



## Red Sea



## Key Points

- **Physical Geography:**
  - An inlet of the Indian Ocean between Africa and Asia. One of the most saline bodies of water in the world.
  - **Bordering Countries:** Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Sudan, Eritrea and Djibouti.
  - Connected to the Indian ocean in south **through the Bab el Mandeb strait and the Gulf of Aden.**
  - In the north are the **Sinai Peninsula, the Gulf of Aqaba, and the Gulf of Suez** (leading to the Suez Canal).
  - Occupies **a part of Great Rift Valley** (Afro-Arabian Rift Valley).
- **Recent Related Events:**
  - [Conflict in Yemen](#) (Between the internationally recognized government, which is backed by a Saudi-led military coalition, and Houthi rebels supported by Iran).
  - [Suez Canal jam.](#)
  - [First Joint Naval Exercise: US, UAE, Bahrain and Israel](#)

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## Pillars of Creation: James Webb Telescope

**For Prelims:** James Webb Telescope, Hubble Telescope, Pillars of Creation.

**For Mains:** James Webb Telescope.

### Why in News?

A lush, highly detailed landscape- the iconic "**Pillars of Creation**" has been caught by NASA's powerful [James Webb Telescope](#).







## What is Pillars of Creation?

### ▪ About:

- It is a **vista of three looming towers made of interstellar dust and gas.**
- These iconic Pillars of Creation is located in the centre of the **Eagle Nebula (it is a constellation of stars)**, which is also known as Messier 16.
- The images show vast, towering columns of dense clouds of gas and dust where young stars are forming in a region some **6,500 light-years from Earth.**
- At the ends of several pillars are **bright red, lava-like spots.** These are **ejections from stars that are still forming**, only a few hundred thousand years old.



- The pillars were made famous by the [Hubble Space Telescope](#), which first captured them in **1995 and then again in 2014**.
- **Significance:**
  - The new image will help researchers revamp their models of star formation by identifying far more precise counts of newly formed stars, along with the quantities of gas and dust in the region.

## What is the James Webb Space Telescope?

- **About:**
  - The telescope is the result of an international collaboration between NASA, the **European Space Agency (ESA)** and the Canadian Space Agency which was launched in December 2021.
  - It is currently at a point in space known as the **Sun-Earth L2 Lagrange point**, approximately 1.5 million km beyond Earth's orbit around the Sun.
    - Lagrange Point 2 is one of the five points in the orbital plane of the Earth-Sun system.
    - Named after Italian-French mathematician Joseph-Louis Lagrange, the points are in any revolving two-body system like Earth and Sun, marking where the gravitational forces of the two large bodies cancel each other out.
    - Objects placed at these positions are relatively stable and require minimal external energy or fuel to keep themselves there, and so many instruments are positioned here.
  - It's the largest, most powerful infrared space telescope ever built.
  - It's the **successor to Hubble Telescope**.
  - It can see backwards in time to just after the Big Bang by looking for galaxies that are so far away that the light has taken many billions of years to get from those galaxies to our telescopes
- **Objectives:**
  - It will **examine every phase of cosmic history:** from the Big Bang to the formation of galaxies, stars, and planets to the evolution of our own Solar System.
  - The goals for the Webb can be grouped into four themes.
    - The first is to **look back around 13.5 billion years** to see the first stars and galaxies forming out of the darkness of the early universe.
    - Second, to compare the faintest, earliest galaxies to today's grand spirals and understand how galaxies assemble over billions of years.
    - Third, to see where stars and planetary systems are being born.
    - Fourth, to observe the atmospheres of extrasolar planets (beyond our solar system), and perhaps find the building blocks of life elsewhere in the universe.

### UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

**Q.** Launched on 25<sup>th</sup> December, 2021, James Webb Space Telescope has been much in the news since then. What are its unique features which make it superior to its predecessor Space Telescopes? What are the key goals of this mission? What potential benefits does it hold for the human race? **(2022)**

[Source: IE](#)

**Lok Adalats**

**For Prelims:** Lok Adalat, NALSA

**For Mains:** Significance of Lok Adalat and related jurisdiction.

## Why in News?

Recently, the Chhattisgarh government had launched [Lok Adalat](#) in jails for the speedy disposal of cases for the prisoners of the state.

- These courts will be held every working Saturday and provide relief to undertrials, and in some cases convicted prisoners, by explaining their rights and legal options such as plea bargaining and settlement.

## What is Lok Adalats?

### ▪ About:

- The term '**Lok Adalat**' means '**People's Court**' and is based on Gandhian principles.
- As per the [Supreme Court](#), it is an old form of adjudicating system prevalent in ancient India and its validity has not been taken away even in the modern days too.
- It is one of the components of the [Alternative Dispute Resolution \(ADR\)](#) system and delivers informal, cheap and expeditious justice to the common people.
- The first **Lok Adalat camp was organized in Gujarat in 1982** as a voluntary and conciliatory agency without any statutory backing for its decisions.
- In view of its growing popularity over time, it **was given statutory status under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987**. The Act makes the provisions relating to the organization and functioning of the Lok Adalats.

### ▪ Organization:

- The State/District Legal Services Authority or the Supreme Court/High Court/Taluk Legal Services Committee may organize Lok Adalats at such intervals and places and **for exercising such jurisdiction and for such areas as it thinks fit**.
- Every Lok Adalat organized for an area **shall consist of such number of serving or retired judicial officers and other persons of the area** as may be specified by the agency organizing.
  - Generally, a **Lok Adalat consists of a judicial officer as the chairman** and a lawyer (advocate) and a social worker as members.
- [National Legal Services Authority \(NALSA\)](#) along with other Legal Services Institutions conducts Lok Adalats.
  - NALSA was constituted under the **Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987** which came into force **on 9<sup>th</sup> November 1995** to establish a nationwide uniform network for providing free and competent legal services to the weaker sections of the society.
- The Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 was **amended in 2002 to provide for the establishment of the Permanent Lok Adalats** to deal with cases pertaining to the public utility services.

### ▪ Jurisdiction:

- A Lok Adalat shall have **jurisdiction to determine and to arrive at a compromise or settlement** between the parties to a dispute in respect of:
  - Any case pending before any court, or
  - Any matter which falls within the jurisdiction of any court and is not brought before such court.
- Any case pending before the court **can be referred to the Lok Adalat for settlement if:**
  - Parties agree to settle the dispute in the Lok Adalat or one of the parties applies for referral of the case **to the Lok Adalat or court is satisfied that the matter can be solved** by a Lok Adalat.
  - In the case of a pre-litigation dispute, the **matter can be referred to the Lok**

**Adalat on receipt of an application from any one of the parties to the dispute.**

- Matters such as matrimonial/family disputes, criminal (compoundable offenses) cases, land acquisition cases, labor disputes, workmen's compensation cases, bank recovery cases, etc. **are being taken up in Lok Adalats.**
- However, the Lok Adalat shall have no jurisdiction in respect of any case or matter relating to an offense **not compoundable under any law.**

▪ **Powers:**

- The Lok Adalat shall have the same powers as are **vested in a Civil Court under the Code of Civil Procedure (1908).**
- Further, a Lok Adalat shall have the **requisite powers to specify its own procedure for the determination of any dispute** coming before it.
- All proceedings before a Lok Adalat shall be deemed to be **judicial proceedings within the meaning of the Indian Penal Code (1860)** and every Lok Adalat shall be deemed to be a Civil Court for the purpose of the Code of Criminal Procedure (1973).
- An award of a Lok Adalat shall be deemed to be a decree of a Civil Court or an order of any other court.
- Every award made by a Lok Adalat shall be final and binding on all the parties to the dispute. No appeal shall lie to any court against the award of the Lok Adalat.

▪ **Benefits:**

- There is **no court fee and if court fee is already paid the amount will be refunded** if the dispute is settled at Lok Adalat.
- There is **procedural flexibility and speedy trial** of the disputes. There is no strict application of procedural laws while assessing the claim by Lok Adalat.
- The parties to the dispute **can directly interact with the judge** through their counsel which is not possible in regular courts of law.
- The award by the Lok Adalat is **binding on the parties and it has the status of a decree of a civil court and it is non-appealable**, which does not cause the delay in the settlement of disputes finally.

## Conclusion

Lok Adalats can be functional at larger levels if people are willing and aware of its advantages. Further, more provisions and innovative utilisation is needed that could empower permanent lok adalats and are made supplementary form of litigation for people who cannot or should not resort to courts.

### UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

**Q. With reference to Lok Adalats, which of the following statements is correct? (2010)**

- (a) Lok Adalats have the jurisdiction to settle the matters at pre-litigative stage and not those matters pending before any court
- (b) Lok Adalats can deal with matters which are civil and not criminal in nature
- (c) Every Lok Adalat consists of either serving or retired judicial officers only and not any other person
- (d) None of the statements given above is correct

**Ans: (d)**

**Exp:**

- **National Legal Services Authority of India (NALSA) along with other Legal Services Institutions conducts Lok Adalats.** Lok Adalat is one of the alternative dispute redressal mechanisms, where disputes or cases pending in the court of law or at a pre-litigation stage are settled or compromised amicably.
- Lok Adalats have been given statutory status under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. The award is final and binding on all parties and no appeal against such an award lies before any court

of law.

- Lok Adalats can deal with civil matters as well as criminal matters which are compoundable under any law. They have no jurisdiction in respect of matters relating to divorce or matters relating to an offence not compoundable under any law.
- The Lok Adalat is presided over by a sitting or retired judicial officer as the chairman, with two other members, usually a lawyer and a social worker. **Therefore, option (d) is the correct answer.**

[Source: TH](#)

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## National Curriculum Framework

**For Prelims:** National Curriculum Framework, NEP, Right To Education

**For Mains:** Education System in India and related issues

### Why in New?

Recently, the Union Education ministry launched the **National Curriculum Framework** for foundational stage education of children in the **three to eight years age group**.





# Key features of the framework

The National Curriculum Framework, made for the 3-8 age group, is the first such integrated curriculum for children

## What replaces textbooks?

NCF suggests the use of simple worksheets for the 3-6 age group

- "...for ages 3-6, there should not be any prescribed textbooks for the children...(they) should not be burdened with textbooks," the document states.

## Why is this an important step?

- Vast numbers of school-going children routinely fail learning outcome tests
- Effect of holistic education in founding years on learning levels of children

## Other reforms

- Toy-based learning
- Avoiding stereotypes
- Gender representation
- Ethical, moral awareness



## What is the National Curriculum Framework?

- The NCF has four sections:
  - the National Curriculum Framework for School Education
  - the National Curriculum Framework for Early Childhood Care and Education
  - the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education
  - National Curriculum Framework for Adult Education
- The framework focuses on the '**panchakosha**' **concept** - the ancient Indian emphasis on the body-mind connection.
- The NCF says its **five parts are physical development** (sharirik vikas), development of life energy (pranik vikas), emotional and mental development (manasik vikas), intellectual development (bauddhik vikas) and spiritual development (chaitisik vikas).
- It is an important step taken to implement the [New Education Policy-2020](#).

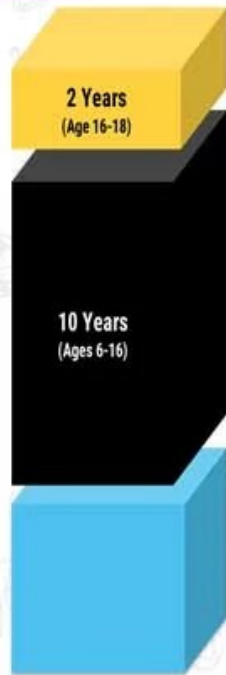
## What is NEP, 2020?

- The National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) is transforming education in India.
- It has set the **education system on a path to delivering the highest quality education** for all, with equity and inclusion.
- Amongst the most transformative aspects of NEP 2020 is the **new 5+3+3+4 curricular structure** which integrates Early Childhood Care and Education for all children of ages 3 to 8.
- **Early childhood lays the foundation for life-long learning** and development - it is a key determinant of the quality of overall life.

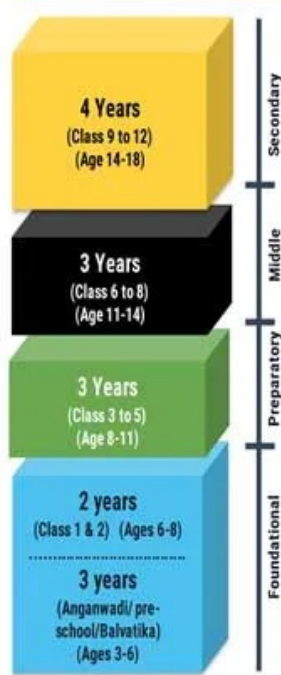


## Transforming Curricular & Pedagogical Structure

### Existing Academic Structure



### New Academic Structure



New pedagogical and curricular structure of school education (5+3+3+4): 3 years in Anganwadi/pre-school and 12 years in school

- **Secondary Stage(4)** multidisciplinary study, greater critical thinking, flexibility and student choice of subjects
- **Middle Stage (3)** experiential learning in the sciences, mathematics, arts, social sciences, and humanities
- **Preparatory Stage (3)** play, discovery, and activity-based and interactive classroom learning
- **Foundational stage (5)** multilevel, play/activity-based learning

## What are the Constitutional Provisions and Laws related to Education in India?

### ▪ Constitutional Provisions:

- Part IV of Indian Constitution, **Article 45 and Article 39 (f) of Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP)**, has a provision for state-funded as well as equitable and accessible education.
- The **42<sup>nd</sup> Amendment to the Constitution in 1976** moved education from the State to the Concurrent List.
  - The education policies by the Central government provides a broad direction and state governments are expected to follow it. But it is not mandatory, for instance Tamil Nadu does not follow the three-language formula prescribed by the first education policy in 1968.
- The **86<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 2002** made education an enforceable right under Article 21-A.
  - **Article 21A** of the Constitution makes it obligatory on the State to provide free and compulsory education to children between the age of 6 and 14 years.

### ▪ Related Laws:

- **Right To Education (RTE) Act, 2009** aims to provide primary education to all children aged 6 to 14 years and enforces education as a Fundamental Right.
  - It also **mandates 25% reservation for disadvantaged sections** of the society.

### ▪ Government Initiatives:

- **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Mid Day Meal Scheme, Navodaya Vidyalayas (NVS schools), Kendriya Vidyalayas (KV schools)** and use of IT in education are the result of the NEP of 1986.

## UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

### Prelims

### Q. Consider the following statements: (2018)

1. As per the Right to Education (RTE) Act, to be eligible for appointment as a teacher in a State, a person would be required to possess the minimum qualification laid down by the concerned State Council of Teacher Education.
2. As per the RTE Act, for teaching primary classes, a candidate is required to pass a Teacher Eligibility Test conducted in accordance with the National Council of Teacher Education guidelines.
3. In India, more than 90% of teacher education institutions are directly under the State Governments.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: (b)

### Mains

Q. National Education Policy 2020 is in conformity with the Sustainable Development Goal-4 (2030). It intends to restructure and reorient education system in India. Critically examine the statement. (2020)

[Source: Livemint](#)

## Prevention of Money Laundering Act

**For Prelims:** Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018 FEOA, Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act, 1974 COFEPOSA.

**For Mains:** Issue of Money Laundering, Powers of ED, Judicial Review.

### Why in News?

Recently, the [Supreme Court](#) has rejected a plea by a political leader challenging his arrest by the [Enforcement Directorate \(ED\)](#) on [Money Laundering](#) charges.

### What is Money Laundering?

▪ **About:**

- Money laundering is the **process of making large amounts of money generated by criminal activity**, such as drug trafficking or terrorist funding, appear to have come from a legitimate source.
  - Criminal activities like illegal arms sales, smuggling, drug trafficking and prostitution rings, insider trading, bribery and **computer fraud schemes produce large profits.**

- Thereby it creates the **incentive for money launderer to "legitimize" the ill-gotten gains** through money laundering.
- The money generated is called '**dirty money**' and **money laundering is the process of conversion of 'dirty money', to make it appear as 'legitimate' money.**
- **Stages:**
  - **Placement:** The first stage is when the crime money is injected into the formal financial system.
  - **Layering:** In the second stage, money injected into the system is layered and spread over various transactions with a view to obfuscate the tainted origin of the money.
  - **Integration:** In the third and the final stage, money enters the financial system in such a way that original association with the crime is sought to be wiped out and the money can then be used by the offender as clean money.

## What is the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002?

- **Background:**
  - The PMLA was enacted in response to India's global commitment (**Vienna Convention**) to combat the menace of money laundering. These include:
    - [United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances 1988](#)
    - **Basle Statement of Principles, 1989**
    - [Forty Recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering, 1990](#)
    - **Political Declaration and Global Program of Action adopted by the [United Nations General Assembly in 1990.](#)**
- **About:**
  - It is a criminal law enacted to prevent money laundering and to provide for confiscation of property derived from, or involved in, money-laundering and related matters.
  - It forms the core of the legal framework put in place by India to combat Money Laundering.
  - The provisions of this act are applicable to all financial institutions, banks (**Including RBI**), [mutual funds](#), [insurance companies](#), and their financial intermediaries.
- **Recent Amendments:**
  - **Clarification about the Position of Proceeds of Crime:** Proceeds of the Crime not only includes the property derived from scheduled offence but would also include any other property derived or obtained indulging into any criminal activity relate-able or similar to the scheduled offence.
  - **Money Laundering Redefined:** Money Laundering was not an independent crime rather depended on another crime, known as the predicate offence or scheduled offence.
    - The amendment seeks to treat money laundering as a stand-alone crime.
    - Under Section 3 of PMLA, the person shall be accused of money laundering if in any manner that person is directly or indirectly involved in the proceeds of the crime.
      - Concealment
      - Possession
      - Acquisition
      - Use or projecting as untainted property
      - Claiming as untainted property
  - **Continuing Nature of Offence:** This amendment further mentioned that the person will be considered to be involved in the offence of money laundering till the time that person is getting the fruits of activities related to money laundering as this offence is of a continuing nature.

## What is the Enforcement Directorate?

- **History:**
  - The Directorate of Enforcement or the ED is a multi-disciplinary organization mandated with investigation of economic crimes and violations of [foreign exchange laws](#).
  - The origin of this Directorate goes back to 1<sup>st</sup> May, 1956, when an 'Enforcement Unit' was formed in the Department of Economic Affairs for handling Exchange Control Laws violations under Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1947 (FERA '47).



- With the onset of the process of **economic liberalization**, **FERA, 1973**, which was a regulatory law, was repealed and in its place, **Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (FEMA)** came into operation.
- Recently, with the increase in the number of cases relating to economic offenders taking shelter in foreign countries, the Government has passed the **Fugitive Economic Offenders Act, 2018 (FEOA)** and ED is entrusted with its enforcement.
- **Functions:**
  - **The PMLA, 2002:**
    - ED has been given the responsibility to enforce the provisions of the PMLA by conducting investigation to trace the assets derived from proceeds of crime, to provisionally attach the property and to ensure prosecution of the offenders and confiscation of the property by the Special court.
  - **The FEMA, 1999:**
    - ED has been given the responsibility to conduct investigation into suspected contraventions of foreign exchange laws and regulations, to adjudicate and impose penalties on those adjudged to have contravened the law.
  - **The FEOA, 2018:**
    - It is a law whereby the Directorate is mandated to attach the properties of the fugitive economic offenders who have escaped from India warranting arrest and provide for the confiscation of their properties to the Central Government.
  - **Sponsoring agency under COFEPOSA:**
    - Under the Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities Act, 1974 (COFEPOSA), Directorate is empowered to sponsor cases of preventive detention with regard to contraventions of FEMA.

**Source: IE**

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