



Decoding Jamun's Medicinal Might

The first-ever genome sequencing of the **jamun tree (Syzygium cumini)** by researchers at **IISER Bhopal** has revealed the **pharmacological properties embedded within this species**. Jamun tree is an **evergreen tree** popular in India for its medicinal properties, fruits, and ornamental value.

- Jamun's genetic code uncovers a rich array of **bioactive compounds responsible for its antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and anti-diabetic attributes**.
 - The study also highlights the **presence of genes linked to terpenoids and glucosides**, key contributors to its defense mechanisms and anti-diabetic capabilities respectively.
- **Genome sequencing** is the process of determining the exact order of **DNA** building blocks in an organism, unveiling its complete genetic blueprint.

Read more: [Genome Sequencing in India](#)

Security Breach in Parliament

Source: [IE](#)

Why in News?

Recently, a security breach unfolded in the **Lok Sabha** after leaders paid tribute to the security personnel martyred during the **2001 Parliament attack**.

- The Delhi Police have invoked sections of the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act**, an anti-terror law, against accused persons, as well as sections of the **Indian Penal Code (IPC)** related to criminal conspiracy, trespass, provoking a riot, and obstructing a public servant in the discharge of functions.
- The accused were carrying **visitors' passes** issued to them during the attack.

What are the Rules for Parliament Visitors?

- **Rule 386** of the **Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Lok Sabha** governs the "admission, withdrawal, and removal" of visitors (referred to as "strangers" in parliamentary terms) during the sittings of the House.
- **Rule 387** grants the **Speaker the power to withdraw "strangers"** from any part of the House if deemed fit.
- **Rule 387A**, authorized by the Speaker, empowers a **Secretariat officer to remove** or take into custody any **stranger within House precincts** reserved for members.
 - This includes strangers admitted who misbehave, violate Speaker's regulations (under Rule 386), or fail to withdraw when directed under Rule 387 during House sittings.
- Members can apply for **visitors' cards** only for individuals well-known to them personally.
 - Certification is required, stating, "The above-named visitor is my relative/personal friend/known to me personally, and I take full responsibility for him/her."

- Cards for admission to visitors' galleries are ordinarily issued for a single sitting, generally for one hour. These cards are not transferable and are issued subject to the holder observing the conditions endorsed thereon.
- For security reasons, visitors are mandated to carry photo identification along with the certification.
- Similar rules are in force for visitor entry into the [Rajya Sabha](#).
- Members are advised to exercise utmost care, especially when facilitating the entry of individuals introduced by someone personally known to them.
 - Members bear responsibility for any untoward incident or undesirable activity in the galleries resulting from cardholders.

2001 Attack on the Indian Parliament

- The 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament was a terrorist attack that took place on 13th December 2001, when a group of armed militants attacked the Parliament of India in New Delhi.
 - The attackers belonged to the Pakistan-based militant organizations [Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed](#).
- The attack resulted in the **death of security personnel and government officials**.
- The attack exposed the **vulnerability of India's parliamentary democracy** to external threats and prompted a major overhaul of its security arrangements.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q. The Parliament of India exercises control over the functions of the Council of Ministers through (2017)

1. Adjournment motion
2. Question hour
3. Supplementary questions

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Ans: (d)

- Adjournment motion is introduced in the Parliament to draw attention of the House to a definite matter of urgent public importance. It interrupts the normal business of the House, thereby making it a device of censure against the government. **Hence, 1 is correct.**
- **Question Hour is a tool of "Parliamentary Oversight"** over the administration or executive. During Question Hour, the government is answerable for all its acts of omission and commission to the Parliament.
 - There are four types of questions: **Starred Questions, Unstarred Questions, Short Notice Question and Question to Private Member. Hence, 2 is correct.**
- Under the Starred Question, an oral answer is required from the minister and the members are allowed to ask the supplementary questions. **Hence, 3 is correct.**
- **Therefore, option (d) is the correct answer.**

Countervailing Duties on Four Indian Products

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

The **United States and the European Union** have now imposed [countervailing duties \(CVDs\)](#) on four Indian products, as a retaliation against the [Remission of Duties and Taxes on Export Products \(RoDTEP\) scheme](#) introduced for outbound shipments in January 2021.

- Countervailing investigations concluded with CVD determinations for items like **paper file folders, common alloy aluminum sheet, and forged steel fluid end blocks by the U.S.**, while **specific graphite electrode systems were investigated by the European Commission.**

What is Countervailing Duty?

- **Countervailing Duty: CVD** are tariffs levied on imported goods to offset subsidies made to producers of these goods in the exporting country.
 - CVDs are **meant to level the playing field between domestic producers of a product and foreign producers of the same product** who can afford to sell it at a lower price because of the subsidy they receive from their government.
 - The [World Trade Organization \(WTO\)](#) permits the **imposition of countervailing duty by its member countries.**
- **WTO's SCM Agreement:** The [WTO's Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures \(SCM Agreement\)](#) addresses two main aspects: multilateral regulations regarding subsidies and the **use of countervailing measures** against injury from subsidized imports.
 - Multilateral disciplines set rules on subsidy provisions and are enforced through the WTO dispute settlement mechanism.
 - **Countervailing duties are imposed unilaterally by a member** after investigating and satisfying criteria under the SCM Agreement.
- **Defining Subsidies:** "[Subsidy](#)" is defined in the SCM Agreement as a **financial contribution by a government** conferring a benefit. Specificity determines whether a subsidy applies to a particular enterprise, industry, or region.
 - **Subsidies are categorized as prohibited (e.g., export subsidies, local content subsidies) and actionable (subject to challenge or countervailing measures).**
 - Actionable subsidies can cause injury, prejudice, or nullification of benefits.
 - However, transition rules **provide exemptions or extended periods for developing countries and those transitioning to market economies** to phase out certain subsidies.

Who Imposes Countervailing Measures in India?

- **Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR)** under Ministry of Commerce & Industry, is the single national authority for administering all trade remedial measures including **anti-dumping, countervailing duties and safeguard measures.**
 - The Directorate General of Anti-Dumping & Allied Duties (DGAD) which was formed in 1997 has been restructured as DGTR in May 2018 by restructuring and re-designing DGAD into DGTR by incorporating all the trade remedial functions i.e. **Anti-Dumping Duty (ADD), Countervailing Duty, Safeguards Duty (SGD), Safeguards Measures (QRs)** under a single window framework.
- It is a quasi-judicial body that **independently undertakes investigations before making its recommendations** to the Central Government.

What is the RoDTEP Scheme?

- The **RoDTEP (Remission of Duties or Taxes on Export Products)** Scheme aims to offset taxes and duties incurred on exported goods that are not refunded otherwise, ensuring competitiveness in global markets.
- This scheme provides rebates on hidden Central, State, and Local duties that were not refunded under other schemes, **encompassing both direct and prior-stage indirect taxes.**

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question:

Prelims

Q. With reference to the international trade of India at present, which of the following statements is/are correct? (2020)

1. India's merchandise exports are less than its merchandise imports.
2. India's imports of iron and steel, chemicals, fertilizers and machinery have decreased in recent years.
3. India's exports of services are more than its imports of services.
4. India suffers from an overall trade/current account deficit.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Ans: D

Limitations of CCS and CDR

For Prelims: Limitations of CCS and CDR, [COP28](#), [Carbon Capture and Storage \(CCS\)](#), Carbon-Dioxide Removal (CDR) technologie, Unabated fossil fuels, Carbon dioxide (CO₂).

For Mains: Limitations of CCS and CDR, Environmental pollution and degradation.

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

The draft decisions taken at [COP28](#) in Dubai, the UAE have recommended the abatement and removal of carbon emissions using [Carbon Capture and Storage \(CCS\)](#) and **Carbon-Dioxide Removal (CDR) technologies.**

- The unabated fossil fuels mean **the combustion of these fuels** without using CCS technologies to capture their emissions.
- Draft decision texts point to a need to “phase out” such unabated fossil fuels.

What are CCS and CDR?

- **Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS):**
 - CCS refers to technologies that can capture carbon dioxide (CO₂) at a source of emissions **before it is released into the atmosphere.**
 - These sources **include the fossil fuel industry** (where coal, oil and gas are combusted to generate power) and industrial processes like steel and cement production.
- **Carbon-Dioxide Removal (CDR):**
 - CDR takes the **forms of both natural means like afforestation or reforestation** and technologies like **direct air capture**, where machines mimic trees by absorbing CO₂ from their **surroundings and storing it underground.**
 - There are also **more complex CDR technologies like enhanced rock weathering**, where rocks are **broken down chemically**; the resulting rock particles can **remove CO₂ from the atmosphere.**
 - Other technologies like bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS) capture and store **CO₂ from burning biomass, like wood.**

How well do CCS and CDR need to work?

- The [IPCC's Sixth Assessment Report \(AR6\)](#) heavily relies on these **technologies for projections in achieving the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.**
- IPCC's assessed scenarios, with over a 50% chance of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, rely on the assumption that the world can sequester 5 billion tonnes of CO₂ by 2040. This sequestration **scale surpasses India's current annual CO₂ emissions.**
- There's no pathway in AR6 to achieve the 1.5 degrees Celsius target without the **integration of CDR technologies.**
- Given current emission rates, there's a significant **risk of surpassing the 1.5 degrees Celsius threshold** within seven years. Mitigating emissions solely through direct measures (like renewable energy adoption) would be nearly **impossible at this stage, requiring substantial reliance on CDR.**

What are the Challenges of CCS and CDR?

- **Rebound Emissions Concerns:**
 - There are concerns that the **existence of CCS and CDR could inadvertently create more room for continued emissions.**
 - This phenomenon might lead to increased emissions **or prolonged reliance on fossil fuels** instead of transitioning to renewable energy sources.
- **Fossil Fuel Dependency:**
 - In some cases, CCS has been used to extract more oil by injecting captured CO₂ into oil fields, potentially prolonging reliance on **fossil fuels rather than transitioning away from them.**
- **Land Equity Concerns:**
 - CDR methods like afforestation, reforestation, BECCS, and direct air capture are constrained by their need for land.
 - Land in the Global South is often considered to be **'viable' and/or 'cost-effective' for planting trees** and deploying other large-scale CDR methods.
 - As a result, such CDR projects can adversely affect land rights of indigenous communities and **biodiversity and compete with other forms of land-use**, like agriculture that is crucial for ensuring food security.
- **Technological and Financial Hurdles:**
 - The scale-up of CCS and CDR technologies poses significant technological challenges, including **high costs, limited infrastructure**, and the need for substantial innovation to make these technologies more effective and affordable.

Way Forward

- Addressing concerns related to CCS and CDR requires a comprehensive approach involving

technological advancements, policy frameworks that discourage continued reliance on fossil fuels, and strategies that ensure the responsible and sustainable deployment of CCS and CDR technologies to align with broader climate goals.

- It is important to integrate **CCS and CDR technologies within broader climate strategies** but emphasize their role as transitional solutions rather than long-term fixes.
- Ensure that their **deployment doesn't detract from efforts to decarbonize** the economy through renewable energy adoption, energy efficiency, and sustainable practices.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q1. Consider the following agricultural practices: (2012)

1. Contour bunding
2. Relay cropping
3. Zero tillage

In the context of global climate change, which of the above helps/help in carbon sequestration/storage in the soil?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 3 only
- (c) 1, 2 and 3
- (d) None of them

Ans: (b)

Q2. In the context of mitigating the impending global warming due to anthropogenic emissions of carbon dioxide, which of the following can be the potential sites for carbon sequestration? (2017)

1. Abandoned and uneconomic coal seams
2. Depleted oil and gas reservoirs
3. Subterranean deep saline formations

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Ans: (d)

Q3. What is/are the advantage/advantages of zero tillage in agriculture? (2020)

1. Sowing of wheat is possible without burning the residue of previous crop.
2. Without the need for nursery of rice saplings, direct planting of paddy seeds in the wet soil is possible.
3. Carbon sequestration in the soil is possible.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Ans: (d)

The CEC and Other ECs (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Bill, 2023

For Prelims: [Election Commission of India](#), [Chief Election Commissioner \(CEC\)](#), [Supreme Court of India](#), [Article 324 of the Constitution](#)

For Mains: Election Commission of India and its functions, Independence, appointment procedure

Source: TH

Why in News?

The [Rajya Sabha](#) recently approved the **Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Bill, 2023**, which outlines the procedures for appointing the [Chief Election Commissioner \(CEC\) and Election Commissioners \(EC\)](#).

- The legislation aims to bring transparency to the appointment process, responding to a [directive from the Supreme Court of India](#).

What are the Key Provisions of the Bill?

- The **Bill replaces the Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act, 1991.**
- It addresses the appointment, salary, and removal of the CEC and ECs.
 - **Appointment Process:**
 - The CEC and ECs will be **appointed by the President** upon the recommendation of a **Selection Committee**.
 - The Selection Committee will consist of the **Prime Minister, a Union Cabinet Minister, and the Leader of Opposition/leader** of the largest opposition party in **Lok Sabha**.
 - Recommendations of the Selection Committee will be valid **even when there is a vacancy in this Committee**.
 - A Search Committee headed by the [Cabinet Secretary](#) will propose a panel of names to the Selection Committee.
 - Eligibility for the posts includes holding (or having held) a post equivalent to the **Secretary to the central government**.
 - **Changes in Salary and Conditions:**
 - The salary and conditions of service of the CEC and ECs will be equivalent to that of the **Cabinet Secretary**.
 - Under the 1991 Act, it was equivalent to the salary of a [Supreme Court Judge](#).
 - **Removal Process:**
 - The Bill retains the constitutional provision (**Article 324(5)**) that allows the CEC to be removed like a Supreme Court Judge, while ECs can only be removed on the recommendation of the CEC.
 - **Protection for CEC And ECs:**

- Bill safeguards CEC and ECs from **legal proceedings related to actions taken during their tenure**, provided such actions were carried out in the discharge of official duties.
 - The amendment aimed to shield these officials from civil or criminal proceedings related to their official functions.

How are the CEC and ECs Currently Appointed?

▪ Constitutional Provisions:

- There are just five **Articles (324-329) in Part XV (Elections)** of the Constitution.
- The Constitution does not lay down a specific legislative process for the appointment of the CEC and ECs.
- Article 324 of the Constitution vests the **“superintendence, direction and control of elections”** in an Election Commission consisting “of the Chief Election Commissioner and such number of other Election Commissioners, if any, as the President may from time to time fix”.
 - The President makes the appointment on the advice of the Union Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister.
 - The Law Minister suggests a pool of suitable candidates to the Prime Minister for consideration. The President makes the appointment on the advice of the PM.

▪ Removal:

- They can resign anytime or can also be removed before the expiry of their term.
- The CEC can be removed from office only through a process of removal similar to that of a SC judge by Parliament.
- Any other EC cannot be removed except on the recommendation of CEC.

What are the Concerns Regarding the Bill?

▪ Transparency and Independence:

- Allowing the Selection Committee's recommendations to be valid even with a vacancy could result in a **monopoly of ruling party members** during certain circumstances, undermining the diversity and independence of the committee.

▪ Shift from Judicial Benchmark to Executive Control:

- Equating the salary of the CEC and ECs with that of the **Cabinet Secretary**, whose salary is determined by the executive, raises concerns about **potential government influence**.
- Unlike the salary of a Supreme Court Judge, which is fixed by an Act of Parliament, this shift may compromise the **financial independence of the EC**.

▪ Limiting Eligibility to Civil Servants:

- Restricting eligibility to individuals who have held a position equivalent to the Secretary to the government **may exclude potentially qualified candidates**, limiting the diversity of backgrounds and expertise in the ECI.

▪ Concerns About Lack of Parity:

- The Bill retains the constitutional provision that allows the CEC to be removed like a Supreme Court Judge, while ECs can only be removed on the recommendation of the CEC.
 - This **lack of parity in removal processes** may raise questions about fairness.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Questions (PYQ)

Prelims

Q.1 Consider the following statements: (2017)

1. The Election Commission of India is a five-member body.
2. Union Ministry of Home Affairs decides the election schedule for the conduct of both general elections and bye-elections.
3. Election Commission resolves the disputes relating to splits/mergers of recognised political parties.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: (d)

Mains

Q.1 To enhance the quality of democracy in India the Election Commission of India has proposed electoral reforms in 2016. What are the suggested reforms and how far are they significant to make democracy successful? **(2017)**

Human Trafficking

For Prelims: Operation Storm Makers II, [Interpol](#), [Human trafficking forms](#), [National Crime Records Bureau](#), [Immoral Traffic \(Prevention\) Act, 1956](#), [Article 23](#), [Protection of Children from Sexual Offences \(POCSO\) Act, 2012](#), UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime, SAARC Convention on Trafficking.

For Mains: Status of Human Trafficking in India,

Source: [TH](#)

Why in News?

Operation Storm Makers II, orchestrated by [Interpol](#), has illuminated the **expanding network of fraud schemes associated with [human trafficking](#)**.

- It mobilized law enforcement in 27 countries across Asia and other regions to target human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

What are the Major Highlights of Operation Storm Makers II?

- **Arrests and Charges:** The operation resulted in the apprehension of 281 individuals across various countries on charges spanning **human trafficking, passport forgery, corruption, telecommunications fraud, and [sexual exploitation](#)**.
- **Rescues and Investigations:** 149 human trafficking victims were rescued, initiating over 360 investigations, a substantial number of which are currently under active pursuit by law enforcement agencies.
- **Telangana Case:** According to Interpol, the Telangana police registered one of the **first cases in India of human trafficking committed for the purpose of forcing victims to commit cyber fraud**.
 - An accountant was lured to a Southeast Asian country and forced into participating in online fraudulent schemes **under inhumane conditions**.
 - His release was secured after a ransom payment.

Note

Interpol or the International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO) is the world's largest international police organization. Interpol's mission is to help police around the world work together to make the world safer.

- It has 196 member countries. India is one of the oldest members of Interpol and joined the organization in 1949.
- It uses a secure network that allows countries to contact each other and the General Secretariat. It also allows them to access Interpol's databases and services in real-time.

What is the Status of Human Trafficking in India?

- **About Human Trafficking:**
 - Human trafficking refers to the **illegal trade and exploitation of people**, typically for the purposes of forced labour, sexual exploitation, or involuntary servitude.
 - It involves the **recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of individuals** through **threat, force, coercion, abduction, fraud, or deception** for the purpose of exploiting them.
- **Status in India:**
 - According to the [National Crime Records Bureau \(NCRB\)](#), India identified over 6,500 human trafficking victims in 2022, with **60% of them being women and girls**.
- **Constitutional & Legislative Provisions related to Trafficking in India:**
 - **Constitutional Prohibition:** [Article 23](#) prohibits **human trafficking and begar (forced labour without payment)**.
 - **Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (ITPA):** This legislation serves as the primary law aimed at preventing trafficking specifically for commercial sexual exploitation.
 - **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012:** Enacted on 14th November 2012, this act is dedicated to shielding children from sexual abuse and exploitation.
 - It provides clear definitions for various forms of sexual abuse, encompassing penetrative and non-penetrative assaults, as well as sexual harassment.
 - **Other Specific Legislations:** Various other laws target trafficking in women and children, including the **Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006**, the **Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976**, the **Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986**, the **Transplantation of Human Organs Act, 1994**, and pertinent sections in the Indian Penal Code, such as Sections 372 and 373 that address the selling and buying of girls for prostitution.
 - **State-Specific Legislation:** States have also enacted specific laws to tackle trafficking. For instance, The **Punjab Prevention of Human Smuggling Act, 2012**, is one such state-level legislation aimed at addressing this issue.
- **Related International Convention:**
 - **UN Convention (UNTOC):** India ratified the [UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime \(UNTOC\)](#) which includes a Protocol specifically addressing the Prevention, Suppression, and Punishment of Trafficking in Persons, particularly Women and Children.
 - **Legislative Action:** The **Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2013**, was enacted to align with the Protocol's provisions, offering a precise definition of human trafficking.
 - **SAARC Convention on Trafficking:** India ratified the **SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution**.
 - **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW):** Also known as the International Bill of Rights for Women. It was adopted in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).
 - India ratified CEDAW in 1993.

What are the Major Causes and Impacts of Human Trafficking?

- **Causes:**
 - **Poverty and Economic Disparities:** **Economic hardships** drive individuals into vulnerable situations, making them susceptible to promises of better opportunities that traffickers exploit.
 - **Lack of Education and Awareness:** Limited education and awareness about the risks of trafficking leave individuals **unaware of the tactics used by traffickers**, making them easy targets.
 - **Conflict, Instability, and Displacement:** Areas affected by conflict, political instability, or **natural disasters** create environments ripe for exploitation as people seek refuge or stability elsewhere.
 - **Social Marginalization and Discrimination:** Marginalized groups, including women, children, migrants, and minorities, are often more vulnerable due to social discrimination and lack of support structures.
 - **Demand for Cheap Labor and Services:** Industries seeking low-cost labor or services sometimes turn a **blind eye to exploitative practices**, perpetuating trafficking for labor exploitation.
 - **Online Exploitation and Technology:** Technological advancements have facilitated online recruitment, making it easier for **traffickers to lure victims through various deceptive means**.
- **Impacts:**
 - **Trauma and Psychological Effects:** Victims endure severe psychological trauma, including **depression, anxiety** and a sense of betrayal, leading to long-term mental health issues.
 - **Physical Health Complications:** Victims often suffer physical abuse, neglect, and inadequate healthcare, leading to various health complications and long-term injuries.
 - **Loss of Freedom and Rights:** Trafficked individuals **lose their autonomy and basic human rights**, often living in constant fear, subjected to control and exploitation.
 - **Social Stigma and Isolation:** Survivors face **social stigma and ostracization**, making it challenging to reintegrate into society even after being rescued.
 - **Global Consequences:** Human trafficking **fuels a global criminal network**, affecting countries' social fabric, economies, and international relations, undermining global human rights efforts.

Way Forward

- **Prevention through Education and Awareness:** Implement comprehensive education programs to **inform communities, especially vulnerable groups**, about the risks and tactics of traffickers.
 - Raise awareness through **campaigns, workshops, and media** to promote vigilance and empower individuals to recognize and report trafficking.
- **Strengthen Legal Frameworks:** Enforce existing laws effectively and consistently while strengthening legislation to provide **better protection for victims and harsher penalties for traffickers**.
 - Provide adequate resources and training to law enforcement agencies to combat trafficking and handle victim cases sensitively.
- **Support and Rehabilitation for Victims:** Establish **comprehensive victim-centered support systems** providing shelter, healthcare, counseling, and vocational training for survivors.
 - Ensure **reintegration programs that help survivors rebuild their lives** and reintegrate into society without stigma.
- **International and Regional Collaboration:** Foster collaboration between countries to **share information, intelligence, and best practices** for effective cross-border cooperation.
 - Ratify and implement international conventions and protocols aimed at combating human trafficking.
- **Tackle Root Causes:** Address **poverty and economic disparities by creating sustainable livelihood opportunities** and economic empowerment programs for vulnerable populations.
 - Combat social discrimination and marginalization by promoting **inclusivity, equality, and social support structures**.

Q. India's proximity to two of the world's biggest illicit opium-growing states has enhanced her internal security concerns. Explain the linkages between drug trafficking and other illicit activities such as gunrunning, money laundering and human trafficking. What counter-measures should be taken to prevent the same? (2018)

Illegal Indian Migration to the U.S.

For Prelims: Rise in Illegal Indian [Migration](#) to the U.S., [Global Migration](#), Minority Communities, [Discrimination](#).

For Mains: Rise in Illegal Indian Migration to the U.S., Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

Over the past decade, the influx of **illegal Indian Migrants to the U.S.** has seen a remarkable increase, rising from a **modest 1,500 a decade ago to a staggering 96,917 in 2023**, as per the data from the **U.S. Customs and Border Protection**.

- The most significant surge in illegal border crossings by Indians has been witnessed since 2020, marking a departure from historically lower numbers under 10,000.
- Traditionally, the **majority of illegal crossings** occurred in the **U.S.-Mexico border**. However, Indian migrants are increasingly opting for the **northern border, with numbers rising from under 100 in 2014 to over 30,000 in 2023**.

Migrant

- **The International Organization for Migration** defines a migrant as any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a state away from his/her habitual place of residence.
 - Migration is the movement of people from one place to another, either permanently or temporarily.

What are the Reasons for Surge in Illegal Indian Migrants in the USA?

- **Push Factors:**
 - There are several push factors such as **the lack of sufficient job opportunities and economic prospects in India** prompt individuals to seek better employment prospects abroad.
 - Social conflicts or lack of confidence in the governance structure in India may drive some individuals to seek a more stable environment elsewhere.
- **Pull Factors:**
 - The US's reputation for offering better employment, higher wages, and career advancement **acts as a significant pull factor for migrants**.

- The enticement of **quality education and prestigious academic institutions** in the USA attracts students and families seeking educational opportunities.
 - Desire to reunite with family members or relatives already settled in the USA drives **some migrants to seek illegal entry for proximity** to loved ones.
- **Global Migration Trends:**
 - The overall rise in **Global Migration** after the pandemic has contributed to this surge, as individuals **seek better opportunities and security in different countries**.
- **Visa Backlogs and Alternative Routes:**
 - Smugglers have **evolved their methods, offering sophisticated and in-demand services** to facilitate illegal entry into America.
 - Extreme visa backlogs have **driven individuals to explore alternative**, albeit illegal, pathways to enter the USA due to the prolonged waiting times and limited options for legal entry.
- **Misinformation:**
 - Misinformation spread through social media and deceptive travel agencies often misguide desperate migrants, **enticing them to undertake perilous journeys** guided by multiple facilitators across continents.
 - Desperate migrants **might undertake complex, multi-leg journeys** passing through various continents and countries, facing numerous risks and challenges along the way.

What are the Socio-Political and Geo-Political Implications for India Over Surge in Illegal Migrants?

- **Bilateral Relations:**
 - The issue could impact bilateral ties between India and the USA, potentially affecting trade negotiations, security cooperation, and strategic partnerships.
- **Economic Factors:**
 - The potential brain drain resulting from skilled individuals seeking illegal entry might impact India's economy, particularly in sectors where skilled labour is in demand.
- **Brain Drain:**
 - The loss of skilled and educated individuals to illegal migration can negatively impact India's economy, depleting the country of talent and expertise.
- **Labor Market Challenges:**
 - The departure of skilled or semi-skilled workers might create labour shortages in certain sectors, impacting India's workforce and economic productivity.
- **Policy Repercussions:**
 - India might need to implement stringent policies to address the factors driving illegal migration, potentially diverting resources and attention from other developmental priorities.

Way Forward

- Focusing on economic stability, **job creation, and social welfare programs** to alleviate distress and provide better opportunities within India.
- Engaging in **diplomatic dialogues to understand and address concerns** leading to migration, collaborating with other nations to ensure the protection of migrants' rights.

India, Asian Development Bank Ink Deal for Uttarakhand Power Project

The signing of the **USD 200 million loan agreement between the Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB)** marks a significant step towards **fortifying Uttarakhand's power infrastructure**.

- Aimed at enhancing **quality, efficiency, and reliability**, the project will introduce a modernized underground cable system spanning 537 km, along with substations and power lines to **meet escalating electricity demands and ensure smoother integration of renewable energy**.
- ADB is a regional development bank established in 1966 with the objective of promoting social and economic development in Asia and the Pacific.
 - It has 68 members; 49 are from within Asia and the Pacific and 19 outside. **India is a founding member**. ADB is **headquartered in Manila, Philippines**.

Read more: [Asian Development Bank](#)

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