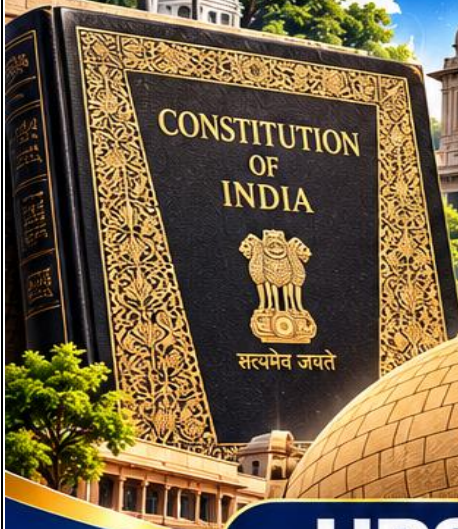




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1. Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Bill, 2026

Prelims:

Polity, Governance

Mains:

GS Paper II- Government Policies and Interventions

Current relevance:

The **Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Bill, 2026**, introduced in the Lok Sabha on 29 July 2026, seeks to amend the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969.



Highlights:

Historical Background:

1. **The Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969** established a **uniform and mandatory framework** for the registration of births and deaths throughout India.
2. It also designated the **Registrar General of India (RGI)** as the **nodal authority** responsible for coordinating and overseeing the country's civil registration system.
3. The **2023 Amendment** enabled the creation of a **national database of births and deaths**.

4. It allowed birth certificates to serve as a **single document** for updating records in various government databases and for availing multiple public services.
5. The Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Bill, 2026, introduced in the Lok Sabha on **29 July 2026**, seeks to further amend the **Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969** to strengthen the legal framework governing the registration of births and deaths.

Objective:

The Bill seeks to make the **delayed registration of births and deaths more stringent**.

Registration of Delayed Births and Deaths:

1. Under the existing Act, **births or deaths reported after one year** require an order for registration.
2. Such an order may currently be issued by a **District Magistrate, Sub-Divisional Magistrate**, or an **Executive Magistrate authorised by the District Magistrate**, after verification and payment of the prescribed fee.
3. The Bill provides that if the delay **exceeds two years**, registration can be authorised **only by a Judicial Magistrate** of the **First Class**.

Source: THE HINDU - <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/births-and-deaths-amendment-bill-2026-passed-in-lok-sabha-amid-protests-over-police-crackdown/article71289428.ece>

2. Collegium system

Prelims:

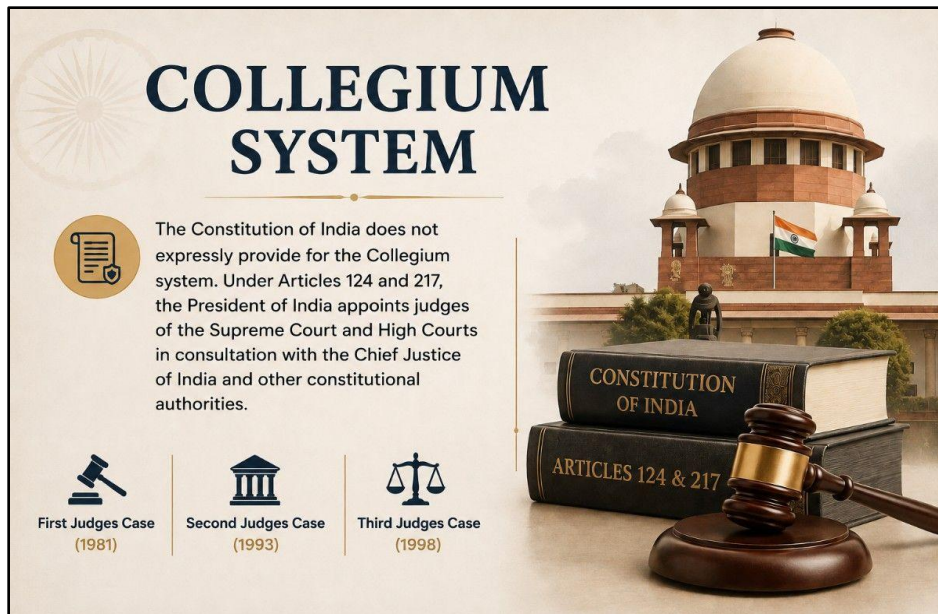
Indian Polity

Mains:

GS Paper II- Indian Polity

Current relevance:

Supreme Court Judge Justice Ujjal Bhuyan stated that the **Collegium's lack of transparency in judicial appointments** creates the risk of unsuitable appointments.



Highlights:

Concerns over Collegium Process:

- i. Justice observed that the Collegium's failure to disclose reasons for judicial appointments, creates a loophole that may allow individuals making unconstitutional or derogatory remarks to enter the judiciary.
- ii. Justice emphasised that **greater transparency strengthens accountability** and **public access to justice without undermining judicial independence**.

About Collegium System:

Constitutional Position:

- i. The Constitution of India does **not expressly provide** for the **Collegium system**. Under **Articles 124 and 217**, the **President of India** appoints judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts in consultation with the Chief Justice of India and other constitutional authorities.

Evolution through Judicial Pronouncements:

- i. The Collegium system evolved through the landmark **Three Judges Cases**, which interpreted the constitutional provisions governing judicial appointments.
- ii. **First Judges Case (1981)**: The Supreme Court held that the **Executive had primacy** in the appointment of judges.
- iii. **Second Judges Case (1993)**: The Supreme Court **overruled the earlier position** and established the **Collegium system**, conferring **primacy on the judiciary** in the appointment and transfer of judges.
- iv. **Third Judges Case (1998)** – Expanded and clarified the Collegium mechanism through a Presidential Reference, making the appointment process a collective decision.

Composition of the Collegium

- i. **Supreme Court Collegium**

Comprises the **Chief Justice of India (CJI)** and the **four senior-most judges** of the Supreme Court.

- ii. **High Court Collegium**

Consists of the **Chief Justice of the High Court** and **the two senior-most judges** of that High Court.

Working Mechanism:

- i. Judicial appointments are initiated by the Collegium, **scrutinised by the Supreme Court Collegium**, processed by the **Central Government**, and finally made by **the President of India**, with the Government having the option to return a recommendation once for reconsideration.

Source: THE HINDU - <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/sc-collegiums-unexplained-recommendations-risk-bad-appointments-justice-bhuyan/article71294127.ece>

3. TRAI MyCall

Prelims:

Digital Governance

Mains:

GS Paper II- Governance

Current relevance:

The **Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)** has launched a revamped version of the '**TRAI MyCall**' mobile application to enable telecom consumers to assess and report their **voice-calling experience**.



Highlights:

1. **TRAIR MyCall** is a citizen-centric mobile application that enables telecom consumers to provide **real-time feedback** on their voice-calling experience along with relevant network parameters.
2. **Objective:**
Aims to strengthen consumer participation, help identify network deficiencies, support corrective action by **Telecom Service Providers (TSPs)**, and improve the overall **Quality of Service (QoS) and Quality of Experience (QoE)**.

3. **Consumer Feedback Mechanism:**

Consumer feedback is shared with **Telecom Service Providers (TSPs)** and **TRAI** in an anonymised form, providing valuable insights for evidence-based regulatory oversight and network performance improvement.

4. **Consumer-Friendly Functionalities:**

- **Instant voice-call rating** through a **1–5-star feedback** system.
- **Reporting of call-related issues**, including call drops, echo, audio delay, cross connection, voice breaking, one-way audio, and delayed call connection.
- **Automatic post-call** feedback prompts.
- **Interactive map** showing rating and feedback history.
- **Coverage Test** feature to assess signal strength.

5. The initiative reinforces TRAI's commitment to a **transparent, accountable, consumer-responsive, and data-driven telecom ecosystem**, with consumer participation playing a central role in improving mobile communication services.

Source: PIB –

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2293797®=3&lang=1>

4. Centre Opposes Income-Based Creamy Layer for SC/ST Reservations

Prelims:

Indian Polity

Mains:

GS Paper II- Polity and governance

Current affairs:

The Union Government, in an affidavit before the **Supreme Court**, opposed the introduction of an **income-based creamy layer** within **Scheduled Castes (SCs)** and

Scheduled Tribes (STs) reservations, stating that judicial precedents have held that the concept is **not applicable** to these categories.



Highlights:

Historical Background:

1. The creamy layer principle originated from the **Supreme Court's *Indra Sawhney v. Union of India (1992)* judgment**, which provided for excluding socially advanced sections among OBCs from reservation benefits.
2. Following the judgment, the **Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT)** issued an Office Memorandum on 8 September **1993** laying down criteria for identifying the **creamy layer among OBCs**.
3. The Government of India has maintained that the **creamy layer principle** and the criteria prescribed by DoPT apply **specifically to OBC reservations**.

Government's Response:

1. According to the **Union Government's affidavit before the Supreme Court (2026)**, **judicial precedents** have clarified that the principles of the **creamy layer** are **not applicable** to **Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs)**.

2. It opposed petitions seeking the introduction of an **income-based creamy layer** for SC/ST reservations on the lines of the existing system for **Other Backward Classes (OBCs)**.

Means Test in Welfare Schemes:

1. The Government stated that **most welfare and development schemes** for SCs, STs, and OBCs already use a **means test** to ensure that benefits reach eligible and deserving beneficiaries.
2. However, this means test does **not apply to reservations** in educational institutions and public employment.

Need for Empirical Assessment:

1. The Government argued that any proposal to introduce **income-based preferences** within reserved categories should be preceded by a **holistic review**, a comprehensive **empirical study**, collection and analysis of **socio-economic data** relating to beneficiaries.

Objective of Reservation Policy:

1. According to the Government, the reservation policy for **SCs, STs, and OBCs** aims to:
 - i. Achieve social equality and justice.
 - ii. Address historical discrimination and disadvantages.
 - iii. Promote economic empowerment of marginalised communities.
 - iv. Ensure inclusive participation in education, public services, and decision-making processes.

Reservation Policy Debate:

2. The issue gained prominence following the **2024 Supreme Court judgment in *State of Punjab vs Davinder Singh***.
3. While the judgment allowed States to **sub-categorise SC/ST reservations**, one of the opinions suggested identifying a **creamy layer within SCs and STs** based on criteria distinct from those applied to OBCs.

Source: THE HINDU – https://www.pressreader.com/india/the-hindu-international-9bn2/20260807/281870125251079?srsId=AfmBOook4bPL9cmCX_IGwT2MCz6mSysUCKEYOA2jyaFkaA_loZ4vkAJW

5. Supreme Court Guidelines in Sexual Offence Cases

Prelims:

Indian Polity and Governance

Mains:

GS Paper II- Judiciary and Constitutional Governance

Current affairs:

The **Supreme Court**, in its judgment dated **July 2026** in Suo Motu Writ Petition, emphasised **compassion, empathy and sensitivity** in judicial proceedings involving victims of sexual offences and other vulnerable persons. The Court also accepted the report prepared by a **Committee of Experts constituted through the National Judicial Academy**.

SUPREME COURT GUIDELINES

IN SEXUAL OFFENCE CASES

Promoting compassion, empathy and sensitivity for victims and vulnerable persons

KEY GUIDELINES

- Gender-sensitive and trauma-informed approach in judicial proceedings
- Prevent secondary victimization from insensitive cross-examination
- No reliance on sexual history or other impermissible considerations
- Identify and address gender biases and prejudices
- Use gender-sensitive and respectful language in orders and judgments
- Compassionate, trauma-informed and victim-centric courtroom practices
- Judicial Training & Awareness
- Protect Dignity & Privacy
- Uphold Equality, Autonomy & Justice
- Justice with Dignity, Empathy and Fairness

“Compassion, humanity and understanding are integral to a fair, responsive and effective system of justice.”

– SUPREME COURT OF INDIA

Highlights:

Background:

Supreme Court's Observation:

- i. The Supreme Court observed that judicial decisions must reflect **compassion, humanity and understanding to ensure a fair, responsive and effective system of justice.**
- ii. The Court accepted the report submitted by the **Committee of Experts** constituted through the **National Judicial Academy.**

Objectives:

- i. The guidelines seek to promote a **gender-sensitive and trauma-informed approach** in judicial proceedings, particularly those involving sexual offences.
- ii. Their central objective is to prevent **secondary victimisation arising from insensitive cross-examination**, while promoting **empathy, dignity and fairness** through judicial training and awareness.

Key Guidelines:

1. Constitutional Values and Gender Justice:

- i. The guidelines highlight evolving constitutional and judicial principles of gender justice based on **dignity, equality, privacy, bodily integrity and autonomy.**
- ii. These principles are intended to help criminal justice stakeholders handle gender-related cases in **a sensitive and dignified manner.**

2. Sensitive Cross-Examination

Practical guidance has been provided for conducting cross-examination, including safeguards against relying on a **survivor's sexual history and other impermissible considerations.**

3. Addressing Gender Bias:

Judicial processes should adopt progressive approaches to identify potential **gender biases and prejudices** during investigation and adjudication.

4. **Respectful Judicial Language:**

The guidelines recommend the use of **gender-sensitive and respectful language** in judicial orders and judgments.

5. **Victim-Centric Courtrooms:**

Courts are encouraged to adopt **compassionate, trauma-informed and victim-centric practices** that preserve the **dignity and privacy of all stakeholders**.

Judicial Capacity Building:

1. The guidelines emphasise **judicial training and awareness** as important tools for embedding empathy, gender sensitivity and fairness within the administration of justice.

Source: PIB –

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2296433®=48&lang=2>

6. **DPDP Act vs RTI Act**

Prelims:

Indian Polity and Governance

Mains:

GS Paper II-Indian Polity and Governance

Current affairs:

The **Supreme Court** has agreed to examine whether provisions of the **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023**, particularly **Section 44(3)**, could restrict the operation of the **Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005** by allowing information to be denied on the ground that it constitutes **personal data**.

SUPREME COURT TO EXAMINE DPDP ACT vs RTI ACT

SC to examine if DPDP Act, 2023 (Section 44(3)) could restrict the Right to Information Act, 2005 by classifying information as 'personal data'

DIGITAL PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION (DPDP) ACT, 2023

- Provides a framework for the processing of digital personal data and protects the privacy of individuals.
- Section 44(3) amends Section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act, enabling public authorities to deny information if it is personal data.
- Aim: Balance individual privacy rights with lawful data processing.

THE KEY QUESTION

Can the DPDP Act, 2023 be used to cripple the RTI Act, 2005 by allowing information to be denied on the ground that it is 'personal data'?

RIGHT TO INFORMATION (RTI) ACT, 2005

- Empowers citizens to access information held by public authorities to promote transparency and accountability.
- Section 8(1)(j) allows denial of personal information if it has no relation to public activity or causes unwarranted invasion of privacy, unless public interest outweighs privacy.
- Ensures openness and citizens' right to know.

The Supreme Court will examine how both Central laws can be harmonised, balancing privacy protection with transparency and the public's right to information.

Highlights:

Issue Before the Supreme Court:

1. Privacy vs Transparency

- i. The Court is examining whether the **DPDP Act's restrictions on disclosure of personal information** could undermine the transparency framework established under the RTI Act.
- ii. The Supreme Court observed that the two Central laws need to be **harmonised**, rather than allowing the later law to automatically undermine the earlier transparency framework.

2. Amendment to the RTI Framework

- i. The petitions primarily challenge **Section 44(3) of the DPDP Act, 2023**, which amended **Section 8(1)(j) of the RTI Act, 2005**.
- ii. According to the petitioners, the amendment enables public authorities to refuse information on the ground that the information sought is **personal in nature**.

3. Balancing Privacy and Public Interest

- i. Earlier, personal information could be withheld where it had **no relationship with public activity** or where its disclosure would cause an **unwarranted invasion of privacy**.
- ii. However, disclosure could still be permitted when **public interest outweighed privacy concerns**.
- iii. The **Public Information Officer or First Appellate Authority** was required to weigh privacy against transparency before deciding whether the information should be disclosed.

4. Impact on Right to Information

- i. The petitioners argued that the amendment could weaken access to information by enabling authorities to classify information broadly as **personal** and refuse disclosure.
- ii. They contended that the right to privacy, intended to protect citizens against State intrusion, should not become a mechanism for shielding the **State and public functionaries from RTI disclosures**.

5. Difference in Scope of the Two Laws

- i. The Supreme Court observed that the **RTI Act operates over a broader domain**, covering different forms of information.
- ii. In contrast, the **DPDP Act concerns data in digital form**, although the Court acknowledged that information is now overwhelmingly maintained digitally.

About the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023:

1. The **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023** is implemented and overseen by the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)**.
2. **Objective:** The Act provides a legal framework for processing **digital personal data** while recognising both the **right of individuals to protect their personal data** and the need to process such data for **lawful purposes**.

3. **Broad framework:** The Act contains provisions dealing with the **obligations of Data Fiduciaries, rights and duties of Data Principals, special provisions, the Data Protection Board of India, appeals, alternate dispute resolution, penalties and adjudication.**

About the Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005:

1. The **Right to Information Act, 2005** is administered by the **Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT)** under the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions.
2. **Objective:** The Act establishes a practical regime through which **citizens can secure access to information under the control of public authorities**, with the broader purpose of promoting **transparency and accountability** in their functioning.

Source: THE HINDU- <https://www.pressreader.com/india/the-hindu-international-9bn2/20260808/281573772510122>

7. Scheduled Castes: Population Data, Reservation and Representation in Central Government Services

Prelims:

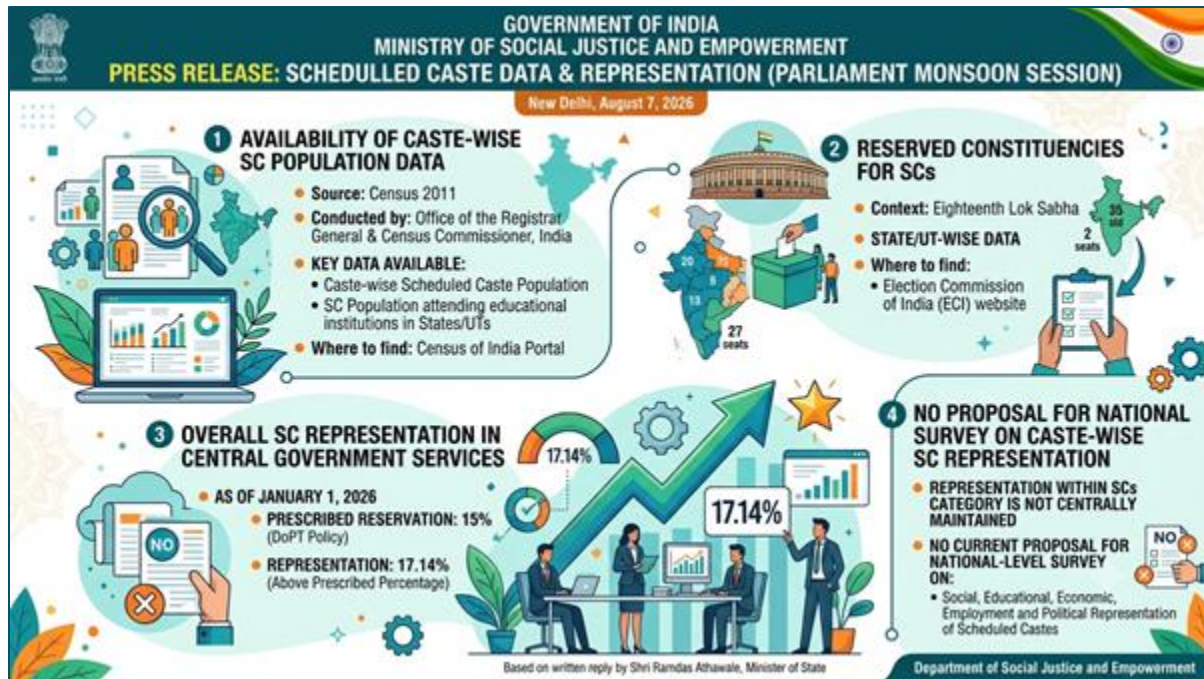
Indian Polity and Governance

Mains:

GS Paper II- Indian Polity and Governance

Current affairs:

The Government informed the **Lok Sabha** that caste-wise population and educational attendance data for various **Scheduled Castes (SCs)** are available from **Census 2011**. It also stated that the overall representation of SCs in **Central Government services** stood at **17.14%** as on 1 January 2026.



Highlights:

1. Caste-wise Population Data:

- Census 2011**, conducted by the **Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner**, India, contains caste-wise population data for various **Scheduled Castes**.
- It also provides caste-wise information on **Scheduled Caste populations attending educational institutions** across States and Union Territories.
- The relevant information is accessible through the **Census of India portal**.

2. Reservation in Central Government Services:

- As per policy instructions issued by the **Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT)**, **15% reservation** is provided to Scheduled Castes in posts and services under the Central Government.
- As of **1 January 2026**, Scheduled Castes accounted for **17.14% of the overall workforce** in Central Government services.

3. Data Limitation

- The Government clarified that **caste-wise representation** within the Scheduled Castes category in **Central Government services is not maintained centrally**.

- ii. Thus, while aggregate SC representation is available, its distribution among individual Scheduled Castes is not centrally maintained.

4. Reserved Constituencies:

State/UT-wise information on constituencies **reserved for Scheduled Castes in the Eighteenth Lok Sabha** is available on the **Election Commission of India website**.

About Census 2011:

1. Census 2011 was the **15th Census of India** since the beginning of the census exercise in **1872** and the **7th Census after Independence**.
2. It was conducted by the **Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India (ORGI)** under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
3. The Census is conducted under the legal framework of the **Census Act, 1948** and **Census Rules, 1990**, along with subsequent amendments.
4. Census 2011 was carried out in two major stages: **Houselisting and Housing Census**, followed by **Population Enumeration**.
5. **Significance:**

The Census provides basic statistical information on India's **demographic, social, cultural and economic characteristics** at local, regional and national levels and constitutes a major source of population statistics for the country.

Source: PIB –

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2296291®=48&lang=1>

8. Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS)

Prelims:

E-Governance, Government Initiatives

Mains:

GS Paper II- E-Governance, Government Policies and Interventions

Current relevance:

The **Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS)** has emerged as a comprehensive digital governance platform connecting **Central Ministries, Departments, States and Union Territories** for timely grievance resolution. Recent reforms include **AI-driven monitoring, multilingual services, Samadhan Didi and the development of NextGen CPGRAMS.**

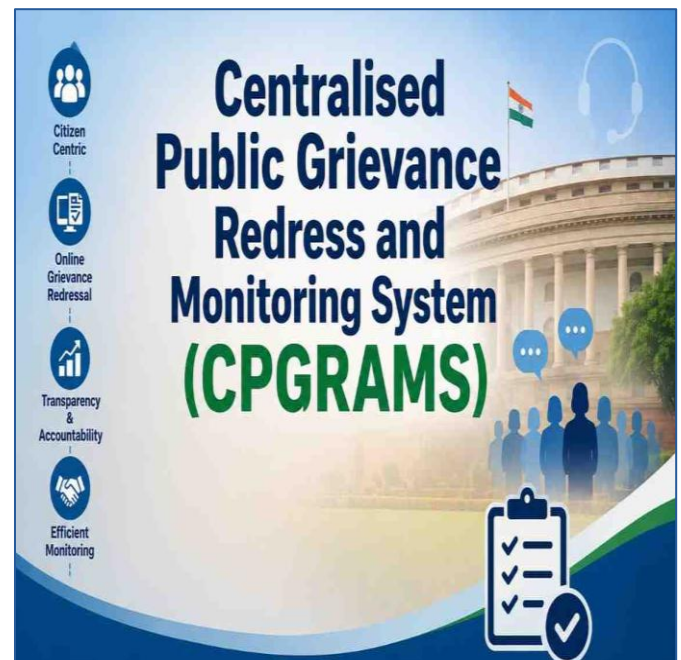
Highlights:

Evolution of CPGRAMS:

1. **Since 2014**, India's public grievance redressal system has transformed from a fragmented, largely manual mechanism into a **technology-driven platform** that prioritises **efficiency, transparency and citizen satisfaction.**
2. Annual grievances increased from about **3.01 lakh** in **2014** to around **27 lakh** in **2024.**
3. The number of Grievance Redressal Officers (GROs) increased from 10,232 in 2014 to more than **1.11 lakh** by **2025.**
4. Average disposal time in Central Ministries and Departments declined from 157 days in 2014 to **15 days in 2025.**

Digital Grievance Redressal Platform:

1. CPGRAMS is the Government's flagship digital platform for **public grievance redressal.**
2. It is available **24x7** and provides a single platform connecting Central Ministries, Departments, State Governments and Union Territories.
3. Citizens can lodge grievances concerning **public service delivery** and track their resolution digitally.



Working mechanism:

1. Registration and Accessibility

Citizens can register grievances through the **online portal, CPGRAMS mobile application, UMANG integration and more than 5 lakh Common Service Centres (CSCs)**, while grievances received through post are digitised and uploaded to the platform.

2. Auto-Routing and Tracking

The platform automatically routes grievances to the appropriate authority, while a **unique registration ID** enables citizens to track their grievance status.

3. Time-Bound Redressal

- Guidelines issued in **August 2024** reduced the grievance-resolution timeline from **30 days to 21 days**.
- Citizens dissatisfied with the resolution can use the **appellate mechanism**, where the Nodal Appellate Authority must resolve the appeal within **30 days**.

4. The platform does not take up **RTI matters, court-related/sub judice matters, religious matters, and service-related grievances of government employees including disciplinary proceedings**.

10-Step Reform Programme

The 10-Step Reform Programme introduced in **2022** marked a major turning point in the evolution of CPGRAMS. **Continuous monitoring and targeted reforms** have since made grievance redressal more **efficient, accessible and citizen-centric**.

1. **Universalisation of CPGRAMS 7.0:** Introduced **automatic routing of grievances** to the appropriate authority, with all Central Ministries and Departments onboarded by 2022.
2. **Technological Enhancements:** Integration of **Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, dashboards and data analytics enables real-time analysis**, identification of systemic issues and evidence-based improvements.

3. **Language Inclusivity:** CPGRAMS accepts grievances in **22 Scheduled Languages besides English**, while **BHASHINI integration** enables responses in the citizen's preferred language.
4. **Grievance Redressal Assessment and Index (GRAI):** Provides a **performance benchmarking framework** to assess Ministries and Departments and promote efficiency, accountability and healthy competition.
5. **Feedback Call Centre:** Collects **citizen feedback on resolved grievances** to assess service quality and identify areas requiring improvement.
6. **One Nation–One Portal:** Integrates **State grievance portals** and other **government platforms** with CPGRAMS to create a unified grievance redressal ecosystem.
7. **Inclusivity and Outreach:** Integration with **Common Service Centres (CSCs)** expands access to grievance redressal, particularly for citizens in **rural and remote areas**.
8. **Training and Capacity Building:** Regular training under the **Sevottam framework** strengthens the capabilities of grievance officers and improves the quality of grievance handling.
9. **Monitoring and Review:** **Monthly reports, review meetings and engagement with Nodal Grievance Officers and Appellate Authorities** promote timely resolution, transparency and accountability.
10. **Data Strategy Unit:** A dedicated unit within **DARPG** uses advanced analytics to identify trends, support policy improvements and optimise grievance redressal processes.

Source: PIB –

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2296724®=48&lang=1>

9. "Judgments and Gender: Sensitivity and Compassion in Writing Judgments"

Prelims:

Indian Polity and Governance

Mains:

GS Paper II- Government Policies and Interventions, GS Paper IV- Ethics in Public Administration

Current relevance:

The Supreme Court published a report on August 3, 2026, titled **"Judgments and Gender: Sensitivity and Compassion in Writing Judgments"**, recommending measures to strengthen **gender sensitivity in judicial writing and courtroom proceedings**, particularly in cases involving **sexual offences and vulnerable persons**.



Highlights:

About the 2026 Report:

1. Expert Committee

- i. The report was drafted by an expert committee headed by **former Supreme Court judge and Director of the National Judicial Academy (NJA), Justice Aniruddha Bose.**
- ii. Before framing its recommendations, the committee examined **125 trial court judgments from across India**, with assistance from **State Judicial Academies.**

2. Background to the 2026 Report

- i. The intervention followed the **Supreme Court's February 10, 2026 judgment** setting aside an Allahabad High Court ruling concerning an alleged sexual offence against a 14-year-old girl.
- ii. Questions were subsequently raised about whether the Supreme Court's **2023 Handbook on Combating Gender Stereotypes** was sufficiently effective in preventing insensitive or flawed judicial reasoning.
- iii. The Supreme Court consequently directed the **National Judicial Academy, Bhopal**, to constitute a committee of experts, academics and lawyers to formulate **practical guidelines and training for judges.**

3. 2023 Handbook vs 2026 Report

i. 2023 – Combating Stereotypes

The 2023 Handbook on Combating Gender Stereotypes primarily focused on **helping judges recognise and avoid gender stereotypes, patriarchal assumptions and inappropriate terminology** in judicial writing.

For example, it recommended:

- **“Street sexual harassment”** instead of “eve teasing”.
- **“Homemaker”** instead of “housewife”.

- Appropriate neutral terminology instead of expressions such as “adulteress”.

ii. **2026 – Broader Judicial Reform**

The 2026 report goes **beyond terminology** by addressing **courtroom management, victim protection, judicial reasoning and trauma-informed adjudication**, with a stronger emphasis on practical courtroom application.

4. **Gender-Sensitive Judicial Language:**

i. **Avoid Stereotypical Expressions**

The report cautions that stereotypical judicial observations can **discourage survivors from reporting offences, reinforce prejudices and weaken confidence in the justice system.**

ii. **Victim-Centric Terminology**

It recommends replacing “**prosecutrix**” with terms such as “**victim**”, “**survivor**” or “**complainant**”, which better recognise the experiences of persons approaching the justice system.

iii. **Move Beyond Chastity and Honour**

- Judges should avoid describing sexual violence through concepts such as a woman's **chastity, honour or morality.**
- Instead, judicial reasoning should focus on the **legal injury and consequences**, including the violation of **bodily autonomy** and trauma caused by the offence.

iv. **Inclusive Terminology**

Courts are encouraged to use **respectful and contemporary terminology** for persons of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities, including the internationally recognised **SOGIESC – Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Expression and Sex Characteristics** framework.

5. **Compassionate Courtroom Practices:**

i. **In-Camera Proceedings:**

Trials involving **rape and other sexual offences should ordinarily be conducted in camera**, through private, closed-door proceedings, as mandated under the **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023**.

ii. **Protection of Identity:**

Courts should strictly protect survivors' identities, including through the **use of initials or pseudonyms** in proceedings and publications.

iii. **Sensitive Treatment of Witnesses:**

The report describes witnesses as **"guests" assisting courts in arriving at the truth** and cautions against repeated **adjournments, prolonged waiting and poor treatment of witnesses**.

iv. **Protection During Cross-Examination**

Judges should enforce provisions of the **Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam** prohibiting **indecent, scandalous or offensive questions during cross-examination**.

A survivor's previous **sexual history is immaterial in a rape trial**.

6. **Significance:**

- i. The 2026 report represents a shift from merely eliminating gender-insensitive terminology to **institutionalising gender-sensitive judicial conduct**, integrating **respectful language**, survivor protection, sensitive cross-examination, **trauma awareness and compassionate courtroom management** into the administration of justice.

Source: THE HINDU - <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/how-does-supreme-courts-new-handbook-rethink-gender-sensitivity-explained/article71318389.ece>

10. India's Delimitation Debate

Prelims:

Indian Polity and Governance

Mains:

GS Paper II- Indian Polity and Governance

Current relevance:

A fresh debate has emerged over the **delimitation of Lok Sabha constituencies**, particularly regarding the timing, allocation of seats among States and implementation of **women's reservation**.

Highlights:

1. Delimitation:

Delimitation is the process of determining the boundaries of territorial constituencies for a legislative body.

2. Delimitation Commission:

- i. In India, delimitation is carried out by the Delimitation Commission (Boundary Commission), a **high-powered statutory body** whose orders have the force of law and **cannot be challenged before a court**.
- ii. The Commission's orders are placed before the **Lok Sabha and the concerned State Legislative Assembly**, but **neither legislature can modify them**.

3. Constitutional Basis:

Under **Article 82** of the Constitution, Parliament enacts a **Delimitation Act after a Census**, following which the Central Government constitutes a Delimitation Commission to redraw parliamentary constituencies.

4. Historical Background:

Since Independence, **four Delimitation Commissions** have been constituted at the national level.

DELIMITATION COMMISSIONS IN INDIA		
DELIMITATION COMMISSION	LEGAL BASIS	BROAD CENSUS BASIS
1 st First – 1952	Delimitation Commission Act, 1952	1951 Census
2 nd Second – 1963	Delimitation Commission Act, 1962	1961 Census
3 rd Third – 1973	Delimitation Act, 1972	1971 Census
4 th Fourth – 2002	Delimitation Act, 2002	2001 Census*
* The 2002 Commission's work was ultimately undertaken on 2001 Census figures following the Constitution (87th Amendment) Act, 2003.		

5. Constitutional Framework & Trigger for Delimitation:

- i. **Articles 81 and 82** provide the constitutional basis for the next delimitation exercise.
- ii. After publication of data from the **first Census conducted after 2026**, two processes are envisaged:
- iii. **Reallocation of the existing Lok Sabha seats** among States and Union Territories based on population.
- iv. **Redrawing of individual parliamentary constituencies** within each State.
- v. A fresh delimitation itself **does not require a Constitutional amendment**; an amendment is necessary only if the existing constitutional framework governing delimitation is to be changed.
- vi. **Present Position:**

The current distribution of **543 Lok Sabha seats among States** continues to be based on the **1971 Census population figures**. The last reallocation of Lok Sabha seats among States took place in **1973**.

6. Seat Reallocation & Federal Representation:

- i. Once the population benchmark shifts from the **1971 Census to the 2027 Census**, the distribution of Lok Sabha representation among States is likely to change.

ii. According to the given information:

- **Southern States** are likely to experience a reduction in their **share of Lok Sabha seats**.
- Hindi-speaking States, particularly **Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan**, are likely to gain representation.
- Under the existing constitutional framework, the maximum permitted strength of the Lok Sabha is **550 seats**.

iii. The debate therefore involves balancing **two competing principles**:

- **Federalism** — representation of States
- **Democracy** — “One Person, One Vote, One Value.”

7. Women’s Reservation & Proposed Changes:

i. Following the **2027 Census**, and in the absence of a new Constitutional amendment, the process would involve **reallocation of Lok Sabha seats among States**, followed by **delimitation of constituencies within States** and implementation of women’s reservation, under which **one-third of Lok Sabha seats** nationally and **one-third of seats within each State** would be **reserved for women**.

ii. **Earlier Proposal:**

- Increase the Lok Sabha strength to a **maximum of 850 seats**.
- Distribute seats among States based on the **2011 Census** through fresh nationwide delimitation.
- Reserve **one-third** of the total **seats for women**.
- The proposed Constitutional amendment, however, **was not passed**.

8. Gerrymandering & Electoral Implications:

i. Even when constituencies contain approximately equal numbers of voters, **how their boundaries are drawn can significantly influence electoral outcomes**.

ii. Two important methods described are:

- **Cracking:** Dispersing a party's supporters across several constituencies so that they lack sufficient concentration to win seats.
 - **Packing:** Concentrating a party's supporters heavily within a few constituencies, causing it to win those seats by large margins while weakening its prospects elsewhere.
- iii. Thus, delimitation is not merely about achieving **numerical equality between constituencies**; the manner in which voters are geographically grouped can also influence **political representation and electoral outcomes**.

Source: THE HINDU - <https://www.pressreader.com/india/the-hindu-international-9bn2/20260810/281998974275753?srsId=AfmBOoqeTiqTGaODa9IxMbzsC4of16k9-NJZM95c3qNyciovOMhctU7>

11. Ladakh to Lead Census 2027 Caste Enumeration

Prelims:

Indian Polity and Governance

Mains:

GS Paper I-Indian Society, GS Paper II-Indian Polity and Governance

Current relevance:

Ladakh is set to become the first region to demonstrate how **caste enumeration will be undertaken in Independent India's first caste census**.



Highlights:

1. Historical Background:

- i. Caste information was collected as part of colonial-era censuses. The official **Census of India 1931** report specifically covered demographic categories including **caste, tribe and race**.
- ii. After Independence, **caste other than Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) was excluded from regular Census operations**. However, Census exercises continued to enumerate SCs and STs according to their constitutionally notified lists.
- iii. In **2011**, the Central Government separately undertook the **Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC)** with State and UT governments. The decision to collect caste information through SECC was approved by the Union Cabinet on **May 2011**. Unlike the regular Population Census, this was conducted as a **separate socio-economic survey**.
- iv. **Census 2027** will be the **first caste enumeration** of the entire population as part of India's regular Census **after Independence**.

2. Caste Enumeration in Census 2027

- i. The Population Enumeration phase is likely to contain questions covering around **40 parameters, including caste.**
- ii. The proposed **caste column will be open-ended**, allowing the enumerator to record the **name of the caste as declared by the respondent.**
- iii. The questionnaire or final Census schedule is **yet to be notified by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India (RG&CCI).**
- iv. During the **Population Enumeration pre-test held from July 1–20 across 16 States and Union Territories**, respondents other than those belonging to **Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes** recorded their caste in an open column, or had it recorded by the enumerator based on their declaration.

3. Digital Census and Security Exception:

- i. Census 2027 is described as **India's first digital Census.**
- ii. The digital process ordinarily requires enumerators to **geo-locate structures through a mobile application**, while people using self-enumeration through the Census portal must also provide geo-location.
- iii. However, **paper schedules are being prepared in sufficient numbers for Ladakh.**
- iv. This exception takes into account the presence of **large defence establishments near the borders with China and Pakistan**, whose locations cannot be geo-tagged because of **security considerations.**

Source: THE HINDU - <https://www.pressreader.com/india/the-hindu-international-9bn2/20260810/281711211466921>

12. Grant of Deemed University Status to NCERT

Prelims:

Indian Polity and Governance

Mains:

GS Paper II- Issues relating to Development and Management of Education, Government Policies and Interventions

Current relevance:

The **Ministry of Education**, through a notification dated 30 March 2026, declared the **National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)**, New Delhi, an Institution Deemed to be University under the **UGC Act, 1956**, following the recommendation of the **University Grants Commission (UGC)**.



Highlights:

1. NCERT applied for **Institution Deemed-to-be-University status**, which was examined by a **UGC Expert Committee** under the **UGC (Institutions Deemed to be Universities) Regulations, 2023**.

2. Following the Committee's recommendation after its assessment, the **Ministry of Education**, acting on UGC's advice, declared NCERT, New Delhi, an Institution Deemed to be University under the **UGC Act, 1956**.
3. The declaration requires NCERT to take appropriate steps to commence **research programmes, doctoral programmes and innovative academic programmes**.

About NCERT:

1. The **National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)** was established by the **Government of India in 1961** as an **autonomous organisation** to assist and advise the **Central and State Governments** on policies and programmes aimed at improving the **quality of school education**.
2. **Primary role: Educational research**, develops **textbooks and learning resources**, **trains teachers**, **collaborates with educational institutions**, supports **universal elementary education**, serves as a **knowledge resource**, and promotes **international cooperation** in school education.
3. The new status is expected to strengthen NCERT's capacity to:
 - i. Promote **educational research and innovation**.
 - ii. Collaborate with **national and international agencies**.
 - iii. Strengthen its role as an **educational think tank**.
 - iv. Expand its position as a **national resource institution**.

Source: PIB –

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2297126®=48&lang=1>

13. FCRA Amendment Bill to be Referred to Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC)

Prelims:

Indian Polity

Mains:

GS Paper II – Indian Polity

Current relevance:

Amid growing opposition to the proposed [Foreign Contribution \(Regulation\) Amendment Bill, 2026](#), the Centre is set to move a resolution in the Lok Sabha to refer the Bill to a **Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC)** for detailed examination.

JOINT PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE (JPC)

A COMMITTEE OF PARLIAMENT WITH MEMBERS FROM BOTH HOUSES

WHAT IS JPC?
An *ad hoc* committee of Parliament constituted for a specific purpose, such as examining a particular Bill or investigating an issue.

CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS
The Constitution of India does not specifically mention or define JPC. It derives its authority from the Rules of Procedure of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

COMPOSITION
It consists of members from both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

KEY POINT
JPCs play an important role in ensuring detailed scrutiny of legislation and issues through collective wisdom of both Houses of Parliament.

CONSTITUTION
Constituted when one House passes a motion and the other House agrees, or through communication between the two Houses.

FUNCTIONS

- Examines the Bill or matter referred to it.
- Takes evidence and views of stakeholders.
- Submits its report to Parliament.

NATURE
An *ad hoc* (temporary) committee, not a permanent parliamentary committee.

Highlights:

1. **The proposed amendments reportedly contain provisions concerning:**
 - i. Transfer and management of assets of charitable organisations.
 - ii. Sale of assets to the government under certain circumstances.

- iii. Disposal of assets when FCRA registration expires, is not renewed, is refused, cancelled or surrendered.
- iv. Government intervention over the assets of organisations whose FCRA registration ceases.
- v. Critics argue that such provisions could **affect the autonomy of charitable organisations**, particularly **institutions involved in education and social welfare**.

2. Significance of referring it to a JPC

A JPC will allow Members of Parliament from both Houses to **examine the Bill in greater detail**, hear different stakeholders and recommend changes before Parliament takes a final decision.

The development is therefore significant from the perspective of:

- i. Parliamentary scrutiny
- ii. Legislative accountability
- iii. Stakeholder consultation
- iv. Federal concerns
- v. Autonomy of charitable institutions

3. About Parliamentary Joint Committee (JPC):

A Parliamentary Joint Committee is an **ad hoc committee** of Parliament constituted to examine a specific matter of public importance. It consists of Members of **both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha**.

- i. A JPC is created through a motion passed by one House and agreed to by the other House.
- ii. Members are nominated by the Presiding Officers of the two Houses.
- iii. The strength of the committee varies according to the matter being examined.
- iv. Lok Sabha generally has greater representation because of its larger membership.

- v. The Chairperson is generally from the Lok Sabha.

Functions:

- i. **Investigative role:** It can examine important matters such as financial irregularities, policy controversies or other matters of public concern.
- ii. **Detailed examination:** It can examine legislation or a specific issue in considerable detail and suggest amendments or improvements.
- iii. **Evidence gathering:** It can call for documents, summon witnesses and obtain expert opinions, subject to parliamentary rules and privileges.
- iv. **Reporting:** It submits its findings and recommendations to Parliament. Members may also submit dissent notes.
- v. Its recommendations are generally **advisory and are not legally binding** on the government.

Source: THE HINDU- <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/centre-likely-to-send-fcra-amendment-bill-to-jpc-amid-opposition-demand-for-withdrawal/article71333056.ece>

14. Supreme Court Clarifies Police Custody Rules under BNSS

Prelims:

Indian Polity & Governance

Mains:

GS Paper II- Indian Polity & Governance

Current relevance:

In The State of Andhra Pradesh vs Suda Suresh Veera Venkata Naga Raju, the **Supreme Court** clarified the scope of Section 187(2) of the **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS)**.



Highlights:

1. Supreme Court's Key Ruling:

- i. The Court held that **Section 187(2) of BNSS enlarges the window within which police custody** may be sought.
- ii. Police custody can be granted in parts, but the **total period cannot exceed 15 days**.
- iii. These 15 days may be utilised during the **initial 40 days or 60 days**, depending on the applicable total detention period of **60 or 90 days**.
- iv. A Magistrate or court cannot impose an **absolute, non-extendable limit** that prevents subsequent recourse to Section 187(2).
- v. In the present case, the Supreme Court permitted **seven additional days of police custody**, while ensuring that total police remand did **not exceed 15 days**.
- vi. The Court observed that the legislative change accommodates situations where **new facts, discoveries or investigative leads emerge later during an investigation**.

2. Police Remand & Default Bail under BNSS:

- i. **Section 58:** A person arrested without a warrant cannot ordinarily be detained by police for **more than 24 hours without authorisation from a Magistrate under Section 187.**
 - ii. **Section 187(2):** Where investigation cannot be completed within 24 hours and the accusation appears well-founded, a Magistrate may authorise police custody for **up to 15 days in whole or in parts during the prescribed initial 40/60-day window.**
 - iii. **Section 187(3):** Judicial detention may extend up to:
 - **90 days** – offences punishable with **death, life imprisonment or imprisonment of 10 years or more.**
 - **60 days** – other offences.
 - iv. If the investigation is **not completed within the prescribed detention period**, the accused may be entitled to release on **default bail.**
3. **Right to Meet an Advocate during Interrogation:**
- i. **Section 38 of BNSS** entitles an arrested person to **meet an advocate of their choice during interrogation**, but not throughout the interrogation.
 - ii. The Supreme Court clarified that this does **not provide an unrestricted right to the continuous physical presence of an advocate** throughout every interrogation session.
 - iii. The lawyer may remain at the interrogation site in a position where they can **see the accused.**
 - iv. The Court also held that instead of uninterrupted videography during transit, **audio-visual recording of the actual interrogation and proceedings involving discovery or recovery** would satisfy the requirement described in the case.

About Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS):

1. The Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023, administered by the **Department of Internal Security, Ministry of Home Affairs**, replaced the **Code of**

Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1973 as India's principal law governing criminal procedure.

2. **Purpose:** The Act seeks to **consolidate and amend** the law relating to **criminal procedure**.
3. It seeks to make the criminal justice system more **citizen-centric, technology-enabled and efficient**. Important provisions include **electronic reporting of offences, Zero FIR, greater use of audio-video technology, provision of FIR copies to citizens, updates to victims on investigation progress, and increased use of forensic science in investigation**.

Source: THE HINDU – <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/supreme-court-clarifies-scope-of-police-custody-under-bnss/article71338174.ece>

15. PAIMANA

Prelims:

Government Initiatives, Digital Governance

Mains:

GS Paper II – E-Governance, GS Paper III – Infrastructure and Investment

Current relevance:

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has highlighted **PAIMANA**, a web-based platform for monitoring Central Sector infrastructure projects, along with its expanded **Performance Monitoring Dashboard** and the newly launched **PAIMANA-CRIP module**.

PAIMANA: STRENGTHENING DATA-DRIVEN INFRASTRUCTURE GOVERNANCE

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) has highlighted **PAIMANA**, a web-based platform for monitoring Central Sector infrastructure projects, along with its expanded **Performance Monitoring Dashboard** and the newly launched **PAIMANA-CRIP** module.

PAIMANA	PERFORMANCE MONITORING DASHBOARD	PAIMANA-CRIP MODULE
- Launched on 25 September 2025 by MoSPI. - Web-based platform for monitoring ongoing Central Sector infrastructure projects costing ₹150 crore or more.	- Launched on 16 April 2026 to track infrastructure performance across key sub-sectors. - Covers six infrastructure sub-sectors: Power, Civil Aviation, Telecommunications, Railways, Roads, and Ports, Shipping & Waterways. - Tracks 165 indicators through interactive visualisations and time-series analysis.	- Launched on 8 July 2026, replacing DPIIT's Integrated Project Monitoring Portal (IPMP). - Envisioned as the Central Repository of Infrastructure Projects. - Project data for PRAGATI, PMG and other review mechanisms will be sourced and updated through it.

POWER CIVIL AVIATION TELECOMMUNICATIONS RAILWAYS ROADS PORTS, SHIPPING & WATERWAYS

Highlights:

About PAIMANA:

- PAIMANA stands for **Project Assessment, Infrastructure Monitoring and Analytics for Nation-Building**.
- Launched on 25 September **2025** by the **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)**.
- It is a **web-based infrastructure monitoring platform**.
- It replaced the earlier **Online Computerized Monitoring System (OCMS-2006)**.
- It monitors ongoing **Central Sector infrastructure projects** costing **₹150 crore or more**.
- More than **60% of projects** on PAIMANA are updated automatically through **API-based integration** with Ministries/Departments.

PAIMANA-CRIP & Performance Monitoring Dashboard:

- PAIMANA-CRIP** was launched on **8 July 2026**, replacing DPIIT's Integrated Project Monitoring Portal (IPMP).
- It is envisioned to evolve into a **Central Repository of Infrastructure Projects**.
- Project data required for **PRAGATI, PMG and other review mechanisms** would subsequently be sourced and updated through it.

- iv. The **Performance Monitoring Dashboard**, launched on **16 April 2026**, covers six infrastructure sub-sectors: **Power, Civil Aviation, Telecommunications, Railways, Roads, and Ports, Shipping & Waterways.**

Key Features:

- i. Provides a **single digital interface** for cross-sector infrastructure monitoring.
- ii. Moves beyond output/production measurement towards **multi-dimensional performance assessment.**
- iii. Evaluates infrastructure across **access, quality, fiscal cost & revenue, utilisation and affordability.**
- iv. Tracks **year-on-year, month-on-month and cumulative growth**, along with targets and capacity utilisation.
- v. Enables Ministries and Departments to access **tailored dashboards** and receive data-driven updates on project execution.
- vi. Supports **evidence-based monitoring** and **policymaking** through periodic official data updates.

Significance:

- i. The **PAIMANA portal** integrates the **Central Repository of Infrastructure Projects**, reports on **Central Sector projects** costing ₹150 crore and above, and the **Performance Monitoring Dashboard**. Through regular data updates and analytics, it strengthens transparency, efficiency and accountability, supports evidence-based policymaking and informed decision-making, and promotes **sustainable and inclusive infrastructure development** across India.

Source: PIB-

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2296968®=48&lang=1>

16. Constitutional Limits on Arrest

Prelims:

Indian Polity and Constitution

Mains:

GS Paper II: Indian Constitution, Government policies and interventions

Current relevance:

The **Supreme Court in Vihaan Kumar v. State of Haryana (2025)** reinforced safeguards against arbitrary arrest by holding that every arrested person must be **directly, properly and meaningfully informed of the grounds of arrest.**

Highlights:

Supreme Court Ruling in Vihaan Kumar Case

1. An arrested person must be **properly and meaningfully informed of the grounds of arrest.**
2. The information must be communicated **directly to the arrested person** in a manner that enables them to **understand the reasons for arrest.**
3. Merely informing relatives or maintaining **ambiguous records** does not fulfil the constitutional requirement.
4. Failure to communicate the grounds violates **Article 22(1)** and **Section 47 of the BNSS, 2023.**
5. If the **initial arrest** is unconstitutional, subsequent remand orders would also be illegal.
6. The **arrest memo must record the time of arrest** to ensure compliance with the 24-hour production requirement.



7. The Court also condemned **degrading treatment in custody**, affirming the right to dignity under **Article 21**.

Constitutional provisions:

1. Article 21: "No person shall be deprived of **his life or personal liberty** except according to **procedure established by law.**"
2. **Article 22:** Provides important procedural safeguards to an arrested person, including:
 - Right to be **informed of the grounds** of arrest.
 - Right to **consult and be defended** by a lawyer.
 - Right to be produced before the **nearest Magistrate within 24 hours**, excluding travel time.

These protections seek to ensure that the State's power of arrest is **not exercised arbitrarily**.

Arrest under BNSS & Judicial Safeguards:

1. **Section 35 of BNSS** deals with the circumstances governing the police power of arrest.
2. **Section 47** requires **communication** of the grounds of arrest.
3. **Section 58** provides the safeguard concerning detention beyond 24 hours without Magistrate's authorisation.
4. In **Arnesh Kumar v. State of Bihar (2014)**, the Supreme Court held that arrest should generally be an **exception where punishment is less than seven years**.
5. Police must assess whether an arrest is **actually necessary**; a routine arrest cannot be justified merely because the police possess the power to arrest.
6. These safeguards seek to prevent harassment, unnecessary arrest and abuse of criminal process.

Arrest, Detention & Preventive Detention:

1. **Arrest** involves formal police custody based on probable cause regarding the commission of an offence.

2. **Detention** is described as a temporary restraint for investigation where the person has not been charged with an offence.
3. **Article 22** also deals with **preventive detention**, under which the ordinary procedural safeguards mentioned for arrest do not apply in the same manner.
4. Preventive detention may continue for **three months**, after which an **Advisory Board** is required for extension, as described in the given information.

Balancing State Authority with Personal Liberty:

1. The constitutional framework seeks to maintain a **delicate balance between the State's authority to arrest and an individual's liberty and dignity**.
2. The Supreme Court's decision in **Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India (1978)** links **Articles 14, 19 and 21**, forming the constitutional "**Golden Triangle**."
3. **Article 14 – protection against arbitrariness + Article 19 – freedoms/procedural fairness + Article 21 – life and personal liberty**
4. Therefore, an **arbitrary exercise of arrest or detention powers can undermine the interconnected constitutional protections of equality, freedom and personal liberty**, making procedural safeguards essential to a vibrant democracy.

Source: THE HINDU – <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/the-constitutional-limits-on-arrest/article71340875.ece>

17. President Highlights Youth Empowerment, Transparent Exams and Inclusive Development

Prelims:

Indian Polity & Governance

Mains:

GS Paper II: Indian Polity & Governance, GS Paper III: Internal security, inclusive growth.

Current relevance:

In her address to the nation on the eve of the **80th Independence Day**, President **Droupadi Murmu** highlighted the government's efforts to make **public examinations transparent, secure and trustworthy**, while emphasising **youth empowerment, national security, women's participation, inclusive development** and India's global role.

President Droupadi Murmu Addresses the Nation on the Eve of 80th INDEPENDENCE DAY

Highlights government's focus on transparent examinations, youth empowerment, national security, women's participation, inclusive development and India's global role.

TRANSPARENT PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS
Government is undertaking comprehensive reforms to make public examinations transparent, secure and trustworthy; curb paper leaks and unfair means.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT
65% of India's population is below 35. Youth are the architects of India's future and the country's most valuable asset.

NATIONAL SECURITY
Armed forces praised for unmatched valour. Operation Sindoor showcased precision counter-terror capability. Suspension of Indus Waters Treaty in national interest; progress towards a Naxal-free India.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT
Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam ensures 1/3 reservation for women in Lok Sabha & State Assemblies. Target of 3 crore new Lakhpati Didis; women in combat aircraft and 'Drone Didis' in agriculture.

INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT
More than 25 crore people lifted out of poverty. Focus on welfare, financial inclusion and sustainable development.

INDIA'S GLOBAL ROLE
Commitment to peace, dialogue and cooperation based on Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (the world is one family). India to continue advocating greater representation for the Global South in UN and other multilateral institutions.

“Public examinations are gateways to opportunities for our students. It is our shared responsibility to safeguard their present and future.”

Highlights:

Youth Empowerment & Transparent Public Examinations:

1. The President described the **youth as India's "most valuable asset"**, noting that **65% of the population is below 35 years of age**.
2. Students were described as the **"architects of India's future"**.

3. Comprehensive reforms are being undertaken to make public examinations **transparent, secure and trustworthy** and to curb **paper leaks and unfair means**.
4. Public examinations were highlighted as important **gateways to opportunities for students**.
5. India's expanding **start-up ecosystem** reflects the talent and dedication of its youth.
6. The President also stressed **physical and mental well-being**, with families and society sharing responsibility for supporting young people.
7. **Khelo India** was highlighted for building a sporting ecosystem from the **grassroots to the national level**.

National & Internal Security:

1. The President praised the **valour of the armed forces**.
2. **Operation Sindoor** was cited as demonstrating India's capacity to undertake **precision counter-terror operations**.
3. The **suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty** was described as a decisive step in the national interest, particularly in the interests of farmers.
4. Progress towards making India **"Naxal-free"** was highlighted as an important achievement in internal security.

Women Empowerment & Inclusive Development:

1. The President stated that **more than 25 crore people have been lifted out of poverty**.
2. The **Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam** was highlighted for providing **one-third reservation for women** in the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, aimed at making democracy more inclusive.
3. The government has set a target of creating **three crore new Lakhpati Didis**.
4. Women's growing participation was highlighted through examples such as **women flying combat aircraft and Drone Didis in the agriculture sector**.

Foreign Policy & Global South:

1. India reiterated its commitment to **peace, dialogue and cooperation**.

2. Its foreign-policy approach was linked to the principle of **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam** — **“the world is one family”**.
3. India would continue advocating **greater representation for the Global South** in the **United Nations and other multilateral institutions**.

Sustainable Development:

1. The President emphasised India's commitment to **sustainable and inclusive development**.
2. She stated that India had achieved many **Sustainable Development Goals ahead of the 2030 deadline**.
3. The overall vision presented in the address connects **youth development, women's empowerment, security, poverty reduction and sustainability** with India's future development.

Source: THE HINDU - https://www.pressreader.com/india/the-hindu-international-9bn2/20260815/281560887622790?srsId=AfmBOoq4Ytoab5V0j6xmuHt_ZBzZr68IsTJEJudhV71W2dZq_cmy5qzH

18. Appeal and Complaint Management System (AppCoMS 2.0)

Prelims:

Indian Polity & Governance

Mains:

GS Paper II: Indian Polity & Governance

Current relevance:

The **Central Information Commission (CIC)** launched the upgraded **Appeal and Complaint Management System (AppCoMS 2.0)**, to strengthen its digital infrastructure.

Highlights:

About AppCoMS:

1. **Appeal and Complaint Management System (AppCoMS)** is an **online web application portal** of the Central Information Commission. It was initially introduced in **September 2016**.
2. It enables citizens to file **Second Appeals and Complaints online** under the RTI Act, 2005.
3. It facilitates **end-to-end digital processing**, covering registration, scheduling of hearings, issuance and uploading of decisions and other related processes.



Key Features:

1. Provides **enhanced security standards, improved functionalities and streamlined workflows**.
2. Creates dedicated user accounts for **applicants, Central Public Information Officers (CPIOs) and other stakeholders**, linked with their email IDs and mobile numbers.
3. Applicants can submit **Second Appeals and Complaints** through their accounts.
4. They can **track case timelines, access documents and download hearing notices, decisions and orders**.
5. Supports **Digital Signature Certificates (DSCs)** for digitally signing and issuing notices and orders.

Facilities for Public Authorities:

1. Dedicated **user accounts for CPIOs** of Public Authorities are provided.
2. CPIOs can access details relating to **Second Appeals and Complaints**.
3. They can also **submit case-related documents digitally** through the portal.

4. These features are intended to enable **smoother and more efficient processing** of cases.

Significance:

The launch of **AppCoMS 2.0** strengthens the CIC's digital infrastructure and promotes **transparent and citizen-centric governance** through technology.

Source: PIB –

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2300631®=48&lang=2>

19. Kaushal Mahotsav**Prelims:**

Government initiatives

Mains:

GS Paper II: Government policies and interventions for development, GS Paper III: Indian Economy

Current relevance:

The **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE)** organised **West Bengal's first-ever Kaushal Mahotsav** at Balurghat, Dakshin Dinajpur, in collaboration with the Government of West Bengal and **National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)**.



Highlights:

About Kaushal Mahotsav:

1. **Flagship Initiative:** Kaushal Mahotsav is a **flagship initiative of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE).**
2. **Employment Platform:** It seeks to connect young people with employment and career opportunities.
3. **Industry Participation:** It provides a platform where job seekers interact directly with employers from multiple sectors.
4. **Skill–Employment Linkage:** The initiative seeks to translate skills into gainful employment and career opportunities for youth.

Key Outcomes of Balurghat Kaushal Mahotsav:

1. **First in West Bengal:** It marked West Bengal's first-ever Kaushal Mahotsav, organised at Balurghat.
2. **Large Participation:** More than **7,500 interviews** were conducted during the event.
3. **Candidate Shortlisting:** Over **4,500 candidates** were shortlisted.
4. **Employment Opportunities:** More than **7,000 job opportunities** were provided by 50+ employers.

5. Opportunities were available across **manufacturing, retail, logistics, healthcare, hospitality, food processing, banking and financial services**, and other services.

Objectives:

1. **Employment Access:** Connect aspiring youth directly with **job and career opportunities**.
2. **Skill–Industry Interface:** Create a platform connecting **skilled youth with employers across different sectors**.
3. **Regional Inclusion:** Extend skilling and employment opportunities to youth in **remote regions**, irrespective of geography.
4. **Lifelong Learning:** Encourage youth to use **digital platforms for continuous learning, skill development and career growth**.
5. **Employability:** Strengthen the linkage between **education, skills and employment opportunities**.

Significance:

1. **Youth Empowerment:** Provides young people with direct access to diverse employment opportunities.
2. **Bridging Skill–Job Gap:** Connects available human skills with the requirements of employers.
3. **Inclusive Employment:** Taking such initiatives to remote regions can broaden access to employment opportunities.
4. **Industry Participation:** Participation of employers from diverse sectors widens the range of career choices available to local youth.
5. **Skill India Mission:** The initiative advances the broader objective of ensuring that India's youth are **skilled and connected with gainful employment opportunities**.

Source: PIB–

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=2300992®=48&lang=1>

20. National Medical Commission (NMC)

Prelims:

Indian Polity & Governance

Mains:

GS Paper II: Polity & Governance, health sector

Current relevance:

The National Medical Commission (NMC) has proposed the **Registration of Medical Practitioners and Licence to Practice Medicine (Amendment) Regulations, 2026**.



Highlights:

Key Provisions of the Proposed Framework:

1. A doctor registered and licensed by a **State Medical Council** would be eligible to **practise throughout India** without obtaining fresh registration in another State/UT.
2. Each practitioner would receive a **Unique Identification (UID) number** in the **National Medical Register (NMR)**.
3. The UID would incorporate the relevant **State/UT code and the practitioner's State Medical Register (SMR) number**.
4. The proposal seeks to amend the **2023 regulations** governing registration and licensing of medical practitioners.

Unified Digital Registration System:

1. Registration would be routed through a **unified registration portal** of the NMC's **Ethics and Medical Registration Board**.
2. State Medical Councils would continue to **scrutinise applications and grant registration and licences**.
3. Approval would simultaneously be reflected in the **State Medical Register (SMR) and National Medical Register (NMR)**.
4. The draft proposes **automatic electronic synchronisation** between State and national registers so that changes made in one are reflected in the other.
5. The NMR would function as a **central repository of doctors' registration** and disciplinary information.

Licence Validity & Regulatory Oversight:

1. The existing **five-year validity of a licence** would continue.
2. If renewal is not sought within **three months after expiry**, the registration would become **inactive**, and the practitioner would not be entitled to practise medicine.
3. The NMR would display whether a doctor's licence is **active or inactive**.
4. It would also record disciplinary proceedings such as **suspension, removal and restoration of registration**.
5. The Ethics and Medical Registration Board and NMC could seek records and monitor State Medical Councils to promote **uniformity and transparency**.

Disciplinary Jurisdiction:

1. Despite creating a nationwide registration framework, disciplinary jurisdiction would remain primarily with the **State Medical Council where the alleged professional misconduct, unethical conduct or medical negligence occurred**.
2. The concerned State Council would inquire into the matter and record the outcome against the doctor's credentials.

3. Where another State Council recommends disciplinary action, it would be reflected in the **NMR and automatically updated in the practitioner's primary State register.**

About National Medical Commission (NMC):

1. The National Medical Commission (NMC) is a **statutory body** under the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare**, Government of India.
2. It was constituted under the **National Medical Commission Act, 2019**. The NMC came into force as the new regulatory framework on **September 2020**.
3. The Commission consists of **33 members — a chairperson, 10 ex-officio members and 22 part-time members.**
4. The broader objectives of the NMC include improving access to **quality and affordable medical education**, ensuring adequate high-quality medical professionals across India, promoting **equitable and universal healthcare**, maintaining a **medical register for India**, encouraging medical research and establishing an effective **grievance-redressal mechanism.**

Source: THE HINDU - <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/national-medical-commission-proposes-uid-for-doctors/article71364491.ece>

21. SAMAVESH portal

Prelims:

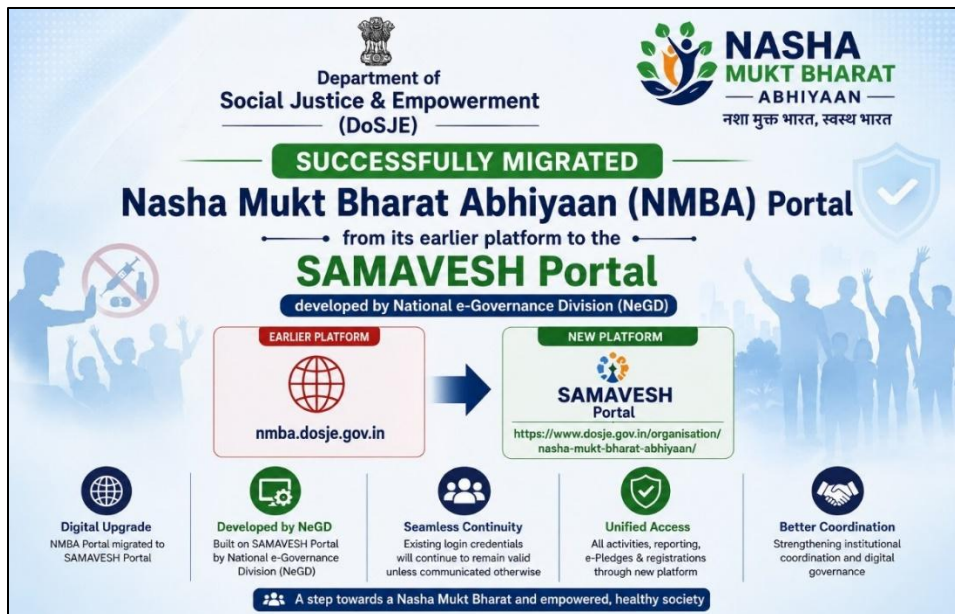
Government initiatives

Mains:

GS Paper II: Government policies and interventions for development

Current relevance:

The **Department of Social Justice & Empowerment (DoSJE)** has successfully migrated the **Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA) Portal** from its earlier platform to the **SAMAVESH Portal**, developed by the **National e-Governance Division (NeGD)**.



Highlights:

Background:

1. The **Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan (NMBA)** was launched on **15 August 2020** by the **Department of Social Justice & Empowerment**.
2. **Objective:** NMBA aims to **reach out to the masses and spread awareness about substance use**, with particular emphasis on **higher educational institutions, university campuses and schools**.
3. **Key Approach:** It focuses on **awareness generation**, identification of dependent populations, counselling and **treatment through hospitals and rehabilitation centres**, and capacity building of service providers.
4. **Community Participation:** The campaign emphasises participation by **youth, women, educational institutions, civil-society organisations** and other stakeholders to strengthen community involvement in addressing substance abuse.
5. **Digital Strengthening:** In **April 2026**, the **NMBA 2.0 App** was launched to strengthen monitoring and institutional coordination under the **National Action Plan for Drug**

Demand Reduction (NAPDDR). It includes features such as the nearest de-addiction centre, grant-status tracking and a public feedback mechanism.

6. **Department of Social Justice & Empowerment** has now migrated the **NMBA Portal** to the **SAMAVESH Portal**, developed by the **National e-Governance Division (NeGD)**.

Key Features:

1. **Old Portal Discontinued:** The earlier NMBA portal has been discontinued and will no longer be accessible.
2. **Continuity of Access:** Existing **login credentials will continue to remain valid** unless any change is officially communicated.
3. **Updated Digital Access:** New links and QR codes have been provided for the **NMBA Portal, e-Pledge, Nasha Mukti Mitr Registration, NMBA Login and NMBA Mobile App**.
4. All **activities, reporting, e-Pledges, Nasha Mukti Mitr registrations and other portal-based functions** will now be carried out through the new platform.

Significance:

1. **Digital Governance:** Migration to SAMAVESH strengthens the digital platform supporting NMBA-related functions.
2. **Unified Access:** Portal activities, registrations, reporting and e-Pledges can be accessed through the updated digital ecosystem.
3. **Administrative Coordination:** Adoption of common links across Ministries, Departments and stakeholders ensures consistency in official communication and implementation.
4. **Continuity of Services:** Retention of existing login credentials facilitates the transition from the earlier portal to the new platform.

Source: PIB –

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2301232®=48&lang=2>

22. Supreme Court Resets Interpretation of 'Industry' under Industrial Relations Code

Prelims:

Indian Polity & Governance

Mains:

GS Paper II: Judiciary, GS Paper III: Employment and labour-related issues

Current relevance:

A nine-judge Bench of the Supreme Court held that the expansive interpretation of **"industry"** laid down in the **1978 Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board v. R. Rajappa** judgment will **not govern the interpretation of "industry" under Section 2(p) of the Industrial Relations Code (IRC), 2020**. The term under the new Code must instead be interpreted on its **"own text and context."**

SUPREME COURT VERDICT
NINE-JUDGE BENCH CLARIFIES INTERPRETATION OF "INDUSTRY"

1978 PRECEDENT	2020 CODE
Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board v. R. Rajappa (Seven-Judge Bench)	INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS CODE (IRC), 2020
1978 interpretation will NOT govern Section 2(p) of IRC, 2020.	
NEW CODE TO BE INTERPRETED ON ITS OWN TEXT AND CONTEXT	

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

1978 JUDGMENT	MAJORITY RULING	PENDING CASES	NO REOPENING	DIFFERING OPINION
Used "Triple Test" for broad definition of "industry"	1978 judgment not the foundation for future interpretation under IRC, 2020	Under 1947 Act to follow 1978 interpretation	Already decided cases will not be disturbed	Justice B.V. Nagarathna favours inclusive definition to protect workers' rights

CLEAR DISTINCTION

CASES UNDER INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES ACT, 1947	VS	FUTURE INTERPRETATION UNDER IRC, 2020
1978 interpretation (Section 2(j)) continues to apply		Section 2(p) interpreted independently on its own text and context

The infographic also features a background image of the Supreme Court building and a foreground image of a gavel, a scale of justice, and a book titled 'BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD v. R. RAJAPPA (1978)'.

Highlights:

Supreme court decision:

1. The majority held that the meaning of **"industry" under Section 2(p) of the IRC, 2020** would not be burdened by the interpretation of Section 2(j) of the **Industrial Disputes Act, 1947**.

2. The 1978 *Bangalore Water Supply* judgment will therefore **not serve as the foundation for future interpretation** of “industry” under the IRC.
3. The term under the new Code will effectively be interpreted on a **clean slate, based on its own statutory text and context.**
4. The **Industrial Relations Code came into force in November 2025**, reducing the immediacy of reconsidering the old statutory definition.

Bangalore Water Supply Judgment, 1978:

1. The seven-judge Constitution Bench judgment, authored by **Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer**, had adopted a broad interpretation of “industry” under **Section 2(j) of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.**
2. It introduced the **“Triple Test”**, bringing an activity within the meaning of industry when it involved:
 - i. Systematic/organised activity
 - ii. Employer–employee cooperation
 - iii. Production of goods/services to satisfy human wants
3. This broad approach brought institutions such as **hospitals, educational institutions and municipalities** within the ambit of “industry”.
4. It excluded essentially **core sovereign activities**, such as the judiciary, law and order and defence.
5. The interpretation enabled workers across a wide range of activities to access labour-law protections, including **collective bargaining and remedies against unfair labour practices.**

Existing & Pending Cases:

1. The Supreme Court clarified that its ruling **will not disturb or reopen cases that have already been decided.**

2. **Pending proceedings under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947** will continue to follow the interpretation of **“industry” under Section 2(j)** established in the 1978 **Bangalore Water Supply** judgment.
3. For the **Industrial Relations Code, 2020**, the meaning of **“industry” under Section 2(p)** will be interpreted **independently on the basis of the new Code’s own text and context**.

Justice Nagarathna’s Differing View:

Justice B.V. Nagarathna considered the reference questioning the 1978 judgment **“unwarranted” and not maintainable**.

1. She argued that an **inclusive definition of industry remains important for protecting workers' rights**, particularly in an increasingly privatised economy.
2. Changes from public to private ownership have transformed many public-sector employees into **private-sector workers**, increasing the relevance of labour-law protection.
3. Altering a definition that had operated for nearly five decades could create **legal uncertainty and disturb industrial peace**.
4. She also emphasised that merely because the **State performs an activity does not automatically make it a sovereign function**.
5. Justice Nagarathna also supported the **“Dominant Nature Test”** evolved in the 1978 judgment. It applies particularly to organisations undertaking **multiple or integrated activities**.
6. The **dominant character of the organisation's activities** is examined to determine whether the establishment qualifies as an “industry”.

Source: THE HINDU – <https://www.pressreader.com/india/the-hindu-international-9bn2/20260821/282600269720497>

23. Mission Zero: Ending Fatalities in Sanitation Work

Prelims:

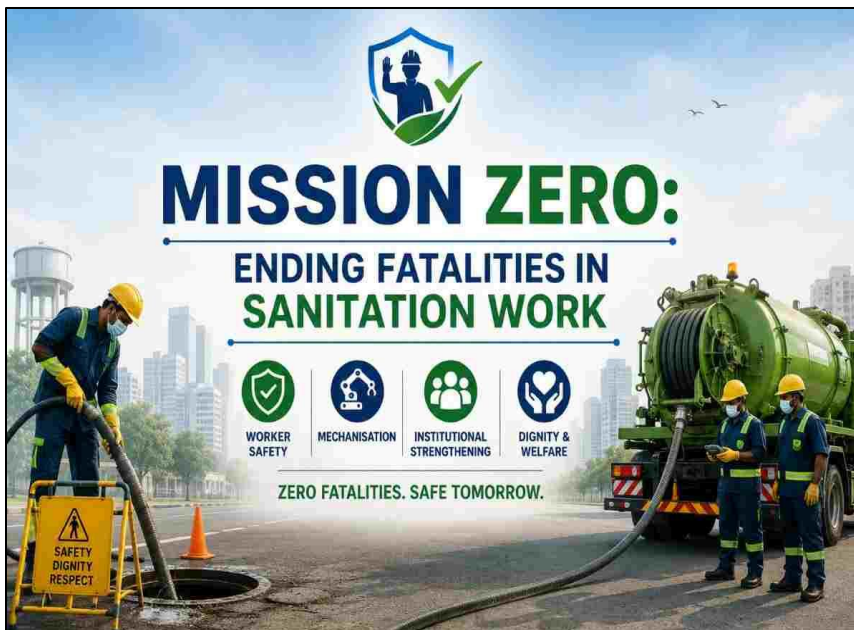
Government initiatives

Mains:

GS Paper II: Government policies and interventions, GS Paper III: Infrastructure

Current affairs:

A National Workshop on **“Mission Zero”** was held in **Bhubaneswar, Odisha**, to promote **mechanised and technology-driven sanitation**, strengthen worker safety and institutional preparedness, and achieve **zero fatalities in sanitation work**.



At a glance:

Mission Zero – Key Approach:

1. **Zero Fatalities:** The central objective is to ensure that **no sanitation worker loses** their life while performing sanitation duties.
2. **Mechanisation:** Promote and scale up **mechanised sanitation services** to eliminate hazardous manual sanitation practices.
3. **Institutional Preparedness:** Strengthen institutional mechanisms and improve **operational preparedness** for safe sanitation services.

4. **Technology Adoption:** Encourage the use of appropriate **safety devices, equipment** and technologies to improve worker safety and efficiency.
5. **Dignified Sanitation:** Build a sanitation ecosystem that is safe, systematic, dignified, **technology-driven and sustainable.**

Role of NAMASTE & GARIMA:

1. **Worker Safety:** NAMASTE and GARIMA seek to strengthen **occupational safety and health** of sanitation workers.
2. **Mechanised Operations:** The schemes promote **mechanisation of sanitation work**, reducing workers' exposure to hazardous practices.
3. **Social Empowerment:** They provide support relating to **education and livelihood opportunities** for sanitation workers and their dependents.
4. **Waste Pickers:** The **Swachhata Sarthi/waste picker component**, introduced in **2024**, brings waste pickers within the framework of social and economic empowerment initiatives.
5. **NAMASTE Extension:** NAMASTE has been **extended up to 2031** to strengthen systematic sanitation service delivery and achieve saturation of welfare measures for sanitation workers and their families.

Institutional & Technology-Based Measures:

1. **Emergency Response Sanitation Units (ERSUs):** These are intended to ensure **systematic sanitation service delivery** under NAMASTE.
2. **Safety Equipment:** Technologies and equipment are being promoted to enhance the **safety and efficiency of sanitation workers.**
3. **Innovation:** The workshop provided a platform to showcase innovations and identify **practical solutions for safer sanitation operations.**
4. **Livelihood Support: Waste-to-Wealth Self Help Groups** involving waste pickers and sanitation workers can promote livelihood generation, entrepreneurship and sustainable waste management.

Significance:

1. **Whole-of-Government Approach:** Coordinated action among the **Union and State governments, ULBs and other stakeholders** is essential for achieving zero fatalities.
2. **Worker Dignity:** Mechanisation and occupational safety can help create **safer and more dignified working conditions**.
3. **Social Security:** Welfare measures extend beyond workplace safety to include **health, education and livelihood support**.
4. **Sustainable Sanitation:** Integration of technology, mechanisation, institutional preparedness and worker welfare supports a sustainable sanitation ecosystem.
5. **Inclusive Implementation:** Participation of governments, ULBs, technology providers, civil society and sanitation workers strengthens **coordinated action against hazardous manual sanitation practices**.

Source: PIB-

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleaseDetail.aspx?PRID=2302324®=48&lang=1>

24. National Commission for Safai Karam Charis

Prelims:

Polity & Governance, Government Bodies & Schemes

Mains:

GS Paper II: Polity & Governance, Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections

Current relevance:

The **National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK)** celebrated its **33rd Foundation Day** in New Delhi, with over 900 Safai Karamcharis and other stakeholders participating.



Highlights:

National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK):

1. The **NCSK was set up in 1994** to address issues concerning Safai Karamcharis.
2. It acts as an important bridge between **Safai Karamcharis, Central and State Governments and local bodies**.
3. It recommends programmes for eliminating **inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities** faced by Safai Karamcharis.
4. It studies and evaluates programmes relating to their **social and economic rehabilitation**.
5. It can investigate specific grievances and take **suo motu notice** of non-implementation of relevant programmes, schemes, decisions, guidelines and laws.
6. It also monitors working conditions relating to **health, safety and wages** under employers including governments, municipalities and panchayats.

Legal Mandate against Manual Scavenging:

The **Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and Their Rehabilitation Act, 2013** expanded the NCSK's mandate to monitor implementation of the Act, investigate complaints of violations, recommend corrective action, advise the **Central**

and State Governments on effective implementation, and **take suo motu cognisance** of cases involving non-implementation of the Act.

Shift towards Mechanised & Safe Sanitation:

The programme articulated the national objective as:

1. Hazardous manual cleaning should increasingly be replaced by **modern machinery and technology**.
2. Workers should receive **proper training, protective equipment and safe operating procedures**.
3. Accident prevention should receive the highest priority.
4. Compensation, assistance and rehabilitation for affected families should be provided in a **time-bound manner**.

NAMASTE Scheme:

1. The **National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE)** was highlighted as an initiative aimed at creating a **safe, mechanised and dignified sanitation ecosystem**.
2. The scheme focuses on identification and profiling of sanitation workers, provision of **safety equipment, training, healthcare coverage**, skill development and access to sustainable livelihood opportunities.
3. Its approach links occupational safety with the broader **health and socio-economic empowerment of sanitation workers**.

Governance & Social Justice Significance:

1. The Constitution's principles of **equality, dignity and social justice** were emphasised as central to protecting sanitation workers.
2. Responsibility extends beyond the Union Government and NCSK to **State governments, Urban Local Bodies, employing institutions and society**.
3. Safai Karamcharis needs access not only to workplace safety but also to **education, healthcare, social security and dignified livelihood opportunities**.

4. NCSK also launched a **Missed-Call Facility** enabling stakeholders to raise grievances and representations for follow-up and resolution.
5. The broader objective is to ensure that **Swachh Bharat is accompanied by the safety, dignity and empowerment of the workers who sustain sanitation services.**

Source: PIB –

<https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2302541®=48&lang=2>

25. National Cooperative Development Corporation (Amendment) Act, 2026

Prelims:

Indian Polity & Governance

Mains:

GS Paper II: Government policies and interventions, GS Paper III: Agriculture

Current relevance:

The **Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM)** has criticised the **National Cooperative Development Corporation (Amendment) Act, 2026**, alleging that its expanded financial and operational scope could **encroach upon States' powers over cooperatives** and divert resources away from agriculture and rural development.



Highlights:

NCDC (Amendment) Act, 2026 – Key Changes:

1. Parliament passed the **NCDC (Amendment) Bill, 2026** in August to amend the **NCDC Act, 1962**.
2. The amendment expands the **financial and operational scope** of the National Cooperative Development Corporation.
3. It permits the NCDC to **directly extend financial assistance to cooperative societies**.
4. It also allows the NCDC to **take shares in cooperative societies**.
5. The earlier requirement that eligible **industrial and village cooperatives must be located only in rural areas** has been removed.
6. Consequently, NCDC operations can extend into **non-agricultural sectors and beyond rural areas**.

Constitutional dimension:

1. **Cooperation** is identified in the given information as a subject under the **State List in the Seventh Schedule**.
2. The NCDC is a **statutory corporation**, with its original legal basis in the **NCDC Act, 1962**.

Judicial dimension:

1. The SKM referred to a **2021 Supreme Court order**, arguing that the Union has **limited powers to intervene in cooperative societies under State governments**.
2. It alleges that the 2026 amendment could weaken this federal limitation by enabling more direct Union-level institutional involvement.
3. Thus, the controversy raises a broader question of balancing **national-level cooperative development with State autonomy and cooperative federalism**.

Major Challenges:

- ❖ **Federalism & Cooperative Autonomy:**

1. The **Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM)** argues that **“cooperation” falls within the State List under the Seventh Schedule**, making regulation of State-level cooperatives primarily a state concern.
2. It contends that direct NCDC involvement in cooperative societies could lead to greater **centralisation of cooperative institutions**.
3. The organisation also invoked the principles of the **International Cooperative Alliance**, particularly autonomy, independence and democratic control of cooperatives.
4. According to the SKM, allowing direct financing and shareholding by NCDC could affect these principles of cooperative autonomy.

❖ **Agriculture & Rural Development:**

1. The SKM argues that cooperatives have traditionally played an important role in **agriculture, rural industries and infrastructure development**.
2. Removing the rural-location requirement could allow NCDC resources to flow towards **urban and non-agricultural activities**.
3. It fears this could reduce the relative priority given to **agriculture-based rural industrial and infrastructure development**.
4. The debate therefore involves balancing an **expanded operational role** for NCDC with the traditional developmental role of rural cooperatives.

Measures to Address the Issues:

1. **Strengthen Cooperative Federalism:** Promote regular **Centre–State consultations** to jointly review policies, reforms and implementation concerning cooperatives.
2. **Ensure Equitable Financing:** Monitor the distribution of **NCDC financial assistance across States** to ensure fair and balanced access to credit.
3. **Maintain Flexible Funding Channels:** Provide NCDC assistance either **directly to eligible cooperatives or through State Governments**, depending on institutional requirements.

4. **Safeguard Rural Priorities:** Continue giving adequate support to **agriculture, farmer collectives, dairy, fisheries, horticulture, storage, processing and rural infrastructure** even as NCDC expands its activities.
5. **Build Cooperative Capacity:** Combine financial support with **capacity building, business development and market linkages** to strengthen the long-term viability of cooperatives.
6. **Enhance Transparency:** Improve **digital monitoring and data-based oversight**, including through the National Cooperative Database, along with regular review involving States and relevant stakeholders.

Source: THE HINDU - <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/farmers-body-terms-national-co-operative-development-corporation-act-anti-federal/article71385491.ece>