



Infographic of Indian language

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Classical Languages of India

Indian classical languages have a long history and a rich, unique, and distinctive literary legacy.

- Linguistic Experts Committee (LEC) – Constituted in 2004 by the Ministry of Culture under Sahitya Akademi to evaluate languages for classical status.

Classical Languages

| |
|------------------|
| Tamil - 2004 |
| Sanskrit - 2005 |
| Telugu - 2008 |
| Kannada - 2008 |
| Malayalam - 2013 |
| Odia - 2014 |
| Marathi - 2024 |
| Bengali - 2024 |
| Assamese - 2024 |
| Prakrit - 2024 |
| Pali - 2024 |

All the Classical Languages are mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution except Prakrit and Pali

Criteria for Classical Languages (set in 2005)

1. High Antiquity: Early texts/recorded history over a period of 1500- 2000 years
2. Possession of a Body of Ancient Literature/Text: Considered valuable heritage by generations
3. Knowledge Texts: Presence of an original literary tradition not borrowed from another speech community
4. Distinction/Discontinuity: Classical Languages and literature could be distinct from its current form or could be discontinuous with later forms of its offshoots

3rd criterion was revised in 2024 to "Knowledge texts, especially prose texts in addition to poetry, epigraphical and inscriptional evidence"

Significance of Declaring Classical Language

- Two international awards given annually to scholars of classical Indian languages
- Center of Excellence for Classical Language Studies established



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GDP Base Year Revision

For Prelims: [Gross Domestic Product](#), [Index of Industrial Production](#), [Annual Survey of Industries](#), [Deflator](#), [CPI](#), [WPI](#), [Unorganised Sector](#), [Base Year](#), [Advisory Committee on National Accounts Statistics](#), [Goods and Services Tax](#), [ASUSE \(Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises\)](#).

For Mains: Concept of a base year, Need for its regular updation, Challenges associated.

Source: [BS](#)

Why in News?

Recently, the [Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation \(MoSPI\)](#) brought together many **economists and forecasters** to discuss the revision of the **base year** for India's [Gross Domestic Product \(GDP\)](#).

- It underscores the importance MoSPI places on **wider consultation**, especially given the **criticism and debates** surrounding previous base year revisions.
- The previous base year revision in **2015** changed the base year from **2004-05 to 2011-12** but faced **criticism** due to perceived flaws in the methodological changes.

What are the Previous Base Year Revision Controversies?

- **Methodological Concerns:** Previous revision of base year replaced computing GDP of the [private corporate sector \(PCS\)](#) directly from the **audited balance sheets** of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) database and the use of **PCS data for estimating manufacturing sector GVA**.
 - It mostly discarded the [Index of Industrial Production \(IIP\)](#) and [Annual Survey of Industries \(ASI\)](#) data in the process.
- **Single Deflator Criticism:** Many experts questioned the **single deflator** used to calculate **real GDP growth** from **nominal GDP growth**, rather than the internationally standard technique of **double deflation**.
 - **Single deflator** involves deflating the **nominal value-added** in each sector by various price indices e.g., [CPI](#), [WPI](#) while **double deflation** involves deflating **output by output prices and inputs by input prices**.
 - The GDP price deflator measures the **change in the value** of all of the goods and services produced in an economy when **inflation is taken into account**.
- **Discrepancies in GDP Estimates:** While overall GDP growth seems robust, **consumption appears weak** and this is a sign of **serious measurement problems**.
 - Also, there is a **discrepancy** between [production methods](#) and the [expenditure methods](#) of calculating GDP.
 - Weak consumption may indicate **underreported economic activities** or problems calculation of inflation in GDP calculations.
- **Under-reporting of Data:** In the last three decades, there has been significant growth in the number of **registered companies**, particularly in the services sector, especially finance.
 - However, their contribution to domestic output is unclear because many do not file their **audited balance sheets** with the **Registrar of Companies (RoC)**.
- **Underestimating Unorganised Sector:** The 2015 revision of base year faced criticism for the use of **balance sheets** of the [unorganised sector](#) to calculate GDP, instead of taking value-added figures from the producing units.
 - It means a **lower coverage** for informal sector producers, who are not listed as

companies.

- **Averaging Problem:** Averaging production and expenditure sides is acceptable in **advanced countries** but not in developing countries, as India does not measure the two sides of GDP independently.
 - Also, the data on the expenditure side of which consumption is a part is quite poor.

What is a Base Year?

- **About Base Year:** A **base year** is a **specific reference year** against which **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** figures for subsequent and prior years are **calculated**.
- **Need for a Base Year:** It provides a **stable reference point** and serves as a **benchmark** for measuring economic performance and allows for **comparisons over time**.
 - By pegging GDP figures to a specific year, analysts can accurately **interpret trends and shifts** in economic performance.
- **Features of a Base Year:** The base year should be a **normal year** i.e., it must not experience any **abnormal incidents** such as droughts, floods, earthquakes, **pandemic**, etc. Also, it should **not be too distant** in the past.
- **Reasons for Revising the Base Year:**
 - **Fluid Nature of Indicators:** The indicators for computing GDP are **dynamic** and can change over time due to **shifts in consumer behaviour, economic structure, and commodity composition**.
 - Additionally, evolving data compilation methods may require the incorporation of **new classification systems** and data sources.
 - As such, revisions ensure that the GDP figures reflect the current economic reality.
 - **Impact on Economic Indicators:** When new data sets are incorporated through base year revisions, it can lead to **adjustments in GDP levels**.
 - These changes have a **ripple effect** on a wide array of economic indicators, including trends in public expenditure, taxation, and public sector debt.
 - **International Standard Practice: United Nations-System of National Accounts 1993** requires countries to revise computation practices from time to time.
- **Frequency of Base Year Revisions:** The base year should ideally be **revised every 5 to 10 years** to keep national accounts in line with the latest available data.
- **History of Base Year Revisions:** Since the first national income estimates were published in **1956** with **FY 1949 as the base year**, India has revised its base year **seven times**.
 - The most recent revision changed the base year from **FY 2005 to FY 2012**.

What are the Considerations for the New Base Year?

- **Formation of the Advisory Committee:** In June 2024, MoSPI set up a **26-member [Advisory Committee on National Accounts Statistics \(ACNAS\)](#)** to decide the base year for GDP data, under the chairmanship of **Biswanath Goldar**.
 - The committee will also take a call on the **alignment** of GDP with other macro indicators like the **WPI, CPI, and IIP**.
- **Potential Base Years:** The committee is leaning towards **2022-23** as the new base year for GDP, although **2023-24** is also under consideration.
 - Year **2016 (Demonetisation)**, **2017-18 (ripple effects of GST)** and **2019-21 (Covid-19)** are not considered because of **abnormal changes** in the economy.
- **Utilising GST Data:** Discussions are underway regarding the inclusion of the **[Goods and Services Tax \(GST\) database](#)** for GDP calculations to include new databases to capture a better picture of the economy.
- **Methodological Improvements:** The advisory committee is also considering changing the composition of indices e.g., inclusion of **[ASUSE \(Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises\)](#)** and exploring the double deflation method to improve GDP measurement accuracy.

Conclusion

In light of past controversies surrounding **India's GDP base year revisions**, the current initiative by MoSPI to engage experts and establish an **advisory committee** underscores the necessity for a

transparent and methodologically sound approach. The inclusion of updated data sources and rigorous methodologies aims to enhance the **accuracy and reliability** of GDP estimates.

Drishti Mains Question:

Explain the concept of a base year in economic measurements. Why is it essential for accurately interpreting GDP data?

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q. A rapid increase in the rate of inflation is sometimes attributed to the “base effect”. What is “base effect”? (2011)

- (a) It is the impact of drastic deficiency in supply due to failure of crops
- (b) It is the impact of the surge in demand due to rapid economic growth
- (c) It is the impact of the price levels of previous years on the calculation of inflation rate
- (d) None of the statements (a), (b) and (c) given above is correct in this context

Ans: (c)

Mains

Q. Explain the difference between computing methodology of India’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) before the year 2015 and after the year 2015. (2021)

Sustainable Agriculture to Recover Groundwater

For Prelims: [Groundwater](#), [Rice cultivation](#), [Cropping patterns](#), [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\)](#), [Global Warming](#), [sustainable groundwater management](#), [oilseeds](#), [Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region \(MOVCDNER\)](#), [National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture](#), [Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana \(PKVY\)](#), [Sub-mission on AgroForestry \(SMAF\)](#), [Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana](#).

For Mains: Challenges Related to Sustainable Agriculture in India, Government initiatives related to sustainable agriculture.

Source: ET

Why in News?

According to the Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar, Gujarat, **replacing around 40% of the area currently sown with [rice](#)** with other crops could help recover 60-100 cubic kilometers

of [groundwater](#) lost in northern India since 2000.

What are the Key Points of the Study?

▪ Key Highlights:

- The prevailing agricultural practices, particularly those centered around **rice cultivation**, heavily depend on groundwater resources for irrigation.
- A continued rise in global temperatures have **contributed to the depletion of groundwater reserves**, with estimates indicating a potential loss ranging between 13 to 43 cubic kilometers.
 - Such unsustainable cropping patterns, if left unchecked, could significantly strain the **already overexploited groundwater resources**, further aggravating water security challenges.
- The nexus between agricultural practices and groundwater depletion underscores the urgent need for **adaptive strategies in cropping patterns to mitigate the impending ecological crisis**.

▪ Impact of Climate Change:

- In comparison, maintaining the **existing cropping patterns** under global warming scenarios of **1.5 to 3°C** would result in a far lower recovery of groundwater, estimated between 13 to 43 cubic kilometers.
 - The **2018 Special Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** on **Global Warming** of 1.5°C warns that, if current trajectories persist, global warming is expected to reach 1.5°C between 2030 and 2050, with a potential rise to 3°C by 2100.

▪ Recommendations:

- The report emphasises the urgent need to alter crop patterns, **particularly in Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh**, to enhance groundwater sustainability while maintaining farmers' profitability.
 - It recommends shifting towards cereals in Uttar Pradesh and **oilseeds** in West Bengal as alternatives to rice cultivation.
- These findings carry significant policy implications, suggesting that optimal **crop patterns must be identified for sustainable groundwater management in irrigated regions** of northern India while safeguarding farmers' livelihoods.
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Note:

- **Heavy Reliance:** Groundwater accounts for **62% of irrigation, 85% of rural water supply**, and 45% of urban water consumption .
- **Depletion Rates:** India's groundwater depletion rate could triple by 2080, primarily due to climate-induced over-extraction .
- **Over-Extraction:** Several regions, including **Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, and Delhi**, extract more groundwater than can be replenished, with withdrawal rates exceeding 100% of available resources.
- **Geographical Disparities:** The **Indo-Ganga-Brahmaputra plains** contain 60% of India's groundwater resources but cover only 20% of the country.
- **Agricultural Dependency:** Over 60% of irrigated agriculture relies on groundwater, putting immense pressure on resources, particularly in agricultural hubs .

What are the Challenges Related to Sustainable Agriculture in India?

- **Water Scarcity:** Over-reliance on **water-intensive crops and inefficient irrigation methods** have resulted in groundwater depletion and water shortages.
- **Climate Change:** Unpredictable **weather patterns, rising temperatures, and increasing**

frequency of extreme events such as **floods and droughts** negatively impact crop yields and agricultural sustainability.

- **Fragmented Landholdings:** Small and fragmented farms make it **difficult to adopt sustainable agricultural practices, mechanization**, and efficient resource use.
- **Overuse of Chemical Inputs:** Excessive use of **chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides** has led to soil and water pollution, harming ecosystems and long-term agricultural productivity.
- **Inadequate Policy Support:** Insufficient **government policies and incentives** specifically promoting sustainable farming practices limit the transition to eco-friendly agriculture.

Government Initiatives Related to Sustainable Agricultural Methods

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

Way Forward

- **Promote Water-Efficient Practices:** Adoption of water-efficient technologies such as **drip irrigation** and **rainwater harvesting**, along with **crop diversification** towards less water-intensive crops, to address water scarcity issues.
- **Enhance Farmer Training and Awareness:** Conduct widespread training programs and workshops to educate farmers on sustainable agricultural practices such as **organic farming, agroforestry, crop rotation, and integrated pest management**.
- **Strengthen Policy and Incentive Support:** Formulate and implement stronger policies that incentivize sustainable farming practices through subsidies, grants, and tax exemptions for adopting eco-friendly technologies and inputs.
- **Improve Access to Technology and Markets:** Facilitate access to modern sustainable agricultural technologies and create efficient supply chains and market linkages for farmers to sell organic and sustainably grown produce at fair prices.
- **Encourage Research and Innovation:** Invest in research and development focused on sustainable agricultural methods, climate-resilient crops, and affordable eco-friendly inputs, while promoting collaboration between government institutions, research bodies, and farmers.

Drishti Mains Question:

Discuss the significance of sustainable agricultural methods in addressing the groundwater crisis in India?

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims:

Q. In the context of India, which of the following is/are considered to be practice(s) of eco-friendly agriculture? (2020)

1. Crop diversification
2. Legume intensification
3. Tensiometer use
4. Vertical farming

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

(a) 1, 2 and 3 only

(b) 3 only

(c) 4 only

(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Ans: (a)

Mains:

Q. India is well endowed with fresh water resources. Critically examine why it still suffers from water scarcity. (2015)

SC Strike Down 'Casteist' Provisions in India's Prison Manuals

For Prelims: [Supreme Court](#), [Fundamental rights](#), [Criminal Tribes Act, 1871](#), [Denotified tribes](#), [Rule 404 of the West Bengal Jail](#), [Scheduled Castes \(SC\)](#), [Scheduled Tribes \(ST\)](#), [Other Backward Classes \(OBC\)](#), [Untouchability](#), [Article 17](#), [Model Prison Manual, 2016](#), [Model Prisons and Correctional Services Act, 2023](#)

For Mains: Fundamental rights of prisoners, Amendment of the Prison Manuals, Caste based discrimination and Issue of Untouchability.

Source: TH

Why in News?

Recently, [the Supreme Court](#) ruled that [caste-based division of labour in prisons](#) is "unconstitutional," marking a **key step towards eliminating** institutional biases in India's correctional system.

- The SC invalidated several provisions in **State prison manuals** that upheld caste distinctions, declaring them a violation of prisoners' [fundamental rights](#).

How do Prison Manuals Reinforce Colonial Stereotypes?

▪ Colonial Stereotypes in Prisons:

- **Colonial Legacy:** The now-repealed [Criminal Tribes Act, 1871](#), allowed the British colonial regime to **label certain marginalised communities as "criminal tribes,"** based on the false stereotype that they were "born criminals."
- **Denotified Tribes:** After the **Act's repeal**, these communities were reclassified as ["denotified tribes."](#) However, **prison manuals** continued to **categorize them as "habitual offenders"** despite no convictions. **Example:**
 - **West Bengal Jail Code:** The court highlighted [Rule 404 of the West Bengal Jail Code](#), which states that a convict overseer may only be appointed as a night guard if they do not belong to tribes considered to have a "strong natural tendency to escape," such as wandering tribes.

- **Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala Prison Manuals:** These manuals define "**habitual criminals**" as those who, by "habit," engage in crimes like robbery, housebreaking, theft, forgery, or extortion—even without prior convictions.
- **Restrictions on Labour:** In Andhra Pradesh, members of "wandering or criminal tribes" are equated with **individuals of "bad or dangerous character"** or those who have escaped custody. As a result, they are **barred from being employed in labor outside prison walls.**
- **Perpetuation of Discrimination:** The court observed that this continued classification **reinforces colonial-era caste-based discrimination**, worsening the social and economic marginalisation of these groups.
- **Examples of Caste Based Discrimination in Prisons:**
 - **Tamil Nadu Prison:** The **segregation of Thevars, Nadars, and Pallars** into separate sections **at the Palayamkottai Central Jail in Tamil Nadu** was a caste-based segregation of barracks.
 - **Rajasthan Prison:** The **Rajasthan Prison Rules, 1951**, assigned latrine duties to the "**Mehtar**" caste, a Scheduled Caste community, while Brahmins or high-caste Hindu prisoners were placed in kitchens.

Denotified, Nomadic, and Semi-Nomadic Tribes

- They are also known as '**Vimukt Jatis**'. These communities are among the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.
- Denotified communities, once labelled as 'born criminals' during British rule under laws like the Criminal Tribes Act, 1871.
 - They were officially **de-notified by the Indian Government in 1952.**
- A few of these communities which were listed as de-notified were also **nomadic.**
 - Nomadic and semi-nomadic communities are defined as those **who move from one place to another rather than living in one place all the time.**
- Historically, Nomadic Tribes and De-notified Tribes never had access to private land or home ownership.
- While most DNTs are spread across the **[Scheduled Castes \(SC\)](#), [Scheduled Tribes \(ST\)](#) and [Other Backward Classes \(OBC\)](#) categories, some DNTs are not covered in any of the SC, ST or OBC categories.**

How are Fundamental Rights of Prisoners Violated?

- **Caste Classification Limitation:** The Supreme Court emphasised that **caste can only be used as a classification criterion** if it benefits victims of caste discrimination. Eg. Caste based affirmative action (reservation).
 - **Segregating prisoners based on caste** reinforces caste differences and animosity, **should be eliminated.**
 - The prison manuals failed to serve this purpose and **violated [Article 14](#)** of the Constitution.
- **Direct and Indirect Discrimination:** The **SC** highlighted both direct and indirect discrimination against marginalized communities.
 - **Assigning cleaning and sweeping jobs to lower castes**, while allowing higher castes to perform tasks like cooking, is a clear example of **direct discrimination** under **[Article 15\(1\)](#)**.
 - The **allocating certain tasks to these communities** based on traditional roles, rather **than offering them more skilled or dignified work**, results in **indirect discrimination.**
- **Violation of Equality:** Differentiating inmates based on "habit," "custom," "superior mode of living," or "natural tendency to escape" undermines the principles of substantive equality.
 - The **SC highlighted** prison rules that mandate **food be cooked by a "suitable caste" or assign "menial duties" to certain communities**, classifying these practices

as **untouchability**, which is prohibited under **Article 17**.

- **Right to Life and Dignity:** The court underscored that prison rules restricting the reformation of **marginalised prisoners violate their right to life and deprive** them of dignity and equal treatment, further marginalizing them.

Constitutional and Legal provisions Against Discrimination

- **Constitutional Provisions:**
 - **Equality Before Law:** According to **Article 14** no person shall be denied treatment of **equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws** within the territory of India.
 - **Prohibition of Discrimination:** **Article 15** of the Constitution of India states that the State shall **not discriminate against any citizen** on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.
 - **Abolition of Untouchability:** **Article 17** of the constitution abolishes **Untouchability**.
- **Legal Provisions:**
 - **The Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955:** The act was **enacted to enforce Article 17 of the Constitution of India**, which abolished the practice of untouchability.
 - **The SCs and the STs (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989:** It was enacted to **safeguard the members of SCs and STs from caste-based discrimination** and violence.

What were the Directives Issued by SC?

- **Amend Prison Manuals:** All States and Union Territories were ordered to **revise their prison manuals and rules within three months** to eliminate discriminatory practices.
- **Removal of Caste References:** The court mandated the **removal of the “caste column”** and any references to caste from the registers of undertrials and convicts maintained in prisons.
- **Issues in Model Prison Manual and Act:** The Union government's **Model Prison Manual, 2016**, and the **Model Prisons and Correctional Services Act, 2023**, were flagged for shortcomings such as caste discrimination.
 - The **2016 manual** was particularly criticized for its **vague definition of “habitual offender,”** allowing States to perpetuate stereotypes against denotified tribes.
 - The court ordered that **reforms be made to both the 2016 and 2023 Act within three months**.
- **Compliance Monitoring:** District legal services authorities and boards of visitors were tasked with **conducting regular inspections to ensure compliance** with these directives.
- **Police Instructions:** Police authorities were instructed **not to arbitrarily arrest members of denotified tribes**, ensuring adherence to guidelines established in previous Supreme Court rulings.

Conclusion

The Supreme Court's recent ruling to abolish these discriminatory practices marks a **significant step towards achieving substantive equality in prisons**. By mandating the removal of caste references, revising outdated definitions, and addressing biases against marginalised communities, the court has reinforced the **importance of dignity, fairness, and reform for all prisoners**. This decision paves the way for a more just and inclusive correctional framework in India.

Drishti Mains Question:

How does the recent Supreme Court ruling on caste-based division of labour in prisons represent a landmark step towards addressing institutional biases in India's correctional system?

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims:

Q. Which one of the following categories of Fundamental Rights incorporates protection against untouchability as a form of discrimination? (2020)

- (a) Right against Exploitation
- (b) Right to Freedom
- (c) Right to Constitutional Remedies
- (d) Right to Equality

Ans: (d)

Mains

Q. What do you understand by the concept of “freedom of speech and expression”? Does it cover hate speech also? Why do the films in India stand on a slightly different plane from other forms of expression? Discuss.

Assam Accord Road Map

For Prelims: [Clause 6 of the Assam Accord](#), [Section 6A into the Citizenship Act, of 1955](#), [1971 Bangladesh Liberation War](#), [Bodoland Territorial Autonomous District](#), [Sixth Schedule autonomous councils in Assam](#), [Inner Line Permit](#).

For Mains: 52 recommendations of Justice Biplab Kumar Sharma Committee, Assam Accord clause 6 impact.

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

The Assam government plans to develop a road map for implementing the **recommendations of the Justice Biplab Kumar Sharma Committee** regarding [Clause 6 of the Assam Accord](#) by 25th October, 2024.

What is Clause 6 of the Assam Accord?

- **Clause 6:**
 - Clause 6 of the accord promises **Constitutional, legislative and administrative safeguards**, to preserve and promote the **cultural, social, linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people**.
 - The main aim was to **protect the indigenous identity of the Assamese people**.
 - The clause was added in response to **changes in population ratios** and the influx of [migrants from Bangladesh](#).

▪ Assam Accords:

- The Assam Accord, **signed in 1985**, was a **tripartite agreement** between the Central Government, the Assam State Government, and leaders of the Assam Movement, aimed at stopping the **influx of illegal migrants** from Bangladesh.
- It led to the introduction of **[Section 6A into the Citizenship Act, of 1955](#)**, exclusively for Assam.

What is the Biplab Sarma Committee Report?

▪ Background:

- In **July 2019**, the **Union Home Ministry constituted a 14-member committee** to suggest ways to implement Clause 6 of the accord.
 - The committee was **chaired by retired Assam High Court Justice Biplab Kumar Sarma** and included judges, retired bureaucrats, writers, AASU leaders, and journalists.

▪ Definition of Assamese:

- The committee **completed its report in February 2020**, and recommended that the definition of "Assamese people" should include:
 - Indigenous Tribals
 - Other Indigenous Communities of Assam,
 - Indian citizens residing in Assam on or before January 1, 1951, and their descendants,
 - Indigenous Assamese people.

▪ Recommendations:

- The **52 recommendations** primarily **focus on safeguards related to language, land, and cultural heritage**.
- **Key Points:**
 - **Land:**
 - Establish Revenue Circles where only "**Assamese people**" can own and **transfer land, and implement a three-year program** to grant land titles to those **occupying land without proper documentation**.
 - Conduct a **special survey of char areas (riverine regions along the Brahmaputra)** and **prioritize erosion-affected people** in land allotment.
 - **Language:**
 - Establish an Autonomous Language and Literature Academy/Council to preserve and promote Assam's indigenous languages.
 - Make Assamese a compulsory subject up to Class VIII or X in all English medium schools under the state board and CBSE.
 - **Cultural Heritage:**
 - Establish an **autonomous authority** for the development of **sattras (neo-Vaishnavite monasteries)** with financial assistance.
 - Create **multipurpose cultural complexes** in each district to uplift the cultural heritage of all ethnic groups.
- The **[Sixth Schedule autonomous councils in Assam](#) — Bodoland Territorial Council, North Cachar Hills Autonomous Council, and Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council** — will decide on implementing these 52 recommendations.
 - The primarily Bengali-speaking Barak Valley is exempted from these recommendations, along with the Sixth Schedule areas.
- **Recommended reservations** for "Assamese people" in Parliament, the state Assembly, local bodies, and jobs.

Recommendations that have been Left Out

- Some of the most **sensitive recommendations by the committee are not included** in the 52 points listed by the state government.
- Key missing recommendations include:
 - The **introduction of an [Inner Line Permit](#) for entry into Assam**, similar to those in Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, and Mizoram.

- Reservations for “Assamese people”.
- Creation of an Upper House (Legislative Council of Assam), fully reserved for “Assamese people.”

What are the Challenges in Implementation of the Assam Accords?

- **Complexity of Defining Assamese Identity :** The committee's recommendation to define "Assamese people" can **lead to disputes over who qualifies for protections** under Clause 6 and this may foster resentment among different ethnic groups.
- **Land Ownership and Rights:** Establishing Revenue Circles for exclusive land ownership by "Assamese people" may create significant **legal and administrative issues**. Conducting a survey for land allotment in char areas presents logistical challenges
- **Language Policies:** The requirement to make **Assamese the official language and compulsory in schools may face resistance, especially in Bengali-dominant areas** like the Barak Valley.
- **Funding and Management:** Establishing an **autonomous authority for sattras and cultural complexes** may require substantial **funding and effective management structures**.
- **Political and Bureaucratic Resistance:** Recommendations requiring concurrence from the Central Government may face **delays or resistance, complicating the implementation process**.
- **Exemptions for Barak Valley:** Exempting the **Barak Valley and Sixth Schedule areas** from these recommendations **may create perceptions of inequity and division** within the state, potentially exacerbating existing regional tensions.

Way Forward

- **Stakeholder Engagement:**
 - Foster continuous dialogue with all stakeholders, including various ethnic groups, civil society organizations, and political entities, to build consensus on the definition of "Assamese people" and ensure inclusive implementation of the recommendations.
- **Phased Implementation:**
 - Adopt a **phased approach to implementation, prioritizing recommendations that are less contentious and can yield quick wins**, such as **language policies** in education, while gradually addressing more complex issues like land ownership and identity definitions.
- **Capacity Building:**
 - Invest in **capacity building for local authorities and community leaders to manage land surveys** and title distributions effectively. This will ensure transparency and build trust within communities.
- **Resource Allocation:**
 - Secure adequate funding and resources to support the establishment of **cultural authorities and education reforms**, ensuring that these initiatives are sustainable and effectively managed.

Drishti Mains Question:

Critically analyze the key recommendations of the Assam Accord committee, highlighting the political, cultural, and legal complexities in their implementation.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. With reference to India, consider the following statements:

1. There is only one citizenship and one domicile.

2. A citizen by birth only can become the Head of State.
3. A foreigner once granted citizenship cannot be deprived of it under any circumstances.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: (a)

Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2024

[Source: IE](#)

Why in News?

Recently, the **Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences** awarded the [Nobel Prize in Chemistry 2024](#).

- **One half** of the prize was given to **David Baker** for **computational protein design** while the **other half** was jointly given to **Demis Hassabis and John M. Jumper** for [protein structure prediction](#).

What is the Contribution of David Baker?

- **Revolutionising Protein Engineering:** Baker's research group has used **computational methods** to design **novel proteins** from scratch, reshaping the possibilities of [protein engineering](#).
 - By manipulating the **20 different amino acids** that form proteins, his team has created **new proteins** that do not exist in nature.
- **Applications in Medicine and Technology:** These artificially designed proteins have vast potential, particularly in the development of **pharmaceuticals**, [vaccines](#), [nanomaterials](#), and **biosensors**.
 - Baker has successfully designed proteins with new functions, like [degrading plastics](#) or performing tasks beyond the capabilities of natural proteins.
- **First Breakthrough in 2003:** Baker's first major success came in **2003** when his team designed a **protein completely different** from any found in nature.

What is the Contribution of Demis Hassabis and John Jumper?

- **Protein Folding Problem:** Since the 1970s, scientists have **struggled** to predict how **strings of amino acids fold** into their **three-dimensional shapes**.
 - The structure of a protein is crucial because it **determines its function**.
 - Understanding these structures is essential for advances in fields like **drug discovery**, **disease treatment**, and [biotechnology](#).
- **Breakthrough with AlphaFold2:** In 2020, **Hassabis and Jumper** introduced **AlphaFold2**, an **AI-driven system** that revolutionised protein **structure prediction**.
 - The model was able to **predict** the structure of nearly **every known protein**,

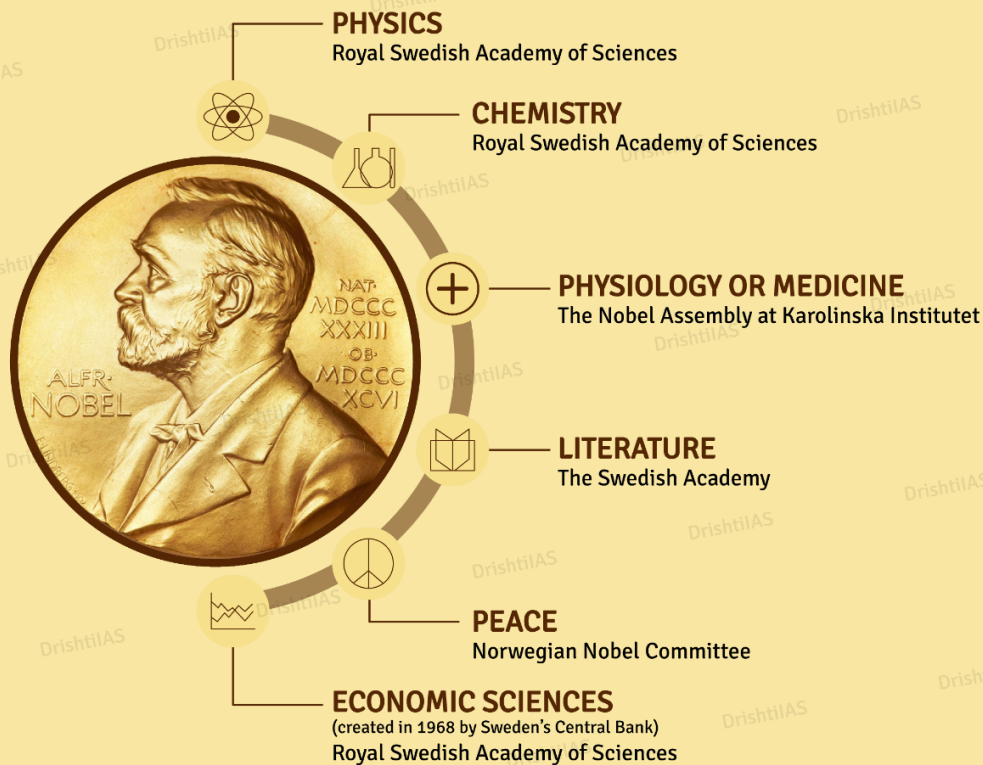
approximately 200 million.

- This achievement solved a **50-year-old problem** in structural biology.
- **Traditional approaches** to decoding protein structures, such as **x-ray crystallography**, are slow, laborious, and time-consuming.
- **Widespread Use and Impact:** AlphaFold2 has been used by over **two million researchers** worldwide, enabling breakthroughs in numerous fields.
 - For example, it has been instrumental in understanding **antibiotic resistance** and creating [enzymes](#) **capable of breaking down plastics**.



Nobel Prize

- ✦ Established by the will of Alfred Nobel (inventor of Dynamite)
- ✦ Awarded to those who have conferred the greatest benefit to humankind, during the preceding year
- ✦ First awards were handed out in 1901



- ✦ The Prize Ceremony is held in Stockholm, Sweden, in December every year
 - ▲ The Peace Prize is not awarded at Stockholm ceremony but presented annually in Oslo, Norway, on the same day
- ✦ Each Nobel laureate receives a gold medal, a diploma, and a monetary award
- ✦ Nobel Prize cannot be given posthumously (after death). Also, up to 3 people can share a Nobel Prize award between them

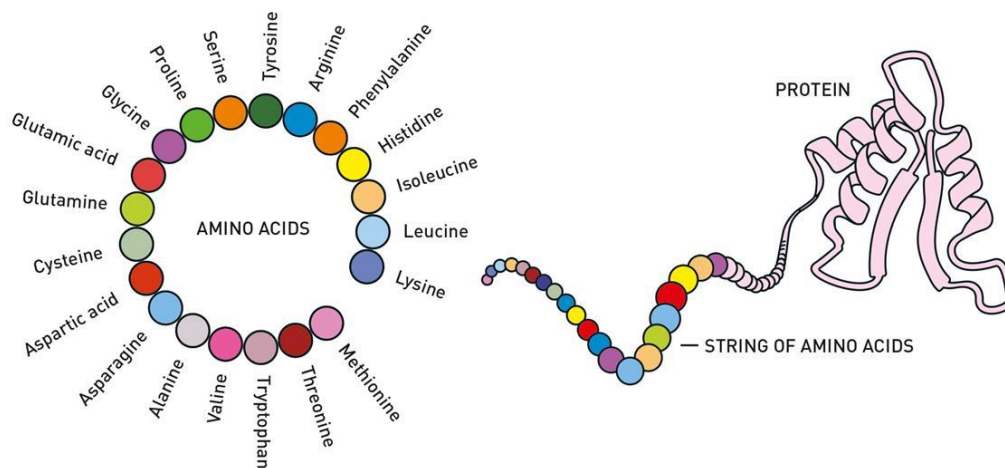
✦ **First Indian Nobel Laureate: Rabindranath Tagore for Literature, 1913**

▲ **First Indian Woman Nobel Laureate: Mother Teresa for Peace, 1979**

What are Key Facts About Proteins?

- **Amino Acids as Building Blocks:** Proteins are made up of **long chains of amino acids**, which are **organic molecules** containing **carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen**, and sometimes sulphur.

- There are **20 different amino acids**, and different combinations of these, **folded** into **three-dimensional structures**, form the various proteins needed for biological processes.
- **Structural Role of Proteins:** The three-dimensional structure of a protein determines its function.
 - In 1972, Nobel Prize in Chemistry was given to **Christian Anfinsen** for his work on **ribonuclease**, especially concerning the **connection between the amino acid sequence**.
- **Proteins as Essential Molecules:** Proteins are **fundamental** to virtually every biological process in living organisms and perform diverse functions such as speeding up **biochemical reactions**, providing structural support, aiding in **immune responses**, and storing nutrients.



UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q. With the present state of development, Artificial Intelligence can effectively do which of the following? (2020)

1. Bring down electricity consumption in industrial units
2. Create meaningful short stories and songs
3. Disease diagnosis
4. Text-to-Speech Conversion
5. Wireless transmission of electrical energy

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Ans: (b)

Launch of Tribal Welfare Projects Under DAJGUA, EMRS and PM-JANMAN

[Source: PIB](#)

Why in News?

Recently, the **Prime Minister inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for projects** worth over Rs 80,000 crore in Jharkhand, including the launch of **Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan (DAJGUA)**.

- He also inaugurated **40 Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)** and **laid the foundation stone for 25 more**, along with several projects under **the Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN)**.

What is Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan?

- Originally named the **PM Janjatiya Unnat Gram Abhiyan (PM-JUGA)**, is an umbrella scheme to implement existing schemes across 63,000 Scheduled Tribe-majority villages.
 - Dharti Aaba refers to **Birsa Munda, a 19th-century tribal leader and anti-colonial icon** from Jharkhand.
- The initiative aims to **address critical gaps in social infrastructure, health, education, and livelihood** through 25 interventions implemented by various 17 Ministries and Departments of the Government of India.

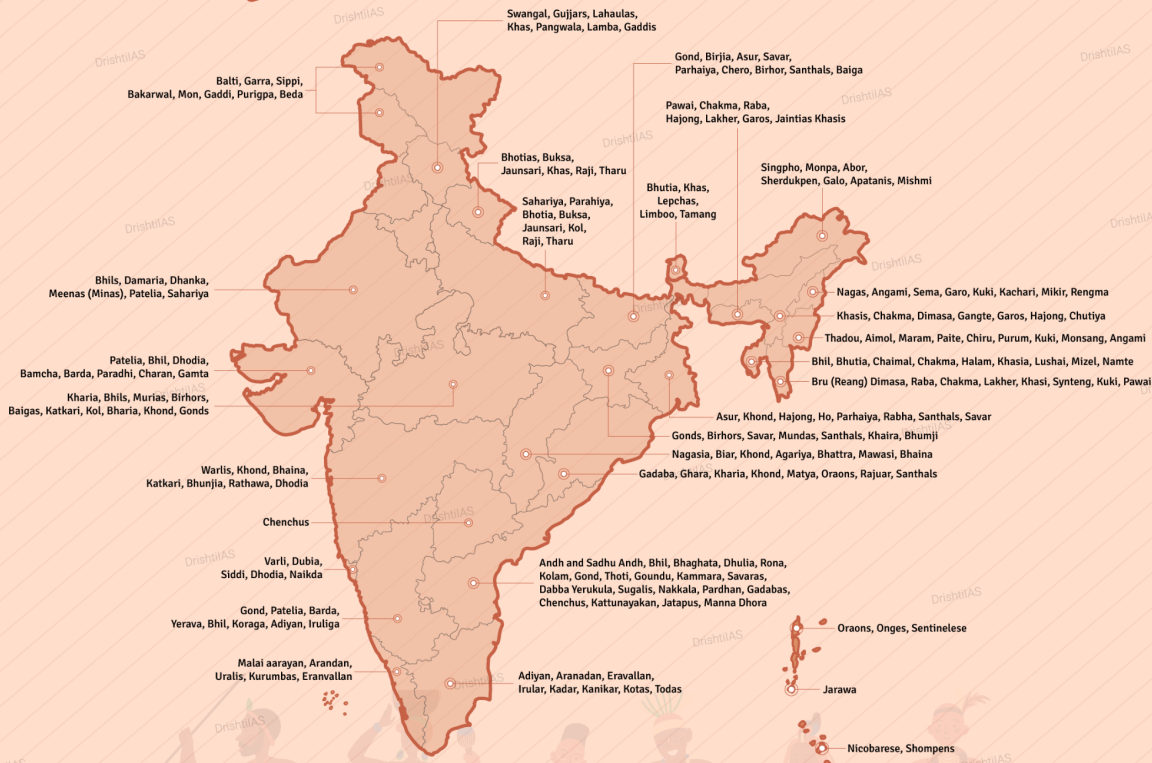
What are Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)?

- EMRS is a scheme for making **model residential schools for Scheduled Tribes (STs) across India**. It **started in the year 1997-98**. Its **nodal ministry** is the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**.
 - These schools are being developed to **provide quality education to tribal students**, focusing on academic as well as overall development.
 - The EMR Schools generally follow the **CBSE curriculum**.
- The scheme aims to **build schools similar to Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas and Kendriya Vidyalayas**, with a focus on **state-of-the-art facilities for preserving local art and culture**, as well as providing training in sports and skill development.

What is Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN)?

- PM-JANMAN was launched on **15th November 2023, on Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas**, to improve the socio-economic welfare of PVTGs.
- It is **implemented by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs**, in collaboration with the State governments and the **PVTGs communities**.
 - It encompasses various sectors, including safe housing under the **PM-Awas Scheme**, access to **clean drinking water**, improved **healthcare, education, nutrition**, road and telecommunications connectivity, as well as opportunities for sustainable livelihoods.
- The plan also includes the establishment of **Van Dhan Vikas Kendras** for **trading in forest produce**, off-grid solar power systems for 1 lakh households, and solar street lights.
- The scheme is expected to **enhance the quality of life and well-being of the PVTGs**, by addressing their multiple and intersecting forms of **discrimination and exclusion**, and by recognizing and valuing their unique and valuable contribution to national and global development.

Major Tribes in India



- STs constitute 8.6% of the population of India (Census 2011). Draft National Tribal Policy, 2006 records 698 STs in India.
- Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) are more vulnerable among the tribal groups. Among the 75 listed PVTGs, the highest number is found in Odisha.
- Bhil is the largest tribal group (38% of the total scheduled tribal population of India) followed by the Gonds.
- Madhya Pradesh has the highest tribal population in India (Census 2011).
- The Santhal are the oldest tribes in India. The Santhal system of governance, known as Manjhi-Paragana, can be compared to local self-governance.
- According to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes list (modification orders), 1956, the inhabitants of Lakshadweep who and both of whose parents were born in these islands are treated as STs.
- Article 342 of the Constitution prescribes procedure to be followed for specification of STs.
- Article 275 provides for the grant of special funds by the Union Government to the State Government for promoting the welfare of Scheduled Tribes and providing them with a better administration.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. Consider the following statements about Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in India: (2019)

1. PVTGs reside in 18 States and one Union Territory.
2. A stagnant or declining population is one of the criteria for determining PVTG status.
3. There are 95 PVTGs officially notified in the country so far.
4. Irular and Konda Reddi tribes are included in the list of PVTGs.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Ans: C

PM Internship Scheme

Source: [BS](#)

Recently, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs **has launched the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme**, which was announced in the [Union budget 2024](#).

- **About the Scheme:**
 - The scheme **aims to provide students with internship opportunities to address [youth unemployment](#)**.
 - It seeks to provide internships to 1 crore young people **over the next five years**.
 - Applicants will get a monthly stipend of ₹4,500 from the government, and an additional ₹500 by companies as part of their [Corporate Social Responsibility](#) initiatives consisting of one year.
 - A **one-time grant of ₹6,000** will be provided upon enrollment, along with insurance coverage under the **PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana** and **PM Suraksha Bima Yojana**.
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
 - **Age:** 21- 24 years.
 - **Education:** At least Class 10th; graduates from premier institutions ([IITs, IIMs](#)) and professional qualifications (CA) are excluded.
 - **Employment Status:** Must not be in full-time employment.
 - **Income Restriction:** Family income must not exceed ₹8 lakh annually; families with government employees are ineligible.
- **Benefits of the Scheme:**
 - Offers practical skills in real-world environment.
 - It will provide financial support to the youngsters.

Read more: [The State of Youth Employment in India](#), [Corporate Social Responsibility - A Strategic Endeavour](#)

Telangana Begins Sub-Categorization of SCs

Source: [TH](#)

Recently, the Telangana government has initiated the process of categorizing **Scheduled Castes (SCs)** into four distinct sub-groups: A, B, C, and D.

- This development follows the **Supreme Court's** landmark judgment which granted states the authority to [sub-classify reserved categories](#), including **Scheduled Castes (SCs)** and **Scheduled Tribes (STs)**, for reservation purposes.
- **Supreme Court Ruling:**
 - The Supreme Court, in a [review-judgment of Punjab and Haryana High Court](#), allowed states to sub-classify SCs and STs under [Article 14 of the Constitution](#) based on **varying levels of backwardness**.
 - It ruled that the '**creamy layer**' principle, previously applied only to [Other Backward Classes \(OBCs\)](#) (as highlighted in [Indra Sawhney Case](#)), should **now also be applied to SCs and STs**.
 - It also held that reservations are applicable **solely to the first generation**; if a family

member has availed of the benefits, the **second generation becomes ineligible.**

Read More: [SC Allows for Sub-Classification of SCs and STs](#)

World Habitat Day 2024

Source: [PIB](#)

On 9th October, the [Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs \(MoHUA\)](#) observed World Habitat Day 2024 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

- **World Habitat Day:**
 - **Background:** In 1985, the [UN](#) designated the **first Monday of October each year** as World Habitat Day.
 - The day is also intended to remind the world that we all have the **power and the responsibility to shape the future of our cities** and towns.
 - The origin of **World Habitat Day can be traced back to Nairobi, Kenya, in 1986.**
 - Since its **first celebration in 1986**, the day has centered on improving urban living conditions.
 - **Theme for 2024: 'Engaging Youth to Create a Better Urban Future,'** focuses on addressing the challenges and opportunities of rapid urbanisation.
 - It aims to encourage the **youth to engage in urban planning and decision-making** to foster more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable urban environments.
 - **Importance:**
 - It raises awareness of the **fundamental right to shelter**, reminding that everyone deserves a safe and comfortable home.
 - It also **highlights the importance of environmental preservation** amid increasing urbanisation.

Read More: [World Habitat Day 2023](#)

Space Based Surveillance (SBS) Mission

Source: [HT](#)

Recently, the [Cabinet Committee on Security \(CCS\)](#) has approved **phase 3 of the [Space Based Surveillance \(SBS\) mission.](#)**

- It will help in better **land and maritime domain awareness** for civilian and military applications.
- It will involve the launch of at least **52 satellites** in [low earth orbit](#) and [geostationary orbit](#) for surveillance.
 - **21 satellites** will be built by [ISRO](#) and the remaining **31 by private companies.**
- The SBS mission is being handled by the [National Security Council Secretariat](#) and **Defence Space Agency** under the Ministry of Defence.
 - The three armed forces will have **dedicated satellites** for their land, sea or air-based missions.
- **SBS 1** was launched in **2001**, and involved the launch of **four satellites e.g., Risat 2** while **SBS**

2 came in **2013** with the launch of **six satellites** e.g., **Risat 2A**.

- The SBS 3 **mission will be supported by** India's acquisition of **31 Predator drones** from the US, joint construction of **military satellites** with France and **anti-satellite missile** capabilities.
- India aims to acquire capabilities to **detect enemy submarines** in the Indo-Pacific and **monitor infrastructure construction** by adversaries along its land and sea borders.

Read More: [Satellite-Based Communication](#)

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