



Principle of Reasonable Accommodation

For Prelims: International Labour Organisation (ILO), Supreme Court, Hijab, Fundamental Rights, Cases Related to Freedom of Religion, Rights of People with Disabilities Act, 2016.

For Mains: Principle of 'Reasonable Accommodation'. Fundamental Rights, Judiciary, Government Policies & Interventions, Women's Issues, Cases Related to Freedom of Religion.

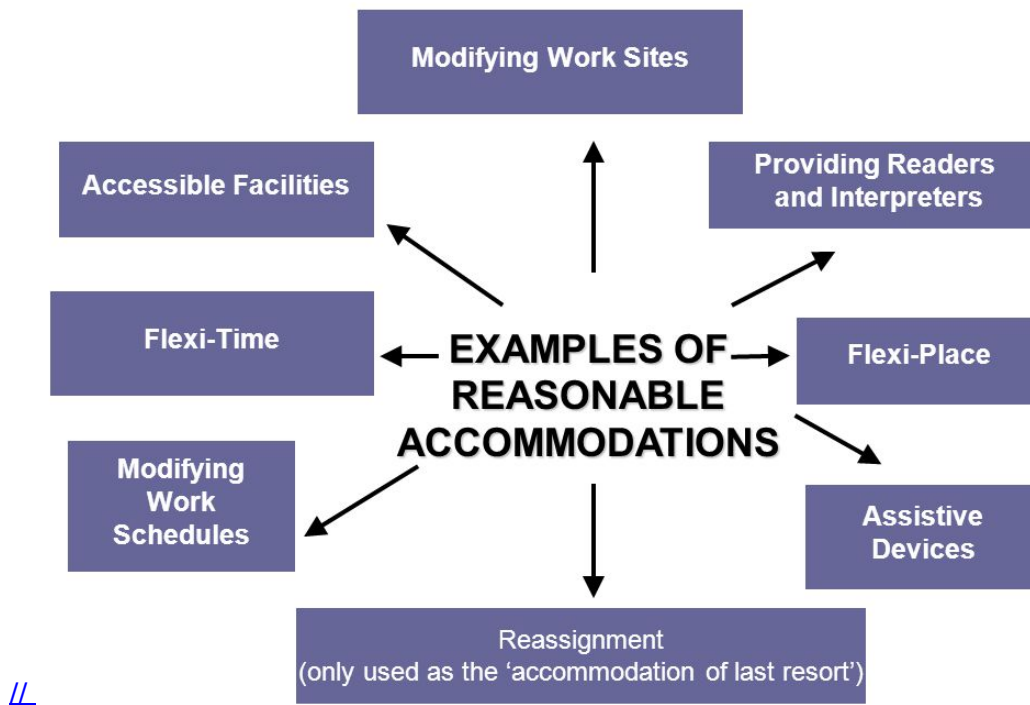
Why in News?

Recently, in the context of [hijab controversy](#), the **Karnataka High Court** ruled in favour of the State's circular that required students in **educational institutions** should only wear prescribed uniforms.

- The decision effectively upheld the **denial of entry to students wearing the hijab**.
- The court rejected an argument in support of permitting Muslim girls wearing head-scarves that was based on the **principle of 'reasonable accommodation'**.

What is the Principle of 'Reasonable Accommodation'?

- **About: 'Reasonable accommodation'** is a principle that promotes equality, enables the grant of positive rights and prevents discrimination based on **disability, health condition or personal belief**.
 - Its use is primarily in the **disability rights sector**.
 - It **captures the positive obligation** of the State and private parties to **provide additional support to persons with disabilities** to facilitate their full and effective participation in society.
 - For a person with disability, the constitutionally guaranteed **fundamental rights to equality (Article 14), the six freedoms (Article 19) and the right to life (Article 21)** will ring hollow if they are not given this additional support that helps make these rights real and meaningful for them.
- **Article 2 of UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD):** It is necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.



//

International Labour Organisation (ILO) Case Study

- In 2016, the [ILO](#) came out with a practical guide on **promoting diversity and inclusion through workplace adjustments**.
- The need for **workplace accommodation may arise in a variety of situations**, but four categories of workers were chosen for the guide:
 - Workers with disabilities,
 - Workers living with [HIV and AIDS](#),
 - Pregnant workers and those with family responsibilities, and
 - Workers who hold a particular religion or belief.
- These categories of workers come across **different kinds of barriers at work**. These may result in either loss of employment or lack of access to employment.
- The provision of reasonable accommodation plays a major role in addressing these barriers and thus contributes to **greater workplace equality, diversity and inclusion**.
- A modified working environment, shortened or staggered working hours, additional support from supervisory staff and reduced work commitments are ways in which accommodation can be made.

PYQ

International Labour Organisation's Conventions 138 and 182 are related to (2018)

- Child Labour
- Adaptation of agricultural practices to global climate change
- Regulation of food prices and food security
- Gender parity at the workplace

Ans: (a)

What is the Legal position on this in India?

- In India, the [Rights of People with Disabilities Act, 2016](#), defines ‘reasonable accommodation’ as “necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments, without imposing a disproportionate or undue burden in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise of rights equally with others”.
 - The definition of ‘discrimination’ in **Section 2(h)** includes ‘denial of reasonable accommodation’.
- **Jeeja Ghosh and Another v. Union of India and Others (2016)**: The Supreme Court, held that Equality not only implies preventing discrimination but goes beyond in remedying discrimination against groups suffering systematic discrimination in society.
 - In concrete terms, it means embracing the notion of positive rights, affirmative action and reasonable accommodation.”
- **Vikash Kumar v. UPSC (2021)**: The court ruled that [benchmark disability](#), that is a specified disability to the extent of 40%, is related only to special reservation for the disabled in employment, but it need not be a restriction for other kinds of accommodation.
 - It also said **failure to provide reasonable accommodation amounts to discrimination**.

PYQ

India is home to lakhs of persons with disabilities. What are the benefits available to them under the law? (2011)

1. Free schooling till the age of 18 years in government run schools.
2. Preferential allotment of land for setting up business.
3. Ramps in public buildings.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (d)

[Source: TH](#)

Draft Bill for a New National Public Health Law

For Prelims: New Health Law Draft, Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897

For Mains: Key issues faced by the healthcare sector of India and steps that can be taken.

Why in News?

Officials from the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and other Government departments have **started the process of finalising various provisions of the draft Bill for a new national public health law.**

- The proposed **National Public Health Act** has been in the works since 2017 and, once enacted, will replace the **125-year-old [Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897](#).**

What is the Background?

- In 2017, the draft of the **Public Health (Prevention, Control and Management of Epidemics, Bio-terrorism and Disasters) Act, 2017** was released.
- In September, 2020, it was announced that the Government would **formulate a national public health law** (National Public Health Bill).

What are the Expected Provisions of the Draft Bill?

- **Four-tier Health Administration Architecture:**
 - The draft Bill proposes a **four-tier health administration architecture**, with “multisectoral” national, state, district and block-level public health authorities who will have **“well defined” powers and functions to deal with “public health emergencies”**.
 - It is proposed to be **headed by the Union Health Ministry**, and be chaired by **health ministers of states**.
 - **District Collectors will lead the next tier**, and block units will be headed by Block Medical Officers or Medical Superintendents.
 - These authorities **will have powers to take measures for the prevention of [non-communicable diseases](#)** and emerging infectious diseases.
- **Creation of Public Health Cadres:**
 - The proposed law also **provides for creation of public health cadres** at national and state levels.
- **Definition of Isolation, Quarantine and Lockdown:**
 - The draft Bill has defined various measures such as **isolation, quarantine and lockdown**, which have been extensively invoked by the Centre and states for Covid management.
 - It defines a lockdown as **“restriction with certain conditions or complete prohibition** of running any form of transport” on roads or **[inland water](#)**.
 - The definition of a **lockdown covers “restrictions” on the movement or gathering of persons** in any place whether public or private.
 - It also includes **“prohibiting or restricting” the working of factories, plants, mining or construction or offices or Educational institutions or market places.**
- **Situation for Declaring Public Health Emergency:**
 - The draft lays down several situations in which **“public health emergency” can be declared**. They include

- [bioterrorism](#)
- appearance of a novel or previously controlled or eradicated infectious agent or biological toxin;
- a [natural disaster](#)
- a [chemical attack](#) or accidental release of chemicals
- a [nuclear attack or accident](#).

What is the State of India's Healthcare System?

▪ Increased Expenditure on Health:

- According to the recently released [National Health Accounts \(NHA\) report for 2017-18](#), the government has increased the expenditure on health, making the decline of [Out-Of Pocket Expenditure \(OOPE\)](#) to **48.8% in 2017-18 from 64.2% in 2013-14**.

- It shows that **total public spending on health** as a percentage of GDP has increased to a **historic high of 1.35% of GDP breaking through the 1%-1.2% mark of GDP**.

▪ Share of Primary Health Care: The share of primary healthcare in current Government health expenditure has increased from **51.1% in 2013-14 to 54.7% in 2017-18**.

- Primary and secondary care accounts for more than **80% of the current Government health expenditure**.

▪ Social Security Expenditure on Health: The share of **social security expenditure on health**, which includes the social health insurance programme, Government financed [health insurance schemes](#), and medical reimbursements made to Government employees, has increased.

What are the issues with Healthcare Infrastructure?

▪ Issues of Healthcare Insurance: In a recently released [report by NITI Aayog](#), at least **30% of the population, or 40 crore individuals** (referred as the missing middle in this report) are devoid of any financial protection for health.

- Additionally, the high **18% GST on insurance premiums** further discourages people from opting for health insurance.

▪ Lack of Private Sector Involvement: The **primary healthcare sector is not one that will result in profits** but provides more of basic level healthcare which is why the burden across the world for primary health care largely lies on the governments; it is more in the public domain rather than in the private domain.

▪ Lack of Original Molecular Development: India is the **pharmacy to the world** because the drug manufacturing in India is quite robust. However, **due to lack of financing, there is no or very little original molecular development** which is required as inputs into drug manufacturing.

- This area **requires impetus from the government** so that India's production can be updated along frontier medicines too rather than only on generic medicines.

What are the Initiatives related to the Health Sector?

- [National Health Policy, 2017](#)
- [Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission](#)
- [Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission](#)
- [PM Atmanirbhar Swasth Bharat Scheme](#)
- [Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana](#)
- [Jan Aushadhi Yojana](#)

Way Forward

- **India's health system needs more government funding for health.** However, when it comes to [Urban Local Bodies](#), this has to be a blend of incremental financial allocations supplemented by elected representatives showing health leadership.
- It also **requires multiple agencies coordinating with each other**, increased citizen engagement in health, setting up of accountability mechanisms and guiding the process under a multidisciplinary group of technical and health experts.
- To bring down costs beyond a few islands of excellence such as the AIIMS, investments in other medical colleges shall be encouraged to possibly bring down costs and ramp up quality of health services.
- **Incentivising R&D (Research and Development)** by additional tax deductions to further support greater investments in new drug developments and reducing GST (Goods and Services Tax) on life-saving and essential drugs.

[Source: IE](#)

NPPA's Role in Fixing Drug Prices

For Prelims: NPPA, Wholesale Price Index.

For Mains: NPPA and its Role in Price Fixing of Drugs.

Why in News

National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) may allow a **price hike of over 10% in the drugs and devices listed under the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM)**.

- The escalation which is expected to have an impact on nearly 800 drugs and devices is propelled by the rise in the [Wholesale Price Index \(WPI\)](#).

What is NPPA and its Mandates?

- **About**
 - NPPA was **constituted by the Government of India in 1997 as an attached office of the Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers** as an independent Regulator for pricing of drugs and to ensure availability and accessibility of medicines at affordable prices.
 - It was made to fix/revise prices of controlled bulk drugs and formulations and to enforce price and availability of the medicines in the country, **under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order, 1995-2013 (DPCO)**.
 - A **bulk drug — also called Active Pharmaceutical Ingredient (API)** — is the chemical molecule in a medicine that lends the product the claimed therapeutic effect.
- **Mandates**
 - To implement and enforce the provisions of the Drugs (Prices Control) Order in accordance with the powers delegated to it.
 - To deal with all legal matters arising out of the decisions of the NPPA.
 - To monitor the availability of drugs, identify shortages and to take remedial steps.
 - To collect/maintain data on production, exports and imports, market share of individual

companies, profitability of companies etc., for bulk drugs and formulations and undertake and/ or sponsor relevant studies in respect of pricing of drugs/ pharmaceuticals.

How does the Pricing Mechanism work?

- All **medicines under the NLEM are under price regulation**. The NLEM lists drugs used to treat fever, infection, heart disease, hypertension, anaemia etc and includes commonly used medicines like paracetamol, azithromycin etc.
 - The Health Ministry prepares a list of drugs eligible for price regulation, following which the **Department of Pharmaceuticals incorporates them into Schedule 1 of DPCO**.
 - The Standing Committee on Affordable Medicines and Health Products (SCAMHP) will advise the drug price regulator the National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) on vetting the list. The NPPA then fixes the prices of drugs in this Schedule.
- As per the Drugs (Prices) Control Order 2013, **scheduled drugs, about 15% of the pharma market, are allowed an increase by the government as per the WPI (Wholesale Price Index) while the rest 85% are allowed an automatic increase of 10% every year**.
 - The **annual change in prices of scheduled drugs is controlled and rarely crosses 5%**.
 - Under the **Drugs and Cosmetics Act 1940, the drugs are classified in schedules** and regulations are laid down for their storage, display, sale, dispensing, leveling, prescribing etc.
- The **pharma lobby is now asking for at least a 10% increase for scheduled drugs too** rather than going by the WPI.
 - As over the past few years, input costs have flared up. One of the reasons is that 60%-70% of the country's medicine needs are dependent on China.

[Source: TH](#)

ExoMars 2022 Mission

For Prelims: ExoMars 2022 Mission, NASA's Perseverance Rover, UAE's Hope Mars Mission, Tianwen-1, China's Mars Mission.

For Mains: Achievements of Indians in Science & Technology.

Why in News?

The **European Space Agency's ExoMars 2022 mission** won't launch in September, 2022 as planned after the agency suspended all cooperation with Russia's space program Roscosmos.

- Earlier, the Russian space agency Roscosmos held that it will not cooperate with Germany on joint experiments in the Russian segment of the [International Space Station \(ISS\)](#).

What is the ExoMars 2022 Mission?

- **About:**
 - **It is a two-stage mission:**
 - **First Part:**
 - Its first mission launched **atop a Proton-M rocket in 2016 and consisted of the European Trace Gas Orbiter** and test lander called

Schiaparelli.

- The orbiter was successful while the test lander failed during its descent to Mars.

- **Second Part:**

- It comprises **a rover and surface platform:**

- This **second part of the mission** was originally planned for July 2020. But it was postponed until this September due to technical issues.

- **ESA and [National Aeronautics and Space Administration \(NASA\)](#)** were the original ExoMars collaborators, but NASA dropped out in 2012 due to budgeting problems.
- **Russia took NASA's place** in the project in 2013.

- **Objective:**

- The primary aim of the mission is to **check if there has ever been life on Mars** and also understand the history of water on the planet.
 - The European rover will **drill to the sub-surface of Mars** to collect samples from about 2 m of depth.
- The main goal is to **land ESA's rover at a site** which has high-potential for finding well-preserved organic material, particularly from the history of the planet.

PYQ

Which one of the following planets has the largest number of natural satellites or moons? (2009)

- (a) Jupiter
- (b) Mars
- (c) Saturn
- (d) Venus

Ans: (a)

How is the Mission Dependent on Russia?

- The mission **uses a number of Russian-made components** — including the rockets.
 - The 2016 launch used a **Russian-made Proton-M rocket**, the same type planned for the launch in September, 2022.
- Many components of the mission's rover are also Russian-made.
 - The components include **radioisotope heaters** that are used to keep the rover warm at night on the surface of Mars.

What about the Other Mars Missions?

- **[NASA's Perseverance Rover](#)**
- **[UAE's Hope Mars Mission](#)** (UAE's first-ever interplanetary mission)
- India's **[Mars Orbiter Mission \(MOM\)](#)** or Mangalyaan:
 - It was launched from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Andhra Pradesh by the **[Indian Space Research Organisation](#)** in November 2013.
 - It was launched on board a PSLV C25 rocket with the aim of studying Martian surface and mineral composition as well as scan its atmosphere for methane (an indicator of life on Mars).
- **[Tianwen-1: China's Mars Mission](#)**

What do we know about Mars?

- **Size and Distance:**

- It is the **fourth planet from the Sun** and the second-smallest planet in the Solar System.
- Mars is about **half the size of Earth**.
- **Similarity to the Earth (Orbit and Rotation):**
 - As Mars orbits the Sun, it **completes one rotation every 24.6 hours**, which is very similar to one day on Earth (23.9 hours).
 - Mars' axis of rotation is tilted 25 degrees with respect to the plane of its orbit around the Sun. This is similar to Earth, which has an axial tilt of 23.4 degrees.
 - Mars has distinct seasons like Earth, but they last longer than seasons on Earth.
 - Martian days are called sols—short for 'solar day'.
- **Other Features:**
 - The reason Mars **looks reddish is due to oxidation or rusting of iron in the rocks**, and dust of Mars. Hence it is also called the Red Planet.
 - It has the **largest volcano in the solar system** i.e. Olympus Mons.
 - It has **two small moons, Phobos and Deimos**.

PYQ

Which of the following pairs is/are correctly matched? (2014)

	Spacecraft		Purpose
1.	Cassini-Huygens	:	Orbiting the Venus and transmitting data to the Earth
2.	Messenger	:	Mapping and investigating the Mercury
3.	Voyager 1 and 2	:	Exploring the outer solar system

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (b)

[Source: IE](#)

Surge in Oil and Natural Gas Prices

For Prelims: Natural gas, International Energy Agency, Urals crude, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

For Mains: Surge in Oil and Natural Gas Prices and its impact on India, Effect of Policies & Politics of Countries on India's Interests

Why in News?

Recently, the U.S. announced the **banning the import of Russian oil, liquefied [natural gas](#), and coal to the country.**

- The move is aimed at **depriving Russia of the economic resources** needed to continue its [war in Ukraine](#).
- In the run up to the U.S. announcement, **international oil prices surged to a 14-year high** with [Brent crude](#) futures hitting **USD139.13** intraday.

What are the Reasons for Targeting Russia's Energy Exports?

- **Largest Oil Producer:**
 - Russia is the **world's third-largest oil producer**, trailing **only Saudi Arabia and the United States**.
 - In January 2022, **Russia's total oil production was 11.3 million barrels per day (mb/d)**, of which 10 mb/d was crude oil, according to the Paris-based intergovernmental [International Energy Agency \(IEA\)](#).
- **World's Largest Exporter of Crude and Oil Products:**
 - Russia is the **world's largest exporter of crude and oil products**, having shipped 7.8 mb/d in December 2021, and the **second largest supplier of crude to the world** with only Saudi Arabia exporting more crude than it.
- **Major Exporter of Natural Gas:**
 - Russia is also a **major exporter of natural gas** and supplied almost a third, or 32%, of the gas consumed in Europe (and the U.K.) in 2021.
 - The revenue it made from the sales of oil and gas in 2021 accounted for **36% of Russia's total revenue of 25.29 trillion rubles last year**.

PYQ

In the context of global oil prices, "Brent crude oil" is frequently referred to in the news. What does this term imply? (2011)

1. It is a major classification of crude oil.
2. It is sourced from North Sea.
3. It does not contain sulphur.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 2 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (b)

What will be the impact of the Move on Russia and on Global Crude Prices?

- Given that Russia exported substantially more than **7 million barrels per day of crude and oil products** in 2021 the U.S. ban would **impact about one-tenth of Russia's oil exports**.
 - Also not all of its allies and partners around the world were currently in a position to join in

its import ban.

- Among its allies, the U.K. announced that it would phase out the import of Russian oil and oil products by the end of 2022.
- Still, **without the rest of Europe and China joining the import ban on Russian oil and gas**, the impact would **not be as severe on Russia's economy**.
 - China, which is the **world's largest importer of crude oil**, is Russia's single-biggest buyer.
 - OECD **Europe (or European members of the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](#))** collectively accounted for **60% of Russia's oil exports**.
- An already tight oil market had been **pushed over the edge with the loss of Russian supply** of about 1.5 mb/d (Millions of Barrels per Day) of its benchmark **Urals crude** and about 1 mb/d of refined products.
 - **Urals** is the most common **export grade of crude oil from Russia** and an important benchmark for the medium sour crude market in Europe.

PYQ

How much is one barrel of oil approximately equal to? (2008)

- (a) 131 litres
- (b) 159 litres
- (c) 257 litres
- (d) 321 litres

Ans: (b)

How can it impact India?

- India is the **world's third-largest oil consumer at 5.5 million barrels a day**, behind the US and China.
 - The oil demand is growing at **3-4% a year in the country**.
- By this estimate, in a decade, **India could be consuming about 7 million barrels a day**.
- **India imports 85% of its oil** from about 40 countries, the bulk coming from the Middle East and the US.
- From Russia, **India imports 2% of its supplies**, including oil which it converts to petroleum products after refining. So, it's not Russian oil but oil in general and its rising prices that have India worried.

Way Forward

- Currently, **oil prices are trading water as investors worldwide** await the outcome of the **U.S. Federal Reserve**, and energy traders keep an eye on demand in China, where a recent upsurge in **Covid-19 cases** has triggered targeted **lockdowns** in some parts of the country.
- If the U.S. Federal Reserve raises interest rates, as is widely expected, the dollar is likely to strengthen, thereby **making imports of oil costlier for net energy importers such as India**.
- India, the world's third-largest energy-consuming and importing nation, is pinning hope on **resumption of crude oil supplies from Venezuela and Iran** as well as higher production from **OPEC nations** to help cool international oil prices that have hit multi-year highs.
- It will also **evaluate the Russian offer to sell crude oil at discounted prices** after considering aspects such as insurance and freight required to move the fuel from the non-traditional supplier.

PYQ

The term 'West Texas Intermediate', sometimes found in news, refers to a grade of (2020)

- (a) Crude oil
- (b) Bullion
- (c) Rare earth elements
- (d) Uranium

Ans: (a)

[Source: TH](#)

Himalayan Griffons

For Prelims: Himalayan Griffons, Species of Vultures

For Mains: Conservation Efforts for Vultures

Why in News?

Recently, at least **Himalayan Griffons** died of suspected poisoning in Assam.



What do we Know about Himalayan Griffons?

- **About:**

- The Himalayan Griffon **Vulture**, **Gyps himalayensis**, is an Old World vulture in the **family Accipitridae**, which also includes eagles, kites, buzzards and hawks.
- It is closely related to the **European Griffon Vulture, G. fulvus**.
- This vulture is a **typical vulture, with a bald white head, very broad wings**, and short tail feathers.
- It has a **white neck ruff and yellow bill** and the whitish body and wing coverts contrast with the dark flight feathers.
- **Protection Status:**
 - **IUCN Red List:** Near Threatened (NT)
- **Distribution Range:**
 - The Himalayan vulture mostly lives in the **Himalayas on the Tibetan plateau** (India, Nepal and Bhutan, central China and Mongolia).
 - It is also **found in the Central Asian mountains** (from Kazakhstan and Afghanistan in the west to western China and Mongolia in the east).
 - Occasionally it **migrates to northern India** but migration usually only occurs altitudinally.

What are the Characteristics of Vultures?

- **About:**
 - It is one of the **22 species of large carrion-eating birds** that live predominantly in the tropics and subtropics.
 - They act an **important function as nature's garbage collectors** and help to keep the environment clean of waste.
 - Vultures also play a valuable role in keeping wildlife diseases in check.
- **Species in India:**
 - India is home to **9 species of Vulture** namely the Oriental white-backed, Long-billed, Slender-billed, Himalayan, Red-headed, Egyptian, Bearded, Cinereous and the Eurasian Griffon.
 - Most of these 9 species face danger of extinction.
 - Bearded, Long-billed, Slender-billed, Oriental white-backed are protected in the **Schedule-1** of the **Wildlife Protection Act 1972**. Rest are protected under **'Schedule IV'**.
- **Threats:**
 - Poisoning from diclofenac that is used as a medicine for livestock.
 - Loss of Natural Habitats due to anthropogenic activities.
 - Food Dearth and Contaminated Food.
 - Electrocution by Power lines.
- **Conservation Efforts**
 - **By India:**
 - The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) launched a **Vulture Action Plan 2020-25** for the conservation of vultures in the country.
 - To study the **cause of deaths of vultures in India, a Vulture Care Centre (VCC)** was set up at Pinjore, Haryana in 2001.
 - Later in 2004, the VCC was upgraded to being the first Vulture Conservation and Breeding Centre (VCBC) in India.
 - At present, there are nine Vulture Conservation and Breeding Centres (VCBC) in India, of which three are directly administered by the **Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)**.
 - **International:**
 - **International: SAVE (Saving Asia's Vultures from Extinction):**
 - The consortium of **like-minded, regional and international organisations, created** to oversee and coordinate conservation, campaigning and fundraising activities to help the plight of south Asia's vultures.
 - **Objective:** To save three critically important species from extinction through a single programme.

Sr. No.	Name of the Vulture Species	IUCN status	Pictorial Representation
1.	Oriental White-backed Vulture (Gyps Bengalensis)	Critically Endangered	
2.	Slender-billed Vulture (Gyps Tenuirostris)	Critically Endangered	
3.	Long-billed Vulture (Gyps Indicus)	Critically Endangered	
4.	Egyptian Vulture (Neophron Percnopterus)	Endangered	
5.	Red-Headed Vulture (Sarcogyps Calvus)	Critically Endangered	
6.	Indian Griffon Vulture (Gyps Fulvus)	Least Concerned	
7.	Himalayan Griffon (Gyps Himalayensis)	Near Threatened	
8.	Cinereous Vulture (Aegypius Monachus)	Near Threatened	
9.	Bearded Vulture or Lammergeier (Gypaetus Barbatus)	Near Threatened	

PYQ

Vultures which used to be very common in the Indian countryside some years ago are rarely seen nowadays. This is attributed to (2012)

- (a) the destruction of their nesting sites by new invasive species
- (b) a drug used by cattle owners for treating their diseased cattle
- (c) scarcity of food available to them
- (d) a widespread, persistent and fatal disease among them.

Ans: (b)

[Source: DTE](#)

Translation of India's Constitution into Ol Chiki Script

Why in News?

India's Constitution has been translated into **Ol Chiki script** for the first time.

- The Ol Chiki script, also known as **Ol Chemet', Ol Ciki, Ol**, and sometimes as the **Santali alphabet**, is the official writing system for Santhali, an Austroasiatic language recognized as an official regional language in India.

What is the Significance of Recognition?

- The Constitution of India has **special provisions for the development of the [Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes](#)**, and the translation has been useful in providing a deeper understanding of laws, powers and the community's **fundamental rights** for readers like Hembram. (Hembram is a surname which is commonly used among the Santhal tribals).
- Adivasi scholars often point to **Article 21 under Schedules V and VI of the Constitution** that set out the **rights of tribal peoples to development** in ways that affirm their autonomy and dignity, and are considered by many to be the foundation of Adivasi rights.
 - **5th Schedule:** It deals with the **administration and control of Scheduled Areas as well as of Scheduled Tribes** residing in any State other than the States of **Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram**.
 - **6th Schedule:** It **provides for the administration of tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram** to safeguard the rights of the tribal population in these states. This special provision is provided under **Article 244(2) and Article 275(1) of the Constitution**.

When was the Santali Language added to the Constitution of India?

- In 2003, the **92nd Constitutional Amendment Act added Santhali to Schedule VIII** to the Constitution of India, which lists the **official languages of India**, along with the **Bodo, Dogri and Maithili languages**.
- This addition meant that the **Indian government was obligated to undertake the**

development of the Santali language and to allow students appearing for school-level examinations and entrance examinations for public service jobs to use the language.

What about the Population of Santhal People?

- According to the [2011 Census of India](#), there are over **70 lakh people** who speak Santali across the country.
- But their geographic distribution is **not limited to India** — the community is also spread across **Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal**.
- Santhals are the **largest scheduled tribe in the Jharkhand state** of India in terms of population and are also found in the states of Assam, Tripura, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and West Bengal.

What is the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution?

▪ About:

- It lists the **official languages of the republic of India**. Part XVII of the Indian constitution deals with the official languages in [Articles 343 to 351](#).
- The Constitutional provisions related to the Eighth Schedule are:
 - **Article 344:** Article 344(1) provides for the constitution of a Commission by the President on expiration of five years from the commencement of the Constitution.
 - **Article 351:** It provides for the spread of the [Hindi language](#) to develop it so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India.
- However, It can be noted that **there is no fixed criteria for any language** to be considered for inclusion in the Eighth Schedule.

▪ Official Languages:

- The Eighth Schedule to the Constitution **consists of the following 22 languages:**
 - Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Malayalam, Manipuri, Marathi, Nepali, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Bodo, Santhali, Maithili and Dogri.
- Of these languages, **14 were initially included in the Constitution**.
- **Sindhi** language was added by the **21st Amendment Act of 1967**.
- **Konkani, Manipuri, and Nepali** were included by the **71st Amendment Act of 1992**.
- **Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, and Santhali** were added by the **92nd Amendment Act of 2003 which came into force in 2004**.

PYQ

Under which one of the following Constitution Amendment Acts, four languages were added to the languages under the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India, thereby raising their number to 22? (2008)

- (a) Constitution (Ninetieth Amendment) Act
- (b) Constitution (Ninety-first Amendment) Act
- (c) Constitution (Ninety-second Amendment) Act
- (d) Constitution (Ninety-third Amendment) Act

Ans: (c)

Mahatma Gandhi Green Triangle

Why in News

Mahatma Gandhi Green Triangle has been unveiled in **Madagascar** to mark Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav.

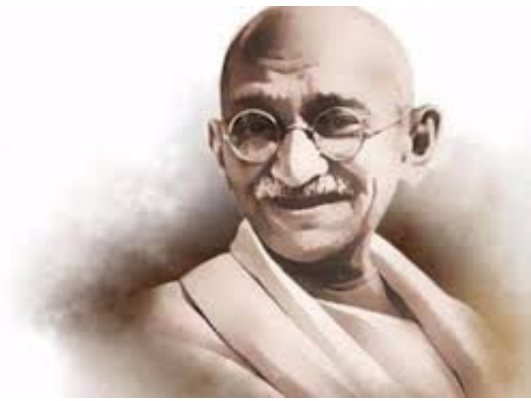


What are the Key Points?

- The word green in the **plaque** (a flat piece of stone or metal) signifies their commitment to **sustainable development** and saving the environment.
- The naming of this park as Mahatma Gandhi Green Triangle **is a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi**.
 - Gandhi was a **'Pravasi' who returned to India from South Africa**, led India's freedom struggle.
- Madagascar has **a large diaspora from the Indian state of Gujarat and it is fitting that a green triangle named after Gandhi**, who hailed from Porbandar in the state, is being unveiled in the capital of Madagascar (Antananarivo).
- Madagascar voiced appreciation for efforts by the Indian Embassy in greening the area, saying it meets the objective of the **Urban Municipality of Antananarivo** to create the maximum green space in the **capital city of Madagascar**.

What are the Key Facts Related to Mahatma Gandhi?

- **Birth:** 2nd October 1869 in Porbandar (Gujarat)



- **Brief Profile:** Lawyer, politician, social activist, and writer who became the leader of the nationalist movement against the British rule of India.
- **Satyagrah:** In **South Africa (1893-1915)**, he had successfully fought the racist regime with a novel method of mass agitation, which he called satyagraha.
- **Return to India:** He returned to India from South Africa on 9th January 1915.
 - **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)** is celebrated on 9th January every year to mark the contribution of the Overseas Indian community in the development of India.
- **Satyagraha Movements in India:** Mahatma Gandhi believed that the dharma of non-violence could unite all Indians.
 - In **1917 he travelled to Champaran** in Bihar to inspire the peasants to struggle against the oppressive plantation system.
 - In **1919**, he decided to launch a **nationwide satyagraha** against the proposed **Rowlatt Act (1919)**.
- **Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-22):** At the Calcutta session of the Congress in September 1920, he convinced other leaders of the need to start a non-cooperation movement in support of Khilafat as well as for swaraj.
- **The Salt March and the Civil Disobedience Movement:** For several years after the Non-cooperation Movement ended, Mahatma Gandhi focused on his social reform work.
 - In 1930, Gandhiji declared that he would lead a march to break the salt law.
 - According to this law, the state had a monopoly on the manufacture and sale of salt.
- **Quit India Movement:**
 - With the outbreak of **World War II** (1939-45), the nationalist struggle in India entered its last crucial phase.
- **Social Work:**
 - He worked for the upliftment of untouchables and gave them a new name '**Harijan**' meaning the children of God.
 - In September 1932, **B.R. Ambedkar** negotiated the **Poona Pact** with Mahatma Gandhi.
 - His symbol of self-reliance - the spinning wheel - became a popular symbol of the Indian Independence Movement.
- **Books Written:** Hind Swaraj, **My Experiments with Truth** (Autobiography)
- **Death:** He was shot dead by Nathuram Godse on **30th January, 1948**.
 - **30th January is observed as Martyrs' Day.**

Source: IE

PDF Refernece URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/21-03-2022/print>