than Brazil's 7% and South Africa's 6%.

15th Finance Commission (FC-XV): Recommended ₹4.36 lakh crore in grants to local governments for 2021-26, the largest share for local bodies.

Initiatives: Local Area Plan and Town Planning Scheme (enables planned urban development) + **Smart Cities Mission** (promotes cities with core infrastructure and sustainable environment) + **PM SVANidhi Scheme** (offers micro-credit loans to street vendors) + **AMRUT Mission** (provides basic civic amenities).

13.3. Urban Local Bodies

Capacity Building:

Measures: Capacity Building Scheme for ULBs (improves governance and financial management) + World Bank-assisted Capacity Building for Urban Development Project (targets ULBs with economic growth potential) + National Urban Digital Mission (2021) (focuses on citizen-centric digital revolution) + Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (urban infrastructure and services) + Municipal Bonds (raises funds for urban development).

13.4. E-Governance

Internet in India Report 2022: India likely to have 900 million active internet users by 2025.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI): Over the last four years, UPI transactions have seen a ten-fold increase in volume, from 12.5 billion transactions in 2019-20 to **131 billion transactions in 2023-24.**

Finance Ministry: DBTs totalling Rs 34 lakh crore resulted in savings of Rs 2.7 lakh crore to govt.

- **Common Services Centres:** Over 400 digital services are being offered by these CSCs.
- **Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance (UMANG):** More than 1,570 government services and over 22,000 bill payment services are made available at UMANG.
- **DigiLocker:** DigiLocker has more than 11.7 crore users and more than 532 crore documents are made available.
- **Unified Payment Interface (UPI):** Facilitated transactions worth over ₹10 lakh crore.
- **CO-WIN:** More than 203 crore vaccination doses and 110 crore registrations have been facilitated by Co-WIN.

- **Diksha:** As of 2022, 7,633 courses are available, and more than 15 crore enrolments have been done.
- **M-KISAN:** Over 5.13 crore farmers are registered for receiving crop advisories through SMS.
- **National Agriculture Market (e-NAM):** 1000 + Mandis integrated

13.5. DIGITAL PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION ACT 2023

Key Provisions: Applies to digital data processing within India and for services offered in India + Requires **consent** for lawful data processing, with exceptions for legitimate uses like government services and emergencies + Establishes **Data Protection Board** of India for monitoring and grievances + **Defines rights and duties of Data Principals**, including data correction and erasure + Obligates Significant Data Fiduciaries to maintain **data accuracy, security**, and deletion post-use

Significance: Enhances data protection, especially in sensitive sectors like healthcare + Provides clear rules for businesses, aiding compliance + Allows data processing for research purposes with exemptions + Aligns with global data protection standards, facilitating international business.

Limitations: Potential violation of privacy rights through government exemptions + Complicated grievance redressal process requiring multiple steps + Ambiguities in definitions, particularly concerning children's data protection + Lacks provisions for data portability and the right to be forgotten + Vulnerabilities due to weaker data protection laws in other countries.

Way Forward: Develop cross-border data governance for countries not listed in the Act + Introduce rights to data portability and the right to be forgotten + Clearly define terms like sovereignty and procedures for exemptions to prevent misuse + Set specific timeframes for data deletion post-purpose fulfilment or consent withdrawal.

14. Role of civil services in a democracy

Free and Fair Elections: Reforms by T.N. Seshan: Critical in reducing money and muscle influence in elections.

Participative Democracy: Village Development Board (VDB): Introduced by A.M. Gokhale in 1976 in Nagaland for decentralized planning.

Inclusive Democracy: Sweekruti (2020): Balangir district initiative to integrate transgender community into mainstream activities and social security.

Law and Order: Sanjukta Parashar: Tackled northeast insurgency, known as the Iron Lady of Assam.

Overcoming Resource Constraints:

- **Armstrong Pame:** Crowdfunded a 100 km road in Manipur, known as the "people's road."
- **Prasanth Nair:** Launched Operation Sulaimani in Kozhikode, using public donations to ensure the Right to Food.

Civil Servants Improvement Initiatives:

- **Mission Karmayogi:** National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building.
- **iGOT Karmayogi:** Integrated Government Online Training platform.
- **NSCSTI:** National Standards for Civil Service Training Institutions.
- **Aarambh (2019):** Common foundation course for civil servants.
- **National Training Policy:** Develops professional, impartial, and efficient civil servants.
- **PM's Awards for Excellence:** Recognizes public administration excellence.



Sherlocking Mains GS Module(s) (GS I-IV)

- **PYQ-centric Answering Writing Development Module**
- Learn how to use **UPSC CSE syllabus as a cheat sheet** to generate a lot of dimensions.
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Know the basics but not how to translate the knowledge into well-written answers?



The Sherlocking Mains Module(s) will help you **rewire your approach – teaching you to **leverage common sense** and foundational knowledge**

HMM24CK Reply
 Sir neilcantbirdwahtch

Your mains module helped me to optimise my mains preparation. Your techniques like how to contextualise conclusion helped me to write better answers.

I was struggling in dealing with case studies and hardly crossed 2.5 pages but now I am writing 3.5pages with ease.

One of the most important aspect of your mains module is your constant support through online sessions where you answered all my queries in detail.

You are my one stop solution for all my upsc related queries. Thank you so much sir. 😊

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← 3 19:15

Sanket Reply

Abhishek
 This is interesting and I wanted to share... I saw the first video an... I cannot agree more. An addendum to supplement this.

I was wasting my time trying to study World History from my notes and it was so funny how I had made specific notes for IR in US, IR in Germany, IR in UK, IR in Japan and so forth.

I felt so foolish trying to memorise such intricate notes (definitely felt intellectual af while jotting em down back in time, admittedly so) and later realised Neil's Apple-Fruit analogy and laughed at myself (extends to revolution, decolonisation too)

99.99% common pointers that can help with an above average answer, ain't gonna be wasting any more time

I respect my history teacher from mainstream coaching but I am also high key pissed why he couldn't simplify our prep by just stating the obvious

Thank you Neil for simplifying the prep process in a rather effortless manner 🙏

❤️ 4 🍌 1 🏆 1

edited 15:56



Neil
(Founder, Unlock IAS)
HCS (2021, Rank 93)

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FREE!

Interested? Contact @helpdeskupsc on Telegram for all module-related queries.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

1. India and its Neighbourhood Relations

1.1. India-Bangladesh

Significance: Key trade partners in South Asia + Security and border cooperation + Peaceful boundary resolutions + Sub-regional cooperation (SAARC, BIMSTEC) + Enhanced connectivity via ports + Strong cultural and people-to-people ties + \$8 billion LOC for development.

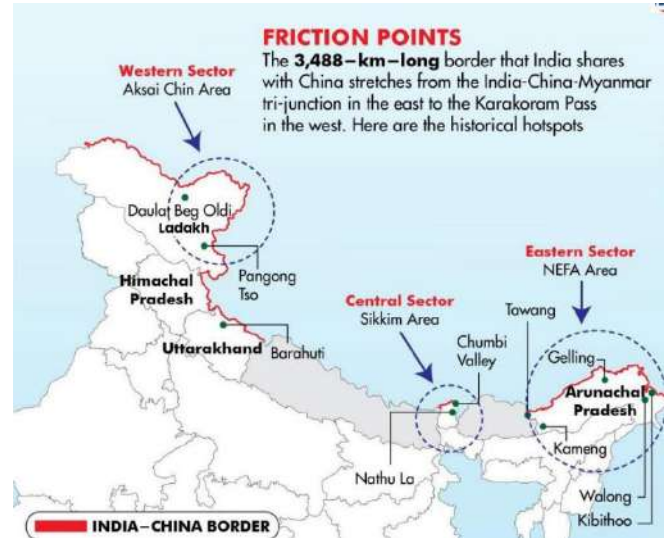
Challenges: Teesta river dispute + China's strategic influence + Internal security issues with illegal migration + Rising radicalization and minority treatment + Impact of CAA on relations + Political instability concerns.

1.2. India-China

China's Major Strategic Threats to India: Immediate territorial threats - Intrusions in Ladakh, claims on Arunachal Pradesh, **CPEC challenge** + Infrastructure development along LAC + Indiscriminate military spending and presence in Indo-Pacific - **\$222 billion defense budget vs. India's \$75 billion** + Subverting democratic societies - Deployment of United Front Work Department (UFWD) + Ballooning trade deficit - \$99 billion in 2023 + Economic dominance for geopolitical gains - **Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka** + Threats to food and water security - **Hydroelectric projects on Brahmaputra**.

India's efforts to mitigate these threats: Standing up to Chinese military - E.g., Ladakh, Doklam + Active Indo-Pacific policy - Support to the Philippines, engagement with Taiwan, BrahMos supply + Quad transformation - Ensure free, open, inclusive, responsible conduct + Domestic policy changes - E.g., banning TikTok + India as a voice of reason and 'Voice of Global South' - E.g., African Union in G20

Border Dispute: India to rename 30 places in Tibet, in response to China's renaming of Arunachal Pradesh (AP)



1.3. Indus Water Treaty

Why in news? India has marked the completion of the **Shahpur Kandi Barrage on the Ravi River (Punjab)**, stopping the water flow to Pakistan.

Signed by India and Pakistan (in 1960) and brokered by the World Bank (also a signatory).

Provisions for water usage rights:

- IWT allows India unrestricted use of three eastern rivers Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej.
- Pakistan has control over three western rivers Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab.
- Can be used by India with certain restrictions (for irrigation, transport and power generation).

Issues with the Treaty: Pakistan's opposition to Indian projects (e.g., Kishanganga, Ratle) + Judicial recourse limitations (India prefers neutral experts, Pakistan favors PCA) + Strained bilateral relations due to state-sponsored terrorism + Climate change challenges IWT's river partitioning + Weak conflict-resolution by WB due to lack of data + No regular data sharing as planned + Technical nature leads to diverse interpretations.

Way Forward: Revisit IWT considering technological advances and principles like ERU and NHR + Empower Indus Water Commissioners for apolitical decisions with regular data sharing + Implement adaptive water

management for sustainability + Promote open data policy for transparency and research.

1.4. India-Maldives Relation

In news: Maldives signed military pact with China in further shift away from India.

Neighbourhood First Policy + Strategic Location + First Line of Defence: (terrorism, piracy, drug trafficking). + **Countering China +Diaspora Presence**

Areas of Cooperation: \$323.9 million bilateral trade in 2021 + Security & Defence cooperation with a comprehensive action plan + Development cooperation through grants + Infrastructure development like the Greater Male Connectivity Project + India as the leading source market for Maldivian tourism in 2023.

1.5. FREE MOVEMENT REGIME WITH MYANMAR

Scrapping of Free Movement Regime (FMR) with Myanmar

Key Decisions:

- **End FMR:** India ends FMR with Myanmar.
- **Border Fencing:** Plan to fence 1,643 km border; only 10 km currently fenced.

About FMR:

- **Purpose:** Allowed free movement within 16 km of the border.
- **Established:** 2018 under Act East Policy.
- **Reasons:** Ethnic ties, local trade.

Reasons for Scrapping:

- Illegal Immigration + Ethnic Violence + Security Concerns (Entry of junta soldiers into Mizoram) +Narcotics Surge

India-Myanmar Relations

- **Commercial:** BIPA and DTAA (2008).
- **Connectivity:** Kaladan Project, Trilateral Highway.
- **Multilateral:** BIMSTEC, Mekong-Ganga, SAARC observer.

- **Defense:** IMBAX military exercise.

1.6. India-Sri Lanka

India's Support During Sri Lanka's 2022 Economic Crisis: Debt restructuring support + **US\$4 billion financial aid** + Essential supplies of fuel, food, and fertilizers.

India-Sri Lanka Economic and Connectivity Ties: ISFTA since 2000 + US\$5.45 billion bilateral trade + Significant FDI + Enhanced air connectivity through **Open Sky and Air Bubble agreements**.

Other Areas of Convergence: Strategic trade routes + Key role in India's "Neighbourhood First" policy and **SAGAR vision** + Military exercises like **Mitra Shakti** and **SLINEX** + Cultural ties through shared Buddhist heritage and Tamil population.

International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) and Kachchatheevu Issue: Fishermen protests and arrests over poaching + IMBL delineated by 1974 agreement under UNCLOS + Kachchatheevu Island within Sri Lanka's maritime boundary, Wadge Bank fishing rights for India.

The Kachchatheevu Island Issue: Kachchatheevu, a 285-acre island within Sri Lanka's maritime boundary, located between Rameswaram and Delft Island, was ceded to Sri Lanka under the **1974 India-Sri Lanka Agreement**, with Indian fishermen allowed access for specific activities. The 1976 agreement granted India sovereign rights over **Wadge Bank**, a rich fishing ground near Kanyakumari, with restricted Sri Lankan fishing access.

The problem has three interrelated facets: Disagreements over Kachchatheevu island; poaching by Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan waters; and Use of trawlers causing environmental damage.

1.7. India-Nepal Relations

Treaty of Peace and Friendship (1950)

India is Nepal's largest trading partner and main FDI source.

Areas of Cooperation: Defence (Surya Kiran exercises) + Water Resources (Kosi, Gandak, Mahakali) + Energy (Joint Vision, pipelines, hydro projects) + Connectivity (Raxaul-Kathmandu Railway, BBIN) + Culture (Roti-Beti ka Naata).

Recent Initiatives: 6th India-Nepal Joint Commission Meeting (power, oil, tourism) + Cross-Border Rail Link (Jayanagar-Kurtha) + Soft Power (Buddhist Vihara in Lumbini) + Community Development Projects (hospitals, schools, colleges).

Territorial Dispute: In news because - new denominations of 100 of Nepalese currency featuring a map that includes Indian territories of Limpiyadhura, Lipulekh, and Kalapani.



Dispute Origin: The 1816 Treaty of Sagauli set the River Kali as the India-Nepal boundary, but disagreement arises over the river's origin. Nepal claims the river west of Kalapani (Limpiyadhura or Lipulekh) as the Kali, while India identifies a smaller rivulet, Pankhagad, as the source.

India's Position: India maintains that Kalapani, Limpiyadhura, and Lipulekh are its territories, rejecting Nepal's claims as unilateral and untenable.

1.8. India-Bhutan Relations

Order of the Druk Gyalpo: Conferred to Indian PM, first foreign leader to receive it.

Bhutan – biggest beneficiary of India's external aid (2023-24).

Areas of cooperation: Technological cooperation: Launch of RuPay, BHIM app, India-Bhutan SAT +

Hydropower: Kurichhu, Tala, Chukha, Mangdechhu supply electricity to India + Infrastructure: BRO's 'DANTAK' project builds roads + Treaty of Friendship: Signed in 1949, renewed in 2007.

Challenges: Hydropower trade delays (e.g., Punatsangchhu I & II) + Militant hideouts (e.g., ULFA, NDFB) + BBIN Motor Vehicle Agreement on hold + India's shift to 30:70 grant-loan model.

1.9. INDIA-AFGHANISTAN RELATIONS UNDER TALIBAN REGIME

In news because: Delegation on a visit to Afghanistan discussed India's humanitarian assistance to the people of Afghanistan and use of Chabahar port (Iran) by Afghan traders.

India-Afghan relations post-Taliban takeover (Aug 2021): Technical Mission in Kabul (June 2022) + Continued ICCR scholarships for Afghan students + Ongoing trade through Chabahar port + Non-recognition of Taliban government, stressing 'Afghan-led, Afghan-owned, and Afghan-controlled' peace process.

Challenges in India-Afghan relations post-Taliban takeover: Ideological differences (Taliban vs. India's democratic values) + Humanitarian concerns (women's rights, education, healthcare) + Limited engagement (closure of Afghan Embassy in Delhi, visa denial to Afghan students) + Regional geopolitics (Pakistan's influence in Afghanistan).

2. BILATERAL

2.1. India-USA

'Future Is AI — America And India'

Areas of Cooperation: Multilateral and Minilateral Cooperation (e.g., UN, G-20) + Defense (**INDUS-X, LEMOA, COMCASA, BECA**) + Strategic Tech Cooperation (**iCET – Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies, NISAR**) + Global Challenges (Energy, climate, ISA, CDRI).

Challenges: Trade and economic divergences (IPR, Atmanirbhar Bharat, GSP withdrawal) + Varied stances on global conflicts (Russia-Ukraine, Israel-Palestine) + Defense dependence on Russia (CAATSA sanctions) + Strategic divergences (commitment to Non-Alignment).

2.2. India-Canada

Areas of Convergence: Diaspora (Indian Diaspora >3% of Canadian population) + Economic (Bilateral trade in goods ~\$9.9 billion, services \$6.5 billion in 2022) + Strategic cooperation (Canada's Indo-Pacific Policy recognizes India as a "critical partner").

Challenges: Canada's immigration system (allows contentious individuals to gain citizenship) + Suboptimal economic cooperation (CEPA pending since 2010) + Meddling in India's domestic affairs (e.g., support for protests against Indian government).

2.3. India-Australia

In news: IND-AUS ECTA was the **first Free Trade Agreement of India with a developed country** signed after more than a decade in April 2022 and entered into force in December 2022.

Key features of IND-AUS ECTA: India gains preferential access on 100% of Australian tariff lines for key exports + Australia receives preferential access to over 70% of India's tariff lines, including raw materials + Agreement covers Rules of Origin, Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures, and Dispute Settlement.

Areas of Cooperation: Bilateral - Comprehensive Strategic Partnership + Defence - Top-tier security partner in Australia's NDS 2024 + Security - Joint Declaration, **Civil Nuclear Agreement, AUSINDEX, Malabar** + Multilateral - G-20, WTO, QUAD + Supply Chain - SCRI with Australia and Japan + Science & Technology - Biotechnology Fund, Strategic Research Fund + People Relations - India as the second largest migrant group in Australia.

Challenges: High trade deficit due to coal imports + Asymmetric priorities with India focusing on defense,

Australia on economic engagement + Instances of discrimination and racism against Indian-origin people in Australia.

2.4. India-Brazil

Why in the news?

- India- Brazil released joint statement at the sidelines of G20 summit.
- 2023 year marks the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Brazil and India and 20th anniversary of IBSA (India-Brazil-South Africa) forum.

Key Highlights of Joint Statement: Collaboration in **G-4 (UNSC reform)** and **L.69 groups** + Brazil supports India's non-permanent UNSC seat (2028-2029) + Founding members of **Global Biofuels Alliance** + India backs Brazil's BASIC presidency and COP30 in 2025 + Expansion of **India-Mercosur PTA** during Brazil's Mercosur presidency + Establishment of India-Brazil Business Forum + Increased joint projects in ISA and CDRI.

2.5. India-Africa

"India's priority is not just Africa; India's priority is Africans - every man, woman and child in Africa."
India's Foreign Minister.

Convergence: Bilateral: E.g., **India-Africa Defence Dialogue (IADD)** + Multilateral: E.g., AU's inclusion in the G20; **Egypt and Ethiopia joined BRICS**; etc + Trade and Investment: E.g., Doubling bilateral trade to US\$ 200 Billion by 2030; **Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC)** + Infrastructure: E.g., Pan-African e-network project + Capacity-Building: ITEC programme since 1964, DIKSHA program, 2020 + Climate: E.g., supporting solar energy projects in Africa under ISA.

Challenges: China has loaned \$134.6bn to African nations, nearly 11 times more than India + Slow project delivery by India E.g., little progress on AAGC + High transport and logistics costs (over 34% road cost) + Piracy, IUU fishing, narcotics. E.g., recently, Somali pirates

were caught and brought to India to stand trial

Kampala Principles (2018): Guiding Principle: focusing on equality and local partnerships.

Asia-Africa Growth Corridor: Initiative: Launched by India and Japan to enhance cooperation with African countries.

Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC): Capacity Building: Offers training opportunities to African professionals and students.

Human Assistance and Disaster Relief:

- **Op Sahayata:** Assisted cyclone-hit Mozambique (2019).
- **Op Vanilla:** Provided relief to flood victims in Madagascar (2020).

2.6. India-Indonesia Relations

Maritime Security: Joint exercises (**Samudra Shakti, IND-INDO CORPAT**) + Shared History and Cultural Values: Bandung Conference, Non-Aligned Movement, Bali Yatra + Trade Relations: **Largest ASEAN trade partner**, USD 38.85 billion bilateral trade, SAGAR Initiative + Infrastructure Development: Aid in **Sabang port development** + Humanitarian Assistance: **Operation Samudra Maitri (2018)** + Way Forward: 'RICH' tourism, Strategic interfaces (ISA, CDRI, GBA), Substantive cooperation (ASEAN Regional Forum, IORA, IONS).

2.7. India-UAE Relationship

Convergence: Economic: Bilateral Investment Treaty, fintech (**UPI-AANI, RuPay-JAYWAN**) + Energy: Ensuring India's energy security + Multilateral: BRICS, **I2U2**, UFI + Diaspora: 3.5 million Indians, **BAPS temple** in Abu Dhabi + Connectivity: **India-Middle East Economic Corridor (IMEC)** + Education: **IIT Delhi** campus, Indian schools + Defense: Joint committee, IDEX, NAVDEX, exercises (Desert Flag, Cyclone) + Space: ISRO-UAE cooperation.

Challenges: Deteriorating regional peace + Rights of migrant labourers in UAE (**Kafala system**) + Trade and

market access barriers (e.g., agrochemicals and biased qualification clauses).

2.8. India-Saudi Arabia

Significance of Saudi Arabia for India: Geostrategic (e.g., '**Look West**' policy + **IMEC**) + Multilateral support (e.g., **UNSC reforms**) + Trade (role in expediting GCC FTA) + Indian **diaspora** (2.4 million expatriates in Saudi Arabia).

Challenges: Regional conflicts in the Middle East (complex politics) + **Diaspora issues** (Saudi's policy impacts Indian migrants) + **Influence of Pakistan** (Saudi's close ties with Pakistan) + **Trade deficit** (India's all-time high trade deficit with Saudi in FY 2022-23).

2.9. India-Russia Relations

Areas of Cooperation: Russia is a **key supplier** to India's armed forces with joint projects like **S-400 systems** and BrahMos missiles + Supports India's **UNSC permanent seat** and **NSG membership** + Active engagement in BRICS, SCO, and INSTC + Bilateral trade reached \$13.2 billion in FY 2021-22, with a target of \$30 billion by 2025 + Cooperation in **nuclear energy** (e.g., tripartite pact with Bangladesh), space (support for **Gaganyaan mission**), and science and technology (e.g., **Russian-Indian Network of Universities**).

Challenges: Emergence of **Russia-China partnership**, e.g., "No-Limits Partnership" + Russia's engagement with **Pakistan**, e.g., Military Exercise "Friendship" ("Druzhba") + Diplomatic dilemma for India, e.g., balancing between the USA and Russia, Russia-Ukraine war + **High trade imbalance:** Of total trade of approximately \$65 billion, India's exports constitute less than \$5 billion + **Russia's criticism of QUAD** and the idea of the Indo-Pacific.

2.10. GEOPOLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF PORTS

Strategic Significance of Ports:

- **Agalega Islands:** Indian Navy base for monitoring southern Africa.
- **Sittwe Port:** Enhances India's maritime domain in the Indian Ocean via Myanmar.

- **Duqm Port:** Engages Gulf countries.
- **Chabahar Port:** Facilitates Central Asian trade, counters China.
- **Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project:** Reduce dependency on the Siliguri Corridor.

Strategic Significance of Ports: Geopolitical assets (e.g., Indian Navy at Agalega Islands) + Maritime security (e.g., Access to Sittwe port, Myanmar) + Strengthening relationships (e.g., Access to Duqm Port, Oman for Gulf engagement)

Economic Significance of Ports: Enhances connectivity and global trade participation + Opens avenues for local currency transactions (e.g., Internationalization of Rupee) + Port cities become global hubs + Safeguards economic and energy security (e.g., China's investment in Gwadar port, Pakistan)

2.11. CRUDE OIL AS A STRATEGIC TOOL

India is 3rd largest consumer of oil after the USA and China (2021).

India's Initiatives for Reducing Oil Imports: **Strategic Petroleum Reserves Programme (SPRs)** to ensure energy security + **Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP)** Programme to reduce fuel import dependence + **National Policy on Biofuel (2018)** targeting 20% bioethanol blending by 2025-26 + Discovered **Small Field (DSF) Policy** for monetizing hydrocarbon resources + Reforms in **Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy** to boost domestic oil & gas production + Functional freedom to National Oil Companies and private sector promotion through streamlined approvals.

3. REGIONAL GROUPING

3.1. AUKUS

Genesis: Announced in 2021

Australia, the UK and US.

AUKUS partnership: Pillar I - UK and USA aid Australia in acquiring nuclear-powered submarines + Pillar II -

Develop joint capabilities in cyber, AI, and quantum technologies.

Importance for India - Strengthens Quad against China + Opportunity for strategic collaboration with France + Deepens trust with Europe.

Concerns for India - Potential erosion of India's regional influence + Possible shift in Indo-Pacific power balance.

3.2. NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION (NATO)

In news: Recently marked 75 years of its formation and Sweden has joined NATO as its 32nd member.

Key achievements of NATO: Cold War - Maintained peace and kept war 'cold' + Post-Cold War - Encouraged US-Russia discussions through the Founding Act + Ukraine War - Denounced Russian actions + Maritime Security - Operation Sea Guardian for secure Mediterranean + Humanitarian Aid - Temporary shelters for Türkiye earthquakes in 2023.

Challenges faced by NATO: Funding issues with many members not meeting the 2% GDP defense spending goal + Growing right-wing nationalism leading to discontent with NATO + US commitment to Europe's defense questioned + Russian aggression undermining trust + Rise of China's military posture threatening Europe's industrial base.

3.3. Gulf Cooperation Council

GCC is a union of six countries in the Gulf region — **Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman and Bahrain.** The council is the largest trading bloc of India.

Why in news? The Parliamentary Standing Committee on External Affairs recommended legal assistance to Indian nationals imprisoned in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries.

4. GLOBAL GROUPING

4.1. INDIA AND G20

Key Outcomes of the G20 Summit

- **Adoption:** Unanimous adoption of the G20 New Delhi Leaders' Joint Declaration.
- **Global Biofuel Alliance:** Launch of the GBA to boost biofuel consumption.
- **IMEC MoU:** Establishment of India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor.
- **African Union Membership:** African Union included as a permanent G20 member.
- **Other Outcomes:**
 - Proposal for G-20 Satellite Mission for Environment and Climate Observation.
 - Framework for regulating crypto-assets and responsible AI use.
 - Consensus on G20 framework for Global Digital Public Infrastructure Repository (GDPIR).

Significance of G20: Supports global financial stability + Addresses global development challenges (e.g., poverty reduction, infrastructure financing) + Promotes human resource development and employment (e.g., gender gap reduction commitment by 2025) + Recasts bilateral ties (e.g., India-US, India-Bangladesh).

Significance of G20 Presidency for India: Showcases leadership (e.g., GBA) + Elevates Global South priorities (e.g., African Union's G20 membership) + Facilitates economic opportunities (e.g., IMEC) + Expands India's footprint (showcasing technology and heritage) + Builds trust (consensus on Ukraine issue) + Steers global agenda (e.g., climate, women empowerment, technology).

Challenges for G20: Divergent interests among members + Lack of legal power + Geopolitical tensions (e.g., Russia-Ukraine, US-China) + Inadequate response to global challenges (e.g., climate change) + Limited accountability and transparency + Rising protectionism and trade tensions

4.2. AFRICAN UNION: A PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE G20

About African Union: 55 member states+: Launched in 2002 as a successor to the Organisation of African Unity

India's efforts in promoting integration with the African continent:

1. The Pan African E network Project (PANEP): ICT project connecting African countries through a satellite and fiber-optic network to India and each other.
2. India Africa Forum Summit: Aims to enhance cooperation between India and Africa.
3. The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme: Leading capacity-building platform of the Ministry of External Affairs, active within the African Union.
4. Asia-Africa Growth Corridor: Focuses on developing infrastructure and digital connectivity in Africa through Indo-Japan collaboration.

4.3. BRICS Summit Outcomes

Expansion of BRICS: Recently, five new members namely **Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates** have joined BRICS as full-time permanent members.

4.4. QUAD

Why in news? US House of Representatives has passed 'Strengthen US-Australia-India-Japan Cooperation' or Strengthening the Quad Act

Practical work undertaken: Quad Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Package (**Q-CHAMP**) + Quad Investors' Network (**QUIN**) + Quad Infrastructure Fellowships Program + Quad Partnership for Cable Connectivity and Resilience

Challenges to QUAD: Less institutionalization + Perceived as cold war mentality (Asian NATO) + Overlapping purpose with other regional groupings (e.g., ASEAN, IORA) + Problem of delivery (e.g., undelivered 800 million COVID-19 vaccine doses).

4.5. ASEAN

India's PM attended 20th ASEAN-India Summit and 18th East Asia Summit (EAS) in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Outcomes of 20th India-ASEAN Summit:

- India's PM reaffirmed ASEAN centrality in the Indo-Pacific.
- 12-point proposal for strengthening India - ASEAN cooperation
- Operationalizing India's Digital Public Infrastructure Stack with ASEAN Partners.
- ASEAN-India Fund for Digital Future focusing on digital transformation.

Significance of ASEAN for India: Central to India's Act East Policy and Indo-Pacific Vision + 11% of India's global trade and >20% of outbound investments go to ASEAN + Financial cooperation through **ASEAN-India Green Fund** and Science and Technology Development Fund + Regional integration projects like **IMT Highway and Kaladan Multimodal Project** + Defence ties via **ADMM-Plus** and **ASEAN-India Maritime Exercise (AIME)** + Soft power projection through cultural commonalities like temples, yoga, and traditional epics.

4.6. The Commonwealth

The year 2024 marks **75 years** since the creation of the modern Commonwealth, with the signing of the London Declaration.

Arguments in favour: Commonwealth promotes transparency through Election Observation Missions since 1967 + Evolving membership with new members like Togo and Gabon + Committed to SDGs, especially Goal 16 on peace and development + Commonwealth countries enjoy 21% lower bilateral trade costs.

Arguments against: Critics argue it legitimizes colonization and suggest focusing on other international platforms + Seen as less relevant in addressing contemporary global issues like COVID-19 + Lack of cohesion among members, evidenced by differing stances on global issues like the Russia-Ukraine war +

Funding constraints limit its effectiveness, with British investment often being bilateral rather than through the Commonwealth Secretariat

4.7. Non-Aligned Movement

In news: Recently, 19th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was held in Kampala, Uganda.

Genesis: Asia-Africa Conference held in Bandung, Indonesia in 1955.

Current Relevance of NAM: Protects sovereignty by upholding self-determination and territorial integrity + Integral to foreign policy for countries like India, promoting independence of action + Acts as a unifying force against colonization and imperialism + Promotes multilateralism, diplomacy, and global peace + Rising importance of Active Non-Alignment (ANA) advocating for proactive problem-solving + Facilitates UN reform for a more democratic, transparent, and representative organization.

Challenges faced by NAM: Change in world order, Evolving alliances, Regional organizations such as ASEAN, SCO, Lack of leadership.

4.8. INTERNATIONAL ENERGY AGENCY (IEA)

International Energy Agency (IEA) to start full membership talks with India.

India joined the IEA as an associate member in 2017 and sent a formal request for full membership last year.

Criteria for IEA Membership: Must be an OECD member + Maintain oil reserves equivalent to 90 days of net imports (India has reserves covering 66 days) + Implement a demand restraint program to reduce oil consumption by 10% + Enforce legislation requiring oil companies to report information upon request.

Significant for India's energy security.

5. AGREEMENTS INVOLVING INDIA AND/OR AFFECTING INDIA'S INTERESTS

5.1. INDIA-MIDDLE EAST-EUROPE ECONOMIC CORRIDOR (IMEC)

India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor



MoU Details:

- **Participants:** India, US, Saudi Arabia, EU, UAE, France, Germany, Italy.
- **Corridors:**
 - **East:** India to Arabian Gulf.
 - **North:** Arabian Gulf to Europe.
- **Aim:** Reliable cross-border ship-to-rail network for goods and services transit.
- **Part of:** Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII).

For India: Speeds up India-Europe trade by 40%, reduces logistics costs, and boosts Act West policy

Challenges: Geopolitics + Rivalries: (China's BRI, impact on Suez Canal) + **Logistics (terrains and regulatory differences) + Security** (terrorism and instability) + **Costs** (multi-modal routes)

5.2. GLOBAL BIOFUEL ALLIANCE (GBA)

Prime Minister of India along with the leaders of Singapore, Bangladesh, Italy, USA, Brazil, Argentina, Mauritius and UAE, launched the Global Biofuel Alliance in 2023 on the sidelines of the G20 Summit in New Delhi.

Significance of GBA: Develop a market for biofuels by connecting industries and nations for stable supply + Implement robust internationally recognized standards +

Contribute to climate efforts by tripling biofuel production by 2030 towards net zero emissions by 2050 (IEA estimate) + Decarbonize transport sector contributing 25% of GHG emissions.

5.3. INDO-PACIFIC ECONOMIC FRAMEWORK FOR PROSPERITY (IPEF)

Genesis: launched jointly by the USA and other partner countries of the Indo-Pacific region in May 2022 at Tokyo.

4 Pillars: Connected Economy (Trade) + Resilient Economy (Supply Chains) + Clean Economy + Fair Economy

India has joined all pillars except the trade one.

Unlike Traditional trade blocs (like the RCEP) or Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), IPEF will not negotiate tariffs or market access.

Challenges to IPEF: Concerns on durability, De-coupling China is difficult, concerns on reciprocity, venturing into sensitive areas, lack of binding commitments.

5.4. SOUTH ASIA SUB REGIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION (SASEC)

Why in news? PM laid the foundation stone of multiple projects in Assam as part of the SASEC corridor connectivity.

SASEC was established in 2001. ADB serves as secretariat

Members: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal and Sri Lanka

Significance of SASEC for India: Links South Asia and Southeast Asia through road corridors in Myanmar + Provides additional gateways to the North Eastern region via Myanmar ports + Promotes multi-modal connectivity between India's North East, Bangladesh, and Myanmar, boosting regional economic potential + Strengthens India's global position through the Great Asian Highway + Supports India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, offering an alternative to China's OBOR.

Challenges of SASEC: Lack of effective cross-border transport infrastructure in South, Outdated border procedure, Underutilized intra-regional trade in South Asia, Red tapism, etc.

5.5. ABRAHAM ACCORDS

It refers to the collective agreement between the United States (US), the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Israel (signed in September 2020).

The Accords was later extended to Sudan, Bahrain and Morocco.

These Accords have two parts: a declaration for Middle East peace and bilateral agreements.

5.6. ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR

Operation Toofan Al-Aqsa (Al-Aqsa Flood)

Coincided with the fiftieth anniversary of Yom Kippur War the fourth Arab Israel war (1973).

Challenges for India in the Middle East: Strategic balancing (e.g., Iran-Russia-China axis) + Maritime security (drone strikes, hijackings) + Safety of Indian diaspora + Energy security risks (crude oil, gas dependency) + Infrastructure project delays (IMEC) + Economic impacts (rising fuel prices, inflation, shipping costs).

Measures to bring stability in West Asia:

Immediate: **UNSC Resolution 2728** demands an immediate ceasefire, release of hostages, and expanded humanitarian aid to Gaza + Long term: Arms control, regional "WMD Free Zone" + Resolution of Israel-Palestine conflict based on Two Nation Theory + India can play a potential role as a net security provider in the region.

5.7. India-Israel Relations

"India-Israel ties are a marriage made in heaven, practised on earth" - Israeli PM

Bilateral: E.g., Strategic partners, full diplomatic relations since 1992 + Defence: E.g., Procurement of AWACS, BARAK-8 missiles + Trade: E.g., Merchandise trade at \$10.77 billion (excluding defence) + Agriculture and water: E.g., Israel's drip irrigation technology + Multilateral: E.g., I2U2 initiative with UAE and US.

5.8. India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA)

EFTA Members: Switzerland + Norway + Iceland + Liechtenstein

Key Highlights of TEPA:

- **Investment Aim:** Increase FDI in India by USD 100 billion in 15 years.
- **Employment:** Create 1 million direct jobs in India.
- **Legal Commitment:** First FTA with legal commitment for investment and job creation.
- **Mutual Recognition:** Agreements for professional services (nursing, chartered accountants, architects).
- **Tariff Reduction:** Provisions included.
- **Market Access:** Enhanced.
- **IPR Commitments:** Aligned with TRIPS standards.

Key Issues:

- **Data Exclusivity:** EFTA's insistence prevents domestic generic drug production.
- **Trade Tariffs:** India's exclusion of sensitive sectors (agriculture, dairy) from significant tariff reductions.
- **Asymmetric Benefits:** India's tariff reductions vs. already low EFTA tariffs could widen trade gap.
- **Investment Obligation:** India can revoke tariff concessions only after 18 years if EFTA nations fail FDI commitments.

6. EFFECT OF POLICIES AND POLITICS OF DEVELOPED & DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ON INDIA'S INTEREST, INDIA'S DIASPORA



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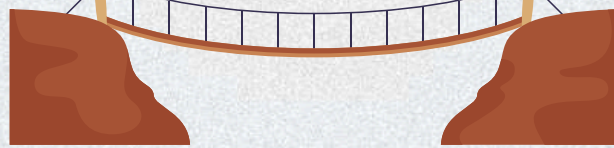
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6.1. South China Sea

Why in news? Philippines has removed a floating barrier installed by China which blocked Philippines fishing boats from entering a contested area in the South China Sea.

Significance of South China Sea: Key maritime trade route (60% global trade, 55% of India's Indo-Pacific trade) + Natural reserves (Oil, Gas, Coral Lime, ONGC exploration) + Major commercial fishing grounds + Strategic uninhabited islands (potential ports, military bases) + Freedom of navigation crucial.

Challenges in South China Sea: Chinese aggression + Overfishing + Marine ecosystem damage + Military drills.

Way Forward: Achieve a Code of Conduct + Sustainable fishing practices + Establish Maritime Peace Parks + Stall artificial island projects + Ensure freedom of passage for civilian and trade vessels.

6.2. Indian Diaspora

Significance of Diaspora Population: Economic benefits (business ideas, reduced unemployment) + Soft diplomacy (e.g., Indo-US Nuclear deals) + Cultural diffusion (Yoga, Ayurveda) + Host country development (e.g., Silicon Valley, USA)

Steps Taken for Betterment of Diaspora: Dedicated Ministry + **OCI Scheme** (lifetime visa) + Swarnpravasi Yojana (employment abroad) + Social security agreements + Distress addressal (**MADAD Portal, ICWF**)

World Bank: Largest Recipient of the Remittance in the World: India received an estimated \$125 billion in remittances in 2023.

7. IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTION, AGENCIES AND FORA THEIR STRUCTURE MANDATE

7.1. UNSC

- India is a founding member of UN and has served as a non-permanent member of UNSC for 8 terms.
- **India's Contribution in UNSC:** India chaired the Taliban and Libya sanctions committees; formulation of UDHR; raise apartheid issue at UN; largest UNPKF; instrumental in establishing G77; Drafting of CCIT.

7.2. UNHRC:

- It's made up of 47 States; Equitable geographical distribution of seats; Establish international commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions investigating human rights violations; **India was re-elected to the UNHRC (2022-24) for a 6th term.**
- **Significance:** Platform for Dialogue among states with regard to human rights issue; Special procedures to monitor human rights; Universal Periodic Review; Encourage Civil Society Participation.
- **Concerns:** Council seats for countries with human rights concerns i.e. China, Syria; Tendency to vote in blocs (Africa); Non-binding recommendations

7.3. UN PEACEKEEPING:

- **Principles:** Consent of the parties, Impartiality and Non-use of force except in self-defence and defence of the mandate.
- **India's contribution to UN Peacekeeping:** India has contributed services of ~2, 87,000 troops; Trust Fund on sexual exploitation and abuse contribution; 'Group of Friends' launched by India.

7.4. IMO

- **In news:** India was re-elected to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council
- United Nations **specialized agency** established in 1948.
- **Significance:** Prevention of pollution from ships; Protecting marine biodiversity; Address noise pollution; Climate change mitigation; Addresses dumping of wastes at sea; SOLAS; Djibouti Code of Conduct.

7.5. UNCAC

- **Why in news?** 20 years of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)
- About: It entered into force in 2005; **Only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument.**
- **5 main areas:** Establishment of anticorruption bodies; States are obliged to establish some offences; States bound to render mutual legal assistance; Asset recovery, and technical assistance and information exchange.
- **Challenges:** UNCAC does not define corruption, Gap between laws, institutions and their effectiveness, UNCAC review process does not require civil society engagement, etc.

7.6. GLOBAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE CHANGING TIMES

- Representation & Inclusiveness
- IMF Quota: India, with the largest population and 3rd largest economy (PPP), holds only 2.75% SDR quota
- Growing Bilateral and Multilateral Groupings – G20, G7 and BRICS
- BRICS NDB as an alternative to World Bank in funding development needs.
- Misuse of Veto Power (Ex: Russia to block resolution condemning its actions in Ukraine)

- Rising protectionism and Trade tensions (US blocked the appointment of WTO's appellate body)
- Inability to handle emerging challenges + Backlash against globalization

Way Forward: Secretary-General has called for UN 2.0 to tackle 21-century challenges + UN 2.0 would emphasize 5 areas - data, digital solutions, innovation, foresight, and behavioral science.

8. IMPORTANT INTL INST., AGENCIES AND FORA THEIR STRUCTURE MANDATE

8.1. Disaster Diplomacy

6th International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (ICDRI) held in India

- A country's efforts to provide aid and support to other countries affected by natural/ man-made disasters or conflicts.
- Operation Dost (Turkiye Earthquake), Operation Karuna (Myanmar cyclone)
- COVID-19 Vaccine Maitri program

8.2. India's Strategic Autonomy

Key Pillars of India's Strategic Autonomy:

Foreign policy independence: Balanced relations (Russia and Western bloc) + Issue-based alignment (Israel-Palestine support).

Military self-reliance: Diversified arms suppliers (France and Russia).

Strategic decision-making: Flexible international stance (e.g., Sri Lanka vote) + No binding alliances (Russia-Ukraine war).

Economic sovereignty: Balanced trade (FTAs with UK and EU) + Critical resources deal (Australia).

Energy security: Diversified energy sources (Russia) + Net Zero by 2070

8.3. India: The Voice of Global South

In news: India hosted 3rd Voice of Global South Summit (VOGSS).

In the Summit India had proposed a comprehensive "**Global Development Compact**" (GDC). GDC has been proposed amid concerns over countries, (particularly, countries of the 'Global South') Sovereign Debt Vulnerability due to so called 'development finance'. GDC will facilitate trade, sharing of technologies and concessional financing based on India's growth journey, at a time when many countries falling into the Chinese 'debt trap'.

Challenges faced by the Global South:

Underrepresentation in global forums (e.g., no permanent UN Security Council seat) + Impact of Global North's conflicts (e.g., Ukraine conflict causing inflation) + Diverging views on normative issues (e.g., differing interpretations of democracy and human rights) + Disproportionate impact from global challenges (e.g., climate change).

India's Position as Leader of the Global South:

Gained goodwill through diplomatic engagements (e.g., **Vaccine Maitri**) + Advocated for democratized climate governance (e.g., **supporting CBDR**) + Pushed for reforms in multilateral institutions (e.g., broader UN Security Council membership) + Offered alternative approaches on normative issues (e.g., democracy, human rights) + Focused on capacity building (e.g., India-UN Capacity Building Initiative) + Created platforms for dialogue (e.g., Voice of Global South Summit).

8.4. India as a Global Unifier

Promotes environment conservation (Mission LiFE, net zero targets) + Supports Digital Public Infrastructure (helping developing countries adapt and scale DPI) + Leads energy transition (International Solar Alliance, Global Biofuel Alliance) + Advocates inclusive multilateralism (e.g., inclusion of African Union in G20) +

Enhances capacity building (Data for Development Initiative for Global South) + Showcases cultural diversity (G20 presidency highlights diverse cultures).

8.5. International Criminal Court

- Rome Statute
- India is not a member

Jurisdiction of ICC under the Rome Statute: Genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes (from 1 July 2002) by a State Party national, in territory of a State Party, or accepted jurisdiction + UNSC referrals for crimes of aggression + No jurisdiction for persons under 18.

Limitations of the ICC: Lack of enforcement mechanism + Reluctance of State Parties to cooperate + Insufficient checks and balances + Lack of retrospective jurisdiction + Allegations of bias, especially against Africa.

Reasons for India not joining the Rome Statute:

Potential political interference via UNSC + Violation of sovereignty by UNSC binding non-States Parties + Concerns over ICC prosecutor's broad powers + Exclusion of nuclear weapons and terrorism from ICC jurisdiction.

8.6. Genocide Convention

- Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948.
- It codified the crime of genocide for the first time; it was also the first human rights treaty adopted by the UN General Assembly.
- India has signed the treaty.

South Africa vs. Israel case in ICJ: South Africa argued that how Israel was conducting its military operations in Gaza violated the Genocide Convention.

Provisional Measures by ICJ: ICJ ruled that Israel must take all measures to prevent genocidal acts in Gaza (Palestine). However, it did not order ceasefire and did not find Israel guilty yet.