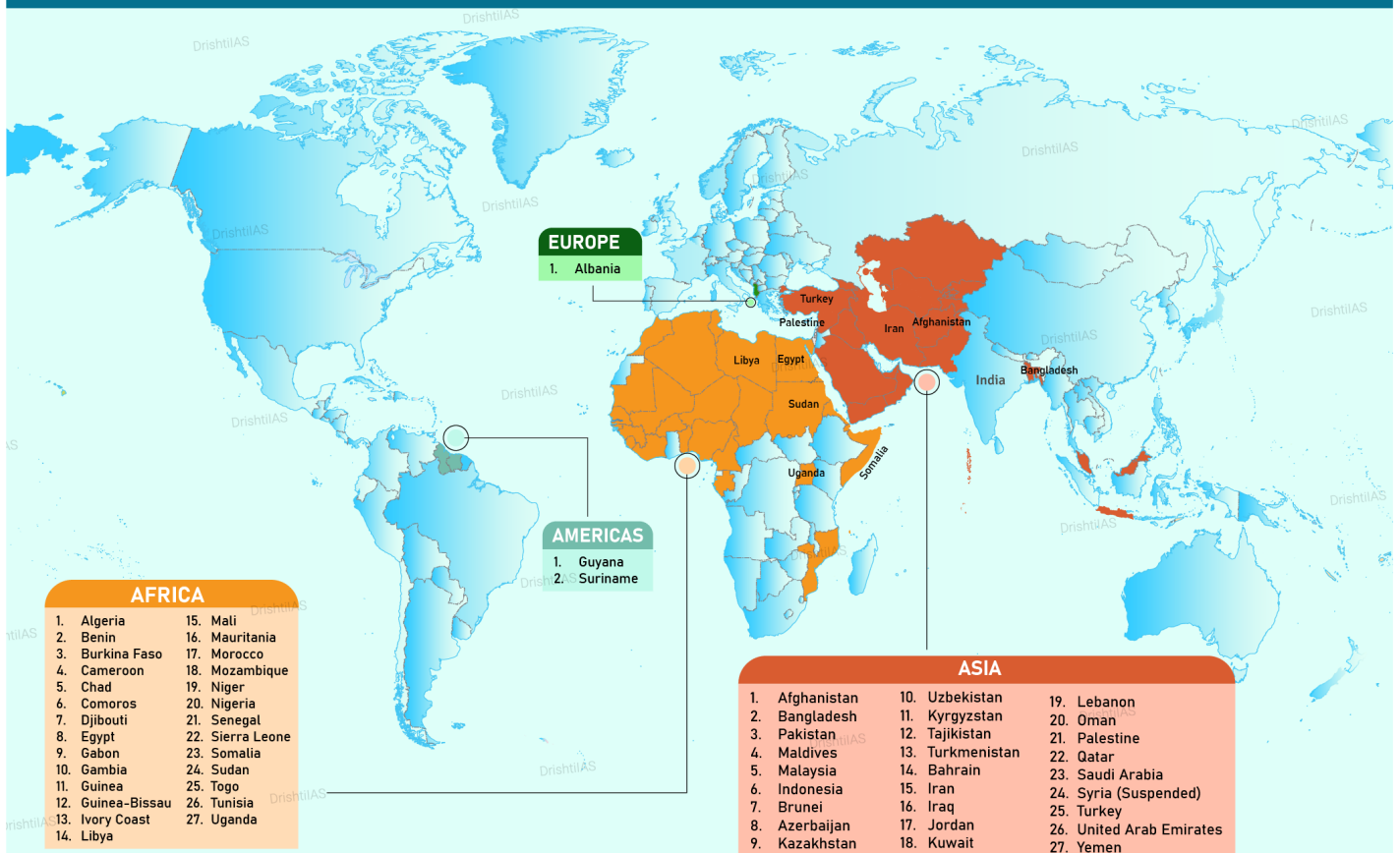




Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC)

Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC)

OIC, the second-largest inter-governmental organization globally after the UN, encompasses 57 countries across four continents, identifying as the "collective voice of the Muslim world" and striving to safeguard Muslim interests while promoting global peace and harmony.



Formerly: Organisation of Islamic Conference
Founded: 25 September 1969 in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco
Founding Members: 30
Current Members: 57 (Most but not all members are Muslim majority states)
Finance: By member states, proportionate to their national income
Highest Authority: Islamic Summit (Composed of Kings and Heads of State)
OIC Summit Meetings: Every three years

Secretariat: Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Charter: Lays down objectives and principles of the organization
OIC Economy:
 ○ Share in Global Export: 8.5% (2020)
India's Position
 ○ Not a member
 ○ 2019: Guest of honour (Maiden appearance at OIC Foreign Ministers' meeting)



[Read more...](#)

Caste Based Discrimination in Indian Prisons

For Prelims: [Supreme Court of India](#), [Public Interest Litigation](#), [Chief Justice of India](#), **Prisons Act of 1894**, [Manual Scavenging](#), [Model Prisons Act, 2023](#)

For Mains: Issues Related to Prisons in India, Impact of various caste-based discriminatory practices prevalent in the society, Caste System

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

The [Supreme Court \(SC\) of India](#) recently issued notice to the Centre and 11 states on a [public interest litigation \(PIL\)](#) that alleged [caste-based discrimination and segregation of prisoners in jails](#) and sought a direction to repeal provisions that mandate such practices under the state prison manuals.

What are the Instances of Caste Based Discrimination Highlighted by the PIL?

▪ Instances of Discrimination:

- The PIL exposes instances from Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, and Tamil Nadu jails where **cooking is allocated to dominant castes**, while **"specific lower castes" are assigned menial jobs** such as sweeping and cleaning toilets.
 - The Prison system in India is alleged to perpetuate discriminatory practices, including the division of labour based on **caste hierarchy and the caste-based segregation of barracks**.
- Caste-based labour distribution is deemed a relic of colonial India and is considered humiliating and unhealthy, violating the prisoners' right to life with dignity.

▪ State Prison Manual Sanctions:

- The petition claims that prison manuals in various states sanction caste-based discrimination and forced labour within the prison system.
 - **Rajasthan Prison Rules 1951:**
 - Assignment of **Mehtars to latrines and Brahmins to kitchens** based on caste.
 - **Palayamkottai Central Jail in Tamil Nadu:**
 - The petition highlights the caste-based segregation of inmates in Palayamkottai Central Jail in Tamil Nadu, pointing to the separation of **Thevars, Nadars, and Pallars into different sections**.
 - **West Bengal Jail Code:**
 - Directs menial tasks like sweeping to prisoners from the **Mether or Hari caste, Chandal, and other castes**.

▪ 2003 Model Prison Manual Guidelines:

- The petition refers to the **2003 Model Prison Manual**, emphasizing guidelines for **classification based on security, discipline, and institutionalized programs**.
 - It argues against any classification based on socio-economic status, caste, or class.

▪ Fundamental Rights:

- The petition argues that a **person does not lose fundamental rights or the equality code** merely for being a prisoner, citing the Supreme Court's judgment in the **Sunil Batra v. Delhi Administration (1978) case on the fundamental rights of prisoners**.

▪ Call for Repeal of Discriminatory Provisions:

- The petition emphasises the need to **repeal discriminatory provisions in state prison manuals**, advocating for the protection of prisoners' fundamental rights and equality

within the prison system.

What are the Supreme Court's Observations on Caste Discrimination in Prisons?

- Three-judge Bench, headed by the [Chief Justice of India](#), finds that prison manuals in over 10 states support caste-based discrimination and forced labour.
 - States include Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Kerala, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana, Punjab, and Tamil Nadu.
- Caste-based discrimination, segregation, and treatment of [denotified tribes](#) as "**habitual offenders**" within prisons are deemed a "**very important issue**" by the SC.
 - SC emphasized the **need for prompt and comprehensive addressing** of alleged discriminatory practices.
- The SC sent a notice and asked for a response from the States and the Union within four weeks on the petition.

How do the Laws Allow Caste Discrimination Inside Indian Jails?

- **Legacy of Colonial Policies:**
 - India's criminal justice system, rooted in **colonial legacy**, primarily focuses on **punishment rather than reformation or rehabilitation**.
 - The '**Prisons Act of 1894**,' dating back almost 130 years, underscores the outdated nature of the legal framework.
 - The Act lacks provisions for the **reform and rehabilitation of prisoners**.
 - Recognizing the deficiencies in existing laws, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) reviewed '**The Prisons Act, 1894**,' '**The Prisoners Act, 1900**,' and '**The Transfer of Prisoners Act, 1950**.'
 - This review led to the assimilation of relevant provisions into the forward-looking '**Model Prisons Act, 2023**.'
 - The effective implementation of the [Model Prisons Act, 2023](#) which was finalized by the MHA in May 2023, is **expected to improve the prison conditions and administration** and protect the human rights and dignity of the prisoners.
- **Prison Manuals:**
 - State-level prison manuals, largely unchanged since the establishment of the modern prison system, reflect both colonial and caste mentalities.
 - Existing prison manuals **enforce the central premise of the caste system**, emphasizing notions of purity and impurity.
 - State prison manuals mandate that duties like cleaning and sweeping must be performed by members of specific castes, perpetuating caste-based discrimination.
 - Prison manuals, such as the one in West Bengal under Section 741, safeguard the monopoly of "savarna Hindus" on cooking and carrying food for all prisoners.
 - Despite constitutional and legal provisions against untouchability, caste-based rules persist in prison administration.
- **The Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (MS Act, 2013):**
 - Despite the outlawing of [manual scavenging](#) by the 2013 Act, it does not explicitly cover prison administration, and hence, the prison manuals that **allow caste discrimination and manual scavenging in jails** are not in violation of the Act.
 - Manual scavenging refers to the practice of manually cleaning, handling and disposing of human excreta and other waste materials from dry latrines, open drains, and sewers.

Way Forward

- The states should adopt the **Model Prison Manual of 2016** released by the Ministry of Home Affairs based on the **Nelson Mandela Rules in 2015**.

- The [United Nations General Assembly](#) adopted the Nelson Mandela Rules in 2015, emphasizing **dignity and non-discrimination for all prisoners**.
- Courts should **consider judicial intervention to strike down discriminatory provisions**, ensuring the protection of fundamental rights and promoting equality within the prison system.
- Establish **robust monitoring mechanisms** to track progress in implementing reforms, holding authorities accountable for creating a more equitable prison system.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Mains

Q1. “Caste system is assuming new identities and associational forms. Hence caste system cannot be eradicated in India.” Comment. (2018)

Q2. What are the two major legal initiatives by the State since Independence addressing discrimination against Scheduled Tribes (STs)? (2017)

Peace Pact with ULFA

For Prelims: [United Liberation Front of Assam](#), Assam Accord, Operation Bajrang, Armed Forces Special Powers Act, Citizenship Act of 1955, Peace Pact with ULFA

For Mains: Major Provisions of Peace Pact with ULFA, Additional Considerations to Enhance the Recent Peace Pact.

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

The pro-talks faction of the [United Liberation Front of Assam \(ULFA\)](#) signed a tripartite peace deal with the Centre and the Assam government recently.

What are the Major Provisions of Peace Pact with ULFA?

- **Context and History:**
 - **Background:** From the 19th century, Assam's rich culture faced challenges due to an **influx of migrants drawn by its thriving tea, coal, and oil industries**.
 - This influx, compounded by **Partition and then refugees from East Pakistan**, heightened insecurity among the indigenous population.
 - Resource competition sparked a six-year mass movement, **culminating in the [1985 Assam Accord](#)** aiming to address the issue of foreigners in the state.
 - **Origin of ULFA:** ULFA was formed in **1979**, advocating for an independent Assam through armed struggle against the Indian state.
 - Over a decade, ULFA recruited and trained members in Myanmar, China, and Pakistan, resorting to abductions and executions to establish a sovereign Assam.
 - In 1990, the government's **[Operation Bajrang](#)** resulted in the capture of a large number of ULFA rebels. **Assam was labeled a 'disturbed area'**, prompting the imposition of President's rule and invoking the **[Armed Forces Special Powers Act \(AFSPA\)](#)**.

- **Protracted Peace Talks:** Negotiations between ULFA, the Indian government, and the Assam state government began in 2011.
- **The Recent Peace Pact:**
 - **Key Terms:**
 - **ULFA to:**
 - Renounce violence and disband their organization.
 - Join the democratic process.
 - Surrender weapons and camps.
 - **Government to:**
 - Address ULFA's concerns regarding Assamese identity, culture, and land rights.
 - **A ₹1.5 lakh crore investment for Assam's holistic development**
 - Following the principles applied for the 2023 delimitation exercise for future delimitation exercises in Assam
 - **Legislative Safeguards:** The pact aims to **restrict non-indigenous communities' representation in the Assam Assembly** and seeks exemptions from specific sections of the [Citizenship Act of 1955](#).

What Should be the Additional Considerations to Enhance the Recent Peace Pact?

- **Transparency and Accountability:** Establishing mechanisms for **transparent implementation of the pact's provisions** and holding responsible parties accountable for their commitments.
- **Engagement with Anti-Talks Faction:** Strategically engaging with the **ULFA's anti-talks faction** to work towards a unified resolution and wider acceptance of the peace pact.
- **Legal Safeguards:** Ensuring that legislative changes or reforms align with constitutional principles and **protect the rights of all residents**, ensuring no discrimination based on ethnicity or origin.
- **International Cooperation:** Collaboration with neighboring countries to **prevent cross-border insurgencies** and maintain regional stability.
- **Long-Term Development Plans:** Creating sustainable and **detailed developmental strategies beyond immediate investments** to foster holistic growth in the region.

Conclusion

The recent peace pact with ULFA presents a significant opportunity for peace and development in Assam. But only by **addressing underlying grievances**, fostering economic growth, and ensuring social integration can a lasting peace be built in the region.

Decoding Psychoanalysis

For Prelims: Psychoanalysis

For Mains: Ethical Aspects Involved in Psychoanalysis, Psychoanalysis and Criminal Rehabilitation

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

Recently, the [Delhi Police](#) revealed that six individuals accused in the [Parliament breach](#) incident underwent **psychoanalysis** to decipher their motives.

What is Psychoanalysis?

- **About:** Psychoanalysis is a **set of theories and therapeutic techniques** that treat mental disorders.
 - It aims to treat a range of mental health issues by investigating the **relationship between the unconscious and conscious elements** of psychological experience.
 - It was pioneered by **Sigmund Freud**, a Viennese psychiatrist, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries
- **Key Aspects Related to Psychoanalysis:**
 - **Unconscious Mind:** Freud proposed that much of human behavior is influenced by **unconscious desires, fears, memories, and conflicts**, often stemming from early childhood experiences.
 - Psychoanalysis delves into the unconscious mind, exploring how it shapes **thoughts, behaviors, emotions, and personality**
 - **Id, Ego, Superego:** Freud introduced a structural model of mind comprising the **id (driven by instincts and pleasure), ego (mediates between id and reality), and superego (internalizes societal norms and values)**.
 - This model helps understand conflicts within the mind.
 - **Psychoanalytic Therapy:** It involves verbal exchanges between the patient and therapist, aimed at exploring unconscious conflicts and gaining insight into one's emotions and behaviors.

What are the Ethical Aspects Involved in Psychoanalysis?

- **Informed Consent:** The patient must be fully informed about the nature of psychoanalysis, its **potential benefits, risks and alternatives** before beginning treatment.
 - This is crucial because the process often involves delving into personal and sensitive topics.
 - Furthermore, obtaining informed consent also safeguards against potential **violations of Article 21**, as highlighted in the [Selvi vs State of Karnataka & Anr Case \(2010\)](#).
- **Confidentiality:** Maintaining patient **confidentiality is paramount in therapy**. However, in some situations, therapists may face ethical dilemmas, such as when a patient poses a danger to themselves or others.
 - Balancing confidentiality with the duty to warn or protect can be challenging.
- **Transference and Countertransference:** Both the **patient and therapist can experience strong feelings or reactions toward each other** due to past experiences or unresolved issues.
 - Managing these emotions ethically to ensure they don't interfere with treatment or professional boundaries is important.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Therapists need to be **culturally competent and aware of their biases** to ensure they provide appropriate care and respect diverse perspectives.

How Psychoanalysis can Help in Criminal Rehabilitation?

- **Developing Empathy:** Psychoanalysis can foster empathy by helping individuals **understand the impact of their actions on others**.
 - Through self-reflection and insight gained in therapy, offenders can develop a greater understanding of the consequences of their behavior, leading to increased **empathy**.
 - **Impulse Control:** For individuals with **a history of violent or impulsive behavior**, psychoanalysis can assist in understanding and managing these tendencies.
 - By **exploring deep-seated emotions** and unresolved conflicts, individuals can learn to better regulate their emotions and impulses, reducing the likelihood of reoffending.
 - **Preventing Recidivism:** By addressing the core motivations, individuals are better equipped to **break free from destructive patterns** and reintegrate into society in a meaningful way.
-

Sustainable Agriculture

For Prelims: [Sustainable Agriculture](#), Indigenous Seed Festival, Environmental stewardship, economic profitability, and social equity.

For Mains: Sustainable Agriculture, Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

Recently, the **Indigenous Seed Festival** in West Bengal showcased **a remarkable effort by farmers** to conserve native seed varieties and exchange traditional knowledge, exemplifying a significant shift towards **Sustainable Agriculture Practices**.

- The festival is a part of ActionAid's climate justice campaign, facilitating discourse between farmers on climate change, organic farming, and indigenous seed access.
- ActionAid's focus on climate resilience and sustainable farming across 22 Indian states. The NGOs aim to establish grassroots-level seed banks across West Bengal.

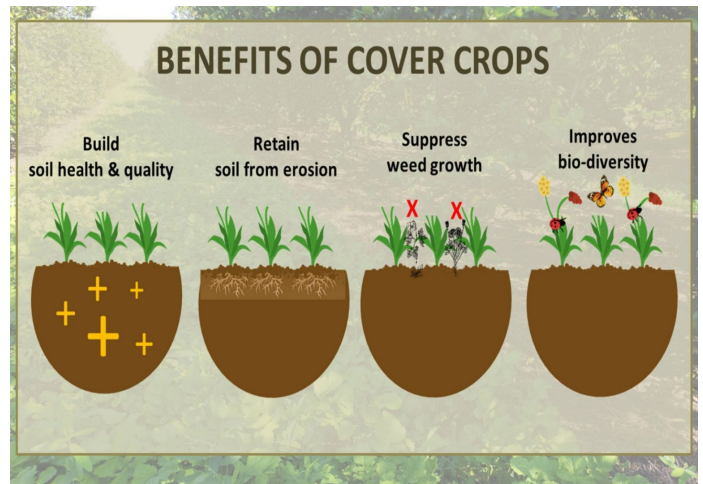
What is Sustainable Agriculture?

▪ About:

- Sustainable agriculture **refers to a holistic approach to farming and food production** that aims to meet the current needs for food and fiber while ensuring the long-term viability of agricultural systems and preserving natural resources for future generations.
- It encompasses various practices and principles such as [Crop Switching](#), [Organic Farming](#), Community Supporting Agriculture etc, that focus on **environmental stewardship, economic profitability, and social equity**.

▪ Benefits:

- **Environmental Conservation:** Practices that **minimize the impact on ecosystems**, soil, water, and biodiversity. This involves using methods that reduce soil erosion, conserve water, and avoid or minimize the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides.
 - Techniques like crop rotation, cover cropping, and [agroforestry](#) are employed to maintain soil fertility and health.



- **Economic Viability:** Ensuring that **agricultural practices are economically feasible for farmers**, enabling them to earn a fair income while sustaining their livelihoods.
 - This involves strategies that enhance productivity, reduce production costs, and open up markets for sustainably produced goods.
- **Social Equity:** Fostering **fair and equitable relationships among farmers**, consumers, and other stakeholders in the food system.
 - This includes ensuring fair wages and working conditions for agricultural laborers, supporting rural communities, and promoting access to healthy and nutritious food for all.
- **Resilience to Climate Change:** Building agricultural **systems that are resilient to climate variability and change**. Sustainable agriculture practices aim to adapt to changing climatic conditions, mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, and contribute to overall climate resilience.
- **Biodiversity Preservation:** Supporting **diverse ecosystems and genetic diversity within crops and livestock**. Maintaining biodiversity is critical for resilience against pests, diseases, and environmental changes. This involves preserving heirloom and indigenous crop varieties, as well as promoting diverse landscapes that support wildlife and pollinators.

What are the Limitations of Sustainable Agriculture in India?

- **High Labor Demand:** Sustainable agriculture often requires more manual labor than conventional agriculture, as it involves practices such as **Crop Rotation**, **Intercropping**, **Organic Fertilization**, and pest management.
 - This can increase the cost of production and reduce the profitability of farmers.
- **Time Consumption:** Sustainable agriculture also takes more time to implement and show results than conventional agriculture, as it relies on natural processes and gradual improvements.
 - This can discourage farmers who need immediate returns and face uncertainties such as weather, market, and policy changes.
- **Limited Production Potential:** Sustainable agriculture may not be able to meet the growing demand for food in India, as it tends to have lower yields than conventional agriculture, especially in the short term.
 - This can pose a challenge to **Food Security** and **Poverty Alleviation**, especially in a country with a large and increasing population.
 - The recent Sri Lankan crisis was triggered by the policy of shifting to Organic farming.
 - Rice, Sri Lanka's dietary staple, saw average yields slashed by some 30%.
- **High Capital Cost:** Sustainable agriculture may require high initial investment in infrastructure, equipment, and inputs, such as **Irrigation systems**, micro-irrigation devices, organic fertilizers, and seeds.
 - This can be a barrier for small and marginal farmers who lack access to credit and **Subsidies**.
- **Storage and Marketing Challenges:** Sustainable agriculture may face storage and marketing challenges in India, as it produces perishable and heterogeneous products that require proper

handling and packaging.

- This can increase post-harvest losses and reduce the marketability of the produce, especially in the absence of adequate certification and labeling systems that ensure quality and traceability.

What are the Recent Government Initiatives Related to Sustainable Agriculture?

- [National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture](#)
- [Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana \(PKVY\)](#)
- [Sub-mission on AgroForestry \(SMAF\)](#)
- [Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana](#)
- **Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER)**

Way Forward

- **Providing financial incentives for farmers** to adopt sustainable practices, such as direct payments, subsidies for organic inputs, and crop insurance.
- Investing in research and development of sustainable agricultural technologies and practices.
- **Strengthening agricultural extension** services to provide farmers with training and information on sustainable agriculture.
- **Improving market access** for sustainably produced food through better infrastructure, marketing support, and consumer awareness campaigns.
- **Addressing land fragmentation** through land consolidation programs and promoting joint farming initiatives.
- Strengthening environmental regulations and their enforcement.
- **Empowering women in agriculture** through land ownership rights, access to credit and resources, and participation in decision-making processes.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. With reference to 'Initiative for Nutritional Security through Intensive Millets Promotion', which of the following statements is/are correct? (2016)

1. This initiative aims to demonstrate the improved production and post-harvest technologies, and to demonstrate value addition techniques, in an integrated manner, with a cluster approach.
2. Poor, small, marginal and tribal farmers have a larger stake in this scheme.
3. An important objective of the scheme is to encourage farmers of commercial crops to shift to millet cultivation by offering them free kits of critical inputs of nutrients and micro irrigation equipment.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Ans: C

Mains:

Q. How far is Integrated Farming System (IFS) helpful in sustaining agricultural production? (2019)

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment Year End Review 2023

For Prelims: Initiatives by Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

For Mains: Year End Review of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Initiatives and Achievements of the Department

[Source: PIB](#)

Why in News?

Recently, the year-end-review of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD), **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** for the year 2023 was released.

What are the Key Highlights of the Initiatives and Achievements?

- **Historic Gatherings and Festivals for Inclusion:**
 - The Department hosted events like a **special gathering at Rashtrapati Bhavan and India's First Festival of Inclusion (Purple Fest)** in Goa, involving thousands of Divyangjan and transgenders, setting world records, and fostering a sense of belonging.
- **India-South Africa cooperation in Disability Sector:**
 - The Union Cabinet signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Government of India and the Government of South Africa, focused on cooperation in the [Disability Sector](#).
- **Divya Kala Mela:**
 - The **Divya Kala Mela 2023**, held in different cities throughout the year, stands as a testament to the Government's commitment to fostering holistic development and empowerment for persons with disabilities.
 - With a vision aligned with the Prime Minister's Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, the Government aims to ensure **equal participation of divyang individuals in India's overall growth**.
- **Disabilities Awareness Days:**
 - The DEPwD embarked on a year-long celebration, commemorating various disability awareness like [World Braille Day](#) on January 4 to [International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#) on December 3, 2023d in 2023.
- **Recognition of Achievements:**
 - Government felicitated **Abilympics winners**, honoring Indian Deaf Cricket Team and Para Swimmer Shri Satendra Singh Lohia, celebrating excellence in the field of disabilities, and recognizing their contributions.
- **Initiatives and Reforms:**
 - The government launched transformative programs like integrating universal accessibility courses into architectural programs, releasing anonymous data through [UDID \(Unique Disability ID\) portal](#), and introducing portals for skill training, employment opportunities, and online case monitoring.
- **Empowering Through Entrepreneurship:**
 - Government partnered with **institutes to support and empower 3000 Persons** with Disabilities through enterprise initiatives, fostering collaboration between government, corporate, and institutions.
- **Technology and Accessible Resources:**
 - The government launched ISL (Indian Sign Language) dictionary terms, Video Relay Service, and online courses in Indian Sign Language, along with ensuring accessible books

through SugamyaPustakalaya.

▪ **Sports and High-Tech Training Centers:**

- Inaugurated India's first high-tech sports training center for Divyangjan, named after former Prime Minister [Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee](#), in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh, emphasizing equal opportunities in sports and talent enhancement.

▪ **Legal Support and Financial Inclusion:**

- Delivered impactful judgments, providing interest rate rebates to divyangjan borrowers, promoting financial inclusion through NDFDC loans, and collaborating for universal design centers for reading.
 - DEPwD announces 1% interest rate rebate to divyangjan borrowers under NDFDC Loan.

▪ **[Assistance to Disabled Persons Camp \(ADIP\) Scheme:](#)**

- The Scheme witnesses remarkable achievements, with grants-in-aid totaling Rs.368.05 crore, benefiting 2.91 lakh beneficiaries.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

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

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

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: (d)

Wetland City Accreditation

Source: PIB

Why in News?

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) has recently submitted three nominations from India for the **Wetland City Accreditation (WCA)**.

- The nominated cities include **Indore (Madhya Pradesh), Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh), and Udaipur (Rajasthan)**.
- The ongoing [Amrit Dharohar initiative](#) by MoEF&CC aligns with WCA goals, promoting the conservation values of [Ramsar Sites](#).

Note

- Amrit Dharohar, part of the 2023-24 budget announcement, promotes the unique **conservation values of the Ramsar Sites** in the country while generating employment opportunities and supporting local livelihoods.

What is Wetland City Accreditation (WCA)?

▪ About:

- The WCA is a voluntary accreditation system established by the [Ramsar Convention](#) during the **Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP) 12, 2015** to recognize cities that have taken exceptional steps to safeguard their urban wetlands.
- The scheme aims to promote the **conservation and wise use of urban and peri-urban wetlands**, as well as sustainable socio-economic benefits for local populations.

▪ Significance:

- Encourages cities to develop positive relationships with valuable ecosystems like Wetlands of International Importance.
- Aims to **gain international recognition for cities** valuing their natural or human-made wetlands.

What are the Key Highlights of the Cities Are Nominated for WCA?

▪ Indore:

- Founded by Holkars, **Indore is the cleanest city in India** and was awarded India's Smart City 2023 for sanitation and urban environment.
 - **Sirpur Lake, a Ramsar Site** in the city, has been recognised as an **important site for water bird congregation** and is being developed as a Bird Sanctuary.
 - Over 200 wetland mitras actively engage in bird conservation and raising awareness to protect the [Sarus Crane](#).

▪ Bhopal:

- **One of the cleanest cities in India** that has proposed conservation zones around the wetlands in its draft City Development Plan 2031.
- **Bhoj Wetland, Ramsar Site** is the city's lifeline, equipped with the world-class wetlands interpretation centre, Jal Tarang.
- Additionally, the Bhopal Municipal Corporation has a dedicated **Lake Conservation Cell**.

▪ Udaipur:

- The city is surrounded by **five major wetlands, namely, Pichola, Fateh Sagar, Rang Sagar, Swaroop Sagar, and Doodh Talai**.
 - These wetlands are an integral part of the city's culture and identity, help maintain the **city's microclimate, and provide a buffer from extreme events**.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. If a wetland of international importance is brought under the 'Montreux Record', what does it imply? (2014)

(a) Changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring or are likely to occur in the wetland as a result of human interference.

(b) The country in which the wetland is located should enact a law to prohibit any human activity within five kilometres from the edge of the wetland.

(c) The survival of the wetland depends on the cultural practices and traditions of certain communities living in its vicinity and therefore the cultural diversity therein should not be destroyed.

(d) It is given the status of 'World Heritage Site.'

Ans: (a)

Exp:

- The Montreux Record is a register of wetland sites on the List of Wetlands of International Importance where changes in ecological character have occurred, are occurring, or are likely to

occur as a result of technological developments, pollution or other human interferences. It is maintained as part of the Ramsar List.

- The Convention on Wetlands, called the Ramsar Convention, is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. The Convention was adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971 and came into force in 1975.

Reverse Flipping

Reverse flipping has become a trend among Indian startups, especially in the **fintech sector**, as they plan for Initial Public Offers (**IPOs**) or seek **long-term benefits** in the home market.

- Reverse flipping is **the process of shifting the domicile of an Indian company back to India** after it had moved its headquarters overseas, usually for tax or regulatory reasons. It is also known as **'re-domiciling'**.
- This strategic move is fuelled by **India's flourishing economy, a huge market**, promising venture capital, favorable tax structures, robust **intellectual property protection**, young and educated population and supportive government policies.

MeitY Launches ERNET India's Web Portal

The Ministry of Electronics & IT has recently unveiled **ERNET**, India's new **integrated web portal for educational institutes**, offering domain registration, **DNS (Domain Name System)**, and value-added services.

- The portal includes **Website as a Service (WaaS) and Learning Management as a Service (LMaaS)**, allowing users to create customized websites and Learning Management Systems using various templates.
- The ERNET India is a **not-for-profit scientific society under MeitY**. It is the exclusive domain registrar for all the education & research institutes having 'ac.in', 'edu.in' & 'res.in' as domain name.

Read more: [DNS Server](#)

Qatari Court Decision on Indian Naval Personnel

Qatar has commuted the **death sentence** for eight Indian Navy veterans and turned that into a **"varying quantum" of jail terms**. The jailed former Indian Navy personnel in Qatar have been given **60 days to appeal** against the varying prison terms.

- **Commutation** of a death sentence refers to the reduction or change of a death penalty to a less severe punishment.
 - The eight Indians, whose death sentences are commuted, **now qualify for repatriation**

to India. This falls under the **2015 Bilateral Agreement with Qatar**, permitting prisoners to serve their terms in their home country.

- **Qatar**, a strong regional player, is a key supplier of energy to India and at least seven lakh Indians form a part of the foreign workforce in the Gulf nation.

Read more: [Former Navy Personnel Case in Qatar](#)

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/06-01-2024/print>

