



Surge in Human Settlements in Flood-Prone Areas

For Prelims: Flood Zones, [Climate change](#), [World Bank Reports](#).

For Mains: Factors Behind Increasing Human Settlements in Flood Zones, Flood Management

Source: [DTE](#)

Why in News?

According to a recent study conducted by the [World Bank](#), [human settlements](#) in some of the **world's riskiest flood zones** have increased by a staggering **122% since 1985**, contributing to the vulnerability of millions to water disasters induced by [climate change](#). And, this growth is **predominantly observed in middle- and low-income countries**.

- On the other hand, the most secure regions experienced an **80% increase in growth in human settlements**.

What are the Major Takeaways from the Study?

- **Global Landscape of Settlement Expansion:**
 - Most countries, **especially in East Asia**, saw more settlements in **regular flood zones and ultra-high flood zones** than in dry areas.
 - **Libya**, which suffered from devastating flooding in **September 2023**, had an 83% increase in settlement extent in the worst flood zones.
 - **Pakistan**, experiencing **catastrophic flooding both in 2022 and 2023**, witnessed an 89% increase in settlements in prone areas.
- **Notable Exceptions:**
 - **Dry settlements in the United States increased by 76%**, while the highest flood settlements rose by only 46%.
 - Other countries with more dry settlements than ultra-wet areas include **India, France, Sweden, Austria, Finland, Japan and Canada**.

What are the Possible Factors Behind Increasing Human Settlements in Flood Zones?

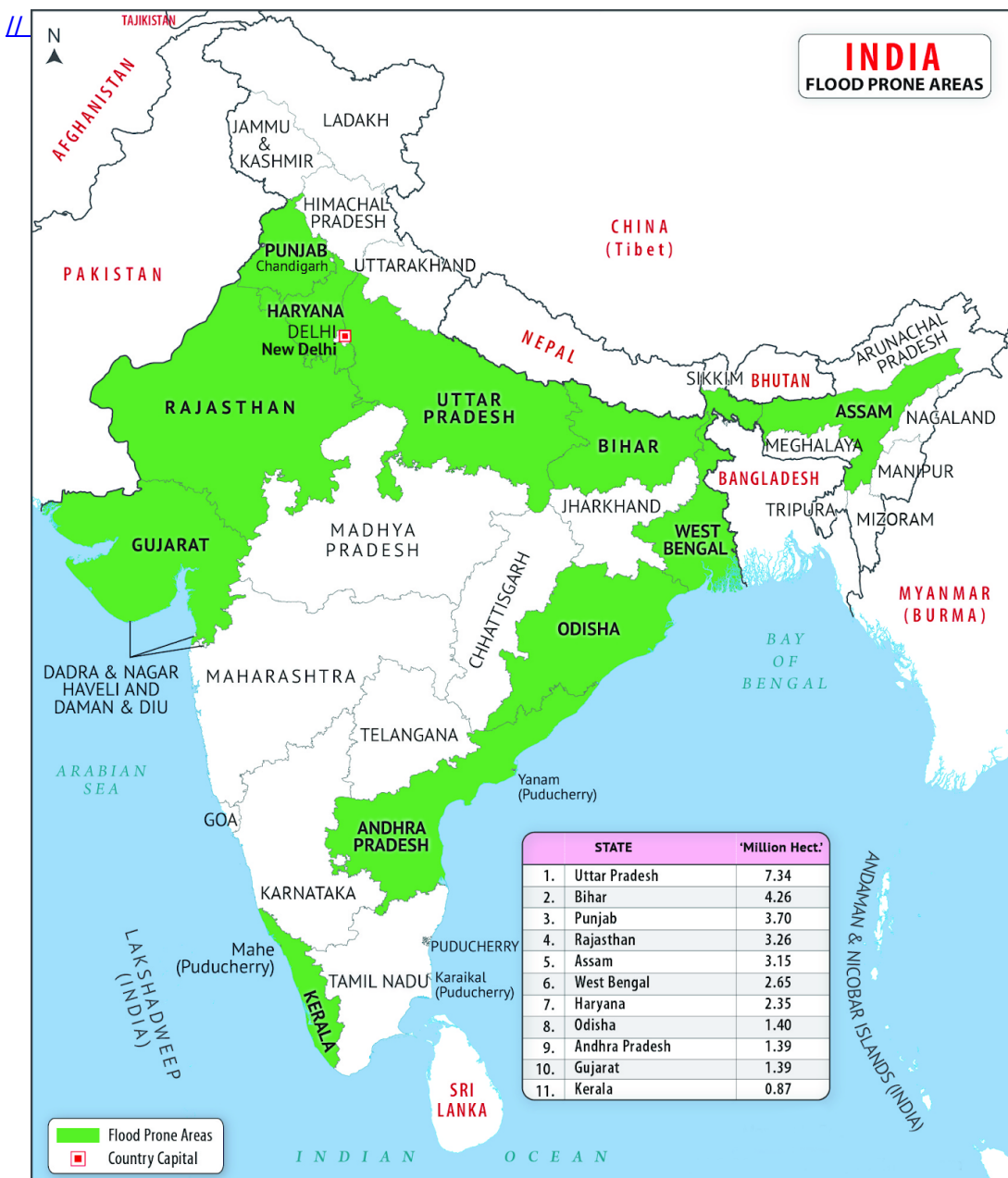
- **Rural to Urban Migration:** As countries experience economic growth, [urbanization near waterways](#) becomes prevalent. Settlements often expand into flood-prone areas as cities grow.
 - **For Example: Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**, exemplifies this issue, **growing from a fishing village to over seven million people**.
- **Economic Factor:** Low-income populations often **cannot afford to live in safer, less flood-prone areas**. They might be forced to live in flood-prone zones because of **housing affordability constraints**.
- **Lack of Regulatory Enforcement:** In some countries, [land-use planning](#) and zoning regulations might not be effectively enforced. This can result in **settlements proliferating in flood-prone areas without adequate safeguards**.

- **Cultural and Historical Ties:** Some communities have **deep cultural or historical connections to flood-prone regions**, and this can influence their decisions to remain or settle in these areas despite the risks.
- **Tourism and Recreation: Coastal and riverfront areas**, despite their vulnerability to flooding, continue to draw tourists and recreation enthusiasts because of their inherent appeal.
 - The **demand for resorts, hotels, and vacation homes** can lead to settlement in these areas, even if it's only seasonal.

Note

Settlement expansion into flood zones **does not negate the significance of climate change**. The two issues are **intertwined**, compounding risks and vulnerabilities. People might **prioritize immediate needs for shelter and livelihoods over long-term climate risks**.

- This can lead to decisions that are more focused on short-term survival.



Way Forward

- **Strict Land Use Policies:** Implement and enforce stringent land use regulations that **prohibit or restrict new construction in high-risk flood zones.**
 - Designate flood-prone areas as '**no-build**' zones and enforce these restrictions consistently.
- **Infrastructure Investment:** There is a need to Invest in resilient infrastructure, including better **flood defences, [early warning systems](#), and floodplain mapping.**
 - Improve drainage systems to mitigate the impact of flooding in existing settlements.
- **Government Support and Relocation Assistance:** The government can offer financial incentives for residents to relocate from flood-prone areas to safer zones.
 - Also, the government needs to strengthen **emergency response and preparedness measures in flood-prone areas** to minimize the loss of life and property during flood events.
- **Public Awareness and Education:** Launch public awareness campaigns to educate citizens about the **risks associated with living in flood-prone areas.**
 - Promote **community-based education programs on flood preparedness** and the importance of avoiding such areas.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question:

Q. The frequency of urban floods due to high intensity rainfall is increasing over the years. Discussing the reasons for urban floods, highlight the mechanisms for preparedness to reduce the risk during such events. **(2016)**

Q. Account for the huge flooding of million cities in India including the smart ones like Hyderabad and Pune. Suggest lasting remedial measures. **(2020)**

Q. Major cities of India are becoming vulnerable to flood conditions. Discuss. **(2016)**

Food Inflation in India

For Prelims: [Inflation](#), [Reserve Bank of India \(RBI\)](#), [Monetary Policy Committee \(MPC\)](#), [Consumer Food Price Inflation \(CFPI\)](#), [Lok Sabha](#), [Minimum Support Price \(MSP\)](#)

For Mains: Impact of rising food inflation on farmers and macroeconomic indicators of the country.

Source: [IE](#)

Why in News?

In recent times, **Consumer food prices were 9.9% higher** year-on-year, with food inflation now largely limited to cereals and pulses, and the government is required to start addressing concerns of both producers and consumers in equal measure.

What is the Recent Scenario of Food Price Inflation and Disinflation in India?

- **Inflation in Cereals and Pulses:**
 - Estimates show [food inflation](#) is being increasingly driven by two items: **Cereals**

(11.9%) and pulses (13%) in the preceding months of July and August respectively.

- Annual retail price rise in vegetables was even higher, **at 37.4% and 26.1%**.
 - The best indicator is **tomato**, the retail inflation for which stood at 202.1 % and 180.3% during the same period.

▪ **Disinflation in Essential Commodities due to Government's Strategy:**

- Most governments naturally tend to privilege consumers over producers due to political reasons, which favours numerical strength.
- In the current scenario, **the government must prioritize listening to producers**, particularly in regard to two agricultural/food commodities, among other concerns.
 - **The first is vegetable oils Producer:**
 - Harvesting and marketing of soybeans has started, but the oilseed is already trading below the government's **minimum support price (MSP)**.
 - Demand for **both oil and meal** (the residual de-oiled cake, used as livestock feed ingredient) is weak.
 - A major reason for the bearish market sentiment has to do with record imports of **edible oil**. India's vegetable oil imports are projected to touch an all-time high of 17 million tonnes (mt) in 2022-23.
 - **The second item - Milk Producers:**
 - **There isn't much buying of powder, butter or ghee happening.** It will be worse once the festival (Dussehra-Diwali) season ends and the animals enter peak production in winter.
 - Compounding the industry's problems is the **reported spurt in sales of ghee adulterated with vegetable fat**. The crash in prices of imported oils, especially palm, has made admixture of cheap fat in butter and ghee that much more attractive.
 - **Wheat and Rice as Essential Commodities:**
 - **Overproduction:** Farmers in India often respond to **Minimum Support Prices (MSPs)** by increasing production of MSP-supported crops, like wheat and rice. This overproduction can lead to a glut in the market, causing prices to fall below MSPs.
 - **Inadequate Procurement and Distribution:** While the government sets MSPs and procures crops from farmers, the procurement infrastructure and distribution system may be inefficient, leading to delays in procurement and inadequate distribution of grains to consumers.
 - As a result, market prices can decline due to oversupply in the absence of effective distribution.

What is Consumer Food Price Inflation (CFPI)?

- **Consumer Food Price Inflation, (CFPI)**, is a specific measure of inflation that focuses exclusively on the price changes of food items in a consumer's basket of goods and services.
 - It calculates the rate at which the prices of food products consumed by the average household are increasing over time.
 - CFPI is a sub-component of the broader **Consumer Price Index (CPI)**, where the **Reserve Bank Of India (RBI)** uses **CPI-Combined (CPI-C)** for this purpose.
 - CFPI tracks the price changes of a specific basket of food items that are commonly consumed by households, **such as cereals, vegetables, fruits, dairy products, meat, and other food staples.**

Consumer Price Index (CPI)

- **CPI inflation**, also known as **retail inflation**, is the rate at which the prices of goods and services that consumers buy for personal use increase over time.
- It measures the change in the cost of a basket of goods and services that are typically purchased by households, including food, clothing, housing, transportation, and medical care.
- **Four types of CPI** are as follows:
 - CPI for Industrial Workers (IW).
 - CPI for Agricultural Labourer (AL).
 - CPI for Rural Labourer (RL).

- CPI for Urban Non-Manual Employees (UNME).
 - Of these, **the first three are compiled by the Labour Bureau** in the Ministry of Labour and Employment. **Fourth is compiled by the [National Statistical Office \(NSO\)](#)** in the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

What are the Causes Behind Food Price Inflation?

- **Supply and Demand Imbalances:** When there is an imbalance between the supply of food and the demand for it, prices tend to rise.
 - Factors such as **extreme weather events, crop failures, or pest infestations can reduce the supply of agricultural products, driving up prices.**
 - Conversely, a surge in demand, perhaps due to population growth or changes in consumer preferences, can also lead to higher prices if supply cannot keep up.
- **Production Costs:** Rising production costs for farmers can lead to higher food prices. This includes expenses such as fuel, fertilizer, and labor costs.
- **Energy Prices:** The cost of energy, especially fuel, is a significant factor in the food supply chain. Increases in **oil prices can lead to higher transportation costs for getting food products from farms to stores, which can result in higher prices for consumers.**
- **Currency Exchange Rates:** Fluctuations in exchange rates can impact food prices, especially for countries that rely heavily on imported food. A weaker domestic currency can make imported food more expensive, contributing to inflation.
- **Trade Policies:** Trade policies and tariffs can affect the prices of imported and domestically produced food. **Restrictions on imports can limit the variety of available food products and potentially drive up prices.**
- **Government Policies:** Government interventions in the form of subsidies, price controls, or regulations can influence food prices. Subsidies may reduce the cost of production, while price controls can limit price increases.
- **Global Events:** Global events such as **geopolitical conflicts, pandemics, and trade disruptions can disrupt food supply chains and lead to food price spikes.** The COVID-19 pandemic, for example, disrupted food production and distribution in many parts of the world.
- **Climate Change:** Long-term changes in climate patterns can have a significant impact on food production. More frequent and severe weather events, such as **droughts or floods, can damage crops and reduce yields, leading to higher prices.**

Way Forward

- **Increase Agricultural Productivity:**
 - Invest in agricultural research and technology to improve crop yields and livestock production.
 - Promote sustainable farming practices to enhance efficiency and reduce production costs.
- **Strengthen Food Supply Chains:**
 - Invest in transportation and storage infrastructure to reduce food wastage and spoilage.
 - Improve distribution networks to ensure that food reaches consumers efficiently.
- **Promote Trade and Market Integration:**
 - Facilitate international trade to ensure a steady supply of food products.
 - Remove trade barriers and tariffs on essential food items.
- **Promote Competition and Reduce Monopoly Power:**
 - Enforce antitrust laws to prevent market concentration and price manipulation by large agribusinesses.
 - Encourage competition in the food sector to keep prices competitive.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q 1. Consider the following statements: (2020)

1. The weightage of food in Consumer Price Index (CPI) is higher than that in Wholesale Price Index (WPI).
2. The WPI does not capture changes in the prices of services, which CPI does.
3. The Reserve Bank of India has now adopted WPI as its key measure of inflation and to decide on changing the key policy rates.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: (a)

Mains

Q. There is also a point of view that Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs) set up under the State Acts have not only impeded the development of agriculture but also have been the cause of food inflation in India. Critically examine. (2014)

Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

Source: IE

Why in News?

Russia has recently indicated that it is moving towards **revoking its ratification of the [Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty \(CTBT\)](#)**.

What is the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)?

▪ Genesis of the CTBT:

- The CTBT is a multilateral treaty aimed at **banning all nuclear explosions, whether for military or peaceful purposes**.
- The roots of the CTBT can be traced back to the **Cold War** era when the United States and the **Soviet Union** were engaged in a **nuclear arms race**, conducting numerous nuclear tests.
 - Between **1945 and 1996, over 2,000 nuclear tests took place globally**, with the **U.S. conducting 1,032 tests and the Soviet Union conducting 715 tests, among others**.
- In response to concerns about the **environmental and health impacts of nuclear tests**, the international community made efforts to limit testing.
- The **Limited Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (LTBT) of 1963** prohibited nuclear testing in the **atmosphere, outer space, and underwater but allowed underground tests**.
- The **Threshold Test Ban Treaty (TTBT) of 1974** prohibits **underground nuclear weapons tests** and establishes a nuclear "threshold," yet it falls short of providing a comprehensive ban on all nuclear testing.

▪ Breakthrough with the CTBT:

- The end of the Cold War and the **dissolution of the Soviet Union** created a conducive

environment for comprehensive arms control measures.

- The CTBT was negotiated at the **Conference on Disarmament in Geneva in 1994**.
- In 1996, the [United Nations](#) **adopted the CTBT**, which imposed a complete ban on nuclear weapons testing, closing the gaps left by previous treaties.
- The CTBT became available for signature in September 1996, signifying a major advancement in the global endeavour to halt nuclear testing across the world.
 - The CTBT will enter into force 180 days after it has been **ratified by all 44 states listed in Annex 2 to the treaty**, which are states that possessed nuclear reactors or research reactors at the time of its adoption.

▪ **Current Position:**

- It has been signed by 187 nations and ratified by 178. However, the treaty cannot formally enter into force until it is **ratified by 44 specific nations**. Eight of these nations have yet to ratify the treaty:
 - China, India, Pakistan, North Korea, Israel, Iran, Egypt, United States.



Treaties Against Nuclear Weapons

Part - I

Nuclear Weapons

- The most dangerous weapons on earth; a **bomb or missile that uses nuclear energy to cause an explosion.**
- Nuclear weapons release energy either by **nuclear fission (atomic bombs) or nuclear fusion (hydrogen bombs).**
- Even a single weapon is potent of **destroying a whole city**, potentially **killing millions**, **jeopardising the natural environment** and lives of future generations.
- They were used for the **first and last time in WW-II** by the US in 1945 on **Hiroshima and Nagasaki.**

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT 1970)



- **Objective:**
 - Prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and its technology
 - Foster peaceful uses of nuclear energy
 - Further the goal of nuclear disarmament
- **Member States:**
 - 191 with **5 nuclear-weapon states (NWS)** (US, Russia, UK, France & China)
- **Nuclear-Weapon States:**
 - Those who **manufactured & exploded** a nuclear weapon or nuclear explosive device **before 1st January 1967**
- **Significance:**
 - **Only binding treaty** to the goal of disarmament by the NWS
- **India and NPT:**
 - India (along with Pakistan, Israel, North Korea, and South Sudan) is **not a member**
 - Opposes it as a **discriminative disarmament policy**
 - India's policy - **No First Use against NWS and no use against non-NWS**
- **NPT Review Conference:**
 - **Undertakes review** of the treaty's implementation **quinquennially**



Drishti IAS



The Vision

Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) (1987)

- An informal and voluntary partnership
- Not legally binding
- Established in 1987 by G7 countries

Objective: To prevent the proliferation of missile and UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) technology capable of carrying >500 kg payload for range >300 km

MTCR Categories

Category I Items

- Complete rocket and UAV systems (>500 kg payload for >300 km)
- Such items are subjected to unconditional strong presumption of denial for export

Category II Items

- Less-sensitive and dual-use missile related components and other complete missile systems (range >300 km)
- Their export is subject to licensing requirements

35 Member Countries

India inducted into the MTCR in 2016 as the 35th member

China not a member

Mandate on Members

- Prohibition from supplying missiles and UAV systems controlled by the MTCR to non-members.
- In 1992, the ambit was extended to all Weapons of Mass Destruction - nuclear, chemical & biological.

Secretariat: No formal Secretariat; France serves as MTCR's Point of Contact

MTCR and UN: No formal linkage but remains committed to the UN's non-proliferation and export control efforts

Significance for India

- Can procure high-end missile technology
- Can run joint programmes for development of UAVs with other countries

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) (1996)

Objective: Ban all nuclear explosions - everywhere, by everyone

Negotiated At: Conference on Disarmament in Geneva 1996 (adopted by UNGA)

185 Signatories

Out of 44, 36 countries have ratified

Treaty will enter into force after all 44 States listed in Annex 2 will ratify it (States having nuclear facilities at the time the Treaty was negotiated and adopted)

8 Annex-2 Countries Not Ratified

- China, North Korea, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the US
- India, North Korea and Pakistan haven't also signed the Treaty

CTBT Organisation

- Promotes the Treaty so that it can enter into force
- Headquartered in Vienna



UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q. What is/are the consequence/consequences of a country becoming the member of the 'Nuclear Suppliers Group'? (2018)

1. It will have access to the latest and most efficient nuclear technologies.
2. It automatically becomes a member of "The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)".

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: (a)

Q. Consider the following countries: (2015)

1. China
2. France
3. India
4. Israel
5. Pakistan

Which among the above are Nuclear Weapons States as recognized by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, commonly known as Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
 (b) 1, 3, 4 and 5 only
 (c) 2, 4 and 5 only

(d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Ans: (a)

Mains

Q. In what ways would the ongoing U.S-Iran Nuclear Pact Controversy affect the national interest of India? How should India respond to this situation? **(2018)**

Q. With growing energy needs should India keep on expanding its nuclear energy programme? Discuss the facts and fears associated with nuclear energy. **(2018)**

Q. Give an account of the growth and development of nuclear science and technology in India. What is the advantage of fast breeder reactor programme in India? **(2017)**

Scheduled Areas in India

For Prelims: Scheduled Areas in India, [Scheduled Tribe](#), Scheduled Areas and [Scheduled Tribes Commission](#), Article 244(1), Article 244(2), [Sixth Schedule](#), [Local Self-Governance](#).

For Mains: Scheduled Areas in India, Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes.

[Source:TH](#)

Why in News?

India's [Scheduled Tribes \(STs\)](#) constitute 8.6% of the population, residing in various states and union territories. [Article 244](#) of the Indian Constitution is a critical provision for the administration of Scheduled and Tribal Areas.

What are Scheduled Areas?

▪ **About:**

- Scheduled Areas represent **regions covering 11.3% of India's land area**, inhabited by various **ST communities** comprising 8.6% of the country's population.
- They are **designated in 10 states under the Fifth schedule**: Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Himachal Pradesh.
 - **4 States under the Sixth Schedule**: Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.
 - In 2015, Kerala proposed to **notify 2,133 habitations, five-gram panchayats, and two wards in five districts as Scheduled Areas**; it awaits the Union government's approval.

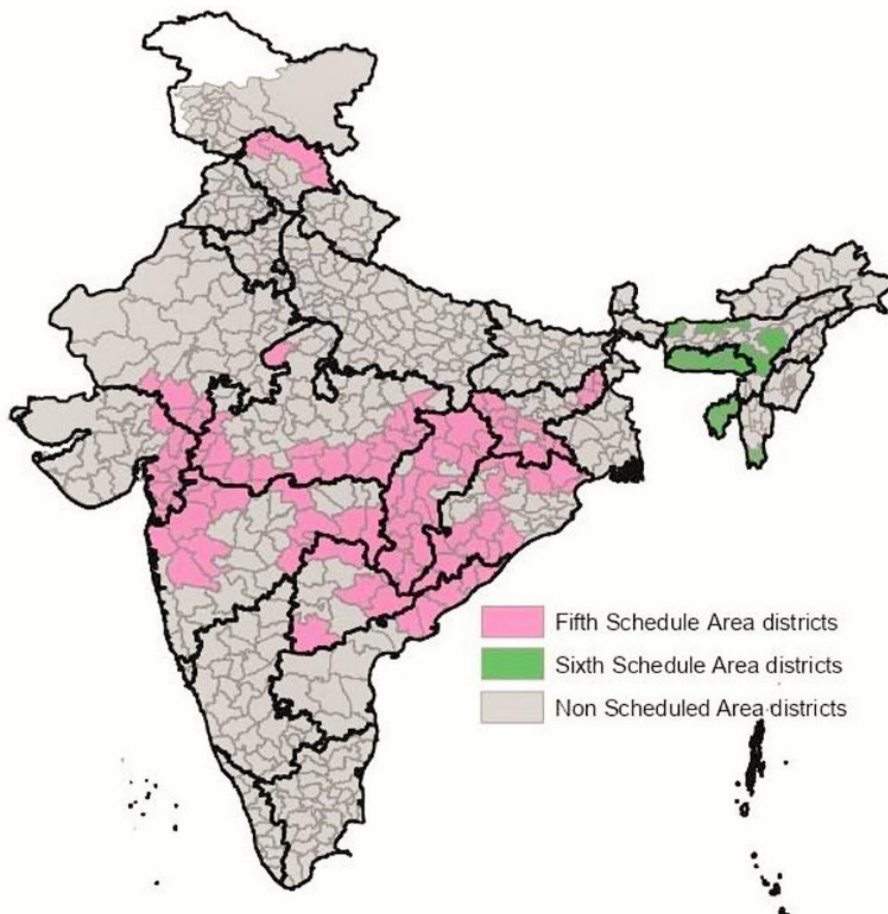
▪ **Criteria for Identification:**

- The guiding norms for declaring an area as a Scheduled Area include **significant tribal population**, compactness, reasonable size, viability as an **administrative entity**, and economic backwardness compared to **neighboring areas**.
- The 2002 Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes Commission or the **Bhuria Commission** recommended considering areas with **40% or more tribal population according to the**

1951 Census as Scheduled Areas.

▪ Constitutional Provisions and Governance:

- **Article 244 (1)** applies the [Fifth Schedule](#) provisions to Scheduled Areas in states other than Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram.
 - **Article 244 (2)** applies the [Sixth Schedule](#) to the aforementioned states.
- **Tribal Advisory Council:** The President of India notifies Scheduled Areas, and states with Scheduled Areas establish a **Tribal Advisory Council** to advise the Governor on ST welfare matters.
- **Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA) of 1996:** It empowers gram sabhas, **granting them substantial authority through direct democracy**, prioritizing [Local Self-Governance](#).
 - **In 1995, the Bhuria Committee**, constituted to recommend provisions for the extension of panchayat raj to Scheduled Areas, recommended including these villages, but this is yet to be done.
 - The President of India notifies **India's Scheduled Areas**. States with **Scheduled Areas need to constitute a Tribal Advisory Council** with up to 20 ST members.
 - They will advise the **Governor on matters referred to them regarding ST welfare**. The Governor will then submit a report every year to the president regarding the administration of Scheduled Areas.



What are the Concerns Related to Scheduled Areas?

- Despite demands from Adivasi organizations, a **significant portion (59%) of India's ST population is outside the purview of Article 244**, denying them rights protected under laws applicable to **Scheduled Areas**.
- The **absence of viable ST-majority administrative units** has been a common bureaucratic response, which has further led to demands for the denotification of parts of Scheduled Areas.
 - They are denied rights under the laws applicable to Scheduled Areas, including the **Right**

to Fair Compensation and Transparency in [Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act 2013](#) and the [Biological Diversity Act 2002](#).

What are the Provisions Related to STs in India?

- **Definition:**
 - The Constitution of India does not define the criteria for recognition of STs. As per [Census-1931](#), STs are termed as "backward tribes" living in the "**Excluded**" and "**Partially Excluded**" areas.
 - The [Government of India Act of 1935](#) called for the first time for representatives of "backward tribes" in provincial assemblies.
- **Constitutional Provisions:**
 - **Article 366(25):** It only provides a process to define STs:
 - "STs means such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this Constitution."
- **Statutory Provisions:**
 - Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 against Untouchability.
 - [Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes \(Prevention of Atrocities\) Act, 1989](#).
 - [Provisions of the Panchayats \(Extension to the Scheduled Areas\) Act, 1996](#).
 - [Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers \(Recognition of Forest Rights\) Act, 2006](#).

Way Forward

- All habitations or groups of habitations outside Scheduled Areas in all States and Union Territories where **STs are the largest social group** will need to be notified as **Scheduled Areas** irrespective of their contiguity.
- The geographical limit of **these villages will need to be extended to the 'community forest resource'** area on forest land under the [FRA \(Forest Rights Act\) 2006](#) wherever applicable, and to the **customary boundary within revenue lands** made possible through suitable amendments to the relevant State laws.
- The geographical limits of the revenue village, panchayat, taluka, and district will need to be redrawn so that these are fully Scheduled Areas.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q1. At the national level, which ministry is the nodal agency to ensure effective implementation of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006?

- (a) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
- (b) Ministry of Panchayati Raj
- (c) Ministry of Rural Development
- (d) Ministry of Tribal Affairs

Ans: (d)

Q2. Which Schedule of the Constitution of India contains special provisions for the administration and control of Scheduled Areas in several States? (2008)

- (a) Third

- (b) Fifth
- (c) Seventh
- (d) Ninth

Ans: (b)

Q3. Under which Schedule of the Constitution of India can the transfer of tribal land to private parties for mining be declared null and void? (2019)

- (a) Third Schedule
- (b) Fifth Schedule
- (c) Ninth Schedule
- (d) Twelfth Schedule

Ans: (b)

Q4. The Government enacted the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act in 1996. Which one of the following is not identified as its objective? (2013)

- (a) To provide self-governance
- (b) To recognize traditional rights
- (c) To create autonomous regions in tribal areas
- (d) To free tribal people from exploitation

Ans: C

Q5. Under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, who shall be the authority to initiate the process for determining the nature and extent of individual or community forest rights or both? (2013)

- (a) State Forest Department
- (b) District Collector/Deputy Commissioner
- (c) Tahsildar/Block Development Officer/Mandal Revenue Officer
- (d) Gram Sabha

Ans: (d)

Q6. The provisions in Fifth Schedule and Sixth Schedule in the Constitution of India are made in order to (2015)

- (a) protect the interests of Scheduled Tribes
- (b) determine the boundaries between States
- (c) determine the powers, authority and responsibilities of Panchayats
- (d) protect the interests of all the border States

Ans: (a)

Mains:

Q. Article 244 of the Indian Constitution relates to the administration of scheduled areas and tribal areas. Analyse the impact of non-implementation of the provisions of the Fifth schedule on the growth of Left wing extremism. **(2013)**

Q. What are the two major legal initiatives by the State since Independence addressing discrimination against Scheduled Tribes (STs)? **(2017)**

Q. Why are the tribals in India referred to as 'the Scheduled Tribes'? Indicate the major provisions enshrined in the Constitution of India for their upliftment. **(2016)**

The Need for a Reliable Code of Police Investigation in India

For Prelims: [Supreme Court of India](#), Malimath Committee, [Police Reforms](#)

For Mains: Challenges Related to Policing in India, Committees/Commissions on Police Reforms.

Source: [TH](#)

Why in News?

In a recent ruling, the [Supreme Court \(SC\) of India](#) stressed the necessity for a **“consistent and dependable code of investigation”** to prevent legal loopholes leading to the acquittal (found not guilty of a crime or wrongdoing) of the guilty.

- The observations came after the court acquitted 3 accused in a 2013 kidnap and murder case, citing flaws in the police investigation.

What are the SC's Observations Regarding Police Investigations in India?

- The court highlighted the 2003 report by [Justice V.S. Malimath Committee on Reforms of the Criminal Justice System](#), which emphasised that the “successful prosecution of the guilty depends on a **thorough and careful search for truth and collection of evidence** which is both admissible and probative”.
- The court referred to a [Law Commission of India report in 2012](#) that the reasons for a low rate of conviction included **“inept, unscientific investigation by the police and lack of proper coordination between police and prosecution machinery.”**

What is the Need for Consistent and Dependable Code of Police Investigation in India?

- To prevent lapses in police probes that lead to the **acquittal of the guilty on technical grounds, as highlighted by the Supreme Court.**
- To improve the standards of investigation and evidence collection, which are often inept and unscientific, as noted by the [Law Commission of India](#).
- To enhance the **credibility and legitimacy of the criminal justice system**, which is often marred by [corruption, political interference, and human rights violations](#).
- To ensure the successful prosecution of the offenders, especially in cases involving serious crimes, such as murder, rape, terrorism, etc.
- To protect the rights and interests of the victims, witnesses, and accused, who often face harassment, intimidation, and coercion during the investigation process.

Police Reforms in India

CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS

- Police and Public Order: State subjects (7th Schedule)

NEED FOR REFORM

- Colonial Law
- Custodial Death
- Lack of Accountability
- Political Interference
- Poor Gender Sensitivity
- Communal/Caste Bias
- No Anti-Torture Law

RELATED DATA

- Police-People Ratio: 153 police/100,000 people (Global benchmark: 222 police/100,000 people)
- Custodial Deaths: 175 in 2021-2022 (as per MHA)
- Women's Share: 10.5% of entire force (India Justice Report 2021)
- Infrastructure: 1 in 3 police stations is equipped with CCTV (India Justice Report 2021)

IMPORTANT COMMITTEES/COMMISSION



RELATED INITIATIVES

- SMART Policing (pan-India)
- Automated Multimodal Biometric Identification System (AMBIS) (Maharashtra)
- Real Time Visitor Monitoring System (uses AI and blockchain) (Andhra Pradesh)
- CyberDome (Tech R&D Centre) (Kerala)

WAY FORWARD

- ↑ Police Budget, Resources
- ↑ Recruitment Process
- Implement Measures to Reduce Corruption
- ↑ Skills of Policemen
- Better Representation (Women, Minorities)

CHALLENGES WITH POLICING

- Low Police-Population Ratio
- Political Superimposition
- Unsatisfactory Police-Public Relations
- Infra Deficit
- Corruption
- Understaffed/Overburdened



What are the Malimath Committee's Recommendations for Police Investigation in India?

About:

- The Malimath Committee was established by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 2000, which aimed to **reform India's criminal justice system**. It presented its recommendations in its report titled as the Report of the Committee on Reforms of the Criminal Justice System in 2003.
- The Committee was headed by Justice V.S. Malimath, former **Chief Justice of Karnataka and Kerala High Courts**.

- The Committee had opined that the existing system **"weighed in favor of the accused and did not adequately focus on justice to the victims of crime."**

Recommendations for Police Investigation:

- The panel recommended borrowing features from the inquisitorial system of investigation, seen in countries like Germany and France, where a **judicial magistrate oversees the investigation**.
- The Committee suggested hiving off the **investigation wing from Law and Order**.
- It also recommended setting up of a **National Security Commission and State Security Commissions**. To improve the quality of investigations.
- It suggested a slew of measures, including the appointment of an Additional. SP in each district to **maintain crime data, organisation of specialised squads** to deal with

- organised crime, and a team of officers to probe inter-state or transnational crimes, and setting up of a Police Establishment Board to deal with posting, transfers, and so on.
- Police custody is now limited to 15 days. The Committee suggested this be extended to 30 days and an **additional time of 90 days be granted for the filing of charge sheets in case of serious crimes.**

Criminal Justice System

- The criminal justice system is the set of laws, processes, and institutions that aim to prevent, detect, prosecute, and punish crimes while ensuring the rights and safety of all people.
- It has four subsystems:
 - Legislature (Parliament)
 - Enforcement (Police)
 - Adjudication (Courts)
 - Corrections (Prisons, Community Facilities)
- India's criminal justice systems have evolved under different rulers, during British rule, criminal laws were codified in India, which remain largely unchanged even today. Later the **Indian Penal Code (IPC)** was drafted in 1860, in the wake of the first law commission established in 1834 under the Charter Act of 1833.
- In line, the **Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC)** provides procedures for administering criminal law in India. It was enacted in 1973 and became effective on 1 April 1974.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims:

Q. For which one of the following reforms was a Commission set up under the Chairmanship of Veerappa Moily by the Government of India? (2008)

- (a) Police Reforms
- (b) Tax Reforms
- (c) Reforms in Technical Education
- (d) Administrative Reforms

Ans: (d)

Mains

Q.1 National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in India can be most effective when its tasks are adequately supported by other mechanisms that ensure the accountability of a government. In light of above observation assess the role of NHRC as an effective complement to the judiciary and other institutions in promoting and protecting human rights standards. **(2014)**

Regulation of OTT Platforms

For Prelims: [Telecom Regulatory Authority of India \(TRAI\)](#), [Tribunals](#), [Telecom Disputes Settlement Appellate Tribunal \(TDSAT\)](#), [Over-The-Top \(OTT\)](#).

For Mains: Challenges faced by the government in regulating OTT platforms due to their evolving and dynamic nature, Tribunals, Dispute Redressal Mechanisms .

[Source: IE](#)

Why in News?

Recently, [Telecom Disputes Settlement Appellate Tribunal \(TDSAT\)](#) has ruled that Over The Top (OTT) platforms **like Hotstar** are not in the jurisdiction of the [Telecom Regulatory Authority of India \(TRAI\)](#) and are governed by the [Information Technology Rules, 2021](#), notified by the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)**.

- TDSAT said that OTT platforms are outside the purview of the [TRAI Act,1997](#) since they do not require any permission or a license from the central government.
- This order was in response to a petition by the All India Digital Cable Federation (AIDCF) against Star India Pvt Ltd (STAR). AIDCF challenged Star's free streaming of World Cup matches on Hotstar, **claiming it was unfair and against TRAI Regulations.**

What is the Controversy Over OTT Platform Regulation ?

- **Conflict Between MoC and MeitY:**
 - [Telecom Regulator TRAI](#) and **Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Ministry of Communications (MoC)** got in conflict with the **MeitY** over who should regulate [Over-The-Top \(OTT\) platforms](#) and there is debate over the nature of the regulatory framework for **Internet-based communications services** in the country.
 - The DoT sought to classify OTT platforms as telecommunications services, and regulate them like telecom operators.
 - The TRAI, separately, has **issued a consultation paper on how to regulate OTT platforms.**
- **Disagreement of IT Ministry with DoT :**
 - The **IT Ministry believes** that under the **Allocation of Business Rules**, Internet-based communications services **are not part of DoT's jurisdiction.**
 - However, in this case, the conversation is centred around OTT communications services like WhatsApp.
- **TRAI's Attempt at Regulating OTT services:**
 - **TRAI first recommended** against creating a specific regulatory framework for OTT communication services **like WhatsApp, Zoom, and Google Meet.**
 - Now, it has revisited its stance, and started consultations on how these services can be regulated which got other ministries and departments into conflict.

What are Over-The-Top (OTT) Platforms ?

- **About:**
 - OTT platforms are **audio and video hosting and streaming services** which started out as content hosting platforms, but soon branched out into the production and release of short movies, feature films, documentaries and web-series themselves.
 - These platforms offer **a range of content and use artificial intelligence to suggest to users the content they are likely to view** based on their past viewership on the platform.
- **Services:**
 - Most OTT platforms **generally offer some content for free and charge a monthly subscription fee for premium** content which is generally unavailable elsewhere.
 - **Premium content** is usually produced and marketed by the OTT platform themselves, in association with established production houses which historically have made feature films.
- **Examples:**

- Netflix, Disney+, Hulu, Amazon Prime Video, Peacock, CuriosityStream, Pluto TV, and so many more.

▪ **Laws Regulating OTT Platforms:**

- In 2022, the Central Government notified the **Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021** to regulate OTT platforms.

What are the Information Technology Rules, 2021 ?

▪ **Mandates Social Media to Exercise Greater Diligence:**

- Broadly, the IT Rules (2021) mandate social media platforms to exercise greater diligence with respect to the content on their platforms.
- The rules establish a **soft-touch self-regulatory architecture with a Code of Ethics and three-tier grievance redressal** mechanism for OTT platforms.
- Also, every publisher needs to become a member of a self-regulating body. Such a body will have to register with **the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting** and address grievances.

▪ **Grievance Redressal Mechanism:**

- The grievance officer of the platform's redressal mechanism is responsible for receiving and resolving complaints of the users.
 - She/he is expected to acknowledge receipt of the complaint within 24 hours and dispose of the same in an appropriate manner within 15 days.
 - Its access and spread by any other means on the platform should also be disabled.

▪ **Privacy Policies:**

- The privacy policies of the social media platforms must ensure that users are educated about not circulating copyrighted material and anything that can be construed as **defamatory, racially or ethnically objectionable, paedophilic**, threatening the unity, integrity, defense, security or sovereignty of India or friendly relations with foreign states, or violative of any contemporary law.

What is Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT) ?

▪ **Establishment:**

- **Amendment in the TRAI Act, 1997:** The TRAI Act was **amended in 2000** which established **TDSAT** to take over the **adjudicatory and disputes functions** from TRAI.

▪ **Objectives:** TDSAT was set up to adjudicate any dispute between:

- A licensor and a licensee
- Two or more service providers
- A service provider and a group of consumers
- It was also established to hear and dispose of appeals against any direction, decision or order of TRAI.

▪ **Composition:**

- The TDSAT consists of a **Chairperson and two other members**, all to be **appointed by the Central Government**.
- The selection of members is done by the **Central Government in consultation with the [Chief Justice of India](#)**.

▪ **Composition:**

- The Tribunal consists of a Chairperson and two Members appointed by the Central Government.

▪ **Eligibility:**

- **Chairperson:** A person shall not be qualified for appointment as the Chairperson unless he/she is or has been, a Judge of the Supreme Court or the Chief Justice of a High Court.
- **Other Members:** He/She must have held the post of Secretary to the Government of India or any equivalent post in the Central/State Government.
- **Term of office:** The Chairperson and the other members of TDSAT shall hold office for a term of maximum **four years or seventy years** (for Chairperson), whichever is earlier.
- In the case of members other than the Chairperson, the maximum age is **sixty-five years**.

▪ **Powers and Jurisdiction of TDSAT:**

- The civil courts do not have jurisdiction to entertain any matter which the TDSAT is empowered to determine.

- An order passed by TDSAT is executable as a decree of civil court, the Tribunal has all the **powers of a civil court.**
- It is not bound by the procedure laid down by the Code of Civil Procedure but guided by the principles of natural justice.
- The Tribunal exercises jurisdiction over Telecom, Broadcasting, IT and Airport tariff matters under the TRAI Act, 1997 (as amended), **the Information Technology Act, 2008 and the Airport Economic Regulatory Authority of India Act, 2008.**
- **In 2004**, the scope of the TRAI Act was expanded to include broadcasting and cable services. Furthermore, following the enactment of the Finance Act in 2017, TDSAT's jurisdiction was **extended to encompass cases that were previously under the jurisdiction of the Cyber Appellate Tribunal.**

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q 1. In India, which of the following review the Independent regulators in sectors like telecommunications, insurance, electricity, etc.? (2019)

1. Ad Hoc Committees set up by the Parliament
2. Parliamentary Department Related Standing Committees
3. Finance Commission
4. Financial Sector Legislative Reforms Commission
5. NITI Aayog

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- (a) 1 and 2
 (b) 1, 3 and 4
 (c) 3, 4 and 5
 (d) 2 and 5

Ans: (a)

Mains

Q1. The aim of Information Technology Agreements (ITAs) is to lower all taxes and tariffs on information technology products by signatories to zero. What impact would such agreements have on India's interests? **(2014)**

Integration Among Defence Forces

Source: TH

Why in News?

Recently, the **Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)** highlighted that **nine verticals have been identified for**

integration among three defense services which includes logistics, intelligence, information flow, training, administration, supply chain management and maintenance etc. among others.

- The process of **'theatrisation'**, part of a reorganization effort undertaken by the armed forces, which will be fulfilled through integration of the defense forces and the creation of [Integrated Theatre Commands](#).

What is the Integration Among Three Defense Services ?

- Integration of three defense services in India involves establishment of **Integrated Theatre Commands (ITCs), office of the Chief of Defense Staff, Cyber and Space Commands, and resource sharing and joint training and exercises** among others.
- **Integrated Theatre Command:**
 - An integrated theatre command envisages a **unified command of the three Services, under a single commander**, for geographical theatres (areas) that are of strategic and security concern.
 - The commander of such a force will be able to bear all resources at his disposal — from the Army, the Indian Air Force, and the Navy — with **seamless efficacy**.
 - The integrated theatre commander **will not be answerable to individual Services**.
 - Integration and jointness of the three forces will avoid duplication of resources. The resources available under each service will be available to other services too.
 - The services will get to know one another better, **strengthening cohesion** in the defense establishment.
 - The [Shekatkar committee](#) has recommended the **creation of 3 integrated theatre commands** — **northern** for the China border, **western** for the Pakistan border, and **southern** for the maritime role.
- **Joint Command in Andaman & Nicobar islands:**
 - There is one [joint command in Andaman and Nicobar Islands](#).
 - It is the **first Tri-Service theatre command** of the Indian Armed Forces, based at Port Blair in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands of India.
 - It was **created in 2001 to safeguard India's strategic interests in Southeast Asia and the Strait of Malacca** by increasing the rapid deployment of military assets in the islands.
- The other tri-service command, the **Strategic Forces Command (SFC)**, looks after the delivery and operational control of the country's nuclear assets.
- **Current Situation:**
 - The Indian armed forces **currently have 17 commands**. There are 7 commands each of the Army and the Air Force. The Navy has 3 commands.
 - Each command is headed by a **4-star rank military officer**.

A new approach to defence

Understanding the theaterisation of the Indian armed forces that will be a significant departure from the current arrangement – a change experts say is integral to fighting future wars. **By Rahul Singh**

WHAT IS THEATERISATION?

It is a concept that seeks to integrate the capabilities of the three services and optimally utilise their resources for future wars and operations. It refers to placing specific units of the army, the navy and the air force under a Theatre Commander. Such commands are expected to come under the operational control of an officer from any of the three services, depending on the function assigned to that command.

LACK OF CONSENSUS?

A lack of consensus on the military's theaterisation model emerged earlier this month during a key meeting of top government officials reviewing a draft cabinet note on the new joint structures. This led to the government setting up an expert committee last week for consultation and to remove differences before the reform plan is sent to the Cabinet Committee on Security for approval. The panel has members of the armed forces, defence ministry and other ministries (finance and home).

WHO HAS RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE CURRENT MODEL?

While the army and navy are in favour of theatre commands, the Air Force has concerns. Its concerns are over:

- Division of air assets
- Home culture and jurisdiction of commands
- Leadership of theatre commands
- Dilution of powers of chiefs

The expert committee is expected to hold more discussions to iron out the details of the theaterisation plan and bring all stakeholders, particularly the IAF, on board. Deliberations on the proposal are likely to take more time and previous timelines may need to be revised.

HOW MANY COMMANDS DO ARMED FORCES HAVE RIGHT NOW?

17 single-service commands are currently spread across the country's geography. These are divided as follows:

- ARMY – 7 commands
- AIR FORCE – 7 commands
- NAVY – 3 commands

Creating theatres would involve merging existing commands. The Port Blair-based Andaman and Nicobar Command and Strategic Forces Command are the two in-service commands. The ANC command will come under the proposed Maritime Theatre Command and SFC will be under National Security Council.

WHAT WILL THEATERISATION ENTAIL?

The current theaterisation model under consideration seeks to set up at least six new integrated commands.

THE FIRST PHASE INVOLVES CREATION OF:

Air Defence Command: This will control air defence resources of all three services and will be tasked with protecting military assets from airborne enemies.

HEADED BY: A top three-star Indian Air Force officer
BASED IN: Prinsaj

Maritime Theatre Command: This will be responsible for securing India from seaborne threats and will have army and air force elements under it.

HEADED BY: A top three-star Indian Navy officer
BASED IN: Karwar, Karnataka

Ultimately, India is expected to have three other integrated land commands to secure its western, northern and eastern fronts. The northern command will have the entire jurisdiction of J&K and Ladakh, and has been kept separate as it faces adversaries on LoC and LAC. Additionally, a logistics command is in the works to avoid duplication of efforts and resources.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEATERISATION?

India's first chief of defence staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat has been given the mandate to steer the theaterisation drive.

EXPECTED BY: JANUARY, 2023

Rawat, who took charge as CDS on January 1, 2020, is expected to bring about the integration of the three services in a three-year timeframe.



'ONLY WAY AHEAD'

Despite IAF's reservations, experts stressed that theaterisation is the only way forward to fight future wars, particularly in an era where the nature of conflict is changing. The three services cannot work in silos and air defence is integral to fighting future wars for the era of stand alone aerial weapons like armed UAVs, rockets, missiles and swarm drones has dawned.

"No service should feel that they will have an upper hand or become subordinate to another service. Such thinking does not reflect sound national strategic thinking. We should all be mature enough to take India's long-term interests into account."

— LT GEN DE SHEKHAR (retd), who headed a committee that recommended the appointment of CDS & creation of theatre commands

COMMON CONCEPT IN BIG MILITARIES

Most leading militaries, including those of the United States, Russia, China, United Kingdom and France, function as per the theatre command concept with the idea of seamless integration among the land, sea and air forces for better coordination and response.

The US military, the world's most powerful, has 10 combatant commands, each with a geographic or functional mission. Similarly, the Chinese People's Liberation Army has five theatre commands – eastern, southern, western, northern and central, with its western theatre handling the entire border with India. Pakistan has sought Beijing's help to reorganise its forces under the same concept.

What are the Recent Developments in Integration Among the Three Services?

- The appointment of the **CDS** and the creation of the **Department of Military Affairs (DMA)** are momentous steps towards the integration and advancement of defence forces.
 - Work exclusively pertaining to military matters will fall within the purview of the DMA. Earlier, these functions were the mandate of the Department of Defence (DoD).
- **CDS:** It is the single-point military adviser to the government as suggested by the **Kargil Review Committee in 1999**.
 - It oversees and coordinates the working of the three Services.
 - **As the head of DMA, CDS** is vested with the authority in prioritizing inter-service procurement decisions.
 - **Significance of CDS:**
 - **Synergy between Armed forces and Government:** CDS fosters better cooperation between the Ministry of Defense bureaucracy and the Armed services.
 - **Jointness in operations:** Erstwhile Chiefs of Staff Committee-COSC has been made dysfunctional as CDS promotes more jointness in operations.
- **Concerns of Indian Air Force (IAF):**
 - While the army and navy are in favour of theatre commands, the IAF has concerns about the model **over the division of its air assets, the nomenclature of commands, the leadership of theatre commands and dilution of powers of chiefs.**
- **New Uniforms:**
 - All officers of the rank of Brigadier, Maj General, Lt General, and General will wear berets of the same colour, common badges of rank, a common belt buckle, and a common pattern of shoes, and will do away with the lanyards on the shoulders.
- Recently, **Inter-Services Organisations (Command, Control and Discipline) Bill, 2023**, was introduced in Lok Sabha to empower designated military commanders to take charge of soldiers and enforce discipline, regardless of the service they belong to.

Inter-Services Organisations (Command, Control and Discipline) Bill, 2023

- The system is likely to include **five joint services commands - western, eastern, northern, maritime, and air defense.**
- The central government may constitute an Inter-services Organisation, which may include a Joint Services Command.
- It will empower the Commander-in-Chief/the Officer-in-command of Inter-Services Organisations to maintain discipline and ensure proper discharge of duties of all the personnel from the army, navy and IAF serving under his command.
- The Commander-in-Chief or the Officer-in-Command of an Inter-services Organisation shall be the head of such Inter-services Organisation.

Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission Joins PDG

[Source: PIB](#)

Why in News?

The [Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission \(IPC\)](#) has joined the **Pharmacopoeial Discussion Group (PDG)**, a pivotal move to **enhance global pharmaceutical standards**, regulatory compliance, and international recognition of Indian pharmaceutical products.

- IPC was the only Pharmacopoeia body in the world to be selected for the pilot phase initiated in September 2022. After a year-long pilot phase, **IPC's inclusion as a permanent PDG member was confirmed in September 2023.**

What is the Pharmacopoeial Discussion Group (PDG)?

- The PDG is an **international forum** that aims to **harmonize global pharmacopoeial standards** to reduce the burden on manufacturers and ensure consistent quality.
- The PDG was established in 1989 by the **European Pharmacopoeia (Ph. Eur.)**, the **Japanese Pharmacopoeia (JP)**, and the **US Pharmacopoeia (USP)**.
 - In 2001, the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) joined as an observer.

How Will IPC's Membership in the PDG Benefit India?

- IPC's standards will **gain international recognition**, potentially boosting the **acceptance of Indian pharmaceutical products globally**. It will position IPC as a forward-looking body that sets drug quality standards in line with global benchmarks.
- IPC can **collaborate and harmonize standards** with other major regulatory bodies, ensuring global pharmaceutical quality and safety.
- IPC can align its processes with global standards, making it **easier for Indian pharmaceutical companies to comply with international regulations.**
- Membership in **PDG will facilitate increased exports of Indian pharmaceutical products** to member countries, reducing trade barriers.

Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission (IPC)

- IPC is an Autonomous Institution of the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare**.
 - IPC was created to **set standards for drugs in India**. Its basic function is to regularly update the standards of drugs commonly required for the treatment of diseases prevailing in this region.
 - It publishes official documents for improving the **Quality of Medicines** by way of adding new and updating existing monographs in the form of **Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP)**.
 - It further promotes the rational use of generic medicines by publishing the National Formulary of India.
 - IP prescribes **standards for the identity, purity and strength of drugs** essentially required from the health care perspective of human beings and animals.
 - IPC also **provides IP Reference Substances (IPRS)** which act as a **fingerprint** for identification of an article under test and its purity as prescribed in IP.
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