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POLITY

Volume - I

**Current Affairs for Prelims 2026
(April 2025- September 2025)**



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PREFACE

Concise Prelims Current Affairs 2026

Current Affairs-Sine Qua Non of UPSC Preparation

Proficiency in Current affairs is sine non qua for UPSC preparation. It is the basic foundation of any aspirant 's preparation. Knowledge and skill to relate current news with UPSC syllabus is quintessential part of the preparation.

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Indra Sawhney Case (1992)

Why in News?

A parliamentary panel recommended raising the OBC creamy layer income limit beyond ₹8 lakh, citing the Indra Sawhney case (1992), which introduced the creamy layer concept to exclude socially advanced sections from reservation benefits.

Description:

- **Reservation Cap:** The Supreme Court upheld the **50% cap** on reservations in public employment, except in **extraordinary circumstances**.
- **Exclusion of Creamy Layer:** The Court introduced the "**creamy layer**" concept, stating that **socially and economically advanced individuals** within OBCs should be excluded from reservation benefits.
- **No Reservation in Promotions:** The judgment ruled that **reservations in promotions are unconstitutional**, impacting future affirmative action policies.
- **Difference Between Backward Classes:** The Court distinguished "**socially and educationally backward classes**" under Article 15(4) from "**backward classes**" under Article 16(4) of the Constitution.
- **Validity of Mandal Commission Recommendations:** The Court **upheld the 27% reservation** for OBCs in central government jobs, as recommended by the **Mandal Commission (1979)**.

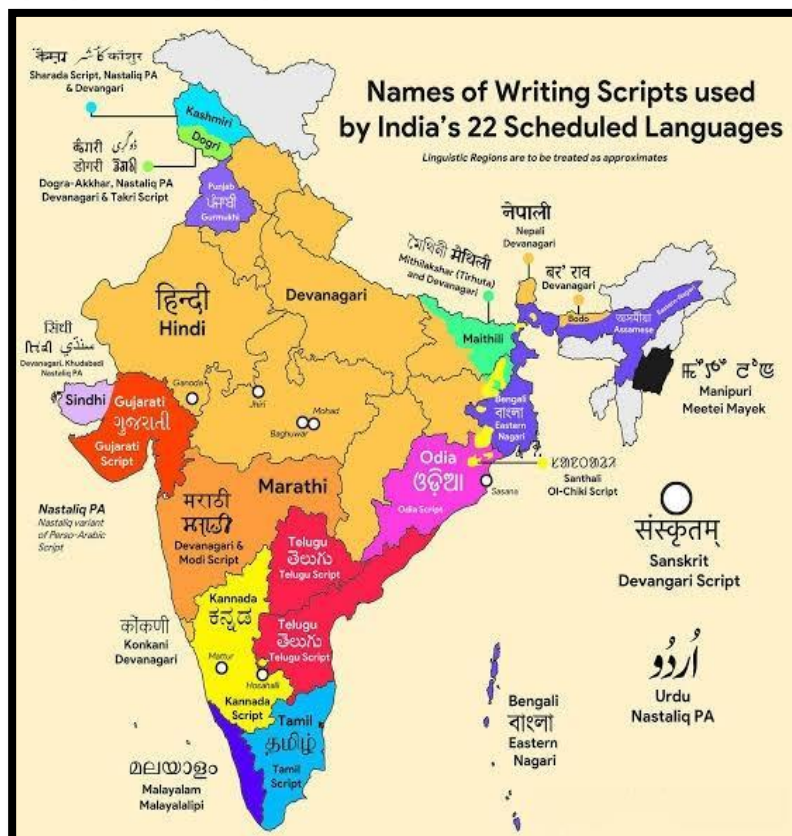
8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution

Why in News?

The Supreme Court stated that Urdu is the finest specimen of India's composite cultural ethos and emphasized that language is culture, not religion, rejecting the alienation of Urdu.

Description:

- **Part of the Constitution:** Mentioned in Part XVII.
- **Relevant Articles:** Articles 344 and 351.
- **Total Languages:** 22 languages listed.



Important Articles:

- **Article 344:** Establishment of **Official Language Commission**.
- **Article 351:** Directive for the **development of the Hindi language**.

Official Language Commission:

- Set up under **Article 344**.
- First constituted in **1955**.
- Recommends progressive use of Hindi and restricts use of English.

Provisions of the Official Language Act, 1963:

- English continues to be used for official purposes **even after 15 years** from the commencement of the Constitution.
- **Hindi and English** are used for Union government communication.
- Allows **regional languages** in state-level official communication with the President's consent.

Benefits of Inclusion in the 8th Schedule:

- Recognition by **Sahitya Akademi**.
- Medium of instruction in schools and universities.
- Use in **competitive exams** (like UPSC, banking, etc.).
- Eligibility for **language-specific development grants**.
- Promotes **preservation and development** of the language.

Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024

The Lok Sabha passed the Coastal Shipping Bill, 2024 to boost coastal trade, reduce logistics costs, promote green transport, and create maritime jobs.

Description:

- **Separation of Functions:** The Bill separates **technical regulation** of ships (covered under the Merchant Shipping Bill) from the **commercial utilization** of Indian coastal waters, ensuring clarity in administrative roles.
- **Licensing & Permissions:** It introduces a framework for **licensing, operational permissions, and coastal route planning**, facilitating smoother operations for coastal shipping businesses.
- **Integration with Inland Waterways:** The Bill aims to integrate **coastal and inland shipping**, promoting multimodal logistics and reducing reliance on road and rail networks.
- **Supports Sagarmala Programme:** It aligns with the **Sagarmala initiative** by promoting infrastructure development like **dedicated coastal cargo berths** and improved hinterland connectivity.
- **Repeals Outdated Laws:** The Bill replaces the **Coasting Vessels Act, 1838**, modernizing the legal framework to meet current and future maritime requirements.

Article 142
Why in News?

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar criticized the judiciary, asserting it cannot direct the President or act as a super Parliament, and called Article 142 a "nuclear missile" against democratic forces.

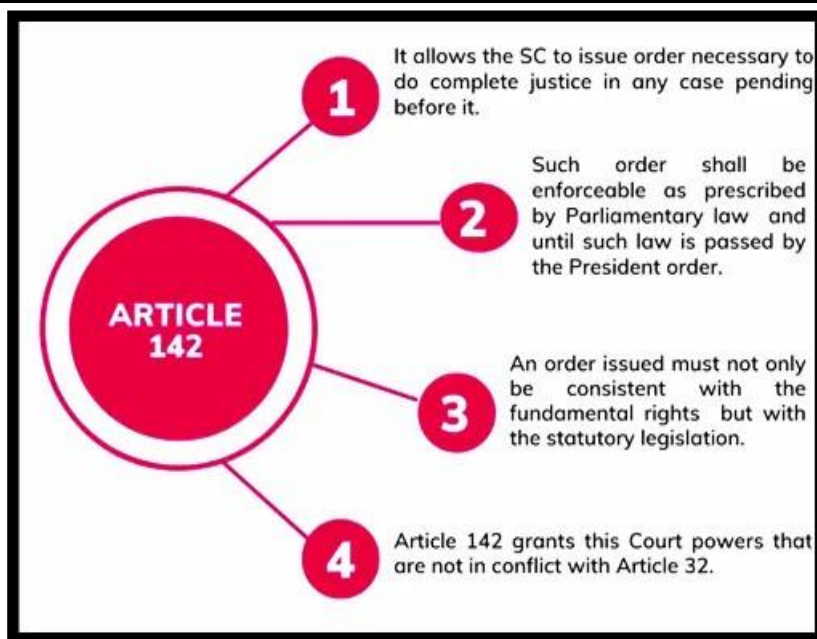
Description:

1. **Complete Justice:** Article 142 empowers the Supreme Court to pass any order necessary for doing **complete justice** in any case before it.
2. **Enforceable Across India:** The orders or decrees passed under Article 142 are **binding throughout the country** and override laws made by the legislature if needed for justice.
3. **Extraordinary Powers:** It is considered an **extraordinary power** that allows the Supreme Court to fill legislative gaps or take actions beyond the scope of existing laws.
4. **Judicial Activism Tool:** Article 142 has often been used in **public interest litigations (PILs)** and landmark cases, making it a symbol of **judicial activism**.
5. **Debate on Overreach:** Critics argue that frequent use of Article 142 may lead to **judicial overreach**, encroaching on the powers of the legislature and executive.

Space for Notes:

landmark cases using Article 142:

1. **Union Carbide Case (1989):** SC settled \$470 million for Bhopal victims, overriding procedural laws for speedy justice.
2. **Babri Masjid-Ram Janmabhoomi Case (2019):** SC allotted 5 acres to Sunni Waqf Board while giving disputed land to Ram Lalla.
3. **Marriage Dissolution Cases:** SC used Article 142 to grant divorces when legal procedures were prolonged.
4. **Sahara vs. SEBI Case (2012):** SC directed Sahara to refund ₹24,000 crore to investors, overseeing the process.
5. **Ayodhya Land Acquisition Case (1994):** SC regularized possession and acquisition of disputed land.

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RoDTEP (Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products) Scheme
Why in News?

The government restored RoDTEP scheme benefits from June 1, 2025, for AA holders, EOUs, and SEZs to boost export competitiveness after exporters lobbied for continuation post-February 5 expiry.

Description:

1. **Objective of the Scheme:** The RoDTEP Scheme was launched to reimburse embedded taxes, duties, and levies (at the central, state, and local levels) that are not refunded under any other scheme, thereby enhancing the global competitiveness of Indian exporters.
2. **Date of Implementation:** It became effective from 1st January 2021 and was introduced through an amendment to the Foreign Trade Policy 2015–20.
3. **WTO-Compliant Scheme:** RoDTEP replaced the Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) to comply with WTO rules, after MEIS was challenged by the US at the WTO for being non-compliant with trade norms.
4. **Coverage and Eligibility:** The scheme is applicable to all sectors, including merchant and manufacturer exporters, and covers EOUs (Export-Oriented Units), SEZ units, and goods exported via e-commerce platforms. However, re-exported products are not eligible.
5. **Benefits in the Form of e-Scrips:** Rebates are provided as a percentage of the FOB value of exports and are issued as transferable e-scrips via the CBIC's electronic credit ledger, which can be used to pay basic customs duty on imports.

INSPIRE Scheme (Innovation in Science Pursuit for Inspired Research)
Why in News?
Research scholars upset over DST delay:

INSPIRE Fellowship scholars across India protested delayed stipends, citing hardships. DST acknowledged fund disbursement issues due to procedural changes and promised timely payments to all scholars starting June 2025.

Description:
Objective:

To attract and nurture young talent in science and research without competitive exams, leveraging the existing educational structure.

Key Features:

- Covers students from school to post-doctoral level.
- Focus on basic and natural sciences.
- Encourages research careers in S&T, medicine, engineering, agriculture, and veterinary sciences.
- Entirely online application process via INSPIRE web portal.

INSPIRE Scheme Components:

Following are the details of INSPIRE Scheme components:

Scheme Component	Target Group	Target Age Group	Target Number	Aim
INSPIRE Internship	Top 1% students in Class X Boards	16-17 years	50,000	To expose students to joys of creative science during 5-day camps through lectures by experts, innovative experiments etc.
Scholarship For Higher Education (SHE)	Top 1% students in Class XII Boards + top 10000 performers in IIT-JEE + other national exams	17-22 years	12,000	To encourage meritorious students to study B.Sc. & M.Sc. (basic and natural sciences) by providing scholarship (Rs. 60,000/- p.a.) and mentorship grant (Rs. 20,000/- p.a.)
INSPIRE Fellowship	INSPIRE-SHE Scholars with 70% marks in M.Sc. + M.Sc. Toppers with min 70% marks	22-27 years	1000	To encourage students to pursue Ph.D. in areas of S&T, Medicine, Agriculture, Pharmacy and Veterinary Sciences
INSPIRE Faculty Fellowship	Ph.D.	27-32 years	100	To encourage young researchers to continue research in areas of S&T, Medicine, Agriculture, Pharmacy and Veterinary Sciences.

Implementation:

- Managed by the Department of Science & Technology (DST).
- Applications invited during specific calls on the INSPIRE web portal.
- Fully digital and automated application and selection process.

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MGNREGA

Why in News?

Despite an 8.6% rise in registered households under MGNREGS, person-days fell due to delayed wages, budget cuts, and poor implementation, raising concerns about the scheme's effectiveness and reach.

Description:

- The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is a significant social security scheme aimed at improving livelihood security for rural households.
- **Eligibility:** Any Indian citizen over the age of 18, residing in a rural area, and willing to perform unskilled manual labor can apply.
- **Guarantee:** The scheme guarantees at least 100 days of wage employment per household in a financial year.
- **Coverage:** The scheme is applicable across the country, except for areas with 100% urban districts.
- **Implementation:** The Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat play a critical role in approving and prioritizing works to be carried out under the scheme.

WAVES Summit

Why in News?

Prime Minister Modi inaugurated the WAVES summit, promoting India's creative economy or 'orange economy', and launched the "Create in India Challenge" to boost global content creation in India.

Description:

- A global summit for the Media and Entertainment (M&E) industry.
- Organized by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India.
- Aims to unite industry leaders, stakeholders, and innovators.
- Focuses on addressing challenges, exploring opportunities, and promoting global trade in the sector.
- Launched the "Create in India Challenge" to foster innovation and creativity in India's creative economy.

Creative Economy (Orange Economy):

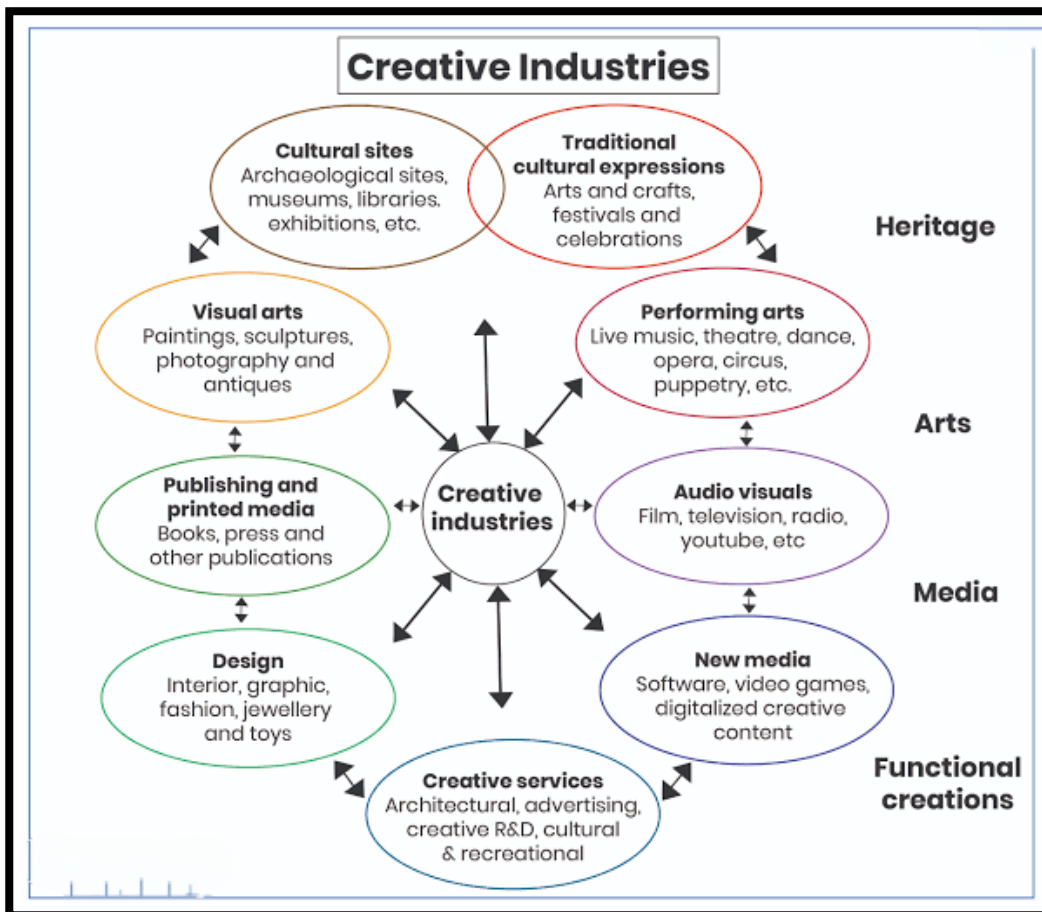
- A knowledge-based sector involving creation, production, and distribution of creative goods/services.
- Includes industries like:
 - Advertising, Architecture, Arts
 - Fashion, Film, Music
 - Photography, Publishing
 - R&D, Software
- Valued at **USD 30 billion** in India.
- Employs **nearly 8%** of India's workforce.
- In 2023, India had **over 100 million** content creators.

India's Media and Entertainment (M&E) Industry:

- **5th largest** M&E industry globally (after the USA).
- Projected to grow to **USD 44.2 billion** by 2028.

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Zero Waste Himalaya Alliance

Why in News?

Over 84% of Himalayan plastic waste comes from single-use packaging; the Zero Waste Himalaya Alliance highlights urgent need for systemic policy changes and mountain-sensitive waste management solutions.

Description:

1. Addressing Plastic Waste Crisis:

- Tackles the severe plastic waste problem in the Himalayan region.
- Focuses on single-use plastic packaging as a major contributor.

2. Promoting Zero Waste Practices:

- Encourages reduction, reuse, recycling, and responsible consumption.
- Aims to minimize overall waste generation.

3. Advocacy for Mountain-Sensitive Policies:

- Demands policies tailored to the unique challenges of Himalayan waste management.
- Calls for appropriate resource allocation.

4. Collaborative Approach:

- Involves NGOs, organizations, and local communities.
- Promotes collective action and shared responsibility.

5. Himalayan Cleanup Campaign:

- Conducts annual cleanup drives across the region.
- Collects waste data and raises public awareness.

Mullaperiyar Dam issue

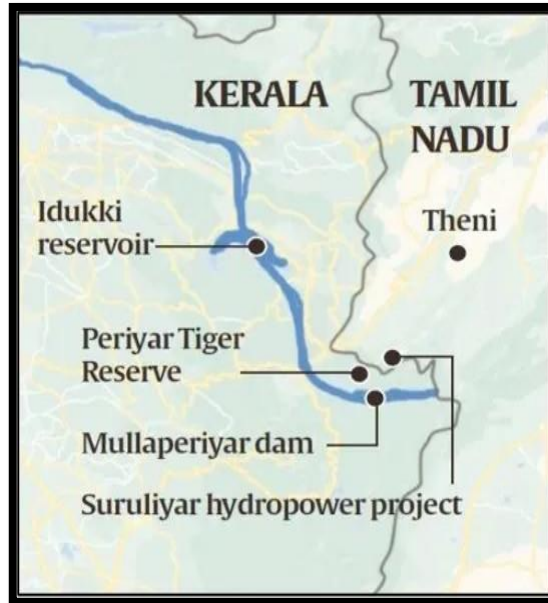
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Why in News?

SC advised using expert panels—not politicians—to resolve Tamil Nadu-Kerala's Mullaperiyar dam safety issue, emphasizing the role of a supervisory committee under the Dam Safety Act, 2021.

Description:

- **Location:** In Kerala, built in the late 1800s on the Periyar River; leased to Tamil Nadu for 999 years in 1886.
- **Purpose:** Diverts water to Tamil Nadu for irrigation.
- **Dispute:**
 - Kerala cites safety concerns (earthquake-prone).
 - Tamil Nadu wants to raise the water level to 142 ft for better usage.
- **SC Rulings:**
 - 2006 & 2014: Allowed TN to raise water level.
 - Kerala's law to block it was struck down as unconstitutional.
- **Current Issue (2024):** TN accuses Kerala of **blocking maintenance work** despite Dam Safety Act.
- **Dam Safety Act, 2021:** Establishes NDSA to regulate dam safety; NDSA oversees inter-state dams like Mullaperiyar.



NHRC (National Human Rights Commission)

Why in News?

NHRC urged 11 States to protect vulnerable people from heatwaves by ensuring ventilation, water, medical supplies, and implementing NDMA guidelines amid rising heat-related deaths and illnesses.

Description:

1. **Establishment:**
 - **Date:** 12 October 1993
 - **Act:** Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993
 - **Nature:** Statutory and independent body
2. **Definition of Human Rights:**
 - Section 2(1)(d) of the Act: Rights relating to **life, liberty, equality, and dignity**, guaranteed by the Constitution or international covenants.
3. **Headquarters:**
 - **Location:** New Delhi
4. **Composition:**
 - **Chairperson:** Retired Chief Justice of India or Supreme Court judge
 - **Members:** 4 members with human rights experience (at least one woman)
 - **Ex-officio members:** 7 – Chairpersons of various national commissions (SC, ST, Women, Minorities, BCs, Child Rights, Disabilities)

5. Appointment:

- **By:** President of India
- **On recommendation of:** A 6-member committee headed by the Prime Minister (includes Speaker, Home Minister, Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha, Leaders of Opposition of both Houses)

6. Tenure:

- **Term:** 3 years or until 70 years of age (whichever is earlier)
- **Reappointment:** Allowed
- **Post-tenure:** Not eligible for government employment

7. Removal:

- By President on grounds such as insolvency, incapacity, misconduct (requires SC inquiry for misconduct cases)

8. Powers:

- Powers of a **civil court** (summon, examine, receive evidence, etc.)
- Can **recommend** compensation, legal action, or interim relief
- Can **approach courts** for necessary directions

9. Functions:

- Inquire into human rights violations (suo motu or petitions)
- Visit jails/detention centres
- Review laws and safeguards
- Promote human rights awareness
- Study international treaties and recommend implementation
- Support NGOs

10. Limitations:

- Can't inquire into matters after **1 year** of occurrence
- **Recommendations not binding**
- No power to punish
- Relies on government machinery for investigation

11. Armed Forces Cases:

- Can only seek a report from the Centre and make recommendations

12. Reporting:

- **Annual Report** to the Central and State Governments
- Must be laid before Parliament/State Legislature with action taken memorandum

13. Challenges:

- Toothless tiger (lack of enforcement power)
- Delays in appointments
- GANHRI deferred accreditation (lack of transparency, diversity)
- Limited resources and autonomy

Competition Commission of India (CCI)
Why in News?

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) notified new definitions of costs to curb predatory pricing, using a flexible, sector-agnostic framework based on average variable cost for fair competition.

Description:

1. **Statutory Body:** CCI is a **statutory body** established under the **Competition Act, 2002**, and became fully operational in **May 2009**. It replaced the **MRTI Act, 1969**.
2. **Objective:** Its main objectives include **preventing anti-competitive practices**, **regulating mergers and acquisitions**, **curbing abuse of dominance**, and **protecting consumer interests**.

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3. **Composition:** The CCI consists of one Chairperson and up to six members, all appointed by the Central Government, with a minimum of 15 years of professional experience.
4. **Headquarters:** The headquarters of the CCI is located in New Delhi, and it operates under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.
5. **Key Amendments:** The Competition (Amendment) Act, 2023 strengthened the CCI's role in the digital economy, introduced faster merger reviews, and increased penalties for anti-competitive behavior.

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Foreign Service Attaches (FSAs)

Why in News?

FSAs Briefed on Operation Sindoor: India briefed 70 Foreign Service Attaches on Operation Sindoor, showcasing military strength and technological superiority post-India-Pakistan border confrontation; China and Türkiye excluded.

Description:

Definition:

- FSAs are foreign officials assigned to a country's **embassy or consulate**, responsible for specialized areas like **defense, trade, culture, science, agriculture**, etc.
- They act as **official representatives** of their home country's ministries or departments.

Key Points:

1. Role & Functions:

- Serve as a **liaison** between their home country's government and the host country in their area of expertise.
- Facilitate **bilateral cooperation**, exchange of information, and resolve technical issues.
- Support diplomatic missions in **negotiations**, official visits, and policy discussions.
- Often gather **open-source intelligence** in their domain.

2. Types of Attaches:

- **Defence Attaché:** Military cooperation, joint exercises, arms deals.
- **Cultural Attaché:** Promote cultural exchanges, education, soft power.
- **Commercial/Trade Attaché:** Boost trade relations, investment facilitation.
- **Science & Technology Attaché:** Cooperation in innovation, research, tech transfer.
- **Agricultural Attaché:** Deal with food security, agricultural trade, cooperation.

3. Status & Immunity:

- Usually enjoy **diplomatic privileges and immunities** under the **Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations (1961)**.
- Their status depends on **host country agreements**.

4. Importance in Diplomacy:

- Help in **Track-II diplomacy** and technical cooperation.
- Play a crucial role in **bilateral & multilateral engagements**.
- Enhance **people-to-people ties** and **economic diplomacy**.

5. Difference from Diplomats:

- Diplomats handle **political & general bilateral relations**.
- FSAs are **subject-matter experts** focusing on a **specific field**.

Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)

Why in News?

Anti-Naxal Operation (Mission Sankalp) (April-May 2025)—A 21-day anti-Naxal operation by CRPF and Chhattisgarh Police successfully dislocated Maoist leadership along the Chhattisgarh-Telangana border, marking a major breakthrough towards Naxalism eradication by 2026. (Location: Karegutta Hill, Chhattisgarh-Telangana border.)

Description:

- CRPF is the premier central police force for internal security in India.
- It functions under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India.

History of CRPF:

- Constituted in 1939 as the Crown Representative Police.
- Raised due to political unrest in princely States after the Madras Resolution (1936) of the All-India Congress Committee.
- Aimed to assist native States in maintaining law and order as part of British imperial policy.
- Became Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) after enactment of the CRPF Act on 28th December 1949.
- One of the oldest Central paramilitary forces, now classified as Central Armed Police Force (CAPF).

Duties of CRPF:

- Crowd control and riot control.
- Counter-militancy / insurgency operations.
- Dealing with Left Wing Extremism (LWE).
- Coordination of large-scale security arrangements, especially for elections in disturbed areas.
- Protection of VIPs and vital installations.
- Environmental protection – checking degradation, preserving flora & fauna.
- Defence duties during wartime.
- Participation in UN Peacekeeping Missions.
- Rescue & relief operations during natural calamities.


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Mission Sankalp:

1. **Who & Where:** Joint anti-Naxal operation by Chhattisgarh Police, Telangana Police, CRPF, CoBRA in Karregutta hills (Bijapur-Mulugu border).
2. **Objective:** Eliminate top Maoist leaders (PLGA Battalion 1), destroy hideouts, logistics bases, and bunkers.
3. **Scale & Tactics:** 24,000+ troops, air surveillance, precision strikes, recovery of explosives, weapons, and supplies.
4. **Significance:** Largest inter-state operation, weakens Maoist leadership, enables development in tribal areas, aligns with zero-tolerance LWE policy.

Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd (SECI)

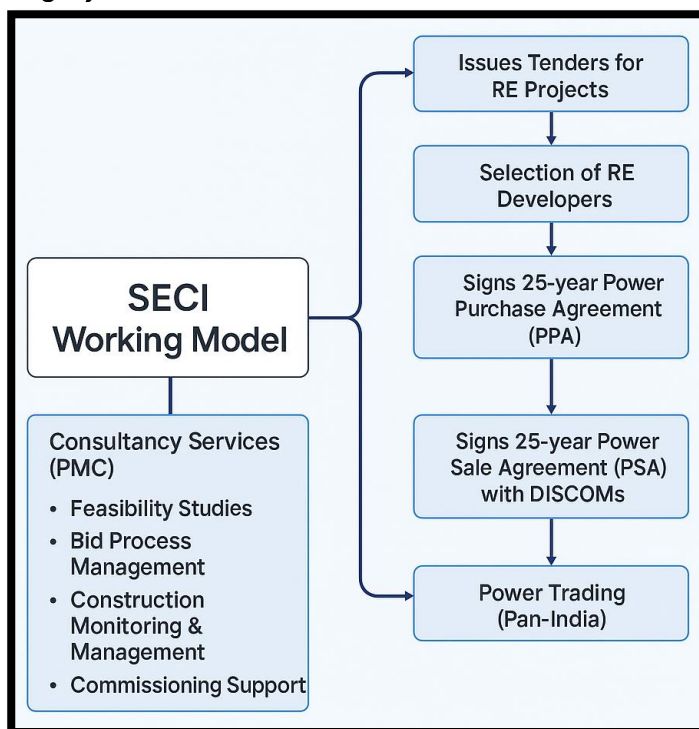
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Why in News?

India is engaging with China over export restrictions on germanium, a critical mineral for semiconductors and optics, after Indian industries raised concerns about supply disruptions and increased import costs.

Description:

- **Leading CPSU** dedicated to the development and expansion of Renewable Energy (RE) capacity in India.
- **Only CPSU** focused exclusively on the renewable energy sector.
- **Incorporated in 2011** as a not-for-profit company (Section 25 of Companies Act, 1956).
- **Converted to a commercial company in 2015** (Section 3 of Companies Act, 2013).
- Established to facilitate the implementation of the **National Solar Mission**.
- Under the administrative control of the **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE)**.
- Miniratna Category-I CPSU status accorded.



Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)

Why in News?

Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan will attend the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore to discuss defence cooperation and address global strategic leaders on future warfare and Indo-Pacific issues.

Description:

- The CDS post has been vacant for over nine months since the death of the first CDS Gen Bipin Rawat in a chopper crash in December 2021.
- This is the first instance since independence, of a three-star Lieutenant General rank officer taking over as a four-star General after retirement.
- The Chief of Defence Staff of the Indian Armed Forces (CDS) is the military head and permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee (COSC) of the Indian Armed Forces.
- The Chief of Defence Staff is the highest-ranking uniformed officer on active duty in the Indian military and chief military adviser to the Minister of Defence.
- The Chief also heads the Department of Military Affairs.

Commando Battalions for Resolute Action (CoBRA)

Why in News?

CoBRA commando and Maoist were killed in an anti-Naxal operation in Sukma, following the major elimination of top Maoist leader Basavaraju in Narayanpur, marking a significant security success.

Description:

- **Established:** 2008
- **Parent Organization:** Integral part of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)
- **Specialization:** Trained in guerrilla tactics and jungle warfare
- **Nickname:** Jungle Warriors
- **Primary Objective:** Originally established to counter the Naxalite problem
- **Current Role:** Engaged in counter-insurgency and asymmetrical warfare operations within India
- **Personnel Selection:** Selected from existing CRPF personnel
- **Training:** Undergo rigorous commando and jungle warfare training
- **Units:** 10 battalions raised between 2008 and 2011
- **Deployment Areas:**
 - Primarily in Maoist violence-affected states
 - Some units deployed in northeastern states for counter-insurgency operations

Sukma Operation:

1. A joint team of CoBRA, District Reserve Guard, and Special Task Force launched the operation based on intel about Maoist presence in the Tumrel area of Sukma.
2. The operation led to a prolonged encounter resulting in the death of a CoBRA commando and a Maoist, with weapons and Maoist materials recovered from the site.

Gallantry Awards

Why in News?

President Droupadi Murmu awarded 6 Kirti Chakras and 33 Shaurya Chakras to defence and police personnel for exceptional bravery in counter-terror, anti-piracy, and rescue operations.

Description:

- Instituted by the **Government of India** to honour acts of **bravery and sacrifice** by:
 - Armed Forces personnel
 - Other lawfully constituted forces
 - Civilians
- **Announced twice a year:**
 - On Republic Day (26th January)
 - On Independence Day (15th August)

Background:

- **26th January 1950:** Introduction of three gallantry awards:
 - Param Vir Chakra
 - Maha Vir Chakra
 - Vir Chakra
- **1952:** Introduction of three more gallantry awards:
 - Ashoka Chakra Class-I
 - Ashoka Chakra Class-II
 - Ashoka Chakra Class-III
- **1967:** These were renamed as:
 - Ashoka Chakra
 - Kirti Chakra
 - Shaurya Chakra

Space for Notes:

Order of Precedence:

1. Param Vir Chakra
2. Ashoka Chakra
3. Maha Vir Chakra
4. Kirti Chakra
5. Vir Chakra
6. Shaurya Chakra

Additional Conditions:

- All gallantry awards may be awarded posthumously.
- Recommended persons **must not have any adverse report, censure, or punishment** from court martial or administrative action.

Ashoka Chakra, Kirti Chakra & Shaurya Chakra:
Eligibility:

- All ranks of:
 - Army, Navy, Air Force
 - Reserve Forces, Territorial Army, Militia
 - Other lawfully constituted forces
- Members of Nursing Services of the Armed Forces
- Civilian citizens of all walks of life
- Police Forces, including:
 - Central Para-Military Forces
 - Railway Protection Force

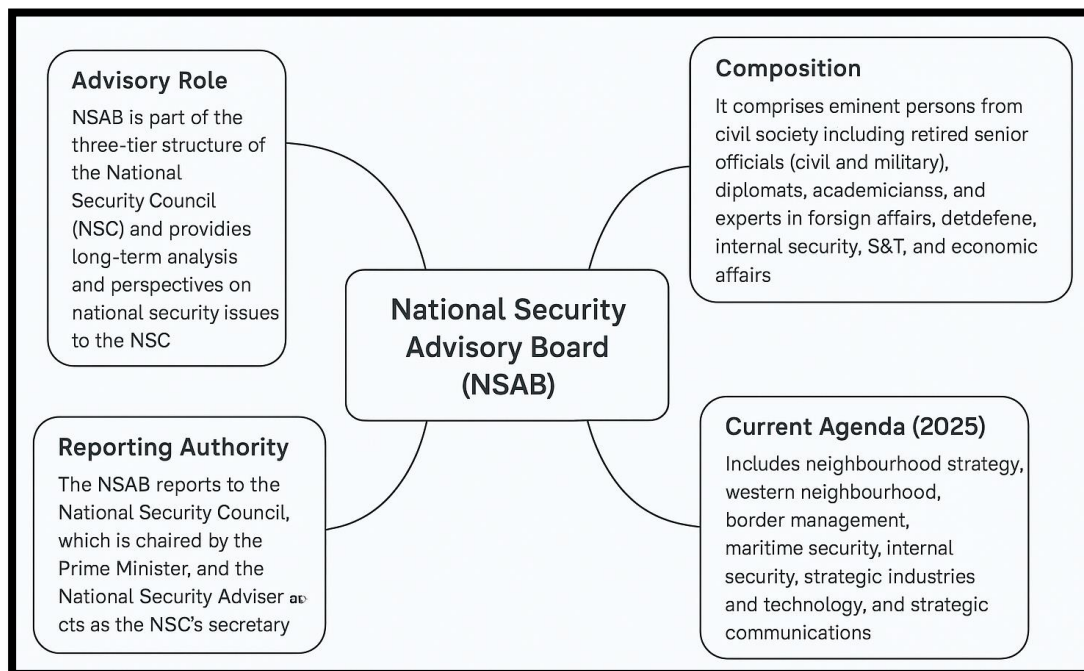
Conditions of Eligibility:

- **Ashoka Chakra:**
 - Awarded for **most conspicuous bravery**, daring act, **pre-eminent act of valour**, or **self-sacrifice** other than in the face of the enemy.
- **Kirti Chakra:**
 - Awarded for **conspicuous gallantry**, other than in the face of the enemy.
- **Shaurya Chakra:**
 - Awarded for **gallantry**, other than in the face of the enemy.


National Security Advisory Board (NSAB)
Why in News?

The National Security Advisory Board (NSAB) was reconstituted with ex-RAW chief Alok Joshi as Chairman and seven new members amid heightened tensions with Pakistan after the Pahalgam terror attack.

Space for Notes:

Description:
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Overseas Citizen of India (OCI)
Why in News?

British academic Nitasha Kaul is challenging the Indian government's cancellation of her OCI registration, citing vague allegations of "anti-India activities" through her writings and speeches. She plans legal action, claiming the move aims to silence critical voices.

Description:
Introduction:

- The OCI scheme was introduced in **August 2005**.
- It allows **Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs)** to register as OCI if:
 - They were Indian citizens on or after **January 26, 1950**, or
 - Were eligible to become citizens on that date.

Who Cannot Be an OCI:

- Applicants whose **parents or grandparents** have ever been citizens of **Pakistan or Bangladesh**.
- **Foreign military personnel**, serving or retired.
- Exceptions: **Spouse of Indian citizen or OCI**, if:
 - The marriage is registered and has lasted at **least two years**.

Advantages of OCI Card Holders:

- **Multiple entry, multi-purpose, lifelong visa** to visit India.
- **No requirement to register with police** for any length of stay in India.
- Treated at par with **NRIs** in:
 - Educational, financial, and economic fields (with some limitations).

Limitations of OCI Card Holders:

- **Cannot vote** or be a member of:
 - Legislative Assembly, Legislative Council, or Parliament.
- **Cannot hold constitutional posts** like:
 - President, Vice President, or Judge of Supreme/High Court.
- **Generally ineligible** for government jobs.

Latest Rules (as of March 4, 2021):

- OCI card holders must obtain **permission to visit protected/restricted areas** in India.
- Special permit required for:
 - **Research**
 - **Missionary, Tablighi, or journalistic activities**

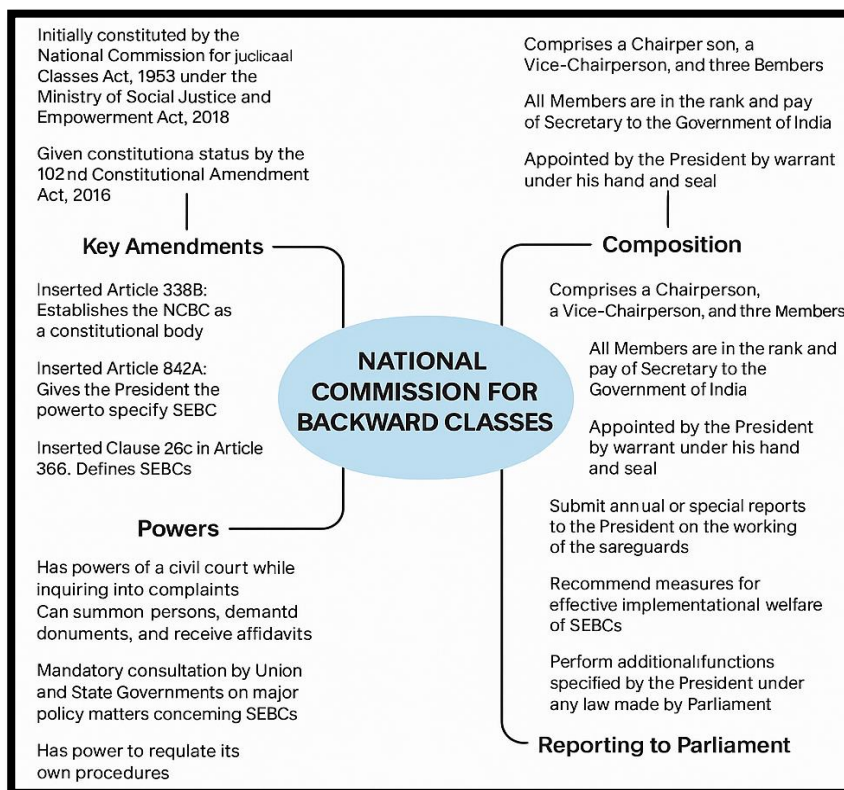
- Same restrictions as foreign nationals for visiting:
 - Jammu & Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh, and similar notified areas.
- Treated as foreign nationals under FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act), 2003.
- Previous RBI circulars under FEMA still apply unless amended.

National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)

Why in News?

The NCBC chief criticized the 2011 SECC for lacking a caste list, causing errors. He supported the government's new caste enumeration plan as vital for accurate social justice measures.

Description:



Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)

Why in News?

ICAR developed the world's first genome-edited rice varieties with higher yield, drought and salinity tolerance, using CRISPR technology, marking a major advancement in sustainable agriculture in India.

Description:

- **Full Name:** Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)
- **Type:** Autonomous organisation under the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India
- **Former Name:** Imperial Council of Agricultural Research
- **Established:** 16 July 1929
- **Legal Status:** Registered society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860
- **Based On:** Recommendations of the Royal Commission on Agriculture
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi, India
- **Role:**
 - Apex body for coordinating, guiding, and managing agricultural research and education
 - Covers sectors like agriculture, horticulture, fisheries, and animal sciences

CBI Director

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Why in News?

CBI Director Praveen Sood is in the news as he is likely to get a one-year extension, with the high-level committee failing to reach consensus on his successor.

Description:

Appointment of the CBI Director:

- The CBI Director is appointed under the **Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946**, as amended by the **Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013**.
- The appointment is made by the **Central Government** based on the recommendation of a **three-member Appointment Committee**.

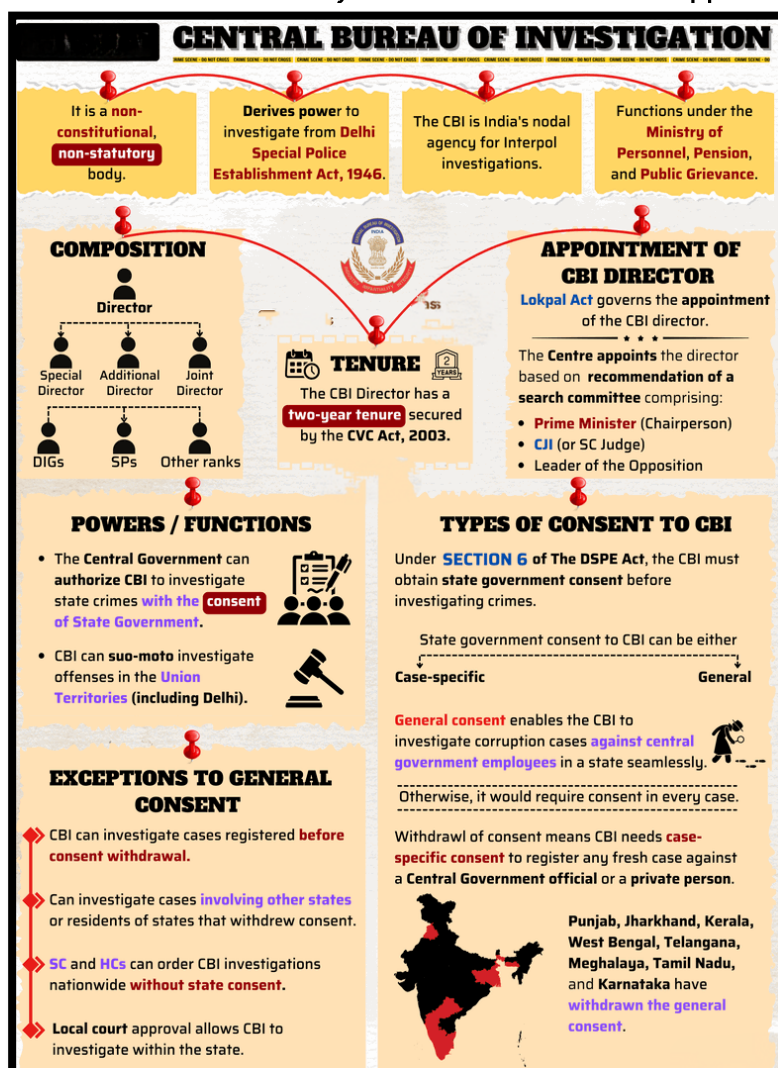
Composition of the Appointment Committee:

- **Prime Minister** – Chairperson
- **Leader of Opposition (LoP)** in the Lok Sabha
- **Chief Justice of India (CJI)** or a Supreme Court judge nominated by the CJI
- If there is no recognised LoP, the leader of the single largest party in the Lok Sabha is included.

Tenure and Related Provisions: As per the Central Vigilance Commission Act, 2003, the tenure of the CBI Director is fixed at 2 years.

Supreme Court Directions (2019):

- No officer with less than six months' service remaining is eligible for appointment as CBI Director.
- The CBI Director must remain in office for not less than two years.
- The Director can be transferred only with the consent of the appointing committee.



Sikkim Statehood Day

Why in News?

Sikkim celebrates 50 years of statehood with a unique 16-day "Butterthon" event, promoting butterfly watching tourism and showcasing its rich biodiversity of around 700 butterfly species.

Description:

- Celebrated on **May 16** every year.
- Marks **Sikkim's integration with India** and its recognition as the **22nd state in 1975**.
- Formed through the **36th Constitutional Amendment (1975)**.

Brief History of Sikkim

- **17th century:** **Namgyal dynasty** established the **Kingdom of Sikkim**.
- **1890:** Became a **British protectorate**, but the **Chogyal dynasty** continued.
- **Post-1947:** India maintained Sikkim's **protectorate status** (oversaw defence, diplomacy, communications).
- **1953:** A **State Council** was established for constitutional governance.
- **1973:** **People's agitation against monarchy** led by **Kazi Lhendup Dorji**.
 - Riots outside **Chogyal's palace** prompted India's intervention.
 - **Chogyal requested security assistance** from India.
- **1974:**
 - **New constitution** adopted in Sikkim.
 - **Chogyal's powers** reduced to a **titular role**.
 - Sikkim became an **"associated state"** of India with **parliamentary representation**.
- **1975:**
 - Sikkim's **Prime Minister** petitioned for **full statehood**.
 - **Sikkim became the 22nd state of India on May 16, 1975**.
 - **Monarchy abolished**.

The Emblems and Names (Prevention of Improper Use) Act, 1950

Why in News?

The Supreme Court dismissed a plea to protect V.D. Savarkar's name under the Emblems Act, 1950, ruling that no constitutional rights were violated and refusing to intervene in political controversies.

Description:

1. **Scope and Applicability:** The Act extends to the whole of India and applies to Indian citizens even outside India. It prohibits the improper use of specified emblems and names for commercial or professional purposes without prior approval.
2. **Prohibition under Section 3:** No person shall use any name or emblem listed in the Schedule of the Act, or any imitation thereof, for trade, business, profession, trademark, or patent purposes without prior permission from the Central Government.
3. **Penalty for Violation:** Any contravention of the Act is punishable with a fine that may extend up to **₹500**. However, legal proceedings require **prior sanction** from the Central Government.
4. **Power to Amend Schedule and Make Rules:** The **Central Government** has the power to amend the Schedule of emblems and names and to frame rules to give effect to the provisions of the Act.
5. **Related Judgment** – **Naveen Jindal vs Union of India (2004)**: The Supreme Court held that the **right to hoist the National Flag** is a **Fundamental Right under Article 19(1)(a)** of the Constitution. This case highlighted the interplay between the Flag Code, this Act, and the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971.

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Cotton Corporation of India (CCI)

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Why in News?

The Cotton Corporation of India bought 100 lakh bales at MSP amid low domestic demand; rising imports and higher MSP may impact future operations and textile industry competitiveness.

Description:

- Established in 1970 under the Companies Act, 1956
- Government of India corporate agency under Ministry of Textiles
- Governed by Textile Policy of 1985
- Engaged in trade, procurement, and export of cotton
- Operates in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Odisha
- Undertakes Price Support Operations when cotton prices fall below MSP



Cotton – Crop Overview:

- Kharif crop, takes 6 to 8 months to mature
- Sowing and harvesting vary with climatic conditions
- Grows in tropical and sub-tropical areas

- Requires 21°C to 30°C temperature
- Growth retarded below 20°C
- Needs 210 frost-free days and 50–100 cm rainfall annually
- Drought-resistant, ideal for arid climates

Economic Importance of Cotton:

- Covers 2.1% of world's arable land
- Contributes 27% to world's textile needs
- Provides fibre, edible oil, and animal feed

India and Global Cotton:

- India is the second-largest cotton producer after China

INCOIS
Why in News?

A fire aboard Singapore-flagged vessel M.V. Wan Hai 503 off the Kerala coast triggered an oil spill alert, with INCOIS monitoring drifting containers carrying hazardous substances after multiple explosions.

Description:

1. **Establishment & Ministry:** INCOIS (Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services) was established in **1999** as an **autonomous body** under the **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)**. It functions under the **Earth System Science Organization (ESSO)**.
2. **Tsunami Early Warning Role:** INCOIS operates the **Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC)**, which has been designated by UNESCO's **Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)** as a **Regional Tsunami Service Provider (RTSP)** for the Indian Ocean region.
3. **Services for Fisherfolk:** It provides **daily ocean advisories** to fisherfolk, including **Potential Fishing Zone (PFZ)** forecasts and **Ocean State Forecasts** (covering waves, currents, sea surface temperature, etc.), aiding in fuel and time savings.
4. **National Oceanographic Data Centre:** INCOIS serves as India's **National Oceanographic Data Centre**, recognized by the **International Oceanographic Data Exchange (IODE)** of the IOC, and it archives oceanic, satellite, and observational data.
5. **International Collaborations:** INCOIS is a founding member of **IOGOOS** (Indian Ocean Global Ocean Observing System) and **POGO** (Partnership for Observing the Global Oceans), playing a key role in international oceanographic research and capacity building.

The Indian Institute of Science (IISc)
Why in News?

IISc researchers developed an artificial metal-based nanozyme that prevents excess blood clotting by mimicking antioxidant enzymes, offering potential treatment for conditions like pulmonary thromboembolism and ischemic stroke.

Description:

1. **IISc was established in 1909** with the support of **Jamsetji Tata**, inspired by a discussion with **Swami Vivekananda** in 1893.
2. It is located in **Bengaluru, Karnataka**, and has a **400-acre campus** with advanced research facilities.
3. Recognized as an **Institution of Eminence** by the Government of India and ranked **1st in India** in the **QS World University Rankings 2023**.
4. Notable alumni include **C.V. Raman** (Nobel Laureate), **Satish Dhawan** (former ISRO Chairman), and **Narayan Murthy** (Infosys co-founder).
5. IISc has six major academic divisions covering **science, engineering, and interdisciplinary research** and offers Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral programs.

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Special Police Officers (SPOs)

Why in News?

The Supreme Court ruled that laws made by Parliament or State legislatures cannot be held in contempt of court unless declared unconstitutional, dismissing a plea against a 2011 Chhattisgarh law.

Description:

1. **Role and Recruitment:** SPOs are ordinary villagers recruited temporarily by state governments, trained for less than a month, and deployed in limited territories to assist in combat operations, often in conflict-affected areas like Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, and Chhattisgarh.
2. **Legal Basis and Status:** Their recruitment is based on the Police Act, 1861, particularly Section 17, which allows for temporary civilian assistance to police. However, SPOs are not regular police employees, receive low wages (₹1500–3000 per month), and their actions create minimal legal liability for the state.
3. **Human Rights Violations and Controversy:** SPOs have been implicated in human rights abuses, including killing innocent civilians, extortion, and engaging in violent feuds unrelated to militancy. Their deployment has sometimes escalated local conflicts rather than resolving them.
4. **Use in Conflict Areas:** SPOs have been used to counter militant and Naxalite groups, especially in Manipur and Chhattisgarh. In Chhattisgarh, recruitment is often influenced by the Salwa Judum, a controversial group declared illegal by India's Supreme Court.
5. **Criticism and Recommendations:** The Asian Legal Resource Centre (ALRC) recommends the immediate termination of SPO programs due to their detrimental impact and urges rehabilitation of discharged SPOs. The ALRC also calls for peaceful conflict resolution and addressing grievances of indigenous communities.

Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)

Why in News?

The DGCA launched a Comprehensive Safety Audit to assess systemic vulnerabilities, improve regulatory compliance, and strengthen aviation safety after recent aviation incidents, using 360-degree evaluation by multidisciplinary teams.

Description:

Basic Details:

- **Type:** Regulatory Body for Civil Aviation in India
- **Parent Ministry:** Ministry of Civil Aviation
- **Status:** Attached Office of the Ministry
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi

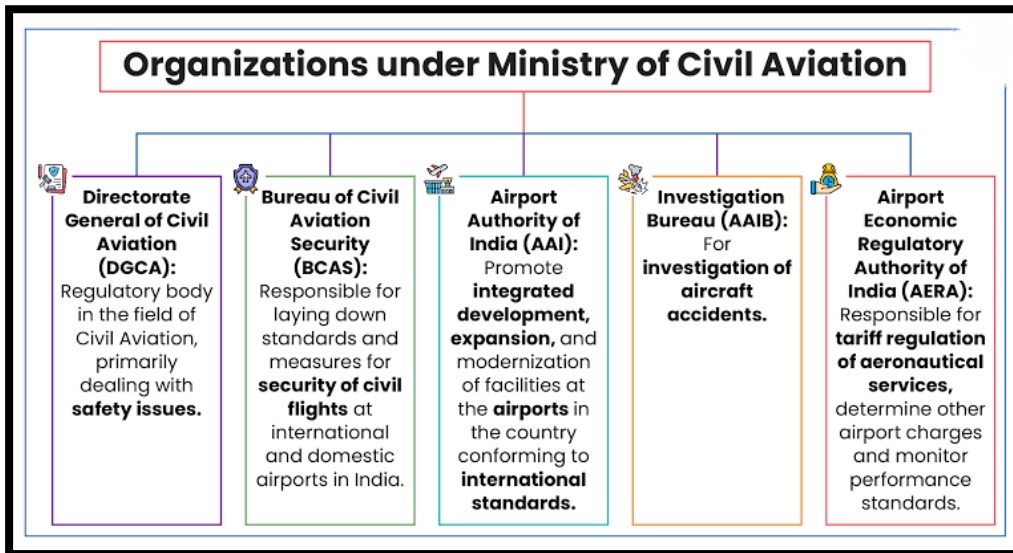
Core Responsibilities:

- **Regulates:** Air transport services to/from/within India
- **Enforces:** Civil aviation rules, air safety, and airworthiness standards
- **Coordinates with:** International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

Key Functions:

- Ensures **passenger and crew safety** on all flights in Indian airspace
- Conducts **safety inspections** of airlines and aircraft regularly
- **Investigates aviation incidents/accidents** and takes preventive measures
- Issues licenses and certificates to:
 - Pilots
 - Aircraft Maintenance Engineers
 - Cabin crew and other aviation personnel

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Registrar General of India (RGI)

Why in News?

The Registrar General of India directed states to ensure birth certificates are issued before newborns are discharged from hospitals, especially government facilities, to improve registration compliance under the Civil Registration System and support digital service delivery reforms.

Description:

- **Established:** 1949
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Home Affairs
- **Position:** Registrar General and Ex-Officio Census Commissioner of India
- **Rank:** Typically, Joint Secretary to Government of India

Key Functions:

- Conducts **Census of India** (decennial exercise since 1881; post-1949 under RGI).
- Implements **Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969**.
- Maintains **Civil Registration System (CRS)** – continuous, real-time registration of births and deaths.
- Conducts **Linguistic Survey of India (LSI)**.
- Manages **National Population Register (NPR)**.

Census of India:

- Provides detailed demographic, socio-economic, and geographic data.
- Last Census completed in 2011.
- 2021 Census delayed due to pandemic, funding priorities, and debates over caste enumeration.

Linguistic Survey of India (LSI):

- Conducted alongside decennial census.
- Documents linguistic diversity.
- First LSI completed by George Abraham Grierson (1928).

Civil Registration System (CRS):

- Mandatory legal system for birth and death registration.
- Government and private hospitals act as registration authorities.
- RGI recently cautioned hospitals for failing to report timely.

Recent Developments:

- **2023 Digital Census** initiative for real-time data, integrating Aadhaar.
- Use of datasets like **NFHS-5** to support policies (e.g. Mission Parivar Vikas).

Border Security Force (BSF)

Space for Notes:

Why in News?

Assam and Mizoram have drafted new rules to curb illegal immigration by tightening Aadhaar issuance and identification procedures. Assam limits Aadhaar powers to District Commissioners, while Mizoram plans to confiscate identity cards of frequently crossing Myanmar nationals to regulate border movement.

Description:

- **Established:** 1st December 1965 (post Indo-Pak War of 1965)
- **Ministry:** Functions under the **Ministry of Home Affairs**
- **Type:** One of the **seven Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs)**
- **Motto:** "Duty Unto Death"

Key Roles & Functions:

- Acts as the **First Line of Defence** of Indian territories.
- **Protects land borders** during peacetime and **prevents transnational crimes**.
- Assists the **Indian Army in wartime**, especially due to knowledge of local terrain and people.
- Engaged in:
 - **India-Pakistan & India-Bangladesh International Borders**
 - **Line of Control (LoC)** alongside Army
 - **Anti-Naxal Operations**

Special Features:

- **World's largest border guarding force:** ~2.57 lakh personnel, 186 battalions
- Only CAPF to have its own:
 - **Air Wing**
 - **Marine Wing**
 - **Artillery Regiments**
- Operates a **Camel and Dog wing** (e.g., for Rann of Kutch)
- Maintains a unique **Tear Smoke Unit (TSU)** for riot control

Powers & Legal Authority:

- Empowered under several Acts:
 - **Passport Act, 1967**
 - **Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920**
 - **Customs Act**
 - **NDPS Act**
 - **Arms Act**
- Authorized for **arrest, search, and seizure** under these laws

Leadership:

- Headed by a **Director General (DG)**, an officer from the **Indian Police Service (IPS)**

Logo:

- Features **two grain spikes**, the **National Emblem**, and the words **"BSF"**
- Motto **"Duty Unto Death"** inscribed at the bottom

National Population Register (NPR)

Why in News?

The Centre informed the Lok Sabha that no decision has been taken to update the National Population Register (NPR) during the upcoming 2027 Census. The Census will be conducted in two phases, including caste enumeration, with plans under finalisation.

Description:

- NPR is a **database of all "usual residents"** in India.
- **Usual resident:** A person residing in an area for **6 months or more** or intending to stay for the next 6 months.
- **Mandatory** for all usual residents to register under NPR.

Legal & Institutional Framework:

- Based on **Citizenship Act, 1955** and **Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003**.
- **Maintained by:** Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India under the **Ministry of Home Affairs**.

Timeline:

- First collected: **2010** (preceding Census 2011)
- Updated: **2015** (door-to-door survey)
- Next update: To be conducted along with **Census 2026 (House-listing phase)**

Data Collected:

- **21 Demographic details**, e.g., parent's birthplace, Aadhaar (voluntary), PAN, DL, mobile number, etc.
- **Biometric data** (linked via Aadhaar; new biometric not required if already enrolled in Aadhaar).
- **Mobile app-based collection** & centralized monitoring portal.

Administrative Levels:

Prepared at: **Local → Sub-district → District → State → National**

Comparison: NPR vs NRC vs Census:

Feature	NPR	NRC	Census
Law	Citizenship Rules, 2003	Citizenship Rules, 2003	Census Act, 1948
Scope	All residents	Only Indian citizens	Citizens (demographic/socio-economic)
Purpose	Database of residents	Citizenship verification	Statistical and planning data
Verification	Local scrutiny	Document-based verification	Self-declared

NITI Aayog

Why in News?

NITI Aayog recommended cutting core grant support for State Science and Technology Councils, shifting to project-based funding to boost accountability, citing concerns over imbalanced contributions and limited scientific output from state-administered research institutions.

Description:

- Full form: **National Institution for Transforming India**.
- Replaced **Planning Commission** on **1st January 2015**.
- Emphasises **Bottom-Up** approach, "**Maximum Governance, Minimum Government**".
- Reflects spirit of **Cooperative Federalism**.
- Planning Commission followed **Top-Down, command-and-control** model inspired by USSR.

Space for Notes:

Composition of NITI Aayog:

- **Chairperson:** Prime Minister.
- **Vice-Chairperson:** Appointed by PM.
- **Governing Council:** Chief Ministers of all States + Lt. Governors of UTs.
- **Regional Councils:** For specific regional issues, chaired by PM or his nominee.
- **Ex-Officio Members:** Up to 4 Union Ministers nominated by PM.
- **Ad-hoc Members:** 2 members from leading research institutions on rotational basis.
- **CEO:** Appointed by PM, in rank of Secretary to Gol.
- **Special Invitees:** Experts nominated by PM.

NITI Aayog Hubs:

- **Team India Hub:** Interface between States and Centre.
- **Knowledge and Innovation Hub:** Think-tank, policy research.
- Documents planned:
 - 3-Year Action Agenda
 - 7-Year Strategy Paper
 - 15-Year Vision Document

Key Objectives:

- Foster **cooperative federalism** through continuous support to States.
- Develop **village-level planning**, aggregating upward.
- Incorporate **national security interests** in economic strategy.
- Focus on **vulnerable sections** of society.
- Promote **stakeholder partnerships**, with think tanks, research bodies.
- Build **knowledge, innovation, entrepreneurial ecosystems**.
- Resolve inter-sectoral and inter-departmental issues.
- Maintain **state-of-the-art Resource Centre** and disseminate **best practices**.

Importance of NITI Aayog:

- Planning Commission was obsolete in **market-driven economy**.
- India's states have **diverse development stages**, making **one-size-fits-all planning outdated**.
- Aims for **competitive, inclusive growth** tailored to state needs.

Major Initiatives of NITI Aayog:

- SDG India Index
- Composite Water Management Index
- Atal Innovation Mission
- SATH Project
- Aspirational District Programme
- School Education Quality Index
- District Hospital Index
- Health Index
- Agriculture Marketing and Farmer Friendly Reforms Index
- India Innovation Index
- Women Transforming India Awards
- Good Governance Index
- Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)
- Strategy for New India @75
- Methanol Economy Programme
- e-AMRIT Portal (EV awareness, UK-India Joint Roadmap 2030)

Space for Notes:

NITI Aayog vs. Planning Commission:

NITI Aayog	Planning Commission
Advisory Think Tank	Extra-constitutional body
Draws from wider expertise	Limited expertise
Cooperative Federalism spirit	States as spectators in plan meetings
CEO appointed by PM (e.g., Parameswaran Iyer)	Secretaries via usual process
Bottom-Up approach	Top-Down approach
No power to impose policies	Imposed policies; tied funds to approved projects
No fund allocation powers (Finance Ministry handles)	Allocated funds to ministries & states

Space for Notes:
CAPF
Why in News?

Despite a Supreme Court directive to reduce IPS deputations in CAPFs within two years, the Home Ministry continues appointing IPS officers to senior CAPF posts, sparking allegations of contempt. The ruling aims to boost career progression for CAPF officers.

Description:

- Group of **seven central armed police units** under **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**.
- Role: **Internal security, law and order, counterinsurgency, border guarding**.
- Earlier called: **Central Para-Military Forces (CPMF)**.
- Official name **CAPF** adopted in 2011.

Classification:

- Border Guarding Forces**
 - Assam Rifles (AR)
 - Border Security Force (BSF)
 - Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)
 - Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)
- Forces for Internal Security**
 - Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)
 - Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)
- Special Task Force**
 - National Security Guard (NSG)

Constitutional Basis:

- Listed as **"Other Armed Forces"** in the Union List.
- Operate under **Article 355**: Union's duty to protect States against **external aggression & internal disturbances**.
- Police and Public Order Are **State List** subjects → CAPF deployed on state request.

Roles (High-Level):

- Border guarding (BSF, ITBP, SSB, AR)
- Security of sensitive establishments (CISF)
- Counterinsurgency, Law & Order, Anti-Naxal Ops (CRPF)
- Counterterrorism (NSG)
- Assist State Police & Army in crises.

Key Facts – Individual Forces:

Force	Key Role	Notes
Assam Rifles (AR)	Indo-Myanmar border (1643 km), NE insurgency	Admin by MHA, ops by Indian Army; oldest paramilitary.
BSF	Indo-Pak & Indo-Bangladesh borders	~292,000 personnel; also wartime roles.
CISF	Security of PSUs, airports, critical infra	~160,500 personnel.
CRPF	Largest CAPF; Law & Order, Naxal ops	~313,678 personnel; includes RAF & COBRA.
ITBP	Indo-China border (3488 km)	~89,432 personnel; high-altitude duties.
NSG	Counterterrorism, hostage rescue	Formed in 1984; elite “Black Cats.”
SSB	Indo-Nepal, Indo-Bhutan borders	~76,337 personnel.

Indian Coast Guard (ICG)
Why in News?

The Indian Coast Guard rescued two foreign nationals from the U.S.-registered yacht stranded in rough seas near Great Nicobar due to sail and engine failure. The operation was coordinated by MRCC Port Blair and executed by ICGS Rajveer.

Description:

- Established: **August 1978** under the **Coast Guard Act, 1978**.
- Status: An **independent Armed Force** under the **Ministry of Defence**.
- HQ: **New Delhi**.
- Origin: Concept proposed after **1971 Indo-Pak war**.
- Visionary behind idea: **Rustamji Committee** laid the blueprint for a **multidimensional maritime force**.

Organisational Structure:

- India's **maritime zones** are divided into **five Coast Guard Regions**:
 1. **North-West** – Gandhinagar
 2. **West** – Mumbai
 3. **East** – Chennai
 4. **North-East** – Kolkata
 5. **Andaman & Nicobar** – Port Blair
- **Fourth-largest Coast Guard** in the world.

Key Functions of ICG:

1. **Maritime Law Enforcement**
 - Prevents **smuggling** through maritime routes.
 - Jurisdiction: Territorial Waters, Contiguous Zone, and **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)**.
 - Acts as **maritime police** enforcing laws in India's waters.
2. **Environmental Protection**
 - Ensures **marine environment protection**.
 - Nodal agency for **oil spill response** in Indian waters.
 - Has prevented major **ecological disasters** (e.g., **Sagar Aaraksha-II** near Sri Lanka during fire on MV X-Press Pearl).
3. **Search & Rescue (SAR):**
 - Performs **Search and Rescue** operations in maritime zones.
 - Recognised as '**First Responder**' in maritime emergencies.

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4. Aid to Civil Authority:

- Assists civil administration during **natural disasters** (floods, cyclones, etc.).
- Has rescued over **13,000 individuals**.
- Recent operations during **floods in Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Goa**.

5. Coastal & Maritime Security:

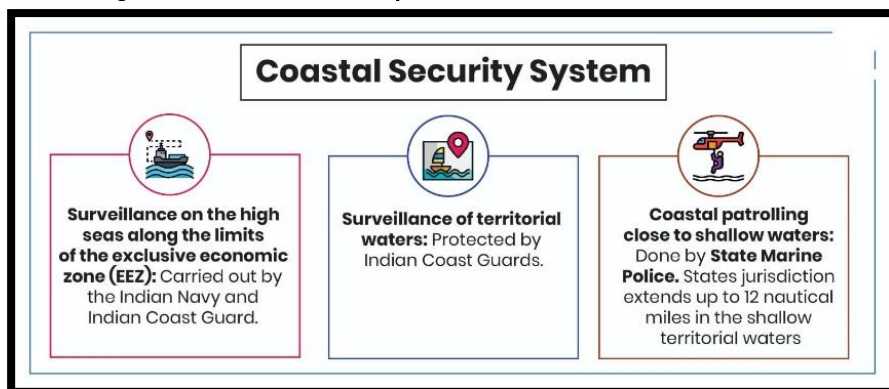
- Works with **Central and State agencies** to enhance coastal security infrastructure.
- Coordinates with **littoral countries** to combat:
 - Transnational crimes (piracy, human trafficking, narcotics)
 - Illegal fishing and marine terrorism

6. International Cooperation:

- Implements **SAGAR** (Security and Growth for All in the Region).
- Promotes **Neighbourhood First Policy** through:
 - **Ocean peacekeeping**
 - Professional exchanges with **Indian Ocean Region (IOR)** countries

Strategic Significance:

- Plays a critical role in:
 - **India's maritime domain awareness**
 - **Blue economy protection**
 - **Countering China's maritime expansion** in the IOR



CBSE's 'Sugar Boards' Initiative

Why in News?

The Union Health Ministry has launched a "Sugar and Oil Boards" initiative, directing government departments to display fat, sugar, and trans fat content of popular snacks to raise awareness about lifestyle diseases and promote healthier food choices and habits.

Description:

- **CBSE Mandate:** The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has directed over **24,000 affiliated schools** to establish 'sugar boards' on campus.
- **Purpose of Sugar Boards:**
 - Visually **display the sugar content** in common snacks and beverages.
 - Use simple comparisons (e.g., **teaspoons of sugar**) to make it relatable for children.
 - Raise awareness about **health risks** linked to excessive sugar consumption.
- **Role of NCPCR:**
 - The **National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)** has urged all schools, including those under **state boards**, to implement sugar boards.
 - The appeal comes amid rising **Type-2 diabetes cases** among children.
- **Alarming Sugar Intake:**
 - Indian children consume **13–15% of daily calories from sugar**, significantly **exceeding the WHO's recommended 5% limit**.
- **Pending Regulatory Action:**
 - The **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)** has not yet finalized:
 - **HFSS** (High Fat, Salt, Sugar) standards for school meals.
 - **Front-of-pack labelling norms**.

- **WHO Guidelines:**
 - The **World Health Organization (WHO)** advises limiting **free sugar intake to less than 10%** of daily energy intake for both children and adults.
 - A **further reduction to below 5%** is suggested for added health benefits.
- **Need for Local Standards:**
 - Indian experts advocate **stricter limits** due to **higher local risk of heart diseases**.
 - Call for a **nationwide dietary study** to frame India-specific guidelines and standards.

Space for Notes:

UNESCO

Why in News?

The U.S. announced it will withdraw from UNESCO again by December 2026, citing concerns over the agency's anti-Israel bias and divisive agenda. This marks the third U.S. exit, affecting UNESCO's budget but the agency is prepared.

Description:

Full Form: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Headquarters: Paris, France

Founded: 16 November 1945 India is a founding member.

Objectives:

- Promote international cooperation in education, science, culture, and communication.
- Strengthen the intellectual and moral solidarity of humankind.
- Preserve heritage and foster peace through dialogue and shared knowledge.

Major Functions & Programmes:

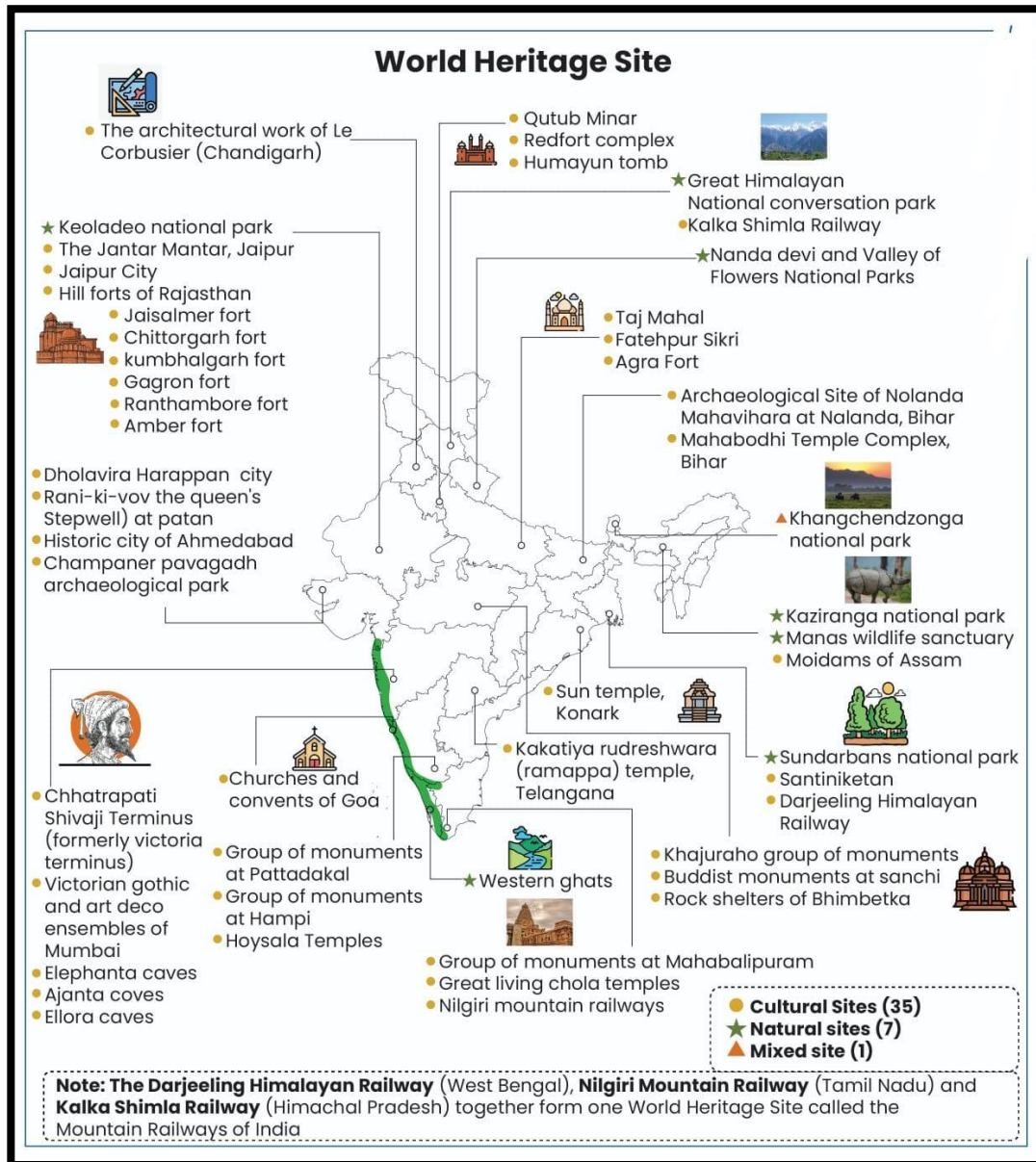
1. **World Heritage Sites**
 - UNESCO designates cultural, natural, and mixed sites of outstanding universal value.
 - India has **42 UNESCO World Heritage Sites** (as of July 2024).
2. **Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme**
 - Promotes sustainable development through **Biosphere Reserves**.
 - India has **12 UNESCO-designated biosphere reserves** (like Nilgiri, Sundarbans, Gulf of Mannar).
3. **Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)**
 - Preserves practices like **Yoga, Kumbh Mela, Kutiyattam, Chhau dance**.
4. **Global Geoparks Network** (India yet to have one)
5. **UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet)** – For peace education globally.
6. **Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), Global Education Monitoring Report, and World Press Freedom Day** (May 3) are part of its initiatives.

Governance Structure:

- **General Conference** (Member states meet every 2 years)
- **Executive Board**
- **Director-General** (currently **Audrey Azoulay**, since 2017)

India-UNESCO Engagement:

- India hosts the **UNESCO Cluster Office in New Delhi** for India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives.
- Active participation in **cultural heritage, education reforms, scientific cooperation, and digital literacy**.

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Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB)

Why in News?

The Information & Broadcasting Ministry blocked 25 OTT platforms for streaming obscene or pornographic content, citing violations under the IT Act, 2000 and IT Rules, 2021, following consultation with multiple ministries and child protection agencies.

Description:

- MIB is a Union Ministry, established in 1947 (originating from the British-era Dept. of Information & Broadcasting, 1941).
- Plays a central role in regulating media, broadcasting, press, advertising, films, and public communication.

Organizational Structure:

- Headed by: Union Minister of I&B
- Supported by: Minister of State and a Secretary
- Works via multiple autonomous bodies, statutory authorities, and PSUs.

Major Bodies under MIB:

Body	Role
Prasar Bharati	Autonomous public broadcaster; oversees AIR & Doordarshan
All India Radio (AIR)	Radio broadcasting
Doordarshan (DD)	Public television service
Press Information Bureau (PIB)	Disseminates official information and govt updates to media
Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP)	Govt advertising and outreach
Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC)	Censor board – classifies films for public exhibition
Film and Television Institute of India (FTII)	Training in film and TV
Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC)	Training in journalism and mass media

Major Schemes & Initiatives:

Initiative	Description
Digital India	Promotes digital outreach through media integration
Broadcasting Sector Reforms	Aims to reduce red tape and ease of doing business
National Broadcasting Day	Celebrated July 23, marks first radio broadcast (1927)
National Film Heritage Mission	Preservation & digitization of Indian cinematic heritage
Community Radio	Promotes localized broadcasting for inclusivity & diversity

State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF)
Why in News?

Eight people died and 30 were injured in a stampede at Haridwar's Mansa Devi temple due to panic over a rumoured electric line snap. SDRF and police rushed for rescue. Uttarakhand ordered a magisterial probe and compensation.

Description:
What is SDRF?

- Statutory Fund under Section 48(1)(a) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005.
- It is the primary fund with state governments for responding to notified natural disasters.

Contribution Pattern:

- General category states/UTs: 75% by Centre, 25% by State
- Special category states/UTs (NE states, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Sikkim): 90% by Centre, 10% by State

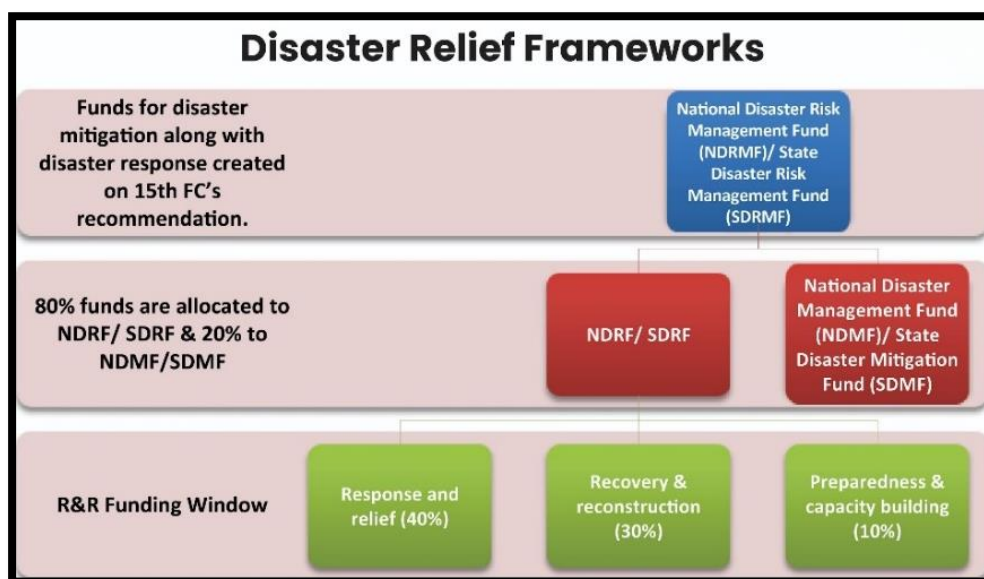
Disasters Covered Under SDRF:

- Notified Disasters:
 - Cyclone, drought, earthquake, fire, flood, tsunami, hailstorm, landslide, avalanche, cloudburst, pest attack, frost, cold waves.
- Local Disasters:
 - States can use up to 10% of SDRF for locally relevant natural disasters not in the central list (as per Ministry of Home Affairs norms).

Recent Allocation:

- As per 15th Finance Commission recommendations:
 - Total SDRF allocation for 2021–26: Over ₹1.28 lakh crore.

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Appointment of DGPs

Why in News?

The Centre notified a new single-window system for appointing State DGPs with detailed checklists and eligibility rules, including a six-month minimum residual service requirement. States must now submit proposals three months before the post falls vacant for UPSC clearance.

Description:

Who is the DGP?

- **Director General of Police (DGP)** is the highest-ranking police officer in a state or UT.
- Also known as the **State Police Chief**.

SC's Landmark Judgement – Prakash Singh Case (2006):

- PIL filed by **Prakash Singh (former DGP)** in 1996.
- SC issued **7 directives** to reform the police system and reduce political interference.

Seven Directives of the SC (2006):

- **Fixed Tenure for DGPs:**
 - Minimum tenure of **2 years** to ensure independent functioning.
- **Transparent Appointment:**
 - DGP must be selected from among the **top 3 officers** empanelled by UPSC.
- **Police Establishment Board (PEB):**
 - For deciding transfers, postings, and promotions.
- **State Police Complaints Authority (SPCA):**
 - To hear complaints from the public against police personnel.
- **Separation of Law & Order from Investigation:**
 - To improve professionalism and reduce workload.
- **State Security Commission (SSC):**
 - To ensure policy direction and insulate police from political pressure.
- **National Security Commission:**
 - For central police forces' oversight.

SC Directive on DGP Appointment (2018):

- UPSC to **shortlist 3 senior-most eligible officers**.
- States must select one from the panel, considering they have **at least 6 months of service left**.
- DGP should have **2-year minimum tenure**, irrespective of superannuation.

Contention by States:

- **Police & Public Order** are **State Subjects** (7th Schedule).
- Some states (e.g., West Bengal) sought SC to **modify its 2018 order**, claiming:
 - UPSC lacks legislative backing to empanel DGPs.
 - **Article 142** shouldn't override state legislative powers.
 - **The CM should have discretion** in appointing the police chief.

Issue of Temporary DGPs:

- **States with Acting DGPs:**
 - AP, Telangana, UP, Punjab (1+ year).
 - Uttarakhand, Odisha, West Bengal, J&K – recently appointed acting DGPs.
- Example: **UP had 4 acting DGPs in 20 months.**

MHA's Directive:

- States must:
 - **Appoint regular DGPs** per SC + UPSC norms.
 - Use acting DGPs **only in rare, exceptional cases.**

Challenges in Implementation:

- As per **CHRI Report (2020)**:
 - No state fully complied with SC's 2006 directives.
 - 18 states enacted Police Acts post-2006, but **none aligned fully** with the SC's model.
 - States cite administrative flexibility and federalism concerns.

Constitutional Context:

- **Article 142:** SC can pass any order to do **"complete justice."**
- **Police & Public Order:** Entry 2, State List – **states' domain.**

Zonal Councils
Why in News?

Union Home Minister Amit Shah highlighted that zonal councils evolved from discussion forums to engines of cooperation, resolving 83% of issues discussed. He spoke at the 27th Eastern Zonal Council meeting, underscoring greater inter-state collaboration.

Description:

- Idea promoted by then PM Jawaharlal Nehru.
- Set up under the **States Reorganisation Act, 1956.**
- Statutory bodies (not constitutional).
- Five Zonal Councils:
 - Northern Zonal Council
 - Central Zonal Council
 - Eastern Zonal Council
 - Western Zonal Council
 - Southern Zonal Council
- **North Eastern States** are not included in these; they have the **North Eastern Council (1972 Act)** for their special needs.

Objectives of Zonal Councils:

- Promote **national integration.**
- Arrest growth of **acute state consciousness, regionalism, linguistic and particularistic tendencies.**
- Enable **Centre and States** to cooperate and exchange ideas/experiences.
- Establish cooperation among States for speedy execution of development projects.

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Organisational Structure of Zonal Councils:

- **Chairman:** Union Home Minister.
- **Vice Chairman:** Chief Ministers of member States (by rotation, one-year term).
- **Members:**
 - Chief Minister + two other Ministers (nominated by Governor) from each State.
 - Two members from Union Territories in the zone.
- **Advisers:**
 - One nominee from **NITI Aayog** (earlier Planning Commission).
 - Chief Secretaries and another officer/Development Commissioner from each State in the Zone.
 - Union Ministers invited as necessary.

Functions of Zonal Councils:

- Advisory bodies.
- May discuss matters of **common interest** among member States.
- Can advise **Central Government** and **State Governments** on actions to be taken.
- Can discuss and recommend on:
 - Economic and social planning.
 - Border disputes.
 - Linguistic minorities.
 - Inter-State transport.
 - Matters connected with State reorganisation under the Act.

Citizenship Act, 1955
Why in News?

After years of uncertainty, 185 displaced Pakistani refugees in Gujarat were granted Indian citizenship under the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, marking a significant implementation step of the law for persecuted minorities from neighboring countries.

Description:
Constitutional Basis:

- **Part II of the Constitution:** Articles 5 to 11
- **Entry in the Union List** – Parliament has exclusive power.
- **The Constitution does not define “citizen”, leaves it to Parliament.**
- **India follows Single Citizenship (like UK, unlike USA).**

Five Ways of Acquisition of Citizenship under the Act:

Method	Key Provisions
By Birth	• Born in India: • 1 Jan 1950–1 July 1987: Citizen by birth • After 1 July 1987: At least one parent must be Indian • After 3 Dec 2004: One parent Indian and other not an illegal migrant
By Descent	• Born outside India: • 1950–1992: If father is Indian • After 1992: Either parent Indian • Condition: Registration at Indian Consulate within 1 year
By Registration	• PIOs, spouses of Indian citizens, minor children, etc., after fulfilling residency + oath of allegiance • Illegal migrants excluded
By Naturalisation	• Resided in India 11 of last 14 years, and continuously for 12 months’ prior • CAA 2019 reduced this to 5 years for certain communities
By Incorporation of Territory	• When new territory is added, Central Govt may declare people citizens (e.g., Goa, Puducherry)

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Termination of Citizenship:

Method	Description
Renunciation	Voluntary declaration by Indian of full age. Minor children also lose citizenship.
Termination	When Indian voluntarily acquires foreign citizenship (automatic termination).
Deprivation	Involuntary, for reasons like fraud, disloyalty, criminal activity, etc. (Govt decision).

Key Amendments:

Year	Amendment Highlights
1986	Restricted citizenship by birth – after 1987, one parent must be Indian.
2003	- Defined illegal migrant - Prohibited their citizenship - Introduced NRC and ended Commonwealth Citizenship
2015	Merged PIO & OCI into OCI Cardholder
2019 (CAA)	- Fast-tracks citizenship for Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, Christians from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh - Must have arrived in India before 31 Dec 2014 - Residency requirement reduced from 11 to 5 years

Illegal Migrants:

- Defined under 2003 amendment.
- Cannot acquire Indian citizenship by registration or naturalisation.
- Entry without valid documents or overstaying = illegal migrant.

Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000
Why in News?

The Information & Broadcasting Ministry blocked 25 OTT platforms for streaming obscene or pornographic content, citing violations under the IT Act, 2000 and IT Rules, 2021, following consultation with multiple ministries and child protection agencies.

Description:

- The Information Technology Act, 2000 is India's primary cyber law.
- Objective:** To provide legal recognition to electronic transactions, prevent cybercrimes, and promote e-governance.

Key Features:

Provision	Description
Legal Recognition of E-Records	Electronic documents and digital signatures are legally valid like paper-based ones.
Digital Signatures	Recognized to authenticate electronic documents.
E-Governance	Enables online filing of forms, e-bills, and e-contracts with government authorities.
Cybercrime Penalization	Offenses like hacking , identity theft , data theft , cyber terrorism , and pornography are punishable.
Intermediary Liability (Section 79)	Provides safe harbour to platforms like social media, if due diligence is followed.
Certifying Authorities (CCA)	Controller of Certifying Authorities established to issue digital signature certificates.
Appellate Tribunal	For resolving disputes related to electronic records and digital signatures.
Section 69A	The government can block websites in the interest of sovereignty, security, or public order.
Section 66A (Struck Down)	Penalized offensive messages via communication services. Struck down by SC in Shreya Singhal v. Union of India (2015).

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Important Amendments:
IT (Amendment) Act, 2008:

- Introduced **Section 66F** (Cyber Terrorism).
- Recognized **privacy violations**, data theft, and **phishing** as offenses.
- Strengthened provisions on **intermediary guidelines** and data protection.

IT Rules, 2021 & 2023:

- Enhanced compliance for **intermediaries**, OTT platforms, and digital news media.
- Mandatory **grievance redressal officers** and **content takedown** timelines.
- Empowered **fact-check units** (2023) to regulate fake news related to the government.

Major Cyber Offenses under the Act:

Section	Offense
43	Unauthorized access to computers, data theft
66	Hacking
66C	Identity theft
66D	Cheating by impersonation (e.g., phishing)
66E	Violation of privacy
67	Publishing obscene material in electronic form
69	Interception of communication
69A	Power to block public access to any information online

Rajya Sabha Election Process
Why in News?

Kamal Haasan, backed by the DMK, along with three others, took oath as Rajya Sabha members from Tamil Nadu. Six members, including two from AIADMK, were elected unopposed, replacing outgoing MPs like Vaiko and Anbumani Ramadoss.

Description:
Constitutional Basis:

- **Article 80:** Provides for the composition of the Rajya Sabha.
 - Maximum strength: **250 members**.
 - **238:** Represent States and Union Territories.
 - **12:** Nominated by the President (eminent persons in art, science, literature, social service).

Election of Members:

- Elected indirectly by the elected members of State Legislative Assemblies.
- Nominated members of the assembly do **NOT** vote.
- Union Territories (e.g. Delhi, Puducherry) with legislatures also elect members.

Voting Method:

- Proportional Representation by Single Transferable Vote (STV).
- Open Ballot system:
 - Introduced by **2003 amendment** to the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (Section 59).
 - **Party MLAs** must show their vote to authorised party agents.
 - **Independent MLAs** cannot show their vote to anyone.

How STV Works:

1. **Quota Formula:** $\text{Quota} = \left(\frac{\text{Total Valid Votes}}{\text{Seats} + 1} \right) + 1$
2. **Preference Voting:**
 - MLAs rank candidates: 1 (most preferred), 2, 3...
 - If a candidate secures the **quota** via **first preference votes**, they are elected.
3. **Surplus Transfer:**
 - If surplus votes remain, they're transferred to other candidates based on next preferences.

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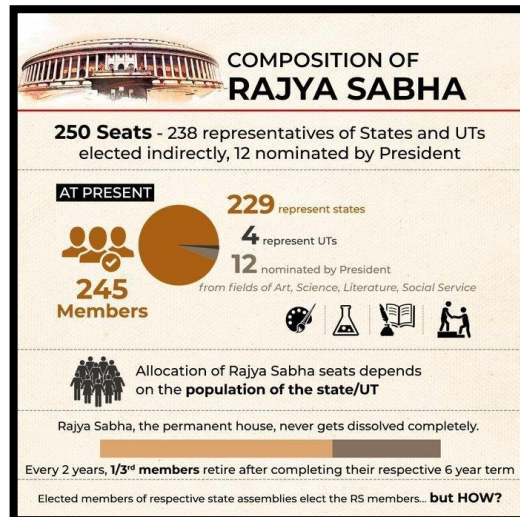
4. Elimination & Redistribution:

- If seats remain unfilled, the candidate with **fewest votes** is eliminated, and their votes redistributed.
- **Exhausted votes** (no valid next preference) are discarded.

5. This process continues until all vacancies are filled.

Cross-Voting and Legal Safeguards

- Cross-voting has occurred (e.g., Maharashtra, 1998; UP, HP, Karnataka in 2024).
- To curb this:
 - **Open ballot** voting introduced.
 - Violations (e.g., not showing to the party agent or showing to the wrong person) lead to **vote invalidation**.



Space for Notes:

Vice President of India

Why in News?

The Election Commission has begun preparations for the Vice-Presidential election following Jagdeep Dhankhar's resignation due to health reasons. The Vice President is elected by an Electoral College of both Houses, as per the 1952 Act and 1974 Rules.

Description:

The Vice Presidents of India hold the second-highest constitutional office after the President. **Election Process**

- Elected **indirectly** by members of **Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha** (no state involvement).
- **Proportional representation** by single transferable vote.
- **Secret ballot**.

Removal:

- **No impeachment** process like the President.
- Can be removed by:
 - **Resolution in Rajya Sabha** (majority).
 - Agreed to by **Lok Sabha**.
- **No grounds** are required – hence more **political** and **flexible**.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Indian citizen.
- Minimum **35 years** of age.
- Eligible for Rajya Sabha.
- **Cannot hold an office of profit** under any government/public authority.

Tenure & Vacancy:

- **5 years**, but:
 - Continues till successor takes over.
 - Can resign (to President).
 - Can be removed.
 - Vacancy can also occur due to death or invalidation of election.

Powers & Functions:

- **Chairman of Rajya Sabha** (ex-officio).
- **Acts as President** during:
 - Vacancy due to death, resignation, impeachment, etc.
 - Maximum **6 months** till the new President is elected.
- **Does not hold regular executive powers** unless acting as President.

Key Facts:

- **First VP:** Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1952–62).
- **Only VP with 2 full terms:** Mohammad Hamid Ansari (2007–2017).
- **Present VP (2022–2025):** Jagdeep Dhankhar.
- **14 individuals** have held the post (1952–2025).
- **The 11th Constitutional Amendment (1961)** changed election from joint sitting to separate votes in both Houses.

Lok Sabha
Why in News?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi surpassed Indira Gandhi's record by serving 4,078 consecutive days as PM, becoming the second-longest serving Prime Minister in India's history with an uninterrupted tenure across three Lok Sabha terms since 2014.

Description:

- **Meaning:** House of the People (Lower House of Parliament).
- **Established under:** Article 81 of the Constitution.
- Represents **directly elected** members from territorial constituencies.
- Plays a major role in **law-making, budget, motions, and democratic representation.**

Composition:

- **Max Strength (Constitutional):** 550 members
 - 530 from States
 - 20 from Union Territories
- **Current Strength: 543**
 - 524 from States
 - 19 from UTs

Representation of States & UTs:

- **States:** Direct election based on territorial constituencies.
- **UTs:** Elected as per the Union Territories (Direct Election to Lok Sabha) Act, 1965.
- **Anglo-Indian Nomination:** Abolished by 104th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2019.

Duration:

- **Normal term:** 5 years from the first sitting.
- **Early Dissolution:** Possible by the President (on Cabinet advice).
- **Emergency Provision:** Extension by 1 year at a time during National Emergency.
 - Cannot continue beyond 6 months after the Emergency ends.

System of Elections:

- **Type:** First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) System
- **Constituencies:** Single-Member Territorial Constituencies
- **Voting age:** 18 years (after 61st Constitutional Amendment, 1988)

Delimitation & Readjustment

- **After every Census,** seats and boundaries are to be revised.
- **Delimitation Acts:** Enacted in 1952, 1962, 1972, 2002.
- **Freeze on Readjustment:**
 - **42nd Amendment (1976):** Froze allocation till 2000 (1971 Census).
 - **84th Amendment (2001):** Extended freeze till 2026 (1991 Census).
 - **87th Amendment (2003):** Allowed delimitation using 2001 Census, without altering seat allocation.

Reservation of Seats:

- For SCs and STs based on population ratio in the State/UT.
- **Elected by all voters** in the constituency (no separate electorate).
- **104th Amendment (2019):** Extended reservation for SCs/STs in Lok Sabha till 2030.
- Based on 2001 Census data.

Space for Notes:

Qualifications (Article 84 & RPA, 1951):

Type	Details
Constitutional	- Citizen of India - ≥ 25 years of age - Must subscribe to oath
Statutory (RPA, 1951)	- Registered voter - Must belong to SC/ST to contest reserved seat

Disqualifications:

Type	Grounds
Constitutional	- Office of profit - Unsound mind - Insolvency - Not a citizen - Disqualified under law
Statutory (RPA, 1951)	- Electoral offences - Criminal convictions (≥2 years) - Failure to file expenses - Govt. contract interests - Convictions related to bribery, enmity, dowry etc.
Anti-defection (10th Schedule)	- Voluntarily giving up party - Voting against party whip - Independents joining party - Nominated members joining party after 6 months

Disqualification under 10th Schedule is decided by:

- **Speaker** (Lok Sabha)
- **Subject to Judicial Review** (Kihoto Hollohan case, 1992)

Oath or Affirmation:

- Before President or his appointee
- Must uphold Constitution, sovereignty and perform duties
- Without it: cannot vote/participate, fined ₹500/day

Salaries and Allowances:

- Decided by Parliament
- **Pension provision** introduced in 1976
- Benefits: Free accommodation, travel, vehicle, medical etc.

Vacating of Seats:

Reason	Explanation
Double Membership	Cannot be member of both Houses / State legislature & Parliament
Disqualification	Under Constitution, RPA, or Anti-defection law
Resignation	Addressed to and accepted by the Speaker
Absence	Absent from Lok Sabha for 60 days without permission
Other Cases	Fraudulent election, death etc.

Delimitation in India
Why in News?

The Supreme Court ruled that states like Andhra Pradesh and Telangana cannot demand delimitation citing Jammu & Kashmir, as states are constitutionally barred from delimitation until post-2026 under Article 170(3), unlike Union Territories like J&K.

Space for Notes:

Description:

- Delimitation is the process of **redrawing boundaries** of electoral constituencies based on **latest population data**, to ensure **equal representation** for equal segments of the population.
- It applies to both **Parliamentary** and **State Legislative Assembly** constituencies.

Objectives of Delimitation:

- **Equal Representation:** Ensures constituencies have similar population sizes.
- **Electoral Fairness:** Prevents over- or under-representation.
- **Demographic Adjustment:** Reflects population changes due to migration or growth.
- **Correct Malapportionment:** Fixes imbalances where one MP may represent 25 lakh people (e.g., UP) vs another representing 10 lakh (e.g., Kerala).

Constitutional Basis:

Article	Provision
Article 82	Parliament to enact a Delimitation Act after each Census for Lok Sabha
Article 170	Delimitation of State Legislative Assembly constituencies
Schedule 1	Allocation of seats to each state

Delimitation Commission:

- **Appointed by:** President of India
- **In Consultation with:** Election Commission of India
- **Composition:**
 - Retired Supreme Court Judge (Chairperson)
 - Chief Election Commissioner (CEC)
 - State Election Commissioners (for relevant states)
- **Powers:**
 - Independent and **not subject to judicial review**
 - Decisions are **final** and **cannot be questioned** in any court

Historical Timeline:

Year	Key Delimitation Event
1952, 1962, 1972, 2002	Four major Delimitation Commissions set up
42nd Amendment (1976)	Freeze on seat redistribution till 2000 (based on 1971 Census) to promote population control
84th Amendment (2001)	Extended freeze till 2026 , but allowed rationalization based on 1991 data
87th Amendment (2003)	Allowed delimitation based on 2001 Census , without altering number of seats

President's Rule (Constitutional Emergency)
Why in News?

The Lok Sabha passed a resolution to extend President's Rule in Manipur for six more months, citing improved law and order. The extension requires Rajya Sabha's approval. President's Rule was imposed in February after ethnic unrest and the CM's resignation.

Description:

Article 356 of Indian Constitution: Allows the President to impose **President's Rule** in a state when the **constitutional machinery** breaks down.

Constitutional Provisions:

- **Article 355:** Union's duty to protect states from external aggression/internal disturbance.
- **Article 356:** President's Rule on grounds of failure of constitutional machinery.
- **Article 357:** President empowered to legislate on behalf of the state.
- **Article 365:** Consequences of state not complying with Union's directions.

Space for Notes:

Grounds for Imposition:

1. **Breakdown of constitutional machinery** (Art 356) – based on the Governor's report or the President's own judgment.
2. **Failure to follow Union's directions** (Art 365).
3. **Common scenarios:**
 - Hung Assembly
 - Breakdown of coalition government
 - Loss of majority (no-confidence vote)
 - Election postponement due to natural disasters/war

Approval and Duration:

- Needs **Parliamentary approval** within **2 months**.
- Initially valid for **6 months**, can be extended up to **3 years**.
- Extension beyond **1 year** needs:
 - **National Emergency** in the whole or part of the state.
 - **ECI certification** that elections cannot be held.
- Can be **revoked anytime** by the President (no Parliament approval needed).

Effects of President's Rule:

- The President assumes executive authority (via Governor).
- **The State Assembly may be suspended/dissolved.**
- **Parliament legislates for the state**, including passing a Budget.
- Ordinances can be issued by the President.
- **High Court jurisdiction remains unaffected.**

Key Supreme Court Judgments:

- **S.R. Bommai (1994)**: President's Rule is **subject to judicial review**; must prove majority on the floor.
- **Rameshwar Prasad (2006)**: Must be based on **objective criteria**, not political convenience.

Recommendations of Commissions:

- **Sarkaria Commission**: Article 356 to be used as **last resort**; prior warning to states advised.
- **Punchhi Commission**: Emergency provisions should be **localized**, not statewide.

Criticism of President's Rule:

- Misused to **dismiss opposition-led state govts** (e.g., 27 times by Indira Gandhi govt).
- **Undermines federalism and democratic process.**
- **Power centralization** in the Union government.

NARI 2025 – National Annual Report & Index on Women's Safety
Why in News?

The **NARI 2025 Report**, based on a survey of 12,770 women across 31 cities, found that **40% of urban women feel unsafe**. Mumbai, Vizag, Kohima ranked safest, while Delhi, Kolkata, Patna and Jaipur ranked lowest, highlighting gaps in infrastructure and reporting.

Description:

- Full form: **National Annual Report and Index on Women's Safety (NARI)**.
- Released by: National Commission for Women (NCW), launched by Chairperson **Vijaya Rahatkar**.
- Prepared by: **Pvalue Analytics** and published by the **Group of Intellectuals and Academicians (GIA)**.
- Objective: To capture women's lived experiences of **safety** beyond official crime statistics.
- Coverage (2025 edition):
 - Survey of **12,770 women**
 - Across **31 cities**, covering all states
 - Focuses on **unreported harassment**, perceptions of safety, and gaps in implementation of laws.

Space for Notes:

United District Information System for Education (UDISE+)

Why in News?

According to **UDISE+ 2024-25 data**, total school enrolment (Classes 1-12) has dropped to an **all-time low of 24.69 crore**, with a **25 lakh fall in ages 3-11**. Officials attribute this to **falling birth rates** and demographic shifts, despite improved **dropout rates and GER**.

Description:

- **Full form:** Unified District Information System for Education Plus.
- **Launched by:** Department of School Education & Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education.
- **Nature:** One of the largest Management Information Systems (MIS) in India.
- **Coverage:**
 - 14.72 lakh schools
 - 98.08 lakh teachers
 - 24.8 crore children (2023-24)

Features:

- Online portal for data on schools, teachers, enrolment, infrastructure.
- **Data Capture Format (DCF):** Used for structured data entry.
- Each school gets a Login ID & Password for uploading data.
- **3-Stage Verification:** Block/Cluster → District → State.
- Final approval given by the State Project Director (SPD).
- Most trusted Pan-India database in school education.

Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS)

Why in News?

The Defence Ministry has approved free medical treatment under the Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) for officer cadets disabled during training. Earlier excluded from benefits as they lacked ex-servicemen status, this decision eases their treatment burden.

Description:

- **Launched:** April 2003.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare, Ministry of Defence.
- **Headquarters:** Central Organisation ECHS, Delhi (Integrated HQ of MoD – Army).

Aim & Objective:

- To provide **quality healthcare** to Ex-Servicemen pensioners (Army, Navy, Air Force) and their dependents.
- Covers both **allopathic & AYUSH** medicare.

Services Provided:

1. **ECHS Polyclinics** – Provide:
 - Outpatient care (consultation, essential investigation, medicines).
 - Preventive & primary healthcare.
2. **Specialized & Inpatient Care** – Through:
 - Service hospitals (Army/Navy/Air Force hospitals).
 - Government hospitals.
 - **Empanelled civil hospitals** across the country.

Funding: Entirely financed by the **Government of India**.

Space for Notes:

RGI vs Census Commissioner
Why in News?

The Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India announced that a pre-test for the Population Census 2027 will be conducted in October–November 2025. This will be India's first digital census using a mobile app, and the first to enumerate caste post-independence.

Description:

Aspect	Registrar General of India (RGI)	Census Commissioner of India
Position	Registrar General of India	Ex-Officio Census Commissioner of India
Established	1949 (as permanent office under Ministry of Home Affairs)	Same person as RGI, functions ex-officio
Ministry	Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)	Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)
Rank	Senior civil servant, usually Joint Secretary rank	Same individual (RGI) acts as Census Commissioner
Main Function	I. Collects statistics on population size, growth, and distribution II. Implements Registration of Births & Deaths Act, 1969 III. Maintains Civil Registration System (CRS) IV. Conducts demographic & linguistic surveys	I. Conducts decadal Census of India under Census Act, 1948 II. Ensures enumeration of population (housing & population phases) III. Provides Census data for policy, planning, & governance
Legal Basis	Registration of Births and Deaths (RBD) Act, 1969 (amended 2023 for digital portal)	Census Act, 1948
Outputs	Vital statistics, CRS reports, linguistic survey data	Census reports every 10 years (16th Census upcoming, 2024–25)
Recent News	Directed states to issue birth certificates at hospital discharge (2025)	2021 Census postponed to 2024–25 due to Covid & elections
Other Notes	Advises govt. on population, fertility, mortality, marriage, etc.	16th Census will be first digital census with self-enumeration option

Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)
Why in News?

The CISF will induct **2,400 women personnel** in 2026 to ensure **10% female representation** in the force. It is also training its **first-ever all-woman commando team** for deployment at airports and vital installations, enhancing gender diversity and operational strength.

Description:

- CISF is one of the **Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF)** of India.
- Functions under the **Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)**.
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi.
- **Motto:** Protection and Security.

Establishment:

- Created by the **CISF Act, 1968**.
- Came into existence in **1969** with **3 battalions**.
- **1983 amendment**: Declared as an **Armed Force of the Union**.
- Present strength: **1.88 lakh+ personnel** (recent approval for +58,000).
- Provides security cover to **359 establishments** (2025).

Organisation Structure:

- Headed by an **IPS officer (Director-General)**.
- Assisted by an **Additional Director-General (IPS)**.
- Divided into **7 sectors**:
 - Airport
 - North
 - North-East
 - East
 - West
 - South
 - Training
- Also has a **dedicated Fire Service Wing**.

Functions:

1. **Security to critical infrastructure**: Nuclear installations, space establishments, power plants, seaports.
2. **Airport security**: Assigned to CISF in **2000**, after the **IC-814 hijacking (Kandahar)**.
3. **Public interface security**: Delhi Metro, Parliament House Complex, J&K Central Jails, iconic monuments (e.g., Taj Mahal).
4. **VIP Security**: Specialized vertical for round-the-clock protected security.
5. **Disaster Management**: Personnel trained for earthquakes, floods, cyclones.
6. **Fire Protection**:
 - Only CAPF with a **dedicated fire wing**.
 - One of the largest fire protection services in India.
7. **Corporate Security**: Post **26/11 Mumbai attacks (2008)**, extended to **private sector establishments**.
8. **Compensatory Cost Force**: Bills its clients for the services provided.

IPS vs CAPF
Why in News?

The Government has filed a review petition against the Supreme Court's May 23 ruling to progressively reduce IPS officer deputations in CAPFs within two years, even as the Home Ministry continues such appointments; related matters remain sub judice.

Description:

Feature	IPS (Indian Police Service)	CAPF (Central Armed Police Forces)
Type	All India Service (AIS)	Central Paramilitary Forces (now officially "Central Armed Police Forces")
Constitutional/ Statutory Basis	Created under All India Services Act, 1951 (along with IAS & IFoS)	Each force constituted under its own Act of Parliament (e.g., CRPF Act 1949, BSF Act 1968, etc.)
Cadre Control Authority	Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) , in consultation with State Governments	Ministry of Home Affairs directly controls

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Recruitment	Through UPSC Civil Services Examination (CSE)	Through UPSC CAPF (AC) Examination
Training Academy	Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel National Police Academy (SVPNPA), Hyderabad	Respective force academies (e.g., BSF Academy, CRPF Academy, ITBP Academy, etc.)
Posting Jurisdiction	Appointed to State cadres; can be deputed to Central Police Organisations, IB, CBI, CAPFs, etc.	Directly posted in Central Armed Police Forces – can be deployed anywhere in India (border areas, internal security, etc.)
Powers	Executive magistracy in law & order, crime investigation, policing	Armed law enforcement, border security, counter-insurgency, anti-terrorism, VIP security, disaster response
Forces Included	IPS itself is a service – officers can be posted to various organisations (including deputation to CAPFs)	BSF, CRPF, CISF, ITBP, SSB, Assam Rifles (partly under MHA/Defence)
Hierarchy	Probationary IPS → ASP → SP/SSP → DIG → IG → ADG → DGP	Assistant Commandant → Deputy Commandant → Second-in-Command → Commandant → DIG → IG → ADG
Nature of Service	Police administration, crime prevention, investigation, policy-level decisions	Primarily operational field service in paramilitary forces
Uniform	Khaki uniform with IPS insignia	Distinct uniforms for each CAPF with force insignia
Retirement Age	60 years	60 years (generally; some variations for specific forces)

Defence Acquisition Council (DAC)

Why in News?

On August 5, 2025, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, approved defence procurements worth ₹67,000 crore, including Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) Remotely Piloted Aircrafts (RPAs), mountain radars, and maintenance for C-17, C-130J, and S-400 systems, enhancing strategic and operational readiness.

Description:

What is DAC?

- Highest decision-making body in the Ministry of Defence for capital acquisitions.
- Ensures expeditious procurement of approved requirements of the Armed Forces.
- Focuses on capability building within a defined time frame and budget.

Background & Formation:

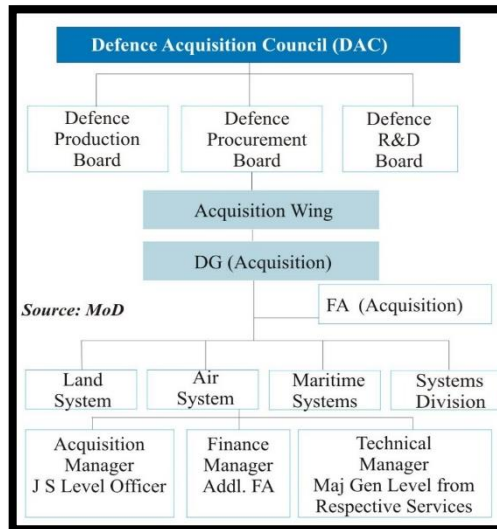
- Formed in 2001, based on recommendations of the Group of Ministers post Kargil War (1999).
- Part of the reforms in the National Security System.

Composition:

- Chairperson: Defence Minister of India.
- Members include:
 - Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)
 - Chiefs of the Army, Navy, and Air Force
 - Defence Secretary
 - Secretary (Defence Production)
 - Secretary (Defence Finance)
 - Other senior officials as required

Major Functions:

1. **Approval of Long-Term Plan:** In-principle approval to 15-year Long Term Integrated Perspective Plan (LTIPP).
2. **Acceptance of Necessity (AoN):** First step in the procurement process; DAC accords AoN for acquisition proposals.
3. **Categorization of Acquisition Proposals:**
 - 'Buy' (Indian/Global),
 - 'Buy and Make' (Indian/Global),
 - 'Make' (Indian Initiative, Innovation, Design & Development)
4. **Offset Policy Decisions:** For acquisition proposals worth above ₹300 crore.
5. **Transfer of Technology (ToT):** Decision on ToT under the 'Buy & Make' category.
6. **Vendor Issues:** Handles Single Vendor Clearance cases.
7. **Field Trial Evaluation:** Ensures fair and realistic field trials before final acquisition.


Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)
Why in News?

The Supreme Court upheld the power of Pollution Control Boards to impose restitutionary damages under the Water and Air Acts to restore ecosystems. However, it directed the enforcement of this power only after issuing subordinate legislation.

Description:

- **Statutory body** constituted under the **Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974**
- **Also empowered under:**
 - **Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981**
 - **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986** (as technical advisor to MoEF&CC)
- **Parent Ministry:** Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)

Principal Functions:

- **Water Pollution Control:**
 - Promote cleanliness of **streams and wells** across states
 - Prevent, control, and abate **water pollution**
- **Air Pollution Control:**
 - Improve **air quality** across India
 - Prevent, control, and abate **air pollution**
- **Advisory Role:**
 - Advise the **Central Government** on air and water pollution matters
- **Coordination & Guidance:**
 - Coordinate with and support **State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs)**
 - Resolve disputes between SPCBs
 - Provide technical and administrative assistance
- **Delegated Authority:**
 - Powers under **Water Act (1974)**, **Water Cess Act (1977)**, and **Air Act (1981)** delegated to **Union Territory administrations**

Key Standards Developed by CPCB:

- **National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)**
- **Water Quality Criteria** for rivers, lakes, groundwater

Space for Notes:

- **Emission/Discharge Standards for:**
 - Industries (under Environment Protection Rules, 1986)
 - **Bio-medical waste incineration**
 - **Diesel engines** – emission & noise limits
 - **LPG/CNG Generator Sets** – emission & noise norms
- **Minimal National Standards (MINAS):**
 - Industry-specific minimum pollution norms
 - Cover effluent discharge, air emissions, noise, and solid waste management
 - Adopted by State Governments as minimum requirement

Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)

Why in News?

For the first time, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has urged the Registrar General of India to enumerate Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) separately in the upcoming Census, enabling precise data collection for better implementation of targeted welfare schemes across 18 states and 1 UT.

Description:

- PVTGs are the **most vulnerable among Scheduled Tribes**.
- Declared on the basis of the **Dhebar Commission (1973)** recommendations.
- **1975:** 52 groups identified as PVTGs.
- **Currently:** 75 PVTGs out of 705 Scheduled Tribes (Census 2011).
- Spread across **18 States + 1 UT (Andaman & Nicobar Islands)**.
- **Odisha** has the **highest number** of PVTGs (population >2.5 lakh).

Characteristics of PVTGs:

1. **Population** – stagnant/declining.
2. **Technology** – pre-agricultural level of technology.
3. **Literacy** – extremely low.
4. **Economy** – subsistence level, hunting/gathering, shifting cultivation.

Government Schemes:

- **Scheme: Development of PVTGs** (by Ministry of Tribal Affairs).
 - **Centrally Sponsored Scheme**, with **100% Central assistance**.
 - Covers **18 States + A&N Islands**.
 - Focus: **socio-economic development while preserving culture & heritage**.
 - Covers education, health, housing, water supply, livelihood, connectivity.

Why do PVTGs need special focus?

- More advanced tribal groups corner most benefits of general tribal schemes.
- PVTGs remain **excluded & marginalised**.
- Require **targeted, customised interventions**

Online Gaming Bill, 2025

Why in News?

The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025 is in news as the government plans to ban online real money gaming due to money laundering and societal concerns, while promoting e-sports and game development as legitimate competitive and economic activities.

Description:

Objective of the Bill:

- Provide a **uniform national legal framework** for online gaming.
- **Ban money-based online gaming** and related advertisements.
- Distinguish **real-money gaming** from **eSports** and **social/casual games**.
- Protect users as **victims of exploitation**, while penalising promoters, operators, and enablers.

Space for Notes:

Definition:

- **Online Money Game:** Any game (skill, chance, or both) played by paying fees/deposit/stakes with expectation of monetary returns.
- **Excludes:** eSports & casual/social online gaming.

Prohibited Activities:

1. Offering online money gaming services.
2. Advertising or promoting such platforms.
3. Processing or transferring funds linked to online betting through banks/financial institutions.

Penalties:

- **Operators of illegal money games:** Jail up to 3 years and/or fine up to ₹1 crore.
- **Advertisements/promotions:** Jail up to 2 years and/or fine up to ₹50 lakh.
- **Financial transactions:** Jail up to 3 years and/or fine up to ₹1 crore.
- **Repeat offenders:** 3–5 years imprisonment + higher fines.

Regulatory Framework:

- Designated **Regulatory Authority** to decide whether a game qualifies as an “online money game”.
- Due inquiry to ensure clarity for players, operators, and enforcement agencies.

Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Act, 2023 & 2.0 (Trust-Based Regulation)
Why in News?

The Jan Vishwas (Amendment) Bill, 2025 will be introduced in the Lok Sabha to decriminalise 350+ minor offences, promoting trust-based governance, ease of living, and ease of doing business, building on the 2023 Act that amended 183 provisions.

Description:

- **Jan Vishwas Act 2023:** Effective Aug 2023; decriminalized 183 minor offense provisions across 42 Central Acts.
- **Objective:** Replace imprisonment for minor, non-malicious violations with monetary penalties, promoting ease of doing business, especially for MSMEs.
- **Focus Ministries:** Environment, Agriculture, Corporate Affairs, etc.

Key Features of Jan Vishwas 2.0 (Budget 2025–26 proposal):

- Decriminalize 100+ more provisions at central and state level.
- Strengthen trust-based regulatory system.
- Encourage modernized legal frameworks and clear criteria for imprisonment.

Trust-Based Regulatory Approach:

- Assumes the good faith of citizens and businesses.
- **Minor violations** → fines; **serious violations** → strict enforcement.
- Encourages voluntary compliance with reduced government interference.

Mechanisms & Features:

Feature	Description
Decriminalization	Minor/technical offenses → fines
Risk-Based Enforcement	Focus only on fraud, safety risks
Simplified Compliance	Less bureaucracy, digital tools
Self-Declaration	Businesses comply; audits only for high-risk cases
Transparency	Digital platforms like MCA21, blockchain authentication
Reduced Harassment	Less rent-seeking and procedural delays

Need in India:

- **Colonial-era punitive laws** (e.g., Indian Forest Act, 1927) created fear and legal uncertainty.
- **MSMEs** face heavy compliance costs; digital compliance burdens exist (e.g., GST IMS).
- **Judiciary backlog:** 5+ crore cases; minor offenses clog courts.
- **Corruption & harassment** due to threat of imprisonment.
- Aligns with **Viksit Bharat 2047 Vision** – minimum government, maximum governance.

Space for Notes:

Section 152 – Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)

Space for Notes:

Why in News?

The Supreme Court questioned whether the “potentiality of abuse” of Section 152 of the BNS—punishing acts endangering India’s sovereignty, unity, and integrity—can justify declaring it unconstitutional, while protecting journalist Siddharth Varadarajan and others from coercive police action.

Description:

- **Purpose:** Criminalises acts that excite secession, armed rebellion, subversive activities, separatism, or endanger the **sovereignty, unity, and integrity of India**.
- **Nature of Offence:** Cognisable and non-bailable.
- **Key Concern:** Seen as a potential **proxy for the repealed Section 124A (sedition)** of the IPC, despite the government’s announcement of sedition’s repeal.
- **Criticism:**
 - Uses **vague and undefined terms** like “endangering unity” or “sovereignty,” allowing broad interpretation.
 - **Low threshold** for offence (term “knowingly”), enabling prosecution without clear causal link between speech and prohibited acts.
 - Risk of **chilling effect** on free speech and dissent.
- **Judicial Context:** Rajasthan High Court (2024) cautioned against misuse to suppress legitimate dissent; aligns with precedents like Kedar Nath Singh (1962), Balwant Singh (1995), and Javed Ahmad Hazam (2024) which stress a direct nexus between speech and unlawful action.

Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019

Why in News?

The India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) progress has slowed due to the ongoing Gaza war, which disrupted Middle East stability, strained Israel–Arab ties, and increased trade risks, despite recent multi-nation talks in New Delhi to advance its eastern leg.

Description:

Background:

- **Article 370:** Granted J&K special autonomy – its own Constitution, limited applicability of Indian laws, Parliament’s jurisdiction subject to state govt. concurrence.
- **Criticism:** Seen as a barrier to integration, contributing to separatism and terrorism, and limiting economic development.

Key Provisions of the Act:

1. **Bifurcation of State:**
 - **Jammu & Kashmir** → Union Territory (with Legislative Assembly)
 - **Ladakh** → Union Territory (without Legislative Assembly)
2. **Legislative Assembly in J&K:**
 - Provided under **Article 239A** (like Puducherry).
 - **Strength:** 107–114 seats (including reserved seats for PoK).
 - **Powers:** Can legislate on state list subjects **except “public order” & “police”**, which remain with the Union Govt.
3. **Governance Structure:**
 - Both UTs are administered by **Lieutenant Governor** appointed by the President.
 - The High Court of J&K has jurisdiction over both UTs.
4. **Representation in Parliament:**
 - Lok Sabha: 5 seats for J&K, 1 seat for Ladakh.
5. **Legislative Changes:**
 - Abolished **J&K Legislative Council**.
 - **106 central laws** extended to UTs.
 - **7 state laws amended, 153 state laws repealed**.

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012

Why in News?

The Centre opposed reducing the age of consent under the POCSO Act from 18 to 16, warning of increased trafficking and abuse. Citing a 2007 study, it stressed children's vulnerability, especially to abuse by known figures in positions of trust.

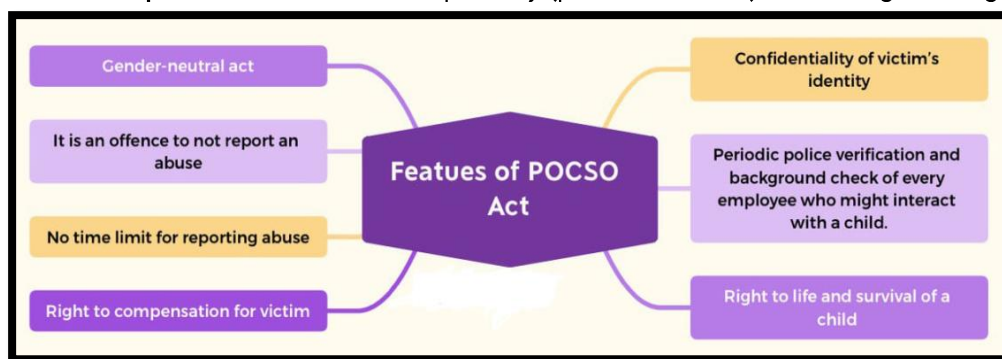
Description:

Overview of POCSO Act:

Attribute	Details
Enacted	2012
Ministry	Ministry of Women and Child Development
Key Objective	To protect children (<18 years) from sexual assault, harassment, pornography
Latest Amendment	2019 – Enhanced punishments for aggravated offences
Type of Legislation	Gender-neutral (applies to all children under 18)
Victim's Identity	Confidentiality must be maintained unless allowed by Special Court
Reporting of Offence	No time limit for reporting
Mandatory Reporting	Failure to report by institutional heads is punishable
Special Courts	To ensure speedy trial of POCSO cases

22nd Law Commission's View (2023):

- **Chairperson:** Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi
- Rejected demand to lower age of consent (remains 18 years)
- **Recommends:**
 - Sex education in schools
 - Awareness on adolescent health & consent under POCSO
- **Caution:** Lowering age could impact efforts to curb child marriage and early pregnancies
- **POCSO vs Muslim Law:**
 - POCSO defines child as <18 years
 - **Muslim personal law** considers puberty (presumed at 15) as marriageable age



Hindu Succession Act, 1956

Why in News?

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin launched the State Policy for Transgender Persons, 2025, aiming to ensure inheritance rights for transgender and intersex individuals by amending succession laws. The policy also promises housing benefits, certificate changes, and protection from gender-based violence.

Description:

Background:

- Enacted in 1956 to codify the laws related to **intestate succession** (i.e., when a person dies without making a will) among **Hindus**.
- It governs the **distribution of property** among heirs of a deceased person.

Applies to:

- Hindus (including Virashaivas, Lingayats, Arya Samaj, Prarthna Samaj, Brahmo Sabha followers)
- Also includes Sikhs, Buddhists, and Jains

Does NOT apply to:

- Muslims, Christians, Parsis, Jews
- Scheduled Tribes unless notified under Article 366 of the Constitution.

Two Major Schools of Hindu Law:

Feature	Mitakshara	Dayabhaga
Region	All of India (except WB & Assam)	West Bengal and Assam
Property Rights	Sons have rights by birth	Rights arise after father's death
Coparcenary	Only male members	Male and female members

Succession Rules (Intestate):

For Hindu Men:

1. **Class I heirs** (equal share): Wife, son, daughter, mother
2. If no Class I → **Class II heirs**: Father, siblings, etc.
3. If none → **Agnates**, then **Cognates**

For Hindu Women:

1. Property inherited by children and husband.
2. If no children or husband → husband's heirs.
3. Only after that → a woman's parents.
4. **Property reverts to source family** if inherited and no direct heirs.

Important Amendments:

Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005:

- Gave daughters equal coparcenary rights from birth, same as sons.
- Applies retrospectively (per SC rulings), but only to living daughters and fathers (clarified in Vineeta Sharma v. Rakesh Sharma, 2020).

Supreme Court of India – Composition & Strength

Why in News?

The Supreme Court regained its full sanctioned strength of 34 judges after Chief Justice B.R. Gavai swore in Justices Alok Aradhe and Vipul M. Pancholi. Their appointment drew attention due to a rare dissent in the Collegium.

Description:

- **Article 124 (1)**: Establishes the Supreme Court of India with a Chief Justice of India (CJI) and other judges.
- The Constitution does not fix the number of judges; it empowers Parliament to decide by law.

Sanctioned Strength (as of 2025):

- Current strength: **34 judges** (CJI + 33 other judges).
- Increased by Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Act, 2019.

Tenure of Judges:

- Hold office until **65 years** of age (Art. 124(2)).
- Resignation by writing to the **President**.
- Removal: By **impeachment** process under Articles 124(4) & 124(5) (proved misbehavior or incapacity).

Appointment of Judges:

- By the **President**, after consultation with judges of SC and HCs as deemed necessary.
- Since **1993 (Second Judges Case)** → Appointment through **Collegium System** (CJI + 4 senior-most SC judges).

Space for Notes:

Collegium System of Judicial Appointments

Space for Notes:

Why in News?

The Supreme Court Collegium, led by CJI B.R. Gavai has recommended the elevation of Bombay High Court Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Patna High Court Chief Justice Vipul Manubhai Pancholi as judges of the Supreme Court.

Description:

- **System for appointment and transfer of judges in the Supreme Court and High Courts.**
- **Not in the Constitution** – it evolved through Supreme Court judgments.
- **Supreme Court Collegium:** Chief Justice of India (CJI) + 4 senior-most SC judges.
- **High Court Collegium:** Chief Justice of the HC + 2 senior-most judges of that HC.

The government can seek clarifications, but if Collegium **reiterates a name**, the government is bound to appoint.

Constitutional Provisions:

- **Article 124:** SC judges appointed by President after consultation; CJI must be consulted.
- **Article 217:** HC judges appointed by President after consultation with CJI, Governor of the state, and Chief Justice of the HC concerned.

Evolution of Collegium System (Judge Cases):

1. **First Judges Case (S.P. Gupta v. UoI, 1981):** “Consultation” ≠ “Concurrence” → President has primacy.
2. **Second Judges Case (SC Advocates-On-Record Assn. v. UoI, 1993)**
 - Overruled First Case.
 - “Consultation” = “Concurrence” → CJI’s advice (with 2 senior-most judges) binding.
3. **Third Judges Case (1998 Presidential Reference)**
 - Expanded collegium → CJI + 4 senior-most judges.
 - If 2 judges dissent, name not recommended.

NJAC (National Judicial Appointments Commission) Act, 2014:

- Aimed to replace Collegium.
- Struck down by SC Constitution Bench (2015) as unconstitutional – violative of judicial independence.

Attempts to Reform:

- **Memorandum of Procedure (MoP)** – 1999 rules for judicial appointments.
- **Revised MoP (2017)** – suggested more transparency; not fully adopted.
- **99th Constitutional Amendment, 2014 (NJAC)** – struck down by SC.
- “Consultation → Concurrence → Collegium” (1981 → 1993 → 1998).

Removal of Prime Minister / Chief Ministers / Ministers – Proposed 130th Amendment (2025)

Why in News?

The 130th Constitutional Amendment Bill, 2025 is in news as the government plans to introduce it in Lok Sabha. It proposes removal of a Union or State Minister detained for 30 consecutive days on serious criminal charges, including corruption, by the President on PM’s advice.

Description:

Union (Article 75):

- **The PM & Council of Ministers** hold office “during the pleasure of the President”.
- **Reality** → The President acts on aid & advice of the Council of Ministers, so the political majority in Lok Sabha decides removal.
- **No provision** for automatic removal of PM/Minister on arrest or criminal charges.

States (Article 164):

- CM & Ministers hold office “during the pleasure of the Governor”.
- Reality → Governor bound by advice of CM, removal depends on Assembly majority.
- No constitutional mechanism for automatic removal if facing criminal charges.

NCT of Delhi (Article 239AA):

- Provides for Council of Ministers headed by a CM for Delhi.
- Ministers hold office during the pleasure of the President, exercised through LG.
- Again, no removal clause for criminal detention.

Removal of PM/CM/Ministers – Before vs Proposed 130th Amendment (2025):

Feature	Before Amendment (Current Constitution)	After 130th Amendment (Proposed, 2025)
Articles involved	Article 75 (Union), Article 164 (States), Article 239AA (Delhi NCT)	Same Articles amended (75, 164, 239AA) + coverage for UTs via new amendments
Removal authority	Indirect – Political majority in Lok Sabha/State Assembly; President/Governor acts on aid & advice	Direct – President (PM/Union Ministers), Governor (CM), CM (State Ministers), LG (UT Ministers)
Grounds for removal	No constitutional provision for removal on arrest/detention; only political disqualification via Assembly majority	Automatic removal if arrested & detained for 30 consecutive days on charges punishable with ≥ 5 years imprisonment
Automatic effect	None – Minister continues in office despite detention/criminal cases	Yes – Removal takes effect automatically on the 31st day of detention
Reappointment after removal	Not applicable (no such mechanism exists)	Allowed – Once released from custody, they can be reappointed
Scope of application	Union, States, NCT of Delhi	Union, States, NCT of Delhi, UTs (Puducherry, J&K, others)
Focus	Political accountability – dependent on majority support in legislature	Legal accountability – ensuring constitutional morality & good governance
Loophole addressed	Ministers could continue in office despite being in custody for serious offences	Prevents a detained Minister from continuing in office → maintains public trust in governance

Space for Notes:
Article 370 of the Indian Constitution
Why in News?

The Supreme Court will hear a plea questioning the delay in restoring Jammu & Kashmir's statehood, despite assurances by the Centre. Petitioners argue this delay violates federalism and the Basic Structure, citing the 2019 abrogation of Article 370 by Presidential order.

Description:
Background & Historical Context:

- **Before 1947:** Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) was a princely state under Maharaja Hari Singh.
- **Accession to India (1947):** Under threat of invasion by Pakistani tribal militias, Maharaja signed the **Instrument of Accession (IoA)** in October 1947.
- **Limited Accession:** J&K acceded to India **only** on matters of **defence, external affairs & communications**.

Formation of Article 370:

- Drafted by Gopalaswami Ayyangar.
- Included as a temporary provision in Part XXI of the Constitution (Article 370).
- Allowed J&K to have its own Constitution.
- Indian laws could only apply with State Government's concurrence.

Key Provisions of Article 370:

Provision	Details
Own Constitution	Adopted in 1956, came into effect in 1957
Limited Applicability of Indian Laws	Only on IoA subjects unless extended via Presidential Order
Article 35A	Special rights to J&K residents (property, jobs, etc.)
Presidential Orders	Required State Government's concurrence for application of laws
No applicability of emergency provisions initially	Except in case of war/external aggression

Public Accounts Committee (PAC)
Why in News?

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC), chaired by K.C. Venugopal, reviewed poor rural mobile connectivity, especially in border and northeastern districts. It directed telecom providers to expand networks, examined delayed payments to the Telecom Department, and flagged slow progress of the National Broadband Mission.

Description:

- **Establishment:** 1921, under provisions of the **Government of India Act, 1919** → Oldest Parliamentary Committee in India.
- **Constitutional/Statutory Basis:** Not constitutional, but a parliamentary standing committee.
- **Purpose:** Ensures financial accountability of the Executive to the Parliament.

Functions:

- Examines the **Audit Reports of the CAG** (Comptroller and Auditor General of India).
- Scrutinises **government expenditure** to check if it is:
 - within Parliament's sanction,
 - spent legally, and
 - in line with **efficiency & economy**.
- Investigates cases of **financial irregularities, losses, wasteful expenditure, and inefficiencies**.
- Does not question policy decisions, only their execution.

Composition:

- **22 members** in total:
 - 15 → Lok Sabha,
 - 7 → Rajya Sabha.
- Members elected annually by **proportional representation via single transferable vote**.
- **Chairperson:**
 - A Lok Sabha MP,
 - Traditionally from the **Opposition (since 1967)**.
- **Term:** One year.
- **Restriction:** Ministers cannot be members.

Limitations:

- Advisory in nature → cannot enforce recommendations.
- No executive powers → depends on the government's response.
- Cannot question matters of **policy**, only implementation.

Space for Notes:

National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)

Why in News?

The NCST urged the Centre and Chhattisgarh government to frame a dedicated policy for tribals displaced by Maoist conflict since 2005, recommending land, jobs, housing, health coverage, and infrastructure, citing the 2018 Bru resettlement plan as a model.

Description:

- Established: **2004**, by the **89th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2003**.
- Inserted **Article 338A** in the Constitution.
- Split the earlier **National Commission for SCs & STs (Article 338)** into:
 - **National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC)**
 - **National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)**
- **Type:** Constitutional body.

Composition:

- **Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and 3 other Members.**
- Appointed by: **President of India** by warrant under his hand and seal.
- At least one member must be a woman.
- **Tenure:** 3 years.
- **Status/Rank:**
 - Chairperson – Union Cabinet Minister rank.
 - Vice-Chairperson – Minister of State rank.
 - Members – Secretary to Govt rank.
- Can serve a maximum of **2 terms**.

Powers & Functions (Article 338A):

- **Investigate & monitor** safeguards for STs under Constitution/laws/orders.
- **Inquire** into complaints of ST rights violations.
- **Advise** in planning & development of ST socio-economic programmes.
- **Report** to the President annually / whenever required.
- **Recommend** measures to Union/State for effective implementation.
- **Additional functions:** As prescribed by President by rules.

Constitutional & Legal Safeguards for STs:

- **Articles:**
 - **366(25):** Defines Scheduled Tribes.
 - **342(1):** President specifies STs for each State/UT (consulting Governor in case of States).
- **Fifth Schedule:** Administration of Scheduled Areas & STs in states other than 6th Schedule states.
- **Sixth Schedule:** Special provisions for administration of tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram.
- **Statutory Safeguards:**
 - Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955.
 - SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.
 - Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA).
 - Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006.



Space for Notes:

Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC)

Why in News?

Assam's Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) elections in the Bodoland Territorial Region recorded over 72% voter turnout across 3,359 polling stations. Main contenders include UPPL, BJP, and BPF. A total of 316 candidates are in the fray; results will be declared on September 26.

Description:

- **Constitutional basis:** Created under the **Sixth Schedule** of the Indian Constitution.
- **Origin:** Result of **2003 Bodo Accord** (with BLTF, Gol, Govt. of Assam).
- **Updated by:** 2020 Bodoland Peace Agreement.
- **Autonomous Region:** Located in **Assam**, covering ~9,000 sq. km.
- **Districts:** Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa, Udalguri (north bank of Brahmaputra, foothills of Bhutan & Arunachal Pradesh).

Structure:

- **Composition:**
 - **40 elected members**
 - **6 nominated by Assam Governor**
- **Head:**
 - **Speaker** – heads BTC
 - **Chief Executive Member (CEM)** – chairs Executive Committee

Powers & Functions:

- Legislative + executive authority under **Sixth Schedule** + Peace Accords (2003, 2020).
- Can **levy taxes, fees, and tolls** on:
 - Land, buildings, animals, vehicles, boats
 - Goods entering the region
 - Transport (ferries, bridges)
 - Sanitation, employment, income
 - Road & school maintenance
- **Judicial powers:** Can set up **village courts** (civil + criminal cases, subject to High Court jurisdiction).

Sixth Schedule:

- **Article 244(2)** → covers Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram.
- Provides for **Autonomous District Councils (ADCs)** with wide autonomy.
- **Governor's role:** Can alter district boundaries/names.
- **Law-making:** Some Parliamentary/State laws don't apply or apply with modifications.

Assam Rifles

Why in News?

Two Assam Rifles personnel were killed and five injured when unidentified terrorists ambushed their convoy on National Highway-2 in Bishnupur district, Manipur, on September 19. The attack occurred days after the Prime Minister's visit, prompting heightened security in the area.

Description:

- One of the six **Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs)**.
- **Administrative control:** Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
- **Operational control:** Indian Army.
- Commanded by a **Lieutenant General (Indian Army)**.
- **Headquarters:** Shillong (unique; others have HQ in New Delhi).
- Current strength: **46 battalions**.

Space for Notes:

Roles & Functions:

- **Primary role:** Counter-insurgency and peacekeeping in **North-East India**.
- Border guarding and internal security where required.
- Dual role → **paramilitary + army support**.

Historical Evolution:

- **1835:** Origin as **Cachar Levy** → to protect British tea estates & settlements.
- Later renamed **Frontier Force** → conducted punitive expeditions in border areas of Assam.
- **1870:** Reorganized into **Assam Military Police Battalions** (3 battalions, 3,000 men).
- Troops served in **Europe & West Asia** during World War I.
- **1917:** Renamed **Assam Rifles**.
- **Post-Independence:**
 - Fought in the **Sino-India War (1962)**.
 - Deployed in **Sri Lanka (1987)** as part of IPKF.
 - Continues as a key force in **North-East India**.

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)
Why in News?

The Supreme Court recently acquitted a man after 11 years in prison, including five on death row, highlighting India's lack of a statutory compensation policy for wrongful incarceration. Courts and experts urged Parliament to consider global models for victim compensation.

Description:

- **Established:** 12 October 1993
- **Act:** Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 (amended in 2006, 2019).
- **Nature:** *Statutory body* (not constitutional).
- **Based on:** UN Paris Principles (1991).
- **HQ:** New Delhi.

Definition of Human Rights (Sec 2(1)(d), PHRA 1993):

- Rights relating to: Life, Liberty, Equality, Dignity of the individual. Guaranteed by Constitution / International treaties, enforceable by Indian courts.

Objectives:

- Strengthen institutional mechanisms for human rights protection.
- Independent investigation of allegations of excesses by authorities.
- Promote awareness & human rights literacy.
- Complement govt & civil society efforts.

Composition:
Full-time members:

- Chairperson: Retd. **Chief Justice of India / Judge of SC**.
- 1 member: Retd. / Sitting **SC Judge**.
- 1 member: Retd. / Sitting **CJ of High Court**.
- 3 members: Experts in human rights (≥1 woman).

Ex-officio members (7): Chairpersons of

- NCM, NCSC, NCST, NCBC, NCW, NCPCR, Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities.

Appointment:

- By the **President of India**.
- Based on recommendation of a **6-member committee**:
 - PM (Chairperson)
 - Speaker (Lok Sabha)
 - Deputy Chairman (Rajya Sabha)
 - Leaders of Opposition (LS & RS)
 - Home Minister
- **Consultation with CJI** required for appointing SC/HC judges.

Space for Notes:

Tenure & Conditions:

- **3 years or until 70 years** of age (whichever earlier).
- Eligible for reappointment.
- Cannot take up further employment under Central/State Govt after tenure.

Removal:

- By **President of India** on grounds of: Insolvency, Paid employment during office, Unsound mind / physical incapacity, Conviction for crime, Proven misbehaviour/incapacity (after SC inquiry report).

Powers:

- Powers of a **civil court**: summon, evidence, reports.
- Can demand info/reports from govt authorities.
- Can use services of Central/State investigative agencies.
- Recommend:
 - Compensation/damages to victims
 - Disciplinary/legal action against public servants
 - Interim relief
- Approach SC/HC for writs/directions.
- Cannot inquire into cases **older than 1 year**.

Functions:

- Inquire into human rights violations (suo motu, petition, or court order).
- Intervene in pending court proceedings.
- Visit prisons/detention centres.
- Review laws & constitutional safeguards.
- Study international treaties & recommend implementation.
- Promote HR literacy & awareness.
- Encourage NGO activities in human rights.

Topic:

Compensation for Wrongfully Incarcerated Persons in India.

Key Points:

1. **Supreme Court Acquittals:** Baljinder Kumar (Punjab) acquitted in July 2025 after 11 years in jail, 5 years on death row, due to “glaring investigative defects.”
2. **No Statutory Law:** India lacks a formal law for compensating wrongfully imprisoned persons; awards are ad hoc.
3. **Judicial Attempts:** 2021 petition (Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay) to frame guidelines rejected; Parliament must legislate.
4. **Foreign Models:** Countries like USA, New Zealand, Portugal have structured compensation for wrongful conviction.
5. **Challenges:** Lack of legal framework, government reluctance to admit liability, lengthy post-acquittal processes.

Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)
Why in News?

22 Nepalese prisoners, who escaped amid political unrest and mass jail breaks in Nepal, were caught by India's Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) at the Uttar Pradesh border. The arrests follow prisoner lists shared by Nepalese authorities for cross-border security coordination.

Description:

- SSB is one of India's **Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs)** under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
- Raised in **1963** as the *Special Services Bureau*; renamed *Sashastra Seema Bal* after assuming charge of the **Indo-Nepal border**.
- Presently guards India's international borders with Nepal and Bhutan.

Space for Notes:

Roles and Responsibilities:

1. **Border Security:**
 - Safeguard the security of India's Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan borders.
 - Instill a sense of security among border residents.
2. **Preventing Unlawful Activities:**
 - Prevent cross-border crimes, smuggling, and trafficking.
 - Check illegal entry or exit across the borders.
3. **Civic Action Programmes:**
 - Implement developmental works in border areas under **Border Area Development Programme (BADP)**.
 - Activities include construction of schools, toilets, roads, community buildings.
4. **Additional Duties (as per Central Government):**
 - **Law & Order** duties.
 - **Counter-Insurgency Operations**.
 - **Election duty** within India.
 - Participation in **UN peacekeeping missions** abroad.
5. **Intelligence Role:**
 - Acts as the **lead intelligence agency** along the Indo-Nepal and Indo-Bhutan borders.
 - Responsible for **collection, coordination, and dissemination of intelligence** in its operational areas.

Foreigners Tribunals (FTs)
Why in News?

The Union Home Ministry notified the **Immigration and Foreigners Order, 2025**, replacing the 1964 order, giving **Foreigners Tribunals (FTs)** powers of a first-class judicial magistrate to issue arrest warrants, detain suspected foreigners, and regulate employment and entry of migrants.

Description:

- Established under **Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964**, issued under **Section 3 of the Foreigners' Act, 1946**.
- **Quasi-judicial bodies** to decide whether a person is a foreigner (illegal immigrant).

Jurisdiction & Presence:

- **Exclusive to Assam** – due to large-scale immigration concerns.
- In other States, cases of illegal immigrants are handled directly under the Foreigners' Act.

Composition:

- Headed by members drawn from:
 - Retired judges,
 - Advocates,
 - Civil servants with judicial experience.
- **MHA (2021):** 300 FTs sanctioned in Assam.
- **Assam State Govt website:** ~100 functional (as of recent update).
- **First 11 FTs:** set up before the **Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983** (IMDT Act) was scrapped in 2005.

Powers & Functioning:

- Have powers of a **civil court**:
 - Summon witnesses, enforce attendance, examine on oath.
 - Require production of documents.
- **Procedure:**
 - Notice to suspected foreigners within **10 days** (in English or State's official language).
 - A person has **10 days to reply** and another **10 days for evidence submission**.
 - FT must dispose of the case within **60 days** of reference.
- **Outcome:**
 - If no proof of citizenship → referral to **detention centre / transit camp** for deportation.

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Registrar General of India (RGI)

Why in News?

The Registrar General of India (RGI), under the Home Ministry, has sought ₹14,619 crore to conduct **Census 2027**, India's first *Digital Census* collecting caste data, with houselisting in 2026 and population enumeration in 2027, pending Cabinet approval.

Description:

- **Established:** 1949
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Home Affairs
- **Position:** Registrar General and Ex-Officio Census Commissioner of India
- **Rank:** Typically, Joint Secretary to Government of India

Key Functions:

- Conducts **Census of India** (decennial exercise since 1881; post-1949 under RGI).
- Implements **Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969**.
- Maintains **Civil Registration System (CRS)** – continuous, real-time registration of births and deaths.
- Conducts **Linguistic Survey of India (LSI)**.
- Manages **National Population Register (NPR)**.

Census of India:

- Provides detailed demographic, socio-economic, and geographic data.
- The last Census was completed in 2011.
- 2021 Census delayed due to pandemic, funding priorities, and debates over caste enumeration.

Linguistic Survey of India (LSI):

- Conducted alongside decennial census.
- Documents linguistic diversity.
- First LSI completed by George Abraham Grierson (1928).

Civil Registration System (CRS):

- Mandatory legal system for birth and death registration.
- Government and private hospitals act as registration authorities.
- RGI recently cautioned hospitals for failing to report timely.

Recent Developments:

- **2023 Digital Census** initiative for real-time data, integrating Aadhaar.
- Use of datasets like **NFHS-5** to support policies (e.g. Mission Parivar Vikas).

National Film Awards

Why in News?

President Droupadi Murmu presented the 71st National Film Awards, honoring Mohanlal with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, praised women-centric films, urged better female representation on juries, and highlighted cinema's role in spreading social awareness and recognizing child actors.

Description:

- Started in **1954** for films of the year **1953**.
- Originally called "**State Awards**".

Purpose / Objectives:

- Encourage production of films with **aesthetic & technical excellence** and **social relevance**.
- Promote **appreciation of diverse cultures and communities** across India.

Initial Awards:

- **Two President's Gold Medals**
- **Two Certificates of Merit**
- **12 Silver Medals** for regional films

Categories:

- Feature Films
- Non-Feature Films (Documentaries, Short Films)
- Best Writing on Cinema

Administration:

- Administered by the Directorate of Film Festivals (DFF) since 1973.

Directorate of Film Festivals (DFF):
1. Establishment:

- Set up in 1973 under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

2. Objectives:

- Promote Indian films nationally and internationally.
- Facilitate cultural exchange through film festivals in India and abroad.
- Serve as the Nodal Agency for scrutiny of applications for financial support under the Film Promotion Fund.

3. Functions:

- Organizes National Film Awards, International Film Festivals, and other cultural events.

71st National Film Awards:
Notable Awards:

Category	Winner(s)	Film(s)
Best Male Actor	Shah Rukh Khan	<i>Jawan</i>
	Vikrant Massey	<i>12th Fail</i>
Best Female Actor	Rani Mukerji	<i>Mrs. Chatterjee vs Norway</i>
Best Direction	Sudipto Sen	<i>The Kerala Story</i>
Best Feature Film	Vikrant Massey	<i>12th Fail</i>
Best Popular Film (Wholesome Entertainment)	Karan Johar	<i>Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani</i>
Best Feature Promoting Social/National/Environmental Values	Meghna Gulzar	<i>Sam Bahadur</i>
Best Children's Film	Sudhakar Reddy Yakkanti	<i>Naal 2 (Marathi)</i>
Best Animation/Visual Effects/Gaming/Comic	–	<i>Hanu-Man (Telugu)</i>
Best Male Singer	P.V.N.S. Rohit	<i>Premisthunna (Baby, Telugu)</i>
Best Female Singer	Shilpa Rao	<i>Premisthunna (Baby, Telugu)</i>
Best Screenplay	Sai Rajesh Neelam	<i>Baby (Telugu) + Parking (Tamil) + Chaleya (Jawan, Hindi)</i>
Best Debut Film	Ashish Bende	<i>Aatma-pamphlet (Marathi)</i>
Best Dialogue Writer	Deepak Kingrani	<i>Sirf Ek Bandaa Kaafi Hai</i>
Best Supporting Male Actor	Vijayaraghavan	<i>Pookkaalam (Malayalam)</i>
	Muthupettai Somu Bhaskar	<i>Parking (Tamil)</i>
Best Supporting Female Actor	Urvashi	<i>Ullozhukku (Malayalam)</i>
	Janki Bodiwala	<i>Vash (Gujarati)</i>

Language-specific winners:

Assamese – *Rongatapu* 1982, Bengali – *Deep Fridge*, Tamil – *Parking*, Kannada – *Kandeelu*, Marathi – *Shamchi Aai*, Odia – *Puskara*, Punjabi – *Godday Godday Chaa*, Telugu – *Bhagavanth Kesari*

Space for Notes:

AFSPA (Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1958)

Space for Notes:

Why in News?

The Union Home Ministry extended the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 in parts of Manipur, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh for six months, empowering armed forces in “disturbed areas” with special operational and legal protections.

Description:

- **1942:** Armed Forces Special Powers Ordinance (British) – to suppress the *Quit India Movement*.
- **1947:** Ordinances invoked in “Assam disturbed areas” after Partition violence.
- **1955:** Assam Disturbed Areas Act.
- **1958:** Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act → later extended as AFSPA, 1958.
- **1990:** Separate AFSPA for Jammu & Kashmir.

Key Provisions of AFSPA, 1958:

- 1. Disturbed Areas (Sec. 3):**
 - Declared by Governor / UT Administrator / Central Government.
 - Reasons: insurgency, inter-community violence, breakdown of law & order.
- 2. Special Powers of Armed Forces (Sec. 4):**
 - **Use force/firearms**, even to the extent of causing death, against violators.
 - **Arrest without warrant.**
 - **Search & seizure without warrant.**
- 3. Immunity (Sec. 7):**
 - No prosecution against armed forces personnel without **Central Govt. sanction**.

Current Status (2024–25):

- In force in parts of Nagaland & Arunachal Pradesh.
- Gradually withdrawn from Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Manipur (partially).
- Extended every 6 months by MHA.

Arguments in Favour:

- Necessary for counter-insurgency & anti-terror operations.
- Provides legal protection to forces in disturbed areas.
- Ensures morale of security forces.
- Helps maintain public order where State machinery is weak.

Arguments Against:

- **Violation of federalism:** Centre can impose without State’s consent.
- **Excessive powers:** risk of extrajudicial killings, fake encounters.
- **Civil liberty violations:** search/arrest without warrant.
- **Impunity:** Prosecution requires Central sanction.
- **Evidence of abuse:** E.g., *Hegde Commission (2013)* found cases of fake encounters in Manipur.

Judicial & Committee Views:

- **SC in Naga People’s Movement (1998):**
 - AFSPA is constitutional, but must be reviewed every 6 months.
 - Use of force must be minimum necessary.
- **Jeevan Reddy Committee (2005):**
 - Recommended repeal of AFSPA.
 - Suggested amending UAPA, 1967 instead.
- **2nd ARC (2007):**
 - Recommended repeal of AFSPA.
- **Santosh Hegde Commission (2013):**
 - Recommended accountability mechanisms.
 - Security forces shouldn’t enjoy blanket immunity.

NSA vs NSC

Why in News?

Climate activist **Sonam Wangchuk** was detained under the **National Security Act (NSA)**, 1980 in Leh, two days after violent protests over **statehood and Sixth Schedule demands for Ladakh** left four civilians dead, prompting criticism from the Leh Apex Body.

Description:

Feature	National Security Act (NSA) (1980)	National Security Council (NSC) (1998)
Type	Law (Preventive Detention Act)	Institutional Body (Advisory Council)
Constitutional Basis	Article 22(3)(b) & 22(4) – Preventive Detention	No constitutional backing → Created by executive order
Purpose	To maintain public order, national security, and essential supplies by detaining persons preventively	To advise PM on national security, defence, economy, strategic & energy issues
Authority	Central & State Governments empowered to detain individuals	Chaired by Prime Minister , advised by National Security Advisor (NSA)
Power	Preventive detention for up to 12 months (extendable)	Policy-making & strategic advisory role (no detention powers)
Key Provision	Advisory Board (HC Judges) must approve detention beyond 3 months	Multi-tiered structure: NSC, Strategic Policy Group, National Security Advisory Board
Criticism	Misuse of power, human rights violations, lack of transparency	Sometimes criticized for excessive centralization of power in PMO
Nature	Coercive/Preventive Law	Advisory/Strategic Body

Anti-Conversion Laws

Why in News?

The court is examining the constitutionality of increasingly stringent anti-religious conversion laws enacted by several states, while also considering arguments about the right to propagate religion versus the prevention of forced or fraudulent conversions.

Description:

What are Anti-Conversion Laws?

- Anti-conversion laws are legislative measures aimed at preventing or prohibiting religious conversions.
- These laws can be used to discourage individuals from leaving a particular faith or to restrict religious groups from actively seeking new members from other religious backgrounds.
- The specific provisions and enforcement of anti-conversion laws differ across jurisdictions, and they may involve both criminal and civil penalties.
- However, the implementation of these laws has raised concerns regarding their potential to favor dominant religions or suppress minority faiths.
- Critics argue that anti-conversion laws **infringe upon the fundamental right to freedom of religion, as protected by international human rights laws.**

Constitutional Context:

- **Article 25:** Freedom of conscience and the right to freely profess, practice, and propagate religion.
- **Issue:** Anti-conversion ("Freedom of Religion") laws allegedly restrict Article 25 by criminalising voluntary conversions through excessive legal provisions.

Space for Notes:

Issues Associated with the Anti – Conversion Laws:

- **Vague Terminology:** Terms like force, inducement, allurement, and even attempted conversion are often undefined or poorly defined. This ambiguity makes the laws prone to misuse and arbitrary interpretation.
- **Violation of Fundamental Rights:** Seen as infringing Article 25 (freedom of religion and conscience). Creates a blanket restriction on the right to change one's faith voluntarily.
- **Violation of International Protections:** Contradicts Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Article 18 of ICCPR, which safeguard the right to adopt a religion of choice.
- **Targeting Minority Communities:** Disproportionate impact on Christians and Muslims, as they engage in proselytisation. Perceived as restricting legitimate religious activities.

Space for Notes:
Environment Audit Rules, 2025
Why in News?

The Environment Ministry has notified **Environment Audit Rules, 2025**, creating a new independent class of **environment auditors**. Accredited private agencies can now inspect projects for compliance with environmental laws, supplementing pollution control boards, and their audits can also support compliance with the **Green Credit Rules**.

Description:
Objective:

To establish a formal framework for environmental auditing across India, enhancing compliance monitoring and promoting ease of doing business.

Key Features:

1. **Environment Audit Designate Agency (EADA):**
 - Certification, registration, oversight, and training of auditors.
2. **Registered Environment Auditors (REAs):**
 - Only REAs can undertake environmental audits.
 - Certification based on qualification & experience scrutiny or an exam.
 - Auditors assigned randomly to ensure impartiality.
3. **Responsibilities of REAs:**
 - Sampling and analysis.
 - Compensation calculation in environmental damage cases.
 - Verification under *Green Credit Rules*.
 - Audits under *waste management rules* and other environmental & forest laws.
4. **Two-Tiered Compliance System:**
 - **Tier 1:** Government regulator-based review (CPCB, SPCBs, MoEFCC regional offices).
 - **Tier 2:** Independent auditor-based mechanism.
5. **Institutional Roles:**
 - **MoEFCC:** Overall implementation, framing guidelines.
 - **CPCB/SPCBs/Regional Offices:** Continue inspection, verification, and assist MoEFCC in implementation.
6. **Oversight Mechanism:**
 - Steering Committee led by an *Additional Secretary (MoEFCC)* to monitor implementation and recommend reforms.

Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025
Why in News?

The Union Home Ministry, through the **Immigration and Foreigners (Exemption) Order, 2025**, exempted **Sri Lankan Tamil refugees (before Jan 9, 2015)** and undocumented minorities from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan from penal provisions, ensuring protection from deportation and eligibility for long-term visas.

Description:

- Came into effect: **September 2025**
- Purpose: To consolidate and modernize India's laws on **immigration, entry, and stay of foreigners**.
- Replaces four old laws:
 1. Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920
 2. Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939
 3. Foreigners Act, 1946
 4. Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Act, 2000

Key Provisions:

1. **Immigration Posts:** Central Govt. may notify designated posts for legal **entry/exit** from India.
2. **Bureau of Immigration:**
 - To be set up for immigration functions:
 - Visa issuance
 - Entry, transit, stay & movement regulation of foreigners.
3. **Registration of Foreigners:** Foreigners must **register** with a Registration Officer on arrival in India.
4. **Reporting Obligation:**
 - Carriers (airlines, shipping lines) → must share details of foreign passengers.
 - Educational institutions → report admission of foreign students.
 - Medical institutions → report treatment of foreign patients.
5. **Offences & Penalties:**
 - Entry without valid passport/travel document:
 - Up to **5 years imprisonment**
 - Fine up to **₹5 lakh**
 - Or both.
6. **Power of Arrest:** Police officers ≥ **Head Constable** may arrest **without warrant**.
7. **Controlling Places Frequented by Foreigners:**
 - Civil authority can:
 - **Direct closure of premises** frequented by foreigners.
 - Refuse admission of foreigners to certain premises.

Significance

- Streamlines fragmented colonial-era immigration laws.
- Enhances national security through stricter monitoring.
- Improves coordination among institutions handling foreigners.

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