





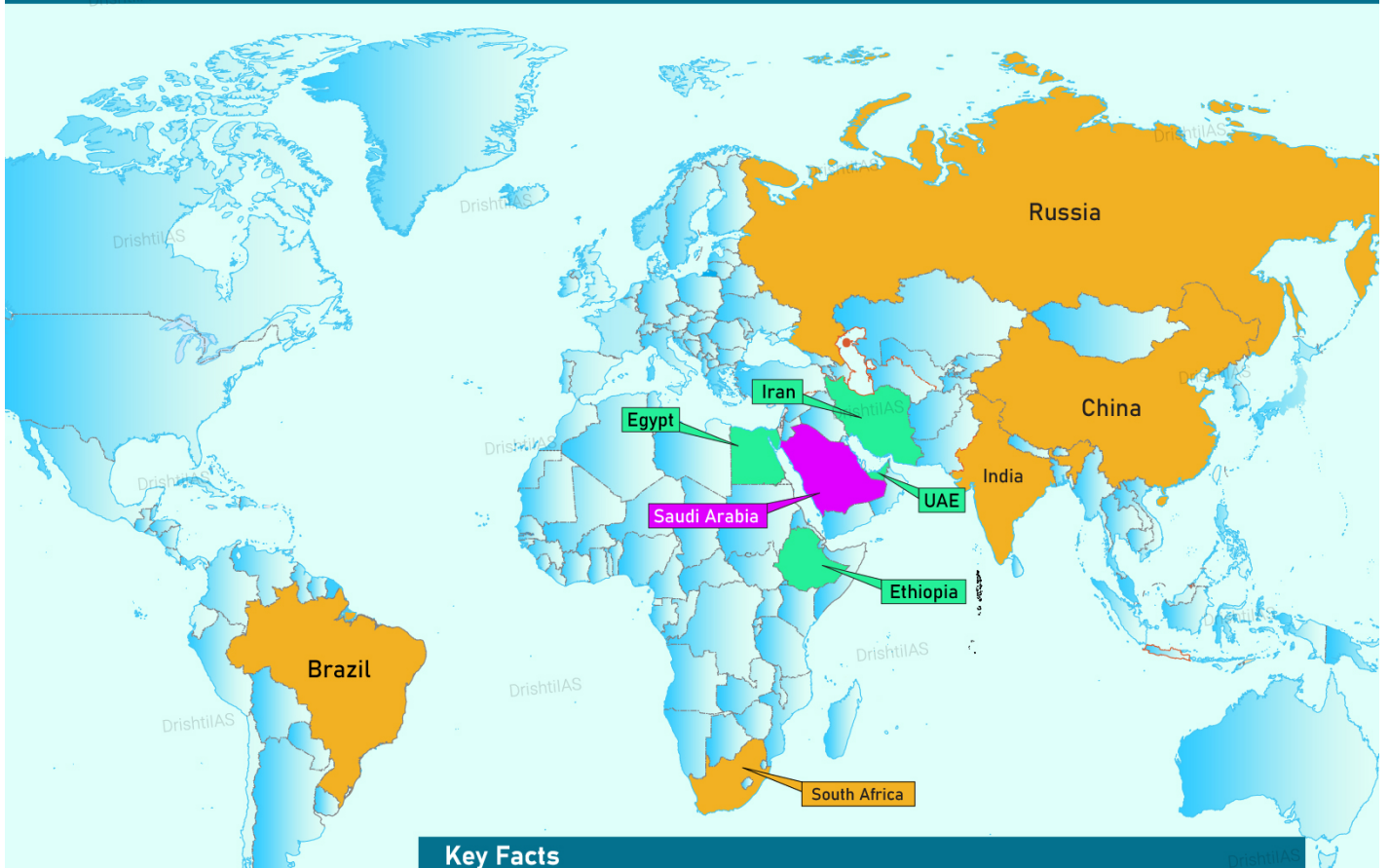
# BRICS

# BRICS

Initial Members 

New Members (added in 2024) 

Invited to join BRICS (not an Official Member yet) 



## Key Facts

- "BRIC" → Coined by Goldman Sachs economist Jim O'Neill (2001)
- Initial Members (2006) → Brazil, Russia, India & China
  - Became "BRICS" with South Africa's inclusion (2010)
- 4 New Members added in January 2024 → Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, & UAE
- First Informal BRIC Meeting → 2006 (Sidelines of UNGA)
- First Formal BRIC Summit → 2009 (Russia)
- Financial Institution & Mechanism → New Development Bank (NDB) & Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA) (set up by Fortaleza Declaration - 6<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit 2014)



# American Civil War (1861-1865)

**For Prelims:** [Slavery](#), [Africa](#), [Middle East](#), [Arthashastra](#), [Bonded Labour System \(Abolition\) Act 1976](#), [Sovereignty](#), [Immigration](#).

**For Mains:** World History, American Civil War, Abolition of Slavery.

[Source: IE](#)

## Why in News?

Recently, the Presidential candidate of the **Republican Party** became president of the **United States (US)** defeating the Presidential candidate of the **Democratic Party**.

- The **US Civil War** was driven by tensions over [slavery](#), economic differences, and states' rights, with the **Republican Party** opposing slavery and the **Democratic Party** initially supporting it.

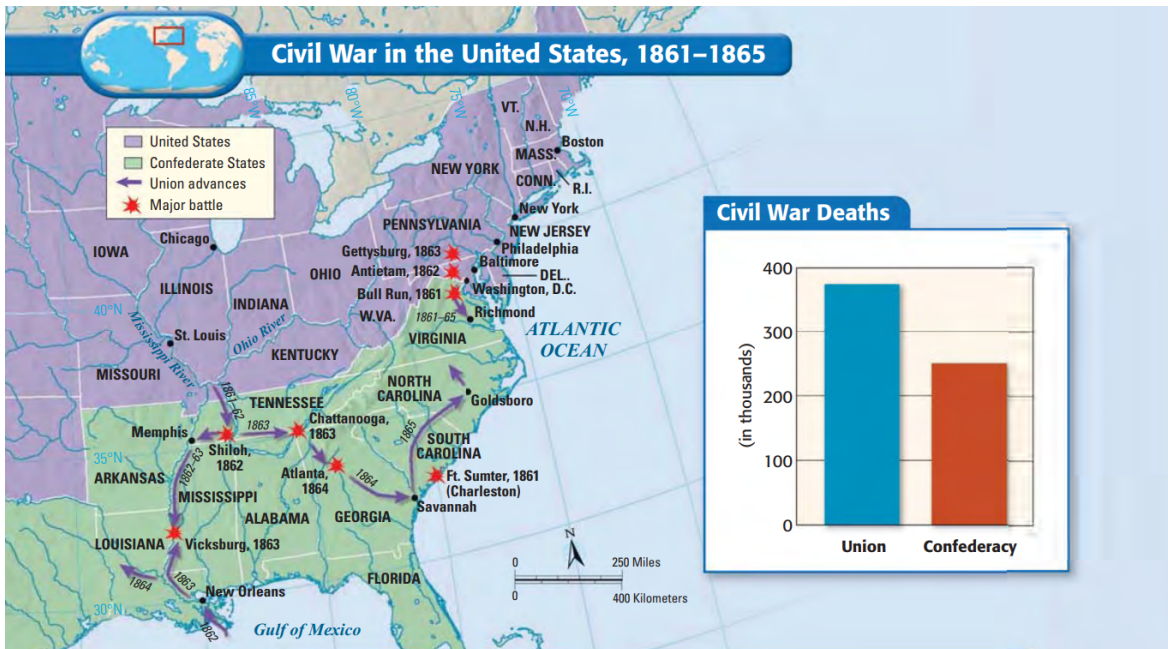
## How did Slavery Evolve Through Human History?

- **Origins & Early Development:**
  - **Slavery** emerged around thousands of years ago with agricultural settlements when **victorious tribes enslaved defeated populations** instead of killing them.
  - **Ancient civilisations** including **Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, and Rome** developed complex slave-based economic systems.
  - Various forms of slavery emerged, including **debt bondage**, the enslavement of **conquered peoples, child labour** and **generational bondage**.
- **Global Expansion & Trade:**
  - Arab **slave trade** dominated the Indian Ocean routes from 7th-19th centuries, connecting [Africa](#), the [Middle East](#), and **Asia**.
  - The **trans-Saharan slave trade** transported millions from **Sub-Saharan Africa** to **North Africa** and the **Middle East**.
  - The **transatlantic slave trade** (16th-19th centuries) forcibly moved approximately **12 million Africans to various parts of the world**.
  - European colonial powers established systematic slave trading networks across continents.
- **Slavery in India:**
  - Early Sanskrit texts like [Arthashastra](#) and **Manusmriti** recognised and regulated slavery.
  - **Buddhist and Jain texts** also mention slavery while advocating compassionate treatment.
  - Islamic rulers introduced military slavery and domestic servitude systems.
  - The **Mughal period** saw extensive slave trading networks across South Asia.
  - **The Girmitiya system** was a form of indentured labour introduced in British colonies to address labour shortages on sugar plantations after the abolition of slavery in 1833.
  - **Indian Slavery Act of 1843** technically abolished slavery under British rule.
  - Post-independence India banned bonded labour through [Article 23 of the Constitution](#) and subsequently through the [Bonded Labour System \(Abolition\) Act 1976](#).

## What were the Causes and Course of the US Civil War?

- **Causes of the US Civil War:**
  - **Slavery and Sectional Divides:** The **US Civil War** was primarily driven by the conflict over **slavery**.

- The **northern United States (US)** had a diversified economy with both industry and farming, relying on free labour.
  - In contrast, the **southern United States** depended heavily on slave labour for its agricultural economy, particularly cotton.
- This economic difference led to deep disagreements on the issue of slavery, with many **Northerners** seeking to **prohibit slavery** in new western states, while **Southerners** wanted laws that would protect it.
- As the **US expanded westward**, the issue of slavery became a major point of contention, **especially for northern states**.
  - They **feared that allowing slavery in new territories** would give the **South greater political power in Congress**.
- This growing divide over slavery contributed to **political tensions**, eventually leading **southern states** to seek secession from the Union.
- The debate also centred on states' rights versus federal authority, with **Southern politicians** arguing that states had the right to leave the **Union**, while most **Northerners** believed the Union was permanent under the Constitution.
- **Ideological Divide Between North vs. South:**
  - The **ideological differences** between the North and the South were stark, with the North advocating for a diversified economy and free labour, while the South's economy was built on slave labour.
  - The **conflict was not only about slavery** but also about the nature of democracy, as both sides sought to shape the future of the nation according to their values and way of life.
- **Course of the Civil War:**
  - **Anti-Slavery Protest:** The **Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854** allowed settlers in **Kansas and Nebraska** to decide on the legality of slavery in their territories through popular **sovereignty**, intensifying sectional tensions in the US.
  - In response to the passage of the Nebraska Bill, anti-slavery activists organised and came together to create a new political party, which was named the Republican Party.
  - In February 1856, anti-slavery activists gathered in Pittsburgh to formalise the **Republican Party**, with **Abraham Lincoln** among those present.
  - **Secession and Outbreak of War:** The conflict reached a climax in 1860 when **Lincoln** was elected president. His opposition to the spread of slavery led to the secession of Southern states, which formed the **Confederate States of America**.
    - In April 1861, **Confederate** forces attacked **Fort Sumter** in South Carolina, marking the start of the war. **Lincoln** ordered the army to bring the rebel states back into the Union.
    - Though the South had superior military leadership, the North's larger population, industrial capacity, and infrastructure eventually in **April 1865** South surrendered.
  - **Emancipation Proclamation:** In 1863, **Lincoln** issued the **Emancipation Proclamation**, declaring that all slaves in the **Confederate** states were free.
    - This move also had international significance, discouraging European nations from supporting the Confederacy.
    - However, **Lincoln declared that the war was being fought to preserve the Union, not to abolish slavery**.
  - **Thirteenth Amendment and Abolition of Slavery:** In the aftermath of the war, the **13th Amendment to the US Constitution** was passed in 1865, abolishing slavery.



## What were the Challenges and Impacts of the US Civil War?

- **Reconstruction and Post-War Challenges in the US:**
  - **Reconstruction and Southern Resistance:** The **Reconstruction era (1865-1877)** sought to reintegrate the Southern states and enforce civil rights for **African Americans**.
    - The **14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments** granted citizenship and voting rights to African Americans, altering the social and political landscape of the US.
  - **Economic Changes and Industrialisation:** The war accelerated industrialisation in the US. By **1914**, the US became a leading industrial power, partly due to the need for mass production during the war.
    - **Immigration** played a significant role in fueling industrial growth, with nearly 20 million immigrants arriving between 1870 and 1914.
    - The development of the railroad system, particularly the completion of the **Transcontinental Railroad** in 1869, helped facilitate trade and industrial growth, linking the eastern US with the West and promoting the movement of goods.
  - **Postwar Economic Expansion:** The war also spurred the growth of railroads, which linked farming communities to industrial cities.
    - Steel became a crucial resource as railways expanded, and the movement of goods, such as corn, wheat, and cattle, helped position the US as a world leader in agriculture and industry by the 20th century.
- **Global Impact on the Cotton Trade and its Influence on India:**
  - **Disruption of Cotton Exports:** The **Civil War** caused a major disruption in the global cotton trade as the South, a primary supplier of cotton to Britain, could no longer export it.
    - British textile manufacturers turned to **India** as an alternative source, leading to a significant increase in cotton demand from Indian growers.
  - **The Cotton Boom in India:** As a result, India became a key supplier of cotton to British industries during the war.
    - This demand drove Indian merchants to encourage farmers in regions like Gujarat and Maharashtra to plant more cotton, resulting in an economic boom, though it often led to exploitation.
- **Long-Term Economic Consequences for India:** While India benefited from increased cotton exports, it was primarily British industries that profited.
  - This cotton boom also caused **food shortages** in some regions, as farmers were encouraged to grow cotton instead of food crops, leading to **famines** and economic distress for Indian farmers.

- The British colonial system continued to extract wealth from India while leaving its farmers in debt and poverty.

**Drishti Mains Question:**

How was the cotton trade from India impacted during the US Civil War, and what were the long-term consequences for Indian farmers?

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

**Mains:**

**Q.** Why indentured labour was taken by British from India to other colonies? Have they been able to preserve their cultural identity over there? (2018)

## Agricultural Policy Monitoring and Evaluation 2024

**For Prelims:** [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](#), [Market Price Support](#), [Minimum Support Price](#), [Digital Agriculture Mission](#)

**For Mains:** Impact of Government Procurement & Distribution, Government Policies and Initiatives, Agricultural Policy and Its Impact on Indian Farmers

**Source:** [DTE](#)

### Why in News?

Recently, the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development \(OECD\)](#) in its ***Agricultural Policy Monitoring and Evaluation 2024 report*** highlighted that India implicitly taxed its farmers **USD 120 billion in 2023**, the highest among 54 countries.

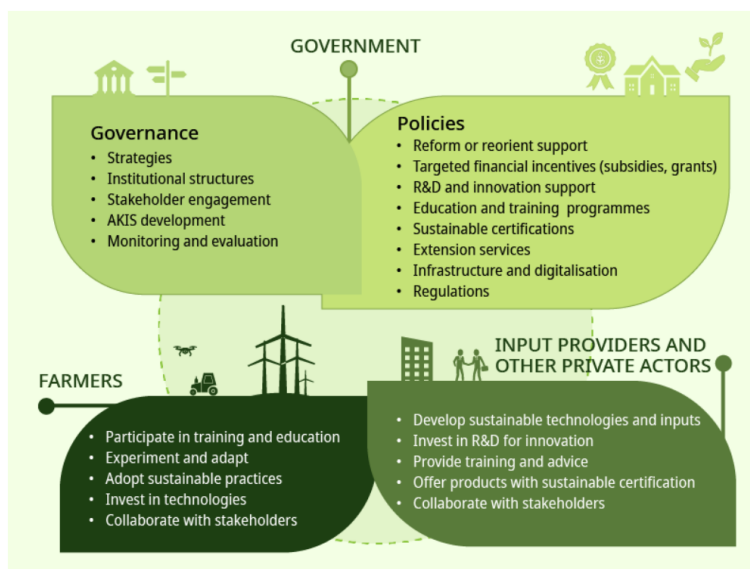
- This is a result of government policies like export bans and duties, which aim to keep **food prices low for consumers** but impose significant costs on the **agricultural sector**.

### What are the Key Highlights of the OECD's Report?

- **Financial Support to Agriculture:** Total support for the agricultural sector across 54 countries averaged **USD 842 billion per year from 2021 to 2023**. Although it dropped in 2022 and 2023 compared to the 2021 peak, it still remained much higher than levels before the **Covid-19 pandemic**.
  - **Market Price Support (MPS)** fell by USD 28 billion between 2021-23 but still remained a major part of total support.
    - MPS is a policy measure that aims to keep the **price of a specific agricultural product on the domestic market** at a certain minimum (government set) level, which **helps to raise domestic prices above world prices**.
- **Agricultural Support in India:** In 2023, India's **export restrictions** on **rice**, sugar, onions, and **de-oiled rice bran** led to a negative MPS, causing a USD 110 billion loss.
  - As a result, farmers **received less for their produce than they would have without**

**these policies**, leading to a significant reduction in their income.

- India's overall market price support in **2023 was negative**, amounting to a **USD 110 billion loss**, meaning **farmers received less for their produce than they would have without these policies**.
  - India had the highest negative price support, followed by Vietnam and Argentina. **India accounted for 62.5% of all global negative price support in 2023**. This share has grown significantly from 61% in 2000-02 to 75% in 2021-23, highlighting the increasing burden on Indian farmers.
  - Despite positive support through **subsidies and Minimum Support Price(MSP)** totaling USD 10 billion, the price-depressing policies overwhelmed these measures.
- **Global Agricultural Challenges:** Ongoing conflicts, such as **Russia's war against Ukraine** and **unrest in the Middle East**, have disrupted agricultural markets, particularly affecting trade and global supply chains.
  - The increasing frequency and severity of **extreme weather events** continue to challenge agricultural production and productivity.
    - Some countries have implemented **export restrictions**, further distorting international trade in agricultural commodities
  - Increasing **farmer's protests across nations** underscore the economic and social struggles faced by farmers, reflecting deep-seated issues in agricultural systems.
  - Global agricultural productivity growth has slowed, threatening the **ability to meet growing global food demands while maintaining sustainability**.
    - Governments are linking payments to farming practices that support land health, **biodiversity**, and **sustainability**, but Environmental Public Goods Payments(EPGP) make up only 0.3% of total producer support.
      - EPGP is a way to fund the provision of public goods that benefit the environment, such as **climate protection**.
- **Recommendations:** Governments need to establish measurable goals for sustainable productivity, investing in monitoring systems like **total factor productivity (TFP)** and **agri-environmental indicators (AEIs)**.
  - TFP measures the efficiency of agricultural inputs in producing outputs. TFP growth shows that farmers can produce more with the same or fewer resources, making it a key metric for sustainable agriculture.
  - AEIs measure key environmental **impacts and risks from agriculture and assess producers' management practices**. They help explain agriculture's performance and its underlying causes.
  - The report highlights the need for **innovation to boost productivity** and calls for a **larger share of producer support** to be tied to **sustainable farming practices**.



Source: OECD (2024), OECD Agricultural Policy Monitoring and Evaluation: Innovation for Sustainable Productivity Growth (Figure 1.13)

## Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

- The **OECD**, founded in 1961, is an international organisation of 38 democratic countries committed to the market economy, headquartered in **Paris, France**.
  - It aims to promote **prosperity, equality, opportunity, and well-being** through the publication of **economic reports, data, analyses, and forecasts**, and by working to eliminate **bribery and financial crime** globally.
- The OECD collaborates with its Member countries and a range of partners on key global issues.
  - **India** has been an OECD **Key Partner** since 2007, alongside countries like **Brazil, China, Indonesia, and South Africa**, though it is **not a member**.
  - The OECD also maintains a "**blacklist**" of **uncooperative tax havens** and has working relationships with non-member economies such as India.
- **Reports and Indices by OECD:** Government at a Glance, and **OECD Better Life Index**.

## How do Indian Agricultural Policies Negatively Impact Farmers?

- **Negative Market Price Support:** India's policies have resulted in a **negative market price support for farmers**. From 2014 to 2016, the producer support estimate (PSE) was around -6.2%, driven by negative market price support (-13.1%).
  - PSE is a metric that measures the annual value of transfers from consumers and the government **to agricultural producers**.
- **Export Restrictions and Bans:** Imposing export bans and quotas on essential commodities like rice and sugar limits market access, driving down domestic prices.
- **Regulatory Constraints:** The [Essential Commodities Act, 1955](#) and [Agricultural Produce Market Committee \(APMC\) Act in 2003](#) impose **stringent regulations on the pricing, stocking, and trading of agricultural commodities**.
  - These Acts, while aimed at ensuring food security, often **result in lower farm gate prices due to price controls** and low procurement prices set by the government, which are sometimes **below international market prices, leading to a price-depressing effect for producers**.
- **Low Minimum Support Prices (MSP):** The MSP is intended to protect farmers, but it **has been set lower than international prices during certain periods**, leading to farmers receiving less

than they would have in an open market environment.

- **Inefficiencies in Marketing:** Lack of modern infrastructure and high transaction costs reduce the prices farmers receive for their produce, adding to price suppression.
- **Inefficient Resource Allocation:** [subsidies for fertilisers](#), irrigation, and electricity provide short-term relief but fail to address long-term issues like [climate change](#), market access, and **declining agricultural research**, which ultimately hinder sustainable growth and profitability for farmers.

## India's Initiatives Related to Agriculture

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

## Way Forward

- **Reform Export Policies:** Gradually ease export bans and quotas, invest in infrastructure (**cold storage, transportation, processing**), and align MSPs with international market prices to boost competitiveness and ensure fair compensation.
- **Shift in Budgetary Priorities:** Redirect resources towards improving resilience, sustainability, infrastructure, and reducing supply chain inefficiencies.
- **Better Market Functioning:** Foster greater integration between state and central policies to improve coordination, reduce fragmentation, and address sector challenges.
- **Promote Digital Platforms:** Encourage direct marketing and **e-commerce** like [National Agriculture Market \(e-NAM\)](#) to connect farmers with consumers, reducing reliance on traditional markets.

### **Drishhti Mains Question:**

Discuss the impact of India's agricultural policies on its farmers. How do policies such as export bans and Minimum Support Prices affect the agricultural sector?

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

### **Prelims:**

**Q. In India, which of the following can be considered as public investment in agriculture? (2020)**

1. Fixing Minimum Support Price for agricultural produce of all crops
2. Computerization of Primary Agricultural Credit Societies
3. Social Capital development
4. Free electricity supply to farmers
5. Waiver of agricultural loans by the banking system
6. Setting up of cold storage facilities by the governments

**Select the correct answer using the code given below:**

**(a)** 1, 2 and 5 only



(b) 1, 3, 4 and 5 only

(c) 2, 3 and 6 only

(d) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6

Ans: (c)

**Mains:**

Q. Given the vulnerability of Indian agriculture to vagaries of nature, discuss the need for crop insurance and bring out the salient features of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY). (2016)

Q. Explain various types of revolutions, took place in Agriculture after Independence in India. How these revolutions have helped in poverty alleviation and food security in India? (2017)

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## SC's Concerns Over Inaction on Sex Trafficking

For Prelims: [Supreme Court](#), [Lok Sabha](#), [National Investigation Agency](#), [Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023](#), [Organised crime](#), [Rohingya refugees](#), [Scheduled Castes](#), [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation](#)

For Mains: Issues Related to Women, Human Trafficking, Sex Trafficking and Gendered Exploitation

Source: HT

### Why in News?

Recently, the [Supreme Court \(SC\) of India](#) criticised the Union government for not establishing the promised **new Organised Crime Investigative Agency (OCIA)** or enacting comprehensive [anti-trafficking](#) legislation since its 2015 commitment.

- This failure has raised significant concerns about the effectiveness of the existing frameworks to tackle the growing menace of **sex trafficking**.

### Why is the Supreme Court Concerned About Establishing OCIA?

- **Inaction Despite Court Directives:** The SC in the case of *Prajwala v. Union of India, 2015*, directed the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to establish the **OCIA** to address sex trafficking.
  - However, despite the deadline of 30th September 2016, and a planned operational date of 1st December 2016, the **agency remains unformed, delaying effective action against sex trafficking**.
- **Importance of Addressing Trafficking:**
  - **High Volume of Cases:** According to data from the MHA, over 10,659 trafficking cases were recorded between 2018 and 2022, highlighting that trafficking remains a systemic issue.
    - An average of around 2,000 cases annually demonstrates the need for strengthened policies, law enforcement, and community awareness.

- **Low Conviction Rates Despite High Arrests:** Although thousands of people were arrested over the past few years, convictions remain extremely low.
  - This gap between arrests and convictions indicates issues such as **inadequate investigation and weak case presentation in court.**
- **Vulnerability of Victims:** Many victims of trafficking come from **economically disadvantaged backgrounds**, often lacking adequate support.
  - The challenges in **disbursing victim compensation funds further aggravate their vulnerabilities**, sometimes leading them to turn hostile in court due to financial hardship and lack of resources.
- **Victim Support:** Despite upgrades in anti-trafficking units and intelligence, low conviction rates highlight the need for improved **law enforcement training, stronger victim support**, and quicker compensation for more effective case handling.
- **Government Response to SC Concerns:**
  - **Pending Legislative Efforts:** The government had previously drafted the [Trafficking of Persons \(Prevention, Protection, and Rehabilitation\) Bill, 2018](#), which passed in the [Lok Sabha](#) but lapsed in 2019 without introduction in the [Rajya Sabha](#).
    - This legislative lapse has contributed to delays in fulfilling the commitment to comprehensive anti-trafficking legislation.
  - **NIA Assigned Role in Sex Trafficking Cases:** The Union government, represented by the **Additional Solicitor General (ASG)**, informed the SC that the government had decided to assign the [National Investigation Agency \(NIA\)](#) the additional task of handling **sex trafficking cases instead of establishing OCIA.**
    - The SC bench questioned the efficacy of this approach, emphasising that NIA may lack resources and mandate to offer adequate protection and **rehabilitation services to trafficking victims.**
  - **Reference to Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023:** ASG informed SC that recent provisions within the [Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 \(section 111 and 112\)](#) include measures addressing [organised crime](#), suggesting a partial framework for addressing sex trafficking.

## How has Sex Trafficking Been Perpetuated in India?

- **Exploitation Through Migration:** Women and girls, particularly from impoverished regions, are lured by traffickers **offering jobs in cities.**
  - Once they migrate, they are **forced into domestic work, spas, and beauty parlours**, where they often face **sexual or labour trafficking.**
  - The exploitation is **rampant in major cities, like Delhi and Mumbai**, where traffickers take advantage of the promise of better economic opportunities.
- **Trafficking in Commercial Sex:** The majority of trafficking victims in India are women and girls from marginalised communities, including [Scheduled Castes and Tribes](#).
  - Traffickers have shifted sex trafficking operations from traditional **red-light areas** to more discreet locations like dance bars and private residences, **making enforcement harder.**
  - Many individuals in commercial sex work, some of them minors, are trapped in [debt bondage](#), unable to escape due to accumulated debts imposed by traffickers.
  - Traffickers are increasingly exploiting **digital platforms** to arrange illicit meetings with buyers, leading to the **decentralisation of sex trafficking beyond traditional brothels** into smaller establishments and private residences.
- **Cultural Exploitation:** In some regions, Dalit women and girls are exploited in systems such as [“devadasi”](#) or [“Jogini”](#), where they are ceremonially married to deities but are coerced into **sexual exploitation** by local communities.
  - **Religious and tourist centres** also become breeding grounds for sex trafficking, with traffickers using these settings to exploit vulnerable women and children.
  - However, in some tribal communities like the **Banchhada in Madhya Pradesh**, **prostitution is seen as a survival mechanism**, with the birth of a girl child celebrated as an opportunity to earn through prostitution.
    - This **normalisation of prostitution contributes to sex trafficking**, as young girls are groomed for exploitation and become targets for trafficking networks.
- **Cross-Border Trafficking:** Limited collaboration among states and with neighbouring countries like **Nepal and Bangladesh** hinders effective action against cross-border trafficking.

- Agreements to combat trafficking and expedite victim repatriation remain incomplete.
- Traffickers also **target women and girls from Central Asia, Eastern Europe, Africa, and Rohingya refugees**, exploiting them for sex and labour in India, often **under false pretences of employment**.
- Traffickers exploit **Indian nationals in Gulf countries, Southeast Asia, and Europe**, often through fraudulent recruitment.

## What are the Measures Taken by India to Combat Human Trafficking?

- **Constitutional and Legislative Provisions:**
  - **Article 23 (1) of the Constitution of India:** Prohibits **human trafficking** and **forced labour**.
  - **Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956 (ITPA):** Focuses on preventing trafficking for **commercial sexual exploitation**.
  - **Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013:** Addresses human trafficking for physical and sexual exploitation, **slavery**, and organ removal.
  - **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012:** **Protects children from sexual abuse and exploitation**.
- **Initiatives Taken:**
  - **Anti-Trafficking Cell (ATC):** Established by the MHA to coordinate and follow up on anti-trafficking actions.
  - **Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs):** The MHA has established **AHTUs** to deal with law enforcement response on Trafficking in human beings, excluding legislative, welfare and promotional aspects, which are subject matters of the **Department of Women & Child Development**.
  - **Mission Vatsalya Program:** It supports **child victims of crime**, including trafficking.
  - **Capacity Building and Awareness:** Training of law enforcement agencies and prosecutors through workshops, and judicial colloquiums to sensitise judicial officers on human trafficking.
- **International Conventions on Trafficking:**
  - **UN Convention:** The **United Nations Convention on Transnational Organised Crime (UNCTOC)** includes a protocol for the prevention, suppression, and punishment of trafficking in persons, especially women and children.
    - India ratified the convention and implemented the **Criminal Law Amendment Act, 2013** in line with the protocol on trafficking in persons.
    - However, UNCTOC defines an "**organised criminal group**" but does not provide a definition for "**organized crime**." This lack of a clear definition can hinder efforts to effectively combat organised crimes like sex trafficking.
  - **SAARC Convention:** India has ratified the **South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)** Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution.

## How an Agency like OCIA Can Help Combat Sex Trafficking in India?

- **Specialised Investigative Units:** OCIA can create units to target sex trafficking along with other organised crimes in high-risk areas like urban centres and borders, deploying trained operatives for intelligence gathering and rescues.
  - Rapid response teams can be deployed for **quick rescues, and collaborations with NGOs providing rehabilitation services** to help **victims reintegrate into society**.
- **Data Collection and Intelligence Sharing:** A centralised database can track **trafficking cases and offenders**, using **predictive analytics** for proactive interventions and better information sharing.
- **Collaboration with Law Enforcement:** OCIA can train police and border forces on trafficking cases and **coordinate joint operations** for efficient rescues and raids.
- **Cross-Border Operations:** OCIA can work with neighbouring countries for joint operations, intelligence sharing, and legal assistance for cross-border trafficking cases.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** OCIA can **run campaigns to educate vulnerable populations** and set up helplines for **safe reporting of trafficking activities**.
- **Policy Advocacy:** OCIA can recommend stronger **anti-trafficking laws and monitor their**

- implementation**, ensuring better victim protection and harsher penalties for traffickers.
- **Judicial Support:** OCIA can provide courts with evidence and legal support for victims, ensuring their participation in the prosecution of traffickers.

## Conclusion

India has made a little progress in combating sex trafficking, but **systemic challenges in enforcement, victim protection, and legal frameworks remain**. A comprehensive approach with legislative reforms, and consistent policy implementation is vital to addressing this issue. The government must prioritise these efforts to effectively reduce and eventually eliminate trafficking.

### Drishti Mains Question:

Discuss the need for an Organised Crime Investigative Agency to combat sex trafficking and other organised crimes in India, highlighting the role of specialised agencies in addressing such issues.

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

### Mains

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

## Supreme Court Guidelines on "Bulldozer Justice"

For Prelims: [Supreme Court](#), [Article 142](#), [Municipal Laws](#), [Executive](#), [Judiciary](#), [Rule of Law](#), [Right to Life with Dignity](#), [Article 21](#), [Article 300A](#), [Article 14](#), [Article 51](#), [Geneva Convention 1949](#), [Procedure Established by Law](#), [Due Process of Law](#), [Maneka Gandhi Case, 1978](#), [Hate Speech](#), [Tribunals](#), [Alternative Dispute Resolution](#).

For Mains: Implementation of due process of law in demolition drives.

Source: IE

### Why in News?

Recently, the [Supreme Court \(SC\)](#) laid down **pan-India guidelines** under [Article 142](#) of the Constitution to ensure that **due process** is followed for **demolishing the properties of citizens**.

- SC ruled that demolishing the properties of an **accused or convicted** without following **due process** is **"unconstitutional"**.
- The case challenged the **"extra-legal" demolition** of homes of individuals accused of crimes, recently seen in **Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Uttarakhand**.

Note:

**Bulldozer justice** refers to the practice of **demolishing properties**, often belonging to those **accused of crimes**, sometimes **without** following proper **legal procedures**.

## What are the Supreme Court Guidelines on Bulldozer Justice?

- **Providing Notice:** A **minimum of 15 days' notice** must be given to the **property owner or occupier** before any demolition can proceed.
  - The notice must clearly **outline the details of the structure** to be demolished and reasons for demolition.
- **Fair Hearing:** A scheduled **date for a personal hearing** to provide an opportunity for the affected party to **contest the demolition** or clarify the situation.
- **Transparency:** Authorities must notify the **local Collector or District Magistrate** via email upon serving the notice, with an **auto-reply acknowledgment** to avoid claims of backdating or tampering.
- **Issuance of Final Order:** The final order must include the **owner's or occupier's arguments**, the authority's justification for demolition as the only option, and whether the **entire or partial structure** is to be demolished.
- **Post-Final Order Period:** If a demolition order is issued, the Supreme Court mandated a **15-day period** before implementation, allowing the owner or occupier to **remove the structure or challenge the order** in court.
- **Documentation of Demolition:** The authority must **record the video of demolition** and prepare an **"inspection report"** beforehand, along with a **"demolition report"** listing the personnel involved.
- **Test for Dual Violations:** The SC laid down a **separate test** for cases where a demolished property houses an **accused but also violates municipal laws** as an illegal construction.
  - The SC stated that if only **one structure is demolished** while **similar ones are untouched**, it may suggest the **motive is to penalise** the accused, not remove an illegal construction.
- **Exception:** SC clarified that its directions will **not be applicable** if there is any **unauthorised structure** in any public place such as **roads, streets, or footpaths, abutting railway lines or any river or water body** and also to cases where there is an order for demolition made by a **court of law**.

## Article 142

- **Article 142** of the Constitution empowers the **Supreme Court** to pass **decrees and orders** necessary for **complete justice** in any case.
- **Article 142(1)** allows the Court to issue **binding orders** across India, **enforceable as prescribed by law** or the **President**.
- **Article 142(2)** grants the Court powers to **secure attendance, discovery of documents, or punish contempt**.
- Over time, this provision has been used to ensure **"complete justice"** and address perceived **legislative gaps**.

## What is the Significance of the Supreme Court Guidelines?

- **Separation of Powers:** The verdict emphasises that the **judiciary** holds the power to **decide guilt** and determine if any state organs have **overstepped their limits**.
  - The **executive cannot replace the judiciary** in performing its core functions.
- **Rule of Law:** The Court stated that it is **impermissible** for the executive to impose **demolition as punishment** without a proper trial. This upholds the **rule of law** by ensuring that state actions **do not overstep constitutional boundaries**.
  - Demolitions that disproportionately affect **certain communities (like slum**

dwellers) can be challenged as discriminatory under [Article 14](#).

- **Accountability of Officials:** By requiring that demolition actions be **publicly scrutinised** and accompanied by **detailed records (such as video recordings and inspection reports)**, the guidelines aim to prevent **abuses of power** and foster greater accountability.
- **Right to Shelter:** Demolition affecting the entire property, including those who are not accused, would be **unconstitutional** as it infringes on the fundamental right to shelter.
  - **Right to life with dignity** under [Article 21](#) of the Indian Constitution includes the **right to shelter**.
  - [Article 300A](#) guarantees that no person shall be deprived of their **property except by law**. This provision emphasises that property can only be taken away following due process and under valid laws.
- **Protection of Individual Rights:** The Court's insistence on **due process** and the separation of powers protects individuals from **arbitrary state actions** and ensures that rights are not violated under the **guise of law enforcement**.
- **Geneva Convention 1949: Article 87(3)** of the [Geneva Convention 1949](#) prohibits collective punishments.
  - Such demolitions also violate [Article 51](#) of Indian Constitution which mandates that India must respect **international treaties and laws**.

## Why is Bulldozer Justice a Concern?

- **Rising Punitive Demolitions:** A **2024** estimate by the **Housing and Land Rights Network (HLRN)** found that authorities demolished **153,820 homes in 2022 and 2023, displacing over 738,438 people** across rural and urban areas.
- **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR): Article 17** of the ICCPR states that **everyone has the right to own property** individually or with others, and **no one shall be arbitrarily deprived** of their property.
- **Collective Punishment:** SC acknowledged that demolition drives not only target the **alleged perpetrators** of an offence but also impose a form of **"collective punishment"** on their **families** by destroying their place of dwelling.
- **Instant Justice:** Demolitions have been justified as actions against encroachment or unauthorised construction. Such state-sanctioned acts of punitive violence have been hailed as a form of **"instant justice."**

## Other Judicial Pronouncements Related to Property Demolitions

- **Maneka Gandhi Case, 1978:** The SC expanded the scope of "[procedure established by law](#)" by ruling that it must be **just, fair and reasonable**, thereby introducing the principle of "[due process of law](#)."
  - Therefore, demolitions based on **suspicion or unfounded allegations** contradict the principles of justice, fairness, and non-arbitrariness.
- **Olga Tellis Case, 1985:** The Supreme Court affirmed that **Article 21**, guaranteeing the right to life, also includes the right to livelihood and shelter.
  - It means demolishing homes without due process violates constitutional rights.
- **KT Plantation (P) Ltd Case, 2011:** SC ruled that the legislation providing for deprivation of property under **Article 300-A** must be just, fair, and reasonable.

## What are Challenges in Implementation of SC Guidelines?

- **Reliance on Political Will:** The political pressures to use demolition as a form of **retribution or deterrence could persist**, especially in politically charged environments.
- **Culture of Impunity:** While the guidelines impose accountability on officials, historical examples, such as the court's previous attempts to address issues like [hate speech](#) or [mob lynching](#), suggest that similar efforts have not always led to substantial outcomes or accountability.
- **Lack of Oversight:** There remains a risk that local authorities or officials may find ways to **circumvent these rules**, especially in regions where judicial oversight is weaker.

- **Long-Term Cultural Change:** The guidelines alone may not be sufficient to change the broader **cultural and institutional practices** that allow for such actions in the first place.

## Way Forward

- **Upholding the Rule of Law:** All state actions must be in **strict compliance with the law**. The legal system must distinguish between criminal justice and collective punishment, ensuring the presumption of innocence is upheld.
- **Enhancing Judicial Oversight:** **Specialised tribunals** should be established to specifically deal with disputes related to property demolitions having powers to review government decisions.
- **Alternative Dispute Resolution:** Mechanisms such as **mediation and arbitration** should be actively promoted as an effective way to resolve disputes related to property rights and demolitions.
- **Rehabilitation Plans:** It is vital to create detailed **rehabilitation plans** for individuals impacted by demolitions having provisions for **alternative housing, livelihood support, and access to mental health services**.

### Drishti Mains Question:

How do Supreme Court's guidelines on property demolitions in the context of 'bulldozer justice.' reinforce the principles of due process, transparency, and accountability?

## NISAR Satellite

Source: DTE

### Why in News?

The **NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) satellite**, a collaborative effort between **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)** and **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)**, is scheduled to launch in **early 2025**.

- It integrates two advanced radar systems—**NASA's L-band radar** and **ISRO's S-band radar**—marking it as the first satellite to carry both.

### What is NISAR?

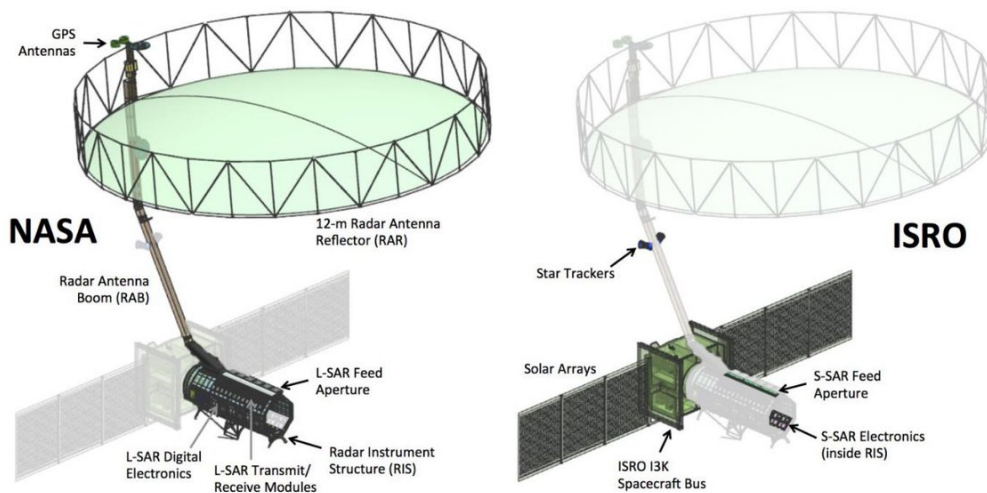
- **About:**
  - It was built in collaboration with the US and India under a **partnership agreement signed in 2014**, and is set to launch from Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Andhra Pradesh, India.
  - The satellite will be launched into **low Earth orbit** using **ISRO's Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark II**.
- **Objective:** It will map the entire globe **every 12 days**, offering consistent data on ecosystems, ice mass, vegetation, sea level rise, groundwater, and natural hazards like earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, and landslides.

Feature	Details
<b>Thermal Blanketing</b>	<b>Gold-coloured</b> thermal blankets regulate the satellite's temperature during operation.
<b>Key Components</b>	<b>Radar Payload:</b> Core instrument for surface observation.

	<p><b>Spacecraft Bus:</b> Provides power, communications, navigation, and pointing control for satellite operations.</p> <p><b>Antenna and Reflector:</b> 12 metre diameter drum-shaped wire-mesh reflector, the largest in space, enhances radar signal focus and observation capabilities.</p>
<b>Technological Advancements</b>	<p><b>Dual Radar Systems:</b> Combines NASA's L-band radar and ISRO's S-band radar:</p> <p><b>L-band Radar:</b> Penetrates dense vegetation to measure ground motion, ideal for volcanic and seismic zones.</p> <p><b>S-band Radar:</b> Improves surface monitoring precision; operates on 8-15 cm wavelength and 2-4 GHz frequency.</p>

## Applications of NISAR

- **Comprehensive Monitoring:** NISAR captures **Earth's surface movements (horizontal & vertical)** with high clarity, functioning day and night through clouds.
- **Disaster Mitigation:** Tracks seismic activities, landslides, volcanic events, and ice sheet shifts for disaster impact reduction.
- **Environmental Tracking:** Monitors forests, **wetlands, farmlands, and deforestation** to support sustainable resource management.
- **Infrastructure Stability:** Assesses infrastructure, **monitors urbanisation, and detects oil spills for better management.**
- **Data-Driven Decision-Making:** Supports understanding tectonic movements and promotes informed, sustainable, and economic use of resources.



NISAR observatory, with NASA and ISRO contributions highlighted

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

### Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements: (2016)

The Mangalyaan launched by ISRO



1. is also called the Mars Orbiter Mission
2. made India the second country to have a spacecraft orbit the Mars after USA
3. made India the only country to be successful in making its spacecraft orbit the Mars in its very first attempt

**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: (c)**

**Q. With reference to India's satellite launch vehicles, consider the following statements: (2018)**

1. PSLVs launch the satellites useful for Earth resources monitoring whereas GSLVs are designed mainly to launch communication satellites.
2. Satellites launched by PSLV appear to remain permanently fixed in the same position in the sky, as viewed from a particular location on Earth.
3. GSLV Mk III is a four-staged launch vehicle with the first and third stages using solid rocket motors, and the second and fourth stages using liquid rocket engines.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

**Ans: (a)**

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## **National Technical Textiles Mission**

**[Source: PIB](#)**

### **Why in News?**

Recently, the **Ministry of Textiles** has approved **12 research projects** under the **[National Technical Textiles Mission \(NTTM\)](#)** increasing the total number of approved research projects to **168**.

- The research projects were approved across key strategic areas of **[geotextiles](#), sustainable and smart textiles** etc.

### **What are Key Points About NTTM?**

- **About:** NTTM is an initiative of the **Ministry of Textiles** to promote the growth and development of the **technical textiles sector** in the country.
  - It aims to position India as a **global leader** in technical textiles by **2024**.
- **Implementation Period:** NTTM was approved with a **four-year** implementation period from **FY 2020-21 to 2023-24**.
- **Components:** The Mission has **four** components.
  - **Research, Innovation and Development:** Fundamental research is conducted in **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) labs, IITs**, and other reputable scientific, industrial, and academic institutions.
  - **Promotion and Market Development:** It focuses on **market growth, international collaborations, investment promotions**, and '**Make in India**' initiatives.
  - **Export Promotion:** An **Export Promotion Council for Technical Textiles** has been established to enhance coordination and promotional activities in this sector.
  - **Education, Training, and Skill Development:** It promotes higher-level **technical education and skill development** in technical textiles, covering engineering, medical, agriculture, and related sectors.

## Technical Textiles

- **About:** Textile materials that are manufactured for their **technical performances and functional properties** rather than aesthetic and decorative features are called technical textiles.
- **Categories:** These products are broadly classified into **12 different categories** based on their usage in **civil engineering, construction, defence**, healthcare and automobile among other industries.
- **Applications:** They can be used for various **applications** ranging from **agriculture, roads, railway tracks, sportswear, health, bullet proof jackets, fireproof jackets, high altitude combat gear** and space applications.
- **Examples:** Umbrella cloth, **mosquito nets, cigarette filter nods**, contact lenses, **sanitary napkins**, seat belts, tufted carpet, **helmets, tea bag filter papers** etc.

## Initiatives Related to Technical Textile

- [Production Linked Incentive \(PLI\) Scheme for Textiles Sector](#)
- [Technotex India](#)
- [Amended Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme](#)

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

### Prelims

**Q. In rural road construction, the use of which of the following is preferred for ensuring environmental sustainability or to reduce carbon footprint? (2020)**

1. Copper slag
2. Cold mix asphalt technology
3. Geotextiles
4. Hot mix asphalt technology
5. Portland cement

**Select the correct answer using the code given below:**

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

(c) 4 and 5 only

(d) 1 and 5 only

**Ans: (a)**

**Q. Recently, there was a growing awareness in our country about the importance of Himalayan nettle (*Girardinia diversifolia*) because it is found to be a sustainable source of (2019)**

(a) anti-malarial drug

(b) biodiesel

(c) pulp for paper industry

(d) textile fibre

**Ans: (d)**

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## Anti-Dumping Duty on Epichlorohydrin Imports

[Source: BS](#)

India recently imposed an [Anti-Dumping\(AD\) duty](#) of up to USD 557 per tonne on **Epichlorohydrin imports** from China, Korea, and Thailand to protect domestic industries from cheap imports.

- Epichlorohydrin, a **colourless liquid with a strong garlic-like odour**, is used in producing glycerol, elastomers, **adhesives**, and as a solvent for resins, paints, and lacquers.
- The **Department of Revenue**, acting on recommendations from the [Directorate General of Trade Remedies \(DGTR\)](#), imposed a **five-year anti-dumping duty** on Epichlorohydrin imports.
- AD duties are enforced as a protective measure under the multilateral **regime of Geneva-based World Trade Organization (WTO)** to ensure fair trade practices.
  - The **Agreement on Implementation of Article VI of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994** (the “AD Agreement”) governs the application of **anti-dumping measures by Members of the WTO including India**.
  - AD measures are unilateral actions taken by a member after investigating and determining that **dumped imports harm a domestic industry**, in line with the AD Agreement.
- India has previously applied anti-dumping duties on various products to curb low-cost imports from other countries, especially **China**.

# WTO Framework on Trade Remedies



## Global Safeguards



## Anti-Dumping measures



## Countervailing Duties

### Legal Basis

- GATT Article XIX

- GATT Article VI
- Agreement on Implementation of Article VI (AD Agreement)

- WTO Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures

### Objectives and Features

- Create “breathing room” for domestic industry struggling with increasing imports
- MFN based import restrictions
- No allegations about unfair trade

- Protect domestic industry from imports sold “at less than the normal value of the products”
- Departure from MFN principle
- It’s about the “unfair” (pricing) practices of individual firms

- Protect domestic industry from effects of another country’s export subsidies actions
- Departure from MFN principle
- It’s about the “unfair” (subsidies) practices of governments

### Measures

- Supplementary tariffs beyond bound MFN rates

- Supplementary tariff beyond bound MFN rates targeted at particular foreign firms based on difference between the import price and the “normal” value

- Supplementary tariff beyond bound MFN rates based on the value of the subsidy provided by the government of the exporting country

### Criteria

- Imports must be rising (absolute)
- Imports are causing “serious” injury to the domestic industry

- Dumping, thus pricing below (1) production cost or (2) market price
- Imports are causing “material” injury to the domestic industry

- Specific subsidies (financial contribution) by foreign governments that are exported
- Imports are causing “material” injury to the domestic industry

[Read more...](#)

## Lightning Rods and Lightning Strikes

[Source: TH](#)

The **frequency and intensity** of [lightning strikes](#) are rising globally, driven by [climate change- induced](#) increases in **temperatures** and **atmospheric moisture**, as warm air and moisture promote cloud formation and **charge separation**.

- **About Lightning Strikes:** Lightning is a **natural electrical discharge** that occurs during [storms](#) due to a buildup of **static electricity** in the atmosphere.
  - This buildup happens when **water droplets in clouds freeze into ice crystals**, which **rub against each other**, generating a static charge that ultimately results in lightning strikes.
- **About Lightning Rod:** A [lightning rod](#) is a **conductive object** installed at the **highest point of a structure** to attract lightning and provide a **controlled path for its discharge**.
  - Lightning moves towards the object with the **highest electric potential**.
  - The **shape** of the **rod** creates a **stronger electric field**, ionising the air around it and providing a **route for the current to flow**. The rod directs lightning into the ground, where the earth safely absorbs and dissipates the charge.

[Read More...](#)

## Titan Arum Flower

[Source: DTE](#)

Recently, the **Titan Arum flower**, one of the world's largest flowers, bloomed in **Australia**. It grows over **10 feet tall** and blooms once a decade.

- **Structure:** It has a **tall, pale yellowish phallic structure** rising from the **centre**.
  - The base of the flower has a '**corm**' which is an **underground energy-storing structure** that supports its **10 year bloom cycle** and **6-month fruiting period**.
- **Uniqueness:** It mimics the **stench of rotting flesh** to attract its **pollinators** — **carnivorous bees and flies** that feed on corpses.
  - **Pollination** by flies on **rotten meat-smelling plants** is called **Sapromyophily**.
- **Habitat:** It blossoms on **limestone hills** in the **rainforests** of western Sumatra, **Indonesia**. It **doesn't bloom in the wild in Australia**.
- **IUCN Status:** The species has fewer than **1,000 individuals** left in the wild, and is listed as '**endangered**'.
- **Other Similar Flowers:** *Rafflesia arnoldi* (largest individual flower in the world), *Dracunculus vulgaris*, *Stapelia gigantea*, *Hydnora africana* and *Helicodiceros muscivorus*.

[Read More...](#)

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## HP Parliamentary Secretaries Act, 2006

[Source: IE](#)

The **Himachal Pradesh High Court (HP HC)** recently quashed the HP Parliamentary Secretaries (Appointment, Salaries, Allowances, Powers, Privileges & Amenities) Act (HPPSA), 2006 which had allowed the state government to appoint **Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs)** as **Chief Parliamentary Secretaries (CPS)**.

- The Court ruled that the HPPSA, 2006, was beyond the **legislative competence of the State Legislature**, making the law unconstitutional.
- The HPPSA, 2006, was found to violate **Article 164(1-A)**, which **limits the size of a cabinet and its composition**.
  - Article 164(1-A) states that the total number of Ministers, including the Chief Minister, in the Council of Ministers in a **State shall not exceed 15%**.
- The Court noted that **CPS performed tasks similar to ministers**, with similar perks, access to official files, and involvement in decision-making, despite lacking formal powers.
- Additionally, the **"office of profit"** clause prevents public office holders from using their position to **gain additional benefits**. The creation of positions like CPS, when not backed by constitutional provision, is **seen as a violation of this clause**.
- The Court emphasised that the difference between ministers and parliamentary secretaries was artificial and **went against constitutional rules**.
- The HP HC ordered the government to immediately end the CPS appointments and revoke all associated privileges.
- Earlier, the **Supreme Court** has consistently struck down the creation of parliamentary secretary posts in states like West Bengal, Punjab, Goa, and Assam, ruling them **unconstitutional for bypassing the 15% ceiling on the Council of Ministers**.

**Read more:** [Himachal Pradesh's Bill to Raise Women's Minimum Marriage Age to 21](#)

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