



# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

Time: 45 min

Date: 04-10-2023

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## Circular Migration

**Syllabus: GS1/ Demography**

### News:

- The increased access to **modern forms of transport and communication, social networks and the growth of multinational corporations** have aided the advent of circular migration.

### Definition:

- Circular migration is a **repetitive form of migration** wherein people move to another place (the destination country) and back (country of origin) according to the **availability of employment**.

- According to **Philippe Fargues**, migration can be defined as circular if it meets the following criteria:
  - there is a **temporary residence** in the destination location ,
  - there is the **possibility of multiple entries** into the destination country,
  - there is a **freedom of movement** between the country of origin and the country of destination during the period of residence,
  - there is a **legal right to stay in the destination country**,
  - there is **protection of migrants' rights**, and
  - if there is a **healthy demand for temporary labour** in the destination country.
- It is a phenomenon **mostly among low-income groups** who migrate to avail of seasonally available jobs in another country, city, place etc.

### **Impacts of circular migration:**

- The movement of citizens from the **Global South to the West** in search of more employment opportunities or a better standard of living **creates brain drain for their origin countries** and **competition** for the citizens of the destination countries.
- Similarly, the flow of people moving **from rural areas to more urban areas** of the same country, results in the **breakdown of infrastructure and agrarian stagnation**.
- Circular migration is now seen as the **best way forward to balance the needs of development and individual economic advancement**. It looks at migration not only from the point of view of the receiving country but also of the sending nation.
  - For the country of origin, migration, especially international migration, is beneficial due to the **flow of remittances** which will boost the economy ensuring **more infrastructure, more jobs and by association, a better standard of living**.
  - The host countries, especially those of the West having lesser population and a higher access to education resulted in a **large dearth of low-income low-skill jobs which migrants have been able to fill**.
- However, the influx of migrants have caused a **wide range of anxieties and cultural conflicts in the host populations** with most of them now calling for restrictions and outright ban on migration.
  - Circular migration aims to quell all these fears. The **negative effects of brain drain will reduce and a sort of brain circulation will be encouraged**, wherein the individual can use his talents in both countries and still contribute to remittances.

### **Circular migration within India**

- In India, internal migration has almost always been circular. With the **advent of jobs in the manufacturing, construction and services sector**, there has been a huge flow of migrants from **rural areas to urban cities**.
- Between 2004–2005 and 2011–2012, **the construction sector witnessed one of the largest net increases in employment** for all workers, specifically for rural males.

- This has led to **rural populations and their economy dwindling and urban spaces, while booming, witnessing infrastructural collapse** as they are unable to properly house incoming populations.
- In India, **the uneven development post-liberalisation, has led to a lot of inter-State migration**, with States like West Bengal, Odisha and Bihar having some of the highest rates of out-migration.
  - Initially, while most of the migration was to Delhi, nowadays it has increased to southern States as well.
- A 2020 study of the circular migration of rural males of West Bengal states that **most of the rural migrants were occupied in agricultural jobs in their origin States**; and when they migrated a majority of them were engaged in low-skill jobs.

### **Impacts of such migration:**

- The positive outcomes of such inter-State migration include **increased access to higher paying jobs** when compared to origin States, **better household welfare** due to remittances, **ease of mobility** etc.
- Some reports have even stated how **women get more autonomy and decision-making power in the family** due to the absence of men who migrate.
- However, in such migration, especially to southern States where the **language barrier is a big obstacle, rural circular migrants are often at the mercy of middlemen or brokers.**
- They are **made to work in unhygienic and unsafe conditions** with little to no protective equipment.
- They are **routinely exploited and suffer significant ‘unfreedoms’ in host States.**
- Additionally, **indigenous wage groups and unions resent these migrants** as they are seen as taking away their jobs by agreeing to work for lower wages.
- The 2020 study also says that **this kind of migration is merely subsistence migration** – it’s the bare minimum.
  - The migrants are able to barely provide for themselves and their families, with no scope for further asset creation or savings.
  - There is also a certain precarity associated with these jobs as they are **seasonal and often irregular.** This precarity was on clear display during the **pandemic in 2020** when migrants en-masse started walking back to their hometowns.

### **Way Ahead:**

- In destination areas, rural or urban, circular migrants remain at the margins of physical, social, cultural, and political spaces. It is high time that **States start actively formulating policy** to understand the extent of circular migration.
- While some States like Kerala have announced health insurance schemes for migrant workers (Awaz Health scheme), there **needs to be more effort to ensure migrants rights.**
- The precarity of workers needs to be addressed and there should be more efforts to **integrate them in the destination States.**

Source: [TH](#)

# **EWS Verdict: A stimulus for the backward classes to seek Reservation**

**Syllabus: GS2/ Mechanisms, Laws, Institutions & Bodies for Protection & Betterment of these Sections**

## **In News**

- The Bihar survey data released recently show that the Other Backward Classes and the Extremely Backward Classes together constituted 63% of the population of the State.
  - Judgement of the Supreme Court in its verdict **to uphold the 10% economically weaker sections (EWS) quota** for the “**poorest of the poor**” among forward castes can paradoxically become **a stimulus for the backward classes to seek reservation over and above the 50% ceiling limit** on the basis of the data published after the **Bihar caste-based survey**.

## **The EWS judgment**

- **Exclusion of the reserved categories from the EWS quota:**
  - The EWS judgment had **excluded the “poorest of the poor ” among the Scheduled Castes, the Scheduled Tribes and the Other Backward Classes from the ambit of 10% quota.**
- **No breach of the ceiling limit of 50%:**
  - The majority 3:2 judgment had held that the **EWS quota did not breach the ceiling limit of 50%** placed by the **Indira Sawhney judgment** on reservations
  - It stated that the **State can make “special provisions** from time to time in the march towards an all-inclusive egalitarian society”.
  - The court concluded that the 50% ceiling limit, though held attached to the constitutional requirements, **was neither “inflexible nor inviolable** for all times to come”.
- **State’s provision for the reservations:**
  - Further **reservation by affirmative action by the State** cannot be seen as damaging the Basic Structure of the Constitution.
  - The judge agreed that a mathematical precision of 50% was difficult to follow in human affairs.
- **Role of judiciary:**
  - The EWS verdict had supported the view that all the courts needed to examine was whether reservation was so excessive as to become oppressive, leading to unfair exclusion.

## 103rd Amendment Act

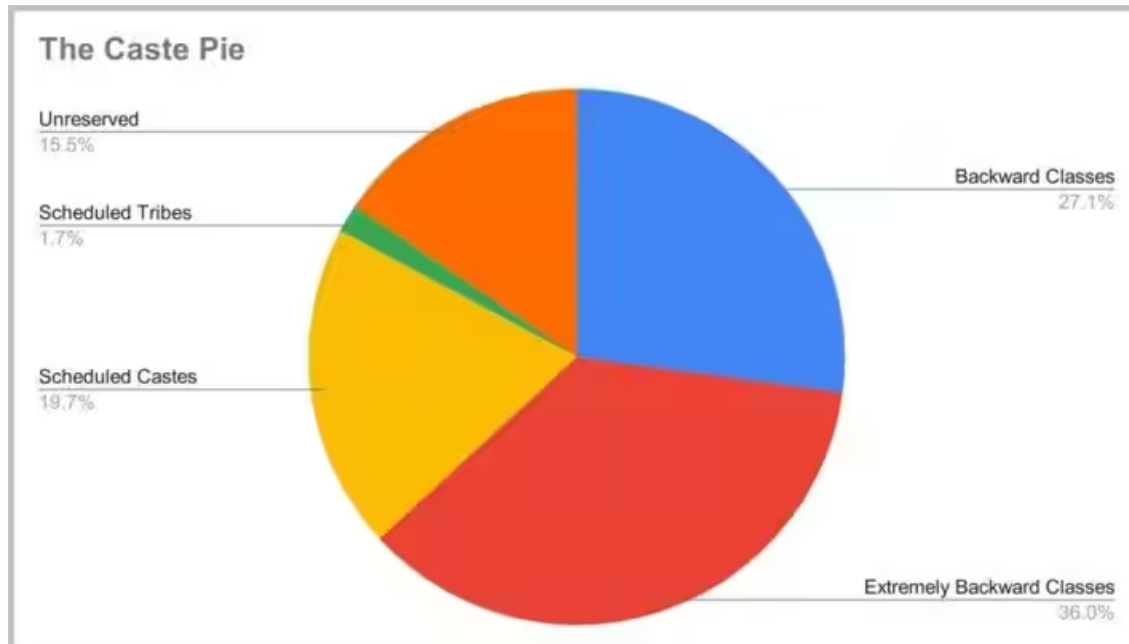
- **About:**
  - The Parliament amended **the Constitution of India (103rd Amendment) Act, 2019** to provide for a **10% reservation in education and government jobs** in India for a section of the **General category candidates**.
- **Introduction of Article 15 (6) and Article 16 (6):**
  - The amendment introduced economic reservation by amending Articles 15 and 16. It inserted Article 15 (6) and Article 16 (6) in the Constitution to allow reservation for the economically backward in the unreserved category.
  - **Article 15(6):**
    - Up to 10% of seats may be reserved for EWS for admission in educational institutions. Such reservations will not apply to minority educational institutions.
  - **Article 16(6):**
    - It permits the government to reserve up to 10% of all government posts for the EWS.

## Bihar's caste based survey

- The **State government in Bihar** in January 2023 launched a two-phase caste survey in Bihar, stating that **detailed information on socio-economic conditions** would help create better government policies for disadvantaged groups.
- The survey, which will also record the **economic status of families** alongside their **caste**, is estimated to collect **socio-economic data for a population** of 12.70 crore in the 38 districts of Bihar.
- The first phase of the survey, which involved a house listing exercise, was carried out from January 7 to January 12th 2023.
- **The final survey report** data was released recently.

## Data highlights

- Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and Extremely Backward Classes (EBCs) constitute more than 63% of the population of Bihar.
- The so-called “forward” castes or “General” category is only 15.5% of the population.
- The data also shows that there are about 20% (2.6 crore) Scheduled Castes (SCs), and just 1.6% (22 lakh) Scheduled Tribes (STs).



### **Relevance and need for the caste count**

- **A step towards equality:**
  - A caste census would help us point out those castes that are not represented in the institutions of this country so that steps towards equality can be established.
  - It would also justify the extension of reservations to various communities.
  - The aim is that every section of society can progress properly.
- **The Last Caste data with the government:**
  - last caste census was in 1931 and the government still uses this as a basis to estimate demography and different caste groups.
  - There have been significant changes in the demography of this country.
- **Data unavailability:**
  - The Rohini Commission too, faced difficulties due to the unavailability of data on various communities classified under OBCs.
    - The Commission was set up to examine the issue of sub-categorisation of OBCs.
- **Effective service delivery:**
  - A fresh estimate of the population is necessary to ensure more effective delivery of targeted welfare.
- **State actions on caste data collection:**
  - **Karnataka, Odisha and Telangana** had carried out similar counts in the name of “**socio-economic surveys**”.
- **Popular demand:**
  - Along with Bihar, other states like Jharkhand and Odisha are also reiterating their support for the caste census.

### **Way ahead**

- The need for a caste census can also be seen in the vast income disparity in the country.

- Meaningful policies that address affirmative action as a method of reducing the rich-poor gap are essential and, in order to properly understand the distribution of wealth in the country.
- The need of the hour is to devise ways and means to concentrate upon the castes and classes who are still deprived, under-privileged and improvised.

Source: [TH](#)

## **World Bank paper on Swachh Bharat Mission - Gramin (SBM-G)**

**Syllabus: GS2/Governance**

### **In News**

- The World bank has released a work paper on the **progress of the Swachh Bharat Mission - Gramin (SBM-G)**.
  - This paper focuses on the **implementation of the first phase** of the SBM(G) program.

### **About**

- The paper is released by the **World Bank and a faculty of Economics at Yale University**.
- It reconciles varied **data points on toilet access and usage** from the National Family Health Surveys (NFHS), National Sample Surveys (NSS) and the National Annual Rural Sanitation Survey (NARSS) and the SBM-G's own information system.

### **What is the Swachh Bharat Mission?**

- The Swachh Bharat (Clean India) Mission (SBM) was **launched in 2014** with the goal of achieving **universal sanitation coverage by 2019**, as a tribute to the **150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi**.
- It consisted of two sub-missions, **urban, and rural or Gramin (G)**.
- SBM(G) sought to improve “the levels of cleanliness through **Solid and Liquid Waste Management activities** and making Gram Panchayats **Open Defecation Free (ODF)**, clean and sanitized.
- 2019 marked the end of the first phase of SBM(G), the second phase, started in 2020-2021, expands efforts with a focus on **safe management of solid and liquid waste and sustainability of ODF**.

### **Findings**

- When the programme started there was a substantial increase in access to toilets in rural India - **from 38% in 2012 to 90% in 2019-20**.

- **Large increase** in toilet use was seen in the **poorest 20%** of the rural population, which reported toilet use going up from 7% to 43% in between 2015-16 and 2019-21.
- **First Phase:** The first phase of 2015-2019 was marked by large improvements, followed by some stagnation and **decline over the last two years.**
- **Decline in States:** There has been a sustained decline in regular use of toilets since 2018 in Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Karnataka, and Himachal Pradesh.
- **Steady Performers:** Odisha, Punjab, Kerala, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Haryana, and Assam - were found to be steady performers in terms of continued toilet usage.
- **Not Sustainable:** When using the broadest definition of toilet use - i.e., regular use of any toilet - the analysis confirms that toilet use is not being sustained in rural households in most Indian states.
- **At the national level,** regular use of any toilet (improved or unimproved) increased from **46% to 75%** on average in rural areas during 2015-16 and 2019-21.
  - This increase was across all population and socio-economic sub-groups we track, and especially pronounced for the poor and socially disadvantaged groups.
- **Groupwise data:** There was a **20 percentage point decline** in regular use of toilets for the SCs and a **24 percentage point decline** for the STs compared to a decline of **9 and 5 percentage** points for the Other Backward Caste and General categories.
- It concluded that **most low-income States** were among the **best performers** in terms of their overall increase in regular use of toilets and that the **performance of richer States was mixed.**

Source: [TH](#)

## Cancer Screening

**Syllabus: GS2/Health**

### **In News**

- **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)** has invited Expressions of Interest on the implementation of research to accelerate **cancer screening, early diagnosis, and treatment.**

### **About**

- This will be a **four year project** including six months for preparatory activities and another six months for analysis and interpretation.
  - It will also include formative, implementation, and evaluation phases.



- In the long run, the Council is looking at **improving the coverage and quality of cancer screening** through the existing healthcare system using accepted and validated methods.
- It plans to engage **non-specialist physicians** and other health care workers within a supportive healthcare system for the screening of cancer as well as pre-cancerous conditions.
- The Council also wants to ensure that all those who test positive are linked to facilities **for early diagnosis and treatment.**

### **What is Cancer?**

- Cancer is an **abnormal growth of body cells** and can start almost anywhere in the human body.
- These cells may form tumors, which are lumps of tissue. **Tumors can be cancerous or not cancerous (benign).**
- Cancerous tumors spread into, or invade, nearby tissues and can travel to distant places in the body to form new tumors (a process called metastasis). Cancerous tumors are also called **malignant tumors.**
- Benign tumors do not spread into, or invade, nearby tissues. When removed, **benign tumors usually don't grow back**, whereas cancerous tumors sometimes do.

### **Cancer Burden on India**

- Cancer poses a significant and pressing public health challenge in India, which currently **ranks third in cancer incidence** after China and the United States.
- According to Global Cancer Observatory projections, India is expected to witness a substantial **57.5% increase in cancer cases between 2020 and 2040.**
- The **three most commonly occurring cancers in India** are those of the breast, uterine cervix and lip/oral cavity. Together, they account for approximately **35% of all cancers in India.**

### **Screening and Diagnosis of Cancer**

- Early detection of cancer greatly increases the chances for **successful treatment.**
- Cancer screening tests aim to find cancer before it causes symptoms and when it may be easier to treat successfully.
- **Dual stain testing** is the best tool for screening for cervical cancer, while a **low-dose CT** in those with a history of smoking is the best for lung cancer.

Source: [TH](#)

## **UAPA Act**

### **Syllabus: GS2/Government Policies and Interventions In News**

- The Delhi Police has sealed the office of news portal NewsClick, by invoking the **UAPA Act**, alleging it received money for pro-China propaganda.

## The UAPA Act

- UAPA presents an **alternate criminal law framework** where the general principles of criminal law are reversed. By **relaxing timelines for the state to file chargesheets** and its **stringent conditions for bail**, the UAPA gives the state more powers compared with the Indian Penal Code (IPC).
- **Enacted:** 1967
- **Mandate:** It is aimed at “more effective prevention of certain unlawful activities of individuals and associations for dealing with terrorist activities”.
- **Unlawful activity:** Unlawful activity means any conduct which **constitutes a crime or which contravenes any law** whether such conduct occurred before or after the commencement of this Act and whether such conduct occurred in the Republic or elsewhere.
- **Terrorist act:** Section 15 of the Act defines “terrorist act” and is punishable with imprisonment for a term of at least five years to life.
- **Power to central government:**
- The Act assigns **absolute power to the central government**, by way of which if the Centre deems an activity as unlawful then it may, by way of an Official Gazette, declare it so.
- **Applicability:** The provisions of this Act apply also to—
  - (a) citizens of India outside India;
  - (b) persons in the service of the Government, wherever they may be; and
  - (c) persons on ships and aircrafts, registered in India, wherever they may be.

## Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) Amendment Act 2019

- The Act **empowers the government to designate individuals as terrorists**.
- Under the Act, **the central government may designate an organisation as a terrorist organisation** if it:
  - (i) commits or participates in acts of terrorism,
  - (ii) prepares for terrorism,
  - (iii) promotes terrorism, or
  - (iv) is otherwise involved in terrorism.
- **Approval for seizure of property by NIA:** Under the Act, an investigating officer is required to obtain the **prior approval of the Director General of Police to seize properties** that may be connected with terrorism.
- The Act **defines terrorist acts** to include acts committed within the **scope of any of the treaties** listed in a schedule to the Act.
  - The Schedule lists nine treaties, including the **Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (1997)**, the **Convention against Taking of Hostages (1979)** and the **International Convention for Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (2005)**.

## Issues with UAPA

- **Low conviction:** According to a source, in 2018-20, as many as 4,690 people were arrested under the UAPA but only 3% were convicted.
- **Sharp Rise in Use:** This caution is significant given the sharp surge in the state’s use of this provision in a sweeping range of alleged offences – **against**

**tribals in Chhattisgarh, those using social media through proxy servers in Jammu and Kashmir; and journalists in Manipur** among others.

- **Stringent Provision of bail:** The standard for bail under the UAPA is that it cannot be granted unless the court is of the view that the accused is innocent of the alleged offence.
  - It means that the onus of proof of innocence for the purpose of obtaining bail is effectively reversed. **It is for the accused to show that he is innocent.**
- **Highly Discretionary:** It confers upon the government broad **discretionary powers and also authorizes the creation of special courts** with the ability to use secret witnesses and to hold closed-door hearings.
- **Ignoring Fundamental Rights:** It can simply be used to bypass fundamental rights and procedures. For instance, those arrested under UAPA can be **incarcerated up to 180 days without a charge sheet being filed.**
  - It thus directly **violates Article 21 of the constitution.**

#### **Related Supreme court rulings:**

- In 2019, the SC defined prima facie **narrowly to mean that the courts must not analyse evidence or circumstances, but look at the “totality of the case”** presented by the state.
- In **NIA v Zahoor Ahmed Watali**, the SC read the bail provisions strictly, holding that **courts must only be satisfied that a prima facie case can be made out to deny bail, and not consider the merit or the admissibility of the evidence.**

#### **Way Ahead**

- The Act has indeed been the center of several debates because of its abusive nature and lack of a proper mechanism for backup.
- It is up to the state, judiciary, civil society **to balance constitutional freedom and the imperative of anti-terror pursuits.**

Source: [IE](#)

## Facts In News

### **SHREYAS Scheme**

**Syllabus:GS2/Welfare schemes for weaker sections**

#### **News**

- The SHREYAS scheme has been making a substantial impact to empower economically disadvantaged Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs).

#### **About**

- The umbrella scheme of "SHREYAS" comprises **4 central sector sub-schemes** namely "Top Class Education for SCs", "Free Coaching Scheme for SCs and OBCs", "National Overseas Scheme for SCs" and "National Fellowship for SCs".

- The scheme has been implemented over the past **nine years**, from **2014-15 to 2022-23**.

### **Free Coaching Scheme for SCs and OBCs**

- **Objective:** To provide coaching for economically disadvantaged Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) candidates to enable them appear in competitive and entrance examinations for obtaining appropriate jobs in Public/Private Sector as well as for securing admission in reputed technical and professional higher education institutions.
- **Eligibility criteria:** The ceiling of the total family income under the scheme is **8 lakhs per annum**.
- **Per annum 3500 slots** are allotted. The ratio of SC: OBC students is **70:30** and **30% slots** are reserved for females in each category.

### **Top Class Education for SCs**

- **Objective:** The Scheme aims at recognizing and promoting quality education amongst students belonging to SCs, by providing full financial support. The Scheme will cover SC students for pursuing studies beyond 12th class.
- **Eligibility criteria:** The ceiling of the total family income under the scheme is **8 lakhs per annum**.

### **National Overseas Scheme for SCs**

- **Objective:** Under this scheme financial assistance is provided to the students for pursuing masters and Ph.D. level courses abroad. Under the scheme, total tuition fee, maintenance and contingency allowance, visa fee, to and fro air passage etc. are provided to the awardees.
- The **Eligibility criteria** is as:
  - The total family income including the candidate should be less than **Rs. 8 lakhs per annum**,
  - The students should have more than **60% marks** in the qualifying examination, **below 35 years of age** and secured admission in top 500 QS ranking foreign Institutes/ Universities.
  - The students will be selected from SCs ; De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes ; landless agricultural laborers and traditional artisan categories.

### **National Fellowship for SC Students**

- **Objective:** Under the scheme fellowship is provided to Scheduled Castes students for pursuing higher education leading to **M.Phil/ Ph.D degrees** in Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences in Indian Universities/Institutions/ Colleges recognized by **University Grants Commission (UGC)**.
- The scheme provides for 2000 new slots per year who have qualified the **National Eligibility Test- Junior Research Fellowship (NET-JRF)** of UGC and Junior Research Fellows for Science stream qualifying UGC-Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (UGC-CSIR) Joint Test.

Source: [PIB](#)

**SAMPRITI-XI**

**Syllabus: GS3/ Defence  
News**

- India and Bangladesh commenced the **11th edition** of annual joint military exercise, SAMPRITI in Umroi, Meghalaya.

### About

- **SAMPRITI-XI** is scheduled for 14 days. It is centered on the conduct of Sub-Conventional Operations as per Chapter VII of the UN mandate and will include a **Command Post Exercise (CPX)** and a **Field Training Exercise (FTX)**, culminating in a Validation Exercise.
- **Representation:** The Indian contingent is mainly made up of troops from a battalion of the **RAJPUT Regiment**.
- **Significance:** The exercise promises to further enhance defense cooperation between India and Bangladesh, fostering deeper bilateral relations, cultural understanding, and mutual benefits from shared experiences in Sub Conventional Operations.

Source: [PIB](#)

## Astra Missiles

Syllabus: GS3/ Defence

### News

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) has placed two contracts with Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) for the Astra Missile.

### About

- **Astra** is a state-of-the-art **Beyond Visual Range (BVR) air-to-air missile (AAM)** system designed to be mounted on fighter aircraft.
- **It is designed and developed by the Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL), Research Centre Imarat (RCI)** and other DRDO laboratories.
- **Range:** It has a range of over **100 km** designed to engage and destroy highly manoeuvrable supersonic aerial targets.
- **Speed:** The missile can travel at speeds more than **four times that of sound** and can reach a maximum **altitude of 20 km**, making it extremely flexible for air combat.

### Astra and its variants

- The missile has been designed and developed for deployment on fighter jets like **Sukhoi-30 MKI** and **Tejas of the IAF** and the **Mig-29K** of the Navy.
- The different variants of the missile are **Astra Mk-1 (Operational)**, **Astra Mk-2 (Trial-phase)** etc.
- **The range** for Astra Mk-1 is around **110 km**, and for the Mk-2 is **over 150 km**.
- The ASTRA Mk-I Weapon System integrated with SU-30 Mk-I aircraft is being inducted into the Indian Air Force (IAF).

### Strategic significance

- AAMs with BVR capability provides large stand-off ranges to own fighter aircraft which can neutralize adversary airborne assets without exposing themselves to adversary air defense measures.
- **Stand-off range** means the missile is launched at a distance sufficient to allow the attacking side to evade defensive fire from the target.

Source: [TH](#)

## **International Criminal Court (ICC)**

**Syllabus:** Prelims/Current Events of international importance, GS2/ International Bodies

### **News**

- The **Armenian** parliament recently voted to join the **International Criminal Court**.

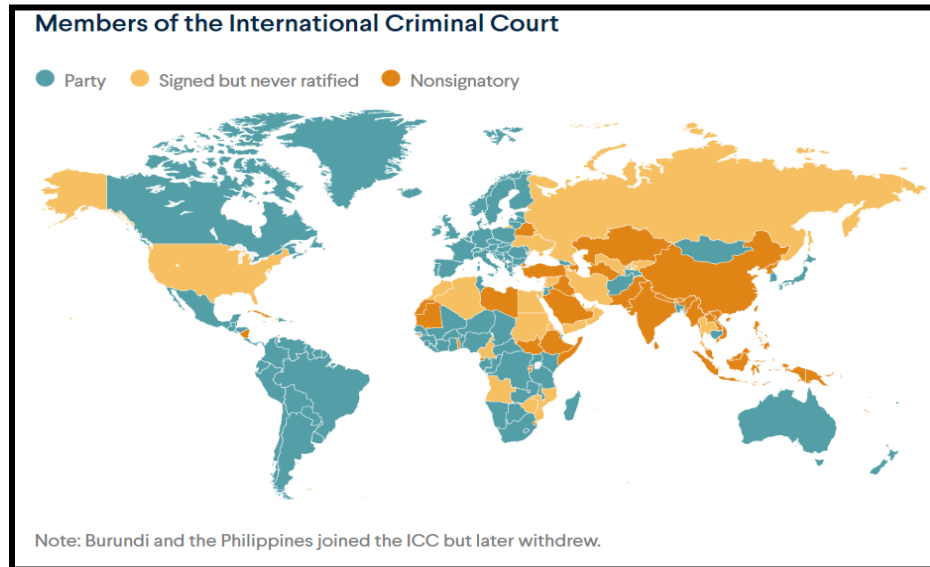
### **About:**

- **Armenia earlier this year indicted Russian President Vladimir Putin** for war crimes connected to the deportation of children from Ukraine.
- Countries that have signed and ratified the Rome Statute that created the ICC **are bound to arrest the Russian President if he sets foot on their soil.**
  - In March 2023, the ICC **issued an arrest warrant for Russian President Vladimir Putin** for crimes related to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
- Armenian officials say the effort to join the ICC has nothing to do with Russia and was **prompted by Azerbaijan's aggression against the country.**

### **International Criminal Court (ICC)**

- **Established:** 2002
- **Mandate:** To hold to account those guilty of worst crimes of concern to the international community: **genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and the crime of aggression.**
- **Six Official languages:** English, French, Arabic, Chinese, Russian and Spanish.
- **Headquarters:** The Hague, the Netherlands.
- **Complementarity :**The ICC is intended **to complement, not to replace, national criminal systems;** it prosecutes cases only when States do not are unwilling or unable to do so genuinely.
- **Cooperation:** As a judicial institution, the ICC **does not have its own police force** or enforcement body; thus, it **relies on cooperation with countries** worldwide for support.
  - While **not a United Nations organization**, the Court has a cooperation agreement with the United Nations.
  - When a situation is not within the Court's jurisdiction, the **United Nations Security Council can refer the situation to the ICC** granting it jurisdiction. This has been done in the situations in Darfur (Sudan) and Libya.
- **Jurisdiction:** The Court may exercise jurisdiction in a situation where genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes were committed **on or after 1 July 2002** and
  - The crimes were committed by a State Party national, or in the territory of a State Party, or in a State that has accepted the jurisdiction of the Court; or
  - The crimes were **referred to the ICC Prosecutor by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC)** pursuant to a resolution adopted under chapter VII of the UN charter.
- **States Parties to the Rome Statute:**

- There are **123 countries party to the Rome Statute**. Some forty countries **never signed the treaty**, including **China, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iraq, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey**.
- Several dozen others **signed the statute, but their legislatures never ratified it**. These include **Egypt, Iran, Israel, Russia, Sudan, Syria, and the United States**.



- **Funding:** Although the Court's expenses are funded primarily by States Parties, it can also receive voluntary contributions.

Source: [IE](#)

## Morocco

### **Syllabus :GS 1/Places in news In News**

- A powerful earthquake struck Morocco, claiming more than 2,800 lives .

### **About Morocco**

- It is a mountainous country of western North Africa .
- It lies directly across the Strait of Gibraltar from Spain.
- **Capital:** Rabat
- It borders Algeria to the east and southeast, Western Sahara to the south, the Atlantic Ocean to the west, and the Mediterranean Sea to the north.



- It is the only African country with coastal exposure to both the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea.
- **Natural resources:** phosphates, iron ore, manganese, lead, zinc, fish, salt
- **Major mountain ranges:** Atlas and Rif

## Saint Sophia Cathedral and City of L'viv

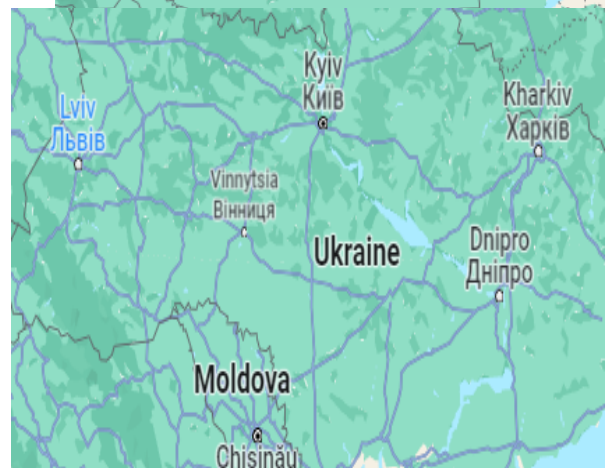
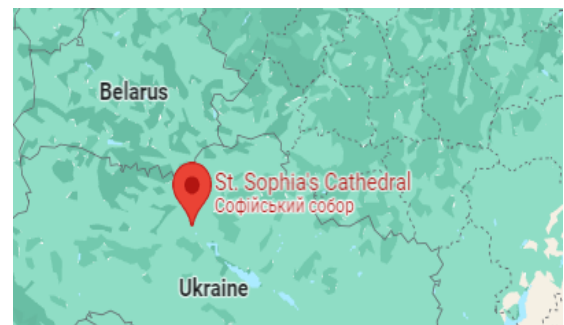
### Syllabus :GS 1/Places in news

#### In News

- UNESCO sites of Saint Sophia Cathedral and L'viv are inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger

#### About the sites

- **Saint Sophia Cathedral :** It is located in the historic centre of **Kyiv(Ukraine)**.
  - It symbolises the "new Constantinople", capital of the Christian principality created in the 11th century in a region converted to Christianity after the baptism of Saint Vladimir in 988.
  - The site has been on the World Heritage List since 1990.
- **City of L'viv :** It is the largest city in western **Ukraine** .
  - Founded in the late Middle Ages, the city of L'viv flourished as an administrative, religious, commercial and cultural centre from the 13th to the 20th centuries.
  - Its medieval urban topography has been preserved intact, in particular the traces of the different ethnic communities that lived there, as well as the magnificent Baroque and later buildings.
  - The historic centre of L'viv was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1998.



## Rwanda

### Syllabus :GS 1/Places in news

#### In News

Rwanda stands out both in Africa and globally for its efforts in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, and particularly in the area of political participation.



- Nearly two third (61%) of its parliamentary seats and 55% of cabinet position is held by women

### About Rwanda

- Rwanda is a country situated in Central Africa.
- **Capital City** : Kigali
- It is bordered to the North by Uganda, to the East by Tanzania, to the South by Burundi and to the West by the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- It is also known as '**The Land of a Thousand Hills**'
- It has five volcanoes, 23 lakes and numerous rivers, some forming the source of the River Nile.



### Kongthong Village

#### **Syllabus :GS 1/Places in news**

#### **In News**

- Kongthong has been honoured with the prestigious 'Best Tourism Village (Bronze)' award at the National Tourism Awards 2023 by the Ministry of Tourism

#### **About Kongthong Village**

- It is located in the East Khasi Hills district, around 65 kilometres from Meghalaya's capital city Shillong.
- It is popularly known as the **Whistling Village**.
- It has a unique oral tradition, **Jingrwai lawbei**, in which a song (Jingrwai) is sung in honour of the **root ancestress - the clan's first woman (Lawbei)**.
  - This song is composed by the mother following the birth of her child, during the first few weeks while she is regaining her health



### Pygmy Hog

#### **Syllabus: GS3/ Species in News**

#### **News**

- Recently, eighteen captive-bred pygmy hogs were released in western Assam's Manas National Park and Tiger Reserve.

#### **About**

- **Scientific Name:** Porcula Salvania.

- **Genus:** It is the rarest species of pig in the world today, and is the only species in the genus Porcula. It is also the smallest species of pig.
- **Description:** The skin of the pygmy hog is a grayish-brown color, and its coat consists of blackish-brown bristles.

### Habitat and Distribution

- **Habitat:** They live in the wet high **grasslands** at the foothills of the Himalayas.
- **Distribution:** The only known population of pygmy hogs resides in Manas National Park in Assam, India.
- It is an **indicator species**. Its presence reflects the health of its primary habitat, the tall, wet grasslands of the region.

### Conservation status

- **IUCN status:** Critically Endangered.
- It is protected under **Schedule I of India's Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**.
- It is also listed in **CITES Appendix I**.

### Pygmy Hog Conservation Programme (PHCP)

- The PHCP is a collaboration among Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust of UK, Assam Forest Department, Wild Pig Specialist Group of International Union for Conservation of Nature and Union Environment Ministry.
- The PHCP target is to reintroduce 60 pygmy hogs in Manas National Park, by 2025.
- It is being implemented by NGOs Aaranyak and EcoSystems India.

### Manas National Park

- It was one of the first tiger reserves under **Project Tiger** in 1973. It was declared as a National park in 1990.
- It is included as a **site** of international importance under **UNESCO's world heritage** convention in **1988** as well as **Biosphere Reserve** in **1989**.
- It is home to the **Red Panda, Golden Langur, Pygmy Hog, Hispid Hare and Assam Roofed Top Turtle**.
- Manas River, a major tributary of the Brahmaputra River, passes through it.

**Source: TH**

## “Dwelling in Fuchun Mountains” Paintings

**Syllabus: GS-1/Geography, Places in News**

### Context:

- The Chinese military had released an animated short film showcasing the reunification of two torn pieces of the renowned scroll painting, “**the Dwelling in Fuchun Mountains**” which had been separated for over 300 years.

### More in News:

- The animated film called “**Dreams Come True on Fuchun River**”, features two elves, representing the two pieces of the painting. At the end of the movie, the two characters come together, magically making the painting whole again.
  - The painting had been torn due to its ownership transitions.
- This short film was released on the **National Day of China**.

### About the ‘Dwelling in Fuchun Mountains’ Painting

- It was painted nearly 700 years ago by **Huang Gongwang** (1269-1354), a highly acclaimed painter of the Yuan Dynasty.
- According to some popular folk stories, Huang and his friend Master Wuyong once visited the **Fuchun River (to the west of Hangzhou)**. He was immediately drawn to the beautiful landscape and decided to settle down near the river to paint a panorama of the landscape.
- It is a painting that shows mountains and settlements in eastern China and is considered a great classical work.



- It got separated into two:
  - The shorter section titled “**Leftover Mountain**” is now in the collection of the **Zhejiang Provincial Museum** in China.
  - The longer part, known as the “**Master Wuyong Scroll**”, is in the **city of Taipei, Taiwan**.
  - Through the film, it has served as a demonstration of mainland China's commitment to incorporate the island of Taiwan into its territory.
- The painting features layers of brush and ink, the landscape forms outlined and washed with great variation.
- The painting depicts rolling slopes and banks, and even lofty peaks, revealing a rich variety to the landscape pattern.

### **About Fuchun River**

- The Fuchun River flows 110 kilometers through Zhejiang Province. It is renowned for its lush scenery and balanced ecology.
- The banks of the river are occupied with villages and towns steeped in local traditions.
- The river connects the **West Lake in Hangzhou and Huangshan Mountain in Anhui Province**.
- It is characterized by lofty hills, limpid stream, long history and tranquil environment, and is also reputed for the Little Three Gorges along the Fuchun River.
- This river attracts numerous visitors for its fantastic mountains and water and unique characteristics.
- More than 1,000 poets in the past dynasties not only visited here but also left over 2,000 poems that have won universal praise. Therefore, the Little Three Gorges Along the Fuchun River are also called the **Tour Route of Tang Poems in West Zhejiang**.

### **National Day of Republic of China**

- It is celebrated on **October 1** every year to commemorate the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949.
- Chinese people enjoy a 7-day holiday, which is known as **Golden Week**.
- It is a peak time for Chinese people to travel at home and abroad.
- It is celebrated throughout the **China mainland, Hong Kong, and Macau** with a variety of activities, especially in Beijing. All Public places are decorated with flags and flowers.
- It is a peak time for Chinese people to travel at home and abroad.

Source: [IE](#)

## 'Ek Tareekh Ek Ghanta Ek Saath' Campaign

**Syllabus: GS-2/Governance**

### **Context:**

The programme titled '**Ek Tareekh Ek Ghanta Ek Saath**' was organised to celebrate nine years of the 'Swachh Bharat Mission'.

- It was a "**swachhanjali**" to **Mahatma Gandhi on the eve of his birth anniversary**.

### **About the Campaign:**

- It is a mega cleanliness drive under the '[Swachhta Pakhwada-Swachata Hi Seva' 2023 campaign](#).
- The purpose of the drive was to promote '**jan bhagidari**' (people's participation) for a garbage free India.
- **It includes:**
  - One hour of Shramdaan for Swachhata.
  - Activities to clean public places like markets, railway tracks, parks, water bodies, religious places, tourist locations, etc.
  - Every town, every village and other Government Institutions will facilitate this cleanliness drive.

### **Nine Years of Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan**

- The Swachh Bharat Mission is a flagship project of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- **Components:** The initiative was launched with
  - **Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin)** : The Rural component of the Mission is implemented under the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation.
  - **Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban):** The urban component is being implemented by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- The Mission was **launched in 2014** to fulfill the vision of a cleaner India by **2 October 2019, as a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th birth anniversary**. It began with an aim to make the country open defecation-free and also universal sanitation coverage.
- The **second phase** was implemented between **2020–21 and 2024–25** to help improve the mission-related work of Phase 1.
- Its main focus is door-to-door collection and scientific management of all types of waste including safe disposal in landfills. It is also aimed at remediation of all legacy dumpsites and converting them into green zones.



### SWACHHA BHARAT MISSION (GRAMEEN) 2.0

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF ODF (OPEN DEFECTION FREE) PLUS HOUSES RISEN TO TO 3.15 LAKH

THE NUMBER OF VILLAGES WITH MINIMAL LITTER STANDS AT 4.71 LAKH, WITH 4.61 LAKH VILLAGES HAVING MINIMAL STAGNANT WATER.

2.54 LAKH VILLAGES HAVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR LIQUID WASTE MANAGEMENT, WHILE 1.73 LAKH VILLAGES CAN MANAGE SOLID WASTE

### SWACHHA BHARAT MISSION (URBAN) 2.0

95 PER CENT OF INDIA'S 94,443 WARDS HAVE 100 PER CENT DOOR-TO-DOOR COLLECTION OF SOLID WASTE

AS MANY AS 89 PER CENT OF WARDS HAVE COMPLETE SOURCE SEGREGATION OF SOLID WASTE

WITH THE BEGINNING OF 2023-24, 75 PER CENT OF TOTAL WASTE GENERATED WAS BEING PROCESSED



IMAGE-MINISTRY OF HOUSING AFFAIRS



## Gandhi Jayanti

- It is celebrated annually in India on October 2, marking the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, who is also regarded as the **‘Father of the Nation’**.
- The United Nations also celebrates October 2 as the **‘International Day of Non-Violence’** to honour Gandhi’s belief in peace and non-violence.

### **About Mahatma Gandhi:**

- He was an **Indian lawyer, politician, social activist, and writer** who became the leader of the nationalist movement against the British rule of India.
- He was born on **October 2, 1869 in Porbandar**.
- **For untouchables:** He also worked for the upliftment of untouchables and gave them a new name **‘Harijan’** meaning the children of God.
- **Contributions in the freedom struggle :** In 1915, he returned to his homeland after two decades of residence abroad.
  - In 1916 he travelled to Champaran in Bihar to inspire the peasants to India has seen an increase in imports of electronic goods and laptops/computers in the last few years. During April-June this year, the import of electronic goods increased to \$6.96 billion from \$4.73 billion in the year-ago period, with a share of 4-7 per cent in overall imports.struggle against the oppressive plantation system.
    - In 1917, he organised a satyagraha to support the peasants of the Kheda district of Gujarat.
  - In 1918, Mahatma Gandhi went to Ahmedabad to organise a satyagraha movement amongst cotton mill workers.
  - In 1919 Gandhiji gave a call for a satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act that the British had just passed.
  - He called for a campaign of “non-cooperation” with British rule.

- Indians who wished colonialism to end were asked to stop attending schools, colleges and law courts, and not pay taxes
- In February 1922, Mahatma Gandhi decided to withdraw **the Non-Cooperation Movement**.
- **Dandi Salt March** : On 12 March 1930, Gandhiji began walking from his ashram at Sabarmati towards the ocean.
  - He reached his destination three weeks later, making a fistful of salt as he did and thereby making himself a criminal in the eyes of the law.
  - **Quit India**: After the failure of the Cripps Mission, Mahatma Gandhi decided to launch his third major movement against British rule. This was the **“Quit India” campaign**, which began in August 1942.
  - He was shot dead by Nathuram Godse on January 31, 1948.

Source: [PIB](#)

## **Super Thermal Power Project**

### **Syllabus: GS3/Economy**

#### **In News**

- The Prime Minister dedicated the first **800 MW Unit of phase 1 of Telangana Super Thermal Power Project** of NTPC to the nation.

#### **About**

- The project, situated in Peddapalli district, will supply **85% of its power to the state of Telangana** and provide a boost to the economic development of the state.
- The second unit of the project will also be operational very soon, and upon its completion, the installed capacity of the power plant would rise to **4,000 MW**.
- Being a pit-head power station with ultra **supercritical technology**, this project will also help the state of Telangana with low-cost power.
- Further, this being the **most efficient power station of NTPC in India** will reduce specific coal consumption (Total consumption of coal per unit of power generated) and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, making it one of the **most environmentally compliant power stations in India**.

#### **What is Supercritical Technology?**

- The Supercritical thermal power plant refers mainly to the steam operating conditions being **above the critical pressure and critical temperature of water**.
- These power plants are **environmentally friendly** to some extent and help in **lower carbon footprint** in the atmosphere.
- The supercritical power plants have lots of benefits such as: **less fuel consumption, less emission of gases, higher efficiency, etc.**

- The use of supercritical technology is being followed in thermal power plants to **reduce the fuel consumption and to meet the environmental friendly goal.**

#### **About NTPC Ltd.**

- NTPC is India's largest energy conglomerate with roots planted way back in 1975 to accelerate power development in India.
- It is India's largest integrated power utility, contributing 1/4th of the power requirement of the country.
- With an installed capacity of more than 73 GW and a diverse portfolio of thermal, hydro, solar, and wind power plants, NTPC is dedicated to delivering reliable, affordable, and sustainable electricity to the nation.

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