



Vishwakarma Yojana and Lakapati Didi Scheme

For Prelims: [Self-help groups](#), Vishwakarma Yojana, Drones, Lakapati Didi Scheme, [Swadhar Greh](#), [Sukanya Samridhi Yojna](#), [Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra Scheme](#).

For Mains: Government Initiatives Related to Artisans and Women Empowerment

Source: [TH](#)

Why in News?

In the recent **Independence Day address**, the Prime Minister unveiled two significant initiatives aimed at empowering [artisans](#) and [women's self-help groups \(SHGs\)](#) across India.

- The two initiatives are: the **Vishwakarma Yojana** and the **provision of drones for women SHGs under Lakapati Didi Scheme**.

What is Vishwakarma Yojana?

▪ About:

- The Vishwakarma Yojana is a pioneering scheme designed to **uplift individuals skilled in traditional craftsmanship**, particularly from the [Other Backward Classes \(OBC\) community](#).
- This scheme, named **after the divine architect and craftsman Vishwakarma**, seeks to preserve and enhance the **guru-shishya parampara (teacher-pupil tradition)** of passing down skills within families engaged in various artisanal trades.

▪ Features:

- **Recognition and Support:** Artisans and craftspeople enrolled in the scheme will receive a **PM Vishwakarma certificate and an identity card**.
 - They will also be **eligible for collateral-free credit support of up to ₹1 lakh (first tranche)** and ₹2 lakh (second tranche) at a concessional interest rate of 5%.
- **Skill Development and Empowerment:** The Vishwakarma Yojana has been allocated a budget ranging from **₹13,000 crore to ₹15,000 crore** for five financial years from 2023-2024 to 2027-2028.
 - The scheme offers a stipend of **₹500 for skill training** and ₹1,500 for the purchase of modern tools.
- **Scope and Coverage:** The scheme encompasses **18 traditional trades across both rural and urban areas**. These trades encompass carpenters, **boat-makers, blacksmiths, potters, sculptors, cobblers, tailors, and more**.
- **Registration and Implementation:** Registration for the Vishwakarma Yojana can be completed at **common services centers in villages**.
 - While the central government will provide funding for the scheme, state governments' support will also be sought.
- **Integration with Value Chains:** A notable objective of the scheme is to **ensure that artisans are seamlessly integrated into both domestic and global value chains**, thus enhancing their market access and opportunities.

What is the Lakhpati Didi Scheme?

- **About:** The government's goal is to create **two crore "lakhpati didis" (prosperous sisters) in villages**. This scheme aligns with the broader mission of poverty alleviation and economic empowerment.
 - Under this scheme, **women will be provided skill training so that they can earn over Rs 1 lakh per year.**
- **Features:**
 - Drones will be **provided to women SHGs for agricultural activities.**
 - This initiative aims to leverage technology to transform the agricultural landscape while empowering women **in rural communities.**
 - Around **15,000 women's SHGs will be given training in operating and repairing drones.**
 - This training will not only create new avenues for income generation but also equip women with cutting-edge skills.
 - Drones have the potential to revolutionize agriculture by enabling [precision farming](#) , **crop monitoring, and pest control.**
 - Under the scheme, women will be trained in skills like **LED bulb making, plumbing, among others.**

Note: Self-Help Groups (SHGs) are informal associations of people who choose to come together to find ways to improve their living conditions.

- It can be defined as self governed group of people with **similar socio-economic background** and having a desire to collectively perform common purpose.

What are the Other Initiatives Related to Women Empowerment and Poverty Alleviation?

- [Swadhar Greh](#)
- [Sukanya Samridhi Yojna](#)
- [Pradhan Mantri Mahila Shakti Kendra Scheme](#)
- [Rashtriya Mahila Kosh](#)

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year's Question (PYQs)

Q. Can the vicious cycle of gender inequality, poverty and malnutrition be broken through microfinancing of women SHGs? Explain with examples. **(2021)**

Q. "The emergence of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in contemporary times pointsto the slow but steady withdrawal of the State from developmental activities". Examine the role of the SHGs in developmental activities and the measures taken by the Government of India to promote the SHGs **(2017)**

Red Fort: Venue for the India's Independence Day Celebration

For Prelims: Red Fort, [1857 Rebellion](#), Indian National Army, National flag, Tryst with Destiny, [Archaeological Survey of India](#) , [UNESCO World Heritage Site.](#)

Source: IE

Why in News?

As India proudly celebrated its **77th Independence Day**, the spotlight once again fell upon the **iconic Red Fort in Delhi**. This historic monument, etched with centuries of stories and struggles.

What are the Series of Events Associated with Red Fort?

- **Historical Significance of Red Fort:**
 - **Under the Delhi Sultanate:** Delhi emerged as a pivotal capital during the Delhi Sultanate (1206-1506).
 - **Babur, the founder of the Mughal dynasty**, termed **Delhi** the 'capital of all Hindustan' in the 16th century.
 - Despite brief relocations (**Akbar** shifted his capital to Agra) the **Mughals, under Shah Jahan, reestablished Delhi as their capital with Shahjahanabad in 1648**, known today as **Old Delhi**.
 - Shah Jahan laid the **foundation of his citadel, Lal-Qila or Red Fort**.
 - **Symbolic Significance of the Mughal Emperor:** By the 18th century, the **Mughal Empire had lost most of its territories and power**.
 - They were still regarded as symbolic rulers of India by some sections of society, **especially by those who opposed British colonialism**.
 - The **1857 Rebellion** epitomized this connection, when people marched towards Red fort and **declared the aged Bahadur Shah Zafar as their leader**.
- **British Imperial Rule and Transformation of the Red Fort:**
 - **British Capture of Delhi:** After subduing the 1857 Rebellion, the British intended to **erase the Mughal legacy by demolishing Shahjahanabad**.
 - While sparing the Red Fort, they stripped it of its grandeur, looted artworks, and replaced inner structures with British buildings.
 - This transformation left an indelible mark of British imperial authority on the Red Fort.
 - **Utilizing Symbolic Authority:** Britishers recognized Delhi's symbolic power.
 - The **Delhi Durbar ceremonies** reinforced British dominance and proclaimed the monarch as the Emperor of India.
 - In 1911, the **British moved their capital to Delhi**, constructing a new city that embodied the Indian ethos and centralized authority.

How Red Fort Became Venue for India's Independence Day Celebration ?

- The **Indian National Army's** trials at the Red Fort in the 1940s elevated its **symbolism**. These trials sparked sympathy for the INA and **intensified nationalist sentiments against British rule**, reinforcing the Red Fort's role as a symbol of defiance.
- As India approached independence, Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, **decided to hoist the national flag at the Red Fort**.
 - On August 15, 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru hoisted the National flag "Tiranga" at **Princess Park**, followed by his historic **"Tryst with Destiny" speech at the Red Fort on August 16, 1947**.
 - This was a **symbolic gesture of reclaiming the fort from British colonial rule and asserting India's sovereignty and identity**. It also marked the culmination of India's long and arduous struggle for freedom.
- **Since then**, every year on 15th August, the Prime Minister of India hoists the national flag and addresses the nation from the Red Fort.

- This tradition has become an integral part of India's Independence Day celebrations and reflects its pride and patriotism.

About Red Fort

- The Red Fort, so called because of the **red colour of the stone** largely used in it, is **octagonal on plan**, with two longer sides on the east and west.
- The fort is a masterpiece of Mughal architecture and a symbol of their cultural and artistic achievements. It was **designated as a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#) in 2007**.
 - Also, the fort is depicted on the reverse side of the new 500 rupee note.
- It is **currently under the management of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**, which is responsible for its conservation and maintenance.
 - The ASI has also installed various facilities for visitors, such as **museums, galleries, audio guides, light and sound shows, etc.**

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. In the context of Colonial India, Shah Nawaz Khan, Prem Kumar Sehgal and Gurbaksh Singh Dhillon are remembered as (2021)

- (a) leaders of Swadeshi and Boycott Movement
- (b) members of the Interim Government in 1946
- (c) members of the Drafting Committee in the Constituent Assembly
- (d) officers of the Indian National Army

Ans: (d)

- Prem Kumar Sehgal, Shah Nawaz Khan and Gurbaksh Singh Dhillon were the second-tier commanders of the Indian National Army (INA). **They underwent court-martial procedure by the British at Red Fort in 1945 and were sentenced to death.** However, following the widespread protests and unrest in India, they had to be released. **Therefore, option (d) is the correct answer.**

Q. With reference to the cultural history of India, consider the following statements: (2018)

1. White marble was used in making Buland Darwaza and Khankah at Fatehpur Sikri.
2. Red sandstone and marble were used in making Bara Imambara and Rumi Darwaza at Lucknow.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans: (d)

New Scheme to Complement PMAY-U

For Prelims: [Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban](#), [Affordable Rental Housing Complexes](#), GHTC India, ANGIKAAR Campaign, [Woman Empowerment](#).

For Mains: Features of PMAY-U, Government Initiatives Related to Infrastructure Development.

Source: TH

Why in News?

Recently, Prime Minister in his address on 77th Independence Day, unveiled a new scheme aimed at **alleviating the housing crisis faced by the urban poor.**

- The new scheme complements the [Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban \(PMAY-U\)](#), a flagship government initiative launched in 2015.

What is Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban?

▪ About:

- The PMAY-U, executed under the aegis of the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)**, aims to tackle the acute shortage of urban housing among economically disadvantaged segments.
- The mission's overarching goal is to provide "**pucca**" (**durable and permanent**) **houses to all eligible urban households by 2022.**
 - To achieve this, the **scheme has been extended until December 2024** to ensure the completion of all sanctioned houses without altering the funding pattern and implementation methodology.

▪ Beneficiaries: The Mission addresses urban housing shortage among the **EWS/LIG and MIG categories including the slum dwellers.**

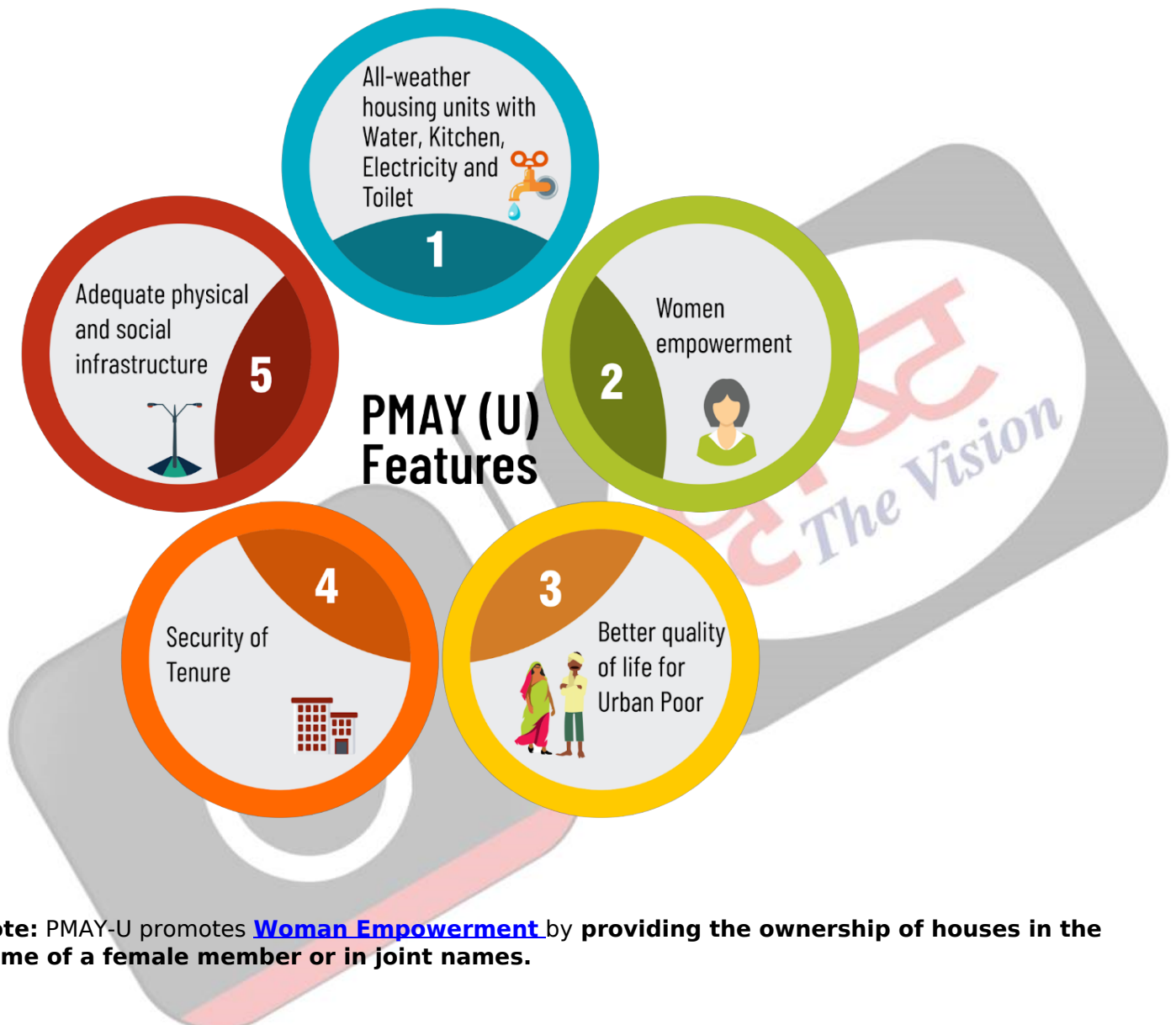
- [Economically Weaker Section \(EWS\)](#) - with a maximum annual family income of Rs. 3,00,00
- **Low Income Group (LIG)** - with maximum annual family income of Rs. 6,00,000 and
- **Middle Income Groups (MIG I & II)** - with a maximum annual family income of Rs. 18,00,000
 - A beneficiary family will comprise husband, wife, unmarried sons and/or unmarried daughters

▪ Components of PMAY-U:

- **In-situ Slum Redevelopment (ISSR):** The ISSR program offers **Central Assistance of Rs. 1 lakh per dwelling** for qualified slum residents during redevelopment, **utilizing land as a resource** in collaboration with private developers.
 - States/Cities have the flexibility to allocate this Central Assistance to other slum redevelopment projects.
- **Credit Linked Subsidy Scheme (CLSS):** The CLSS aids beneficiaries from **EWS/LIG, Middle Income Group (MIG)-I, and MIG-II** seeking housing loans for buying, constructing, or enhancing homes.
 - These **individuals can avail interest subsidies of:**
 - 6.5% on loan amount up to Rs. 6 Lakh
 - 4% on loan amount up to Rs. 9 Lakh
 - 3% on loan amount up to Rs. 12 Lakh
 - **Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO), National Housing Bank (NHB), and [State Bank of India \(SBI\)](#)** are the designated Central Nodal Agencies (CNAs) responsible for channeling the subsidy through lending institutions and monitoring progress.
- **Affordable Housing in Partnership (AHP):**
 - AHP provides Central Assistance of **Rs. 1.5 Lakh for each Economically Weaker Section (EWS) dwelling** by the Government of India.

- Affordable housing projects can include various categories, but they qualify for Central Assistance **if at least 35% of the homes target the EWS category.**
- States/UTs set an upper ceiling on the sale price of EWS homes to ensure affordability.
- **Beneficiary-led Individual House Construction/ Enhancement (BLC-N/ BLC-E):**
 - Qualified Economically Weaker Section (EWS) families receive up to **Rs. 1.5 lakh as Central Assistance for constructing or enhancing individual houses.**
 - **Urban Local Bodies** verify the beneficiary's submitted information and building plan to confirm land ownership, economic status, and eligibility.

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Note: PMAY-U promotes **Woman Empowerment** by providing the ownership of houses in the name of a female member or in joint names.

▪ **Progress:**

- As of the most recent update, a total of **118.9 lakh houses have been completed under the PMAY-U initiative**, out of which 76.25 lakh are occupied.

▪ **Related Initiatives:**

- **Affordable Rental Housing Complexes (ARHCs):** MoHUA has initiated ARHCs, a sub-scheme under PMAY-U.
 - This will provide ease of living to urban migrants/ poor in the Industrial Sector as well as in the non-formal urban economy to get access to dignified affordable rental housing close to their workplace.
- **ANGIKAAR Campaign:** It focuses on **adopting best practices** such as water & energy conservation, waste management, health, sanitation and hygiene for PMAY(U) beneficiaries

through community mobilization and IEC activities.

- The campaign was formally launched on 2nd October, 2019, **commemorating 150th Gandhi Jayanti.**
- **GHTC India:** MoHUA has initiated the **Global Housing Technology Challenge - India (GHTC India)** which aims to **identify and mainstream a basket of innovative construction technologies** from across the globe for the housing construction sector that are sustainable, eco-friendly and disaster-resilient.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Mains:

Q. With a brief background of quality of urban life in India, introduce the objectives and strategy of the 'Smart City Programme.'" (2016)

Q. Discuss the various social problems which originated out of the speedy process of urbanization in India. (2013)

PM-eBus Sewa

For Prelims: PM-eBus Sewa, [Electric Buses](#), Public-Private Partnership (PPP), [E- Mobility](#), National Common Mobility Card, [Greenhouse Gas](#).

For Mains: PM-eBus Sewa, its significance in sustainable mobility and GreenHouse Gas Reduction.

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

The Indian Cabinet has approved the "**PM-eBus Sewa**" scheme, aiming to bolster city bus operations by **introducing 10,000 [Electric Buses](#) through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model.**

What is PM-eBus Sewa?

- **About:**
 - It aims to enhance urban **transportation efficiency** and promote **Environmentally-Friendly Practices.**
- **Segment A: Augmenting City Bus Services (169 cities):**
 - This segment is dedicated to **strengthening urban transportation by 10,000 e-buses** under the PPP model.
 - The initiative recognizes that efficient operations require the development or upgrading of **depot infrastructure, alongside the creation of essential behind-the-meter power infrastructure** like substations to accommodate the electric buses.
- **Segment B: Green Urban Mobility Initiatives (181 cities):.**
 - This segment includes **enhancing bus priority, improving infrastructure**, establishing multimodal interchange facilities, implementing **NCMC (National Common Mobility Card)-based Automated Fare Collection Systems**, and building necessary charging infrastructure.

- By integrating these sustainable practices, the **scheme aims to transform urban mobility landscapes.**
- **Target Population and Unreached Areas:**
 - The scheme will encompass **cities with populations of three lakh and above**, based on the 2011 census data.
 - This comprehensive approach includes **all Capital cities of Union Territories, regions in the North Eastern part of the country, and hilly states.**
 - A significant highlight of the scheme is its **focus on cities lacking organized bus services**, making it an effort to bridge the urban mobility gap.
- **Operation and Facilitation:**
 - The operational aspect of the scheme places the **responsibility on states and cities** to manage and sustain the bus services while making payments to the appointed bus operators.
 - The Central Government's role is to facilitate and support these operations by providing **subsidies as outlined in the scheme.**

What is the Significance of the Scheme?

- **Employment Opportunity:**
 - The scheme is projected to create a direct employment opportunity surge, with an **estimated range of 45,000 to 55,000 jobs.**
 - This boost will **stem from the deployment of electric buses** in city bus operations, contributing to **economic growth while addressing pressing urban mobility needs.**
- **Boosting E-Mobility:**
 - It seeks to propel the **adoption of E-Mobility**, underpinned by comprehensive support for the requisite behind-the-meter power infrastructure.
 - Furthermore cities will receive **backing for the development of crucial charging infrastructure** as part of the **Green Urban Mobility Initiatives.**
 - This holistic approach not only accelerates the adoption of energy-efficient electric buses but also **drives innovation within the e-mobility sector.**
- **Environmental Impact and GHG Reduction:**
 - The shift towards electric mobility is projected to have profound environmental benefits.
 - By reducing noise and air pollution and **curbing carbon emissions**, the scheme aligns with **broader sustainability goals.**
 - The increased utilization of bus-based public transportation will also lead to a modal shift, further contributing to the **reduction of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions.**

What are the Government Initiatives to Promote E-MOBILITY?

- [Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles \(FAME\)scheme II](#)
- [National Electric Mobility Mission Plan \(NEMMP\)](#)
- [National Mission on Transformative Mobility and Battery Storage](#)
- [Production Linked Incentive \(PLI\) scheme](#)
- [Vehicle Scrappage Policy](#)
- [Go Electric campaign](#)

Way Forward

- The "PM-eBus Sewa" scheme stands as a **pivotal initiative in promoting sustainable urban mobility and electric** vehicle adoption.
- With its multi-faceted approach spanning direct employment generation, infrastructure development, and environmental conservation, the scheme **exemplifies India's commitment to creating resilient and eco-friendly urban transportation** systems.
- This forward-thinking strategy is set to have far-reaching implications for both urban development and environmental stewardship.

SC Handbook on Gender Stereotypes

For Prelims: SC Handbook on Gender Stereotypes, [Supreme Court of India](#), [Chief Justice of India](#), [Gender Stereotyping](#).

For Mains: SC Handbook on Gender Stereotypes, Issue of Gender Stereotyping and its impact on Women In Indian Society.

Source: [TH](#)

Why in News?

Recently, the [Chief Justice of India \(CJI\)](#) has released a Handbook, correcting **Gender Stereotypes** and offering guidance on how to avoid utilising harmful gender stereotypes, in particular those about women, in judicial decision making and writing.

What is the Handbook?

▪ **About:**

- The Handbook on Gender Stereotypes is released by the [Supreme Court of India](#) with the intention of assisting judges and legal practitioners in **recognizing, understanding, and combating gender stereotypes** present in legal language and judgments.
- It highlights common stereotypical words and phrases that are often used to describe **women in legal documents**.
- It points out instances where such language **perpetuates antiquated or incorrect notions about women's roles and behavior**.
- It also provides specific examples of **language that should be replaced with more neutral and accurate terms**.
 - For instance, it suggests using **"woman" instead of "career woman,"** "street sexual harassment" instead of "eve teasing," and "rape" instead of "forcible rape."

ALTERNATIVE TO STEREOTYPE-PROMOTING LANGUAGE

'ADULTERESS'

Woman who has engaged in sexual relations outside of marriage

'AFFAIR'

Relationship outside of marriage

'BASTARD' Non-marital child or, a child whose parents were not married

'BIOLOGICAL SEX' / 'BIOLOGICAL MALE' / 'BIOLOGICAL FEMALE'

Sex assigned at birth

'CARNAL INTERCOURSE'

Sexual intercourse

'CHILD PROSTITUTE'

Child who has been trafficked

'CONCUBINE' / 'KEEP'

Woman with whom a man has had romantic or sexual relations outside of marriage

'DUTIFUL WIFE' / 'FAITHFUL WIFE' / 'GOOD WIFE' / 'OBEDIENT WIFE'

Wife

'EVE TEASING'

Street sexual harassment

'HOUSEWIFE' Homemaker

'FEMININE HYGIENE PRODUCTS'

Menstrual products

'UNWED MOTHER' Mother

'VIOLATED'

(e.g. 'he violated her')

Sexually harassed / assaulted or raped

'MISTRESS' Woman with whom a man has had romantic or sexual relations outside of marriage

'PROSTITUTE' Sex worker

'PROVIDER' / 'BREADWINNER'

Employed or earning

'PROVOCATIVE CLOTHING / DRESS' Clothing / dress

'SEX CHANGE'

Sex reassignment or gender transition

'SPINSTER' Unmarried woman



▪ Objective:

- The handbook aims to promote **more equitable and unbiased language usage** in judicial discourse.
- The goal of the handbook is to encourage a **shift towards language that reflects a more modern and respectful understanding of gender** and promotes equal rights for all individuals, regardless of their gender.

Why is it Important for Judges to Use the Right Words?

- The handbook argues that the language a judge uses reflects not only their interpretation of the law, **but their perception of society as well.**
- Even when the use of stereotypes does not alter the outcome of a case, stereotypical language may **reinforce ideas contrary to our constitutional ethos.**
- Language is critical to the life of the law. Words are the **vehicle through which the values of the law are communicated.**
- Words transmit the ultimate intention of the lawmaker or the judge to the nation.

Have there been Similar Efforts in other Countries?

- There have been **projects in other countries**, pushed by both academia and practitioners, which hold up a mirror for the court's practices.
- For example, the **Women's Court of Canada**, a collective of female lawyers, academics and activists write "**shadow judgements**" on equality law.
- In India, the Indian **Feminist Judgement Project** also '**rewrites**' judgements with a feminist critique.

What is Gender Stereotyping?

▪ About:

- Gender stereotyping **refers to the practice of assigning specific attributes, characteristics, or roles to individuals based solely** on their gender.
- These stereotypes can be pervasive in **societies and can impact how people perceive and treat each other** based on their gender.
 - For example, women are **supposed to be nurturing and avoid dominance**, and men are supposed to be agentic and avoid weakness.

▪ Impacts of Gender Stereotyping on Women:

- Gender stereotypes act as a **barrier for girls to access quality education**.
 - For example, stereotypes about the role of women as confined to the **domestic and family sphere underpin** all obstacles to girls' equal access to quality education.
- Women are often **held back from high status positions** in society.
- The persistent gender gap in education, employment and wages is **due in part to gender stereotyping**.
- Harmful gender stereotypes, rigid constructions of femininity and **masculinity and stereotyped gender roles are a root cause** of gender-based violence against women.

Organized Crime and Georgia RICO Act

For Prelims: RICO Act, Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act, 1999, Organized Crime

For Mains: Challenges in combating organized crime in India.

[Source: IE](#)

Why in News?

Recently, former **United States President Donald Trump**, along with 18 of his associates, has recently been charged under the **Georgia RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) Act**.

- The charges encompass a range of alleged criminal activities which mainly include forgery, making false statements, impersonating a public officer, influencing witnesses, and conspiracy.
- RICO Act has similarities with the **Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA), 1999**.

Note: Georgia is one of the 50 US states situated in the southeastern mainland of the United States.



What is the Georgia RICO Act?

- The **RICO Act originated in the US federal law in 1970.**
- Originally designed to combat **organized crime**, particularly mafia-related activities.
- Within a few years of the federal law taking effect, states began passing their own RICO laws.
- Georgia's RICO Act, adopted in 1980, makes it a crime to participate in, acquire or **maintain control of an "enterprise" through a "pattern of racketeering activity" or to conspire to do so.**
- A conviction for racketeering under the RICO Act in Georgia can result in a **prison term of up to 20 years.**
- The severe penalty underscores the gravity of the Act's application.

What is the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA), 1999?

- It was introduced to tackle **organized crime activities in Maharashtra.**
- The Act is not limited to the state of Maharashtra, but it is also applicable to the state of the **National Capital Territory of Delhi.**
- Every offence under the **Act is a cognisable offence.**
- Every offence punishable under this **Act shall be triable only by special courts constituted under the Act.**
- The Act has strict provisions to avoid misuse of power, and anyone failing to do what they are required by law to do shall be punishable by imprisonment which may extend to **three years or a fine.**

What is Organized Crime?

- Organized Crime activities **refer to actions carried out jointly or severally by members of a gang or syndicate, with the intent of obtaining pecuniary or other advantages.**
- **Types of Organized Crime:** Organized gang criminality, Racketeering, Syndicate Crime, Smuggling etc.

- They operate covertly, exploiting gaps in law enforcement and regulations.

What is the Legal Position In India on Organized Crime?

- Organized crime has always existed in India in some form or another. It has, however, assumed its virulent form in modern times due to several socio-economic and political factors and advances in science and technology.
 - Even though rural India is not immune from it, it is essentially an urban phenomenon.
- India **does not have a specific law to deal with organized crime at the national level.** The existing laws, such as the [National Security Act, 1980](#), and the [Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985](#) are inadequate as they **target individuals and not criminal groups or enterprises.**
- Some states, such as **Gujarat (Gujarat Control of Organised Crime Act, 2015), Karnataka (Karnataka Control of Organised Crime Act, 2000), and Uttar Pradesh (Uttar Pradesh Control of Organised Crime Act, 2017)**, have enacted their own laws to combat organized crime.
- India is also a party to several **international conventions and treaties** that aim to prevent and suppress organized crime at the global level.
 - **These include:**
 - [United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime \(UNTOC\).](#)
 - [United Nations Convention against Corruption \(UNCAC\).](#)
 - [United Nations Office On Drug And Crime \(UNODC\).](#)
 - Conventions facilitate cooperation, mutual assistance, law enforcement, and information sharing among countries.

What are the Challenges in Combating Organized Crime?

- **Inadequate Legal Structure:** Lack of a **dedicated law targeting organized crime groups and enterprises.**
- **Difficulty in Obtaining Proof:** Hierarchy insulates higher leadership; witnesses fear for their lives.
- **Resource and Training Shortage:** Insufficient resources, training, and facilities for investigating organized crime.
- **Lack of Coordination:** Absence of a **national agency for coordination and information exchange.**
- **Criminal, Political & Bureaucratic Nexus:** Criminal syndicates maintain **connections with politicians, bureaucrats, and media.**

Way Forward

- Develop a comprehensive national law inspired by successful international models like the RICO Act.
 - Establish specialized training centers for law enforcement, equipping them with advanced anti-organized crime techniques.
 - Increase funding for technology and infrastructure to bolster intelligence gathering, evidence collection, and inter-agency collaboration.
 - Create a central agency tasked with coordinating efforts across states and central enforcement bodies to effectively combat organized crime. Foster seamless information exchange, leveraging advanced data analytics and AI for identifying patterns and hotspots.
 - Enforce stringent monitoring mechanisms to curb the criminal-political nexus. Encourage active involvement of civil society groups and human rights organizations to ensure accountability and prevent misuse of power.
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Radio Thermoelectric Generators

[Source: BL](#)

Why in News?

Recently, [Indian Space Research Organisation \(ISRO\)](#) in collaboration with the [Bhabha Atomic Research Center \(BARC\)](#), has embarked on the joint development of **Radio thermoelectric generators (RTGs)**, an innovative approach aimed at surpassing the constraints of conventional [chemical engines](#) for interplanetary voyages.

- Chemical engines work well for satellite thrusters, but they are **inadequate for deep space travel due to fuel limitations and lack of solar power in distant regions.**
- RTGs have been successfully employed by US spacecraft such as the Voyager, Cassini and Curiosity, to power missions with exceptional achievements.

What are the Radio Thermoelectric Generators (RTGs)?

- **About:**
 - RTGs are innovative power sources designed to **address challenges in deep space missions.**
 - RTGs utilize radioactive materials, such as **Plutonium-238 or Strontium-90, which emit heat as they decay over time.**
 - This **heat is harnessed and converted into electricity**, enabling the propulsion and power of spacecraft.
- **Components of RTGs:**
 - **Radioisotope Heater Unit (RHU):**
 - The RHU is responsible for **generating heat through the decay of radioactive materials.**
 - It initiates the process by **releasing thermal energy**, which serves as the foundation for electricity generation.
 - **RTG (Heat-to-Electricity Conversion):**
 - The RTG component transforms the **heat generated by the RHU into usable electricity.**
 - This conversion takes place through a **thermocouple**, a material that generates **voltage when subjected to a temperature gradient.**
 - The voltage produced by the thermocouple is utilized to **charge batteries onboard the spacecraft.**
 - These batteries, in turn, power various systems, including propulsion mechanisms, enabling interplanetary travel.
- **Advantages of RTGs for Space Missions:**
 - **Independence from Solar Proximity:**
 - Unlike solar-powered systems, RTGs operate effectively regardless of the **spacecraft's distance from the sun.**
 - This characteristic **eliminates constraints related to launch windows and planetary alignment.**
 - **Reliability and Consistency:**
 - RTGs offer a **consistent and reliable source of power**, essential for sustaining prolonged deep space missions.
 - The gradual decay of radioactive materials ensures a continuous supply of heat and electricity.

Bhabha Atomic Research Centre

- BARC is India's premier **nuclear research** facility based in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- It is a multi-disciplinary research center with extensive infrastructure for advanced research and development.
- Its core mandate is to sustain peaceful applications of nuclear energy, primarily for power

generation.

Rapid Fire Current Affairs

FloodWatch Real-Time Flood Monitoring App

Recently, the [Central Water Commission \(CWC\)](#) under the [Ministry of Jal Shakti](#), launched the mobile application "**FloodWatch**" for disseminating flood-related information in real-time.

- **Key Features of FloodWatch:**

- Real-time flood monitoring **provides up-to-date flood situations across the country.**
- App utilizes near **real-time river flow data from various sources** to enhance accuracy.
- Interactive Map feature enables users to check **CWC Flood Forecast (24 hours) or Flood Advisory (7 days)** by selecting stations directly from the map or using the search box.
- "FloodWatch" incorporates advanced technologies like **satellite data analysis, mathematical modelling, and real-time monitoring** to ensure accurate flood forecasts.

Read more: [Central Water Commission \(CWC\)](#)

Curbing Fraud with SIM Card Registration

The **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** in India has introduced new measures to combat cyber fraud and scam calls related to SIM cards, these include **mandatory registration and verification of SIM dealers**, with the goal of curbing fraudulent activities and strengthening mobile security.

- Recent efforts have led to the **blacklisting of 67,000 SIM dealers and 52 lakh connections, with over 300 First Information Reports (FIR) registered.**
- The rollout of the [Sanchar Saathi portal\(SSP\)](#) complements these efforts, solidifying India's commitment to combatting telecommunications-related fraud.
 - The SSP, developed by the **Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT)** under the DoT, addresses prevalent telecom frauds like identity theft and banking fraud.
 - **Over 40 lakh fraudulent connections were identified, and 36 lakhs disconnected using the portal.**
 - Protects against identity theft, **forged KYC, mobile device theft, and banking fraud.**

Read more: [World Telecom Day](#)

Anduri Utsav: Uttarakhand's Whimsical Butter Festival

The **Anduri Utsav, popularly known as the Butter Festival**, celebrated at **Dayara Bugyal** of Uttarkashi district of **Uttarakhand** culminated recently.

- Dayara Bugyal, **situated at an altitude of 11,000 feet above sea level**, is one of the pristine meadows in the state.
 - It is also known as **Butter Holi**, as people smear each other with **butter, milk and buttermilk** in a playful manner.
 - The festival is a way of expressing gratitude to **Lord Krishna**, who is believed to have **protected the cattle from evil forces while they were grazing in the bugyal.**
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Matti Banana

Matti banana, a native variety of Kanniyakumari district, Tamil Nadu, was recently granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag for its unique features and qualities.

- Matti banana has **six types that differ in colour, aroma, taste**, and texture, and are suitable for baby food and medicinal use.
- This Banana is commonly known as '**Baby Banana**'.
- It grows best in the specific climate and soil of Kanniyakumari.

Read more: [Geographical Indication \(GI\)](#)

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