



Yojna IAS

योजना है तो सफलता है

January 2022

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

YOJNA IAS WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS CONTENTS

S.No.	Topics	Pg No.
1.	Details on Virovore	1
2.	Aspirational Block program	2 - 4
3.	Paigah Tombs Complex	5 - 6
4.	Parshuram Kund Festival	7
5.	Status of Gig Economy in India	8 - 11
6.	Kesavananda Bharati case in association with the doctrine of Basic structure	12 - 14



CURRENT AFFAIRS

JANUARY 2022

Details on Virovore

This article covers “Daily current events “Virovore” which is in news, it covers the “Scientific innovations and discoveries” In GS-3 , and following content has relevance for UPSC.

For prelims: Facts about Virovore

Why in news:

Scientists have discovered the first known “Virovore,” or organism that consumes viruses.

The new discoveries might alter how we perceive the microscopic function that viruses perform in the food chain.

VIROVORE: WHAT IS IT?

- It has been determined that this protist species actually eat viruses.
- These virus-eating protist species are now referred to as “Virovores,” as they belong to their own kingdom on the tree of life and are not considered to be either plants, animals, or fungi.
- It belongs to the genus Halteria, a group of tiny ciliates found in freshwater all over the world.
- A common genus of protists known as Halteria is a microorganism that is known to flit about as its hair-like cilia drive it through the water.
- They are composed of phosphorus, nitrogen, and nucleic acids. It can consume a sizable number of contagious chloroviruses that live in the same aquatic environment.
- It is known that chloroviruses can infect microscopic green algae.
- These creatures can feed on viruses to keep themselves alive, eating numerous and expanding in size.
- A virus-only diet, or “virovory,” is sufficient to support an organism’s physiological growth and even population increase.

Aspirational Block program

This article covers “Daily current events “and the topic is ‘The aspirational block programme’ which is in news, it covers the “Government policies and interventions” In GS-2, and the following content has relevance for UPSC.

For prelims: Facts about Aspirational block programme, SDG, NITI Ayog

For mains: GS-2, Impact of Aspirational block programme

Why in news:

The government’s Aspirational Block Programme (ABP), which was announced by the prime minister, aims to improve the performance of blocks that are falling behind on several development metrics.

ASPIRATIONAL BLOCK PROGRAM (ABP)

The Aspirational Blocks Program is modeled after the Aspirational District Program, which was introduced in 2018 and includes 112 districts nationwide.

In the Union Budget for 2022–2023, the Center stated that it intended to begin this effort.

At first, the initiative will include 500 districts spread over 31 states and Union Territories.

Six states make up the majority of these blocks:

- Odisha (29),
- West Bengal (29),
- Bihar (61),
- Madhya Pradesh (42),
- Jharkhand (34) and
- Uttar Pradesh (68).

About Aspirational Districts Program (ADP)

- The “Transformation of Aspirational Areas” initiative, which was started in January 2018, intends to eliminate this heterogeneity through a widespread campaign to quickly and efficiently alter these districts.
- The program’s main tenets include convergence (of central and state schemes), collaboration (between central, state-level “Prabhari” officers, and district collectors), and competition among districts motivated by a sense of mass movement.
- With States acting as the primary motivators, this method will concentrate on the strengths of each district, identify easy areas for quick improvement, track development, and rank districts.
- NITI Aayog has selected 117 Aspirational districts overall using composite factors.

- Based on 49 indicators (81 data points) from the 5 chosen thematic areas, the program's goal is to track the development of aspirational districts in real time.

The following districts have been given weight:

- (30%) Health & Nutrition
- (30% of the vote)
- (20%) Agriculture & Water Resources
- Skill development and financial inclusion (10%)
- Basic Infrastructure (10%)

The ADP's approach

The following is a summary of the program's main Strategy.

- making a large-scale development effort in these areas
- Determine each district's strengths and low-hanging fruit in order to serve as a development accelerator.
- To encourage competition, track progress, and rank districts.
- Districts should strive to be the greatest in their states and the country.

ADP's characteristics

- A Jan Andolan has sprung from it.
- By tracking real-time data, the ADP attempts to monitor the development of these areas.
- The program works to create a convergence between a few currently running federal and state government programs.
- Another noteworthy aspect is how the district performs in the public eye and how the district bureaucracy gains experience.
- The district's population as a whole is the program's target audience, not just one particular beneficiary group.

What is unique about this program:

- In particular, what happened to India's development effort after planning came to an end is reflected in the program.
- Sectors that have long needed attention now receive it.
- It is not a custom program with a one-size-fits-all approach. The districts have been given more responsibility. It has a plan for district-level intervention.
- It functions according to the strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat (SWOT) model and comparison with the best national standards for resource management.
- The Prime Minister has given it the most scrutiny.
- Good work never goes unnoticed is the underlying tenet of the concept. Both the officials and on social media, it is properly recognized.

Programming Prowess:

- The gathering of baseline data and follow-ups at regular intervals is a significant strength of the ADP.
- Maintaining this work would result in a strong statistics compilation for use by scholars and policymakers.
- By doing this, the government also demonstrates its commitment to achieving Sustainable Development Goals and bringing a much-needed focus to human development (SDGs).
- The rankings show that the selected districts are making little-by-little development.
- The program also makes the claim that it is “non-partisan and neutral” and focused at overall progress in India.
- The choice of districts does in fact imply that there is no regional, political, or other bias in the scheme.
- The initiative aims to bring together state and federal programs that are focused on particular activities.

Concerns associated with the program:

- They make the case that the selection of districts for the programs is flawed by using the example of Bihar.
- Because the most fundamental indicator of development, per capita income, has not been taken into account, it actually ignores the least developed districts.
- It appears that there is considerable confusion regarding whether the initiative is focused solely on bettering access or also on the caliber of services offered.
- The employed indicators are not relationally defined; rather, they are static measures of human growth that do not observe persons caught up in changing social dynamics.
- Furthermore, it is said that the state is moralizing about these districts’ failure to improve while doing nothing new or targeting to invest public money in them (apart from the potential use of Flexi-funds) (through rankings).
- The programme is responsible for demonstrating the government’s “developmental” efforts while ignoring all of the key problems that surround attaining equal development.
- Nevertheless, the NITI Aayog defends the broader strategy as utilizing “low-hanging fruit.”

Way Ahead:

- The initiative has been able to improve the lives of Indian residents in the areas of education, health, nutrition, financial inclusion, and skill development. This has especially helped some of the country’s most underdeveloped and remote districts.
- ADP adheres to the SDGs’ essential fundamental tenet of “leaving no one behind.” According to the report, the program’s quick success was the result of high-level political commitment.
- The UNDP has suggested changing a few metrics, such as the “electrification of households” as a basic infrastructure indicator, that are either near to approaching saturation or are already met by the majority of districts.

Paigah Tombs Complex

This article covers “Daily current events” and the topic is about ‘Paigah Tombs Complex’ which is in news, it covers the “Art And culture” In GS-1, and following content has relevance for UPSC.

For Prelims: About Paigah tomb

For Mains:GS-1, Art and Culture

Why in news:

With support from the US Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, Hyderabad’s Paigah Tombs Complex, a necropolis of noblemen from the Asaf Jahi era, will be restored.

ABOUT PAIGAH TOMBS

- The Paigah Tombs are the graves of the noble Paigah family, fierce allies of the Nizams who served as generals, statesmen, and benefactors under and alongside them.
- They are one of the most well-known wonders of Hyderabad State, which is renowned for the quality of its architecture as seen by the mosaic tiles it has set and its artistry.
- The Paigah’s Necropolis is situated nearby Charminar Hyderabad in the Patal Bund Suburb. These tombs are constructed of lime and mortar and have exquisite marble carvings inlaid throughout. These graves, date back 200 years and serve as the final resting places for multiple generations of Paigah Nobles.

History of Paigahs:

- The 200-year-old Paigah tombs serve as the ultimate resting places for multiple generations of Paigah Nobles.
- The Paigahs accompanied Emperor Aurangzeb as he conquered the Deccan region.
- Shams-ul-Umra I, often referred to as Nawaz Abul Fatah Khan Tegh, created the House of Paigah.
- Through matrimonial relationships, their ties to the Nizams were strengthened even more.
- They also built a number of palaces in the city, the most prominent of which are the Falaknuma Palace, Asman Garh Palace, Khursheed Jah Devdi, and Vicar-ul-Umarahi palaces.
- They were thought to be wealthier than the typical Maharajah in the nation.
- The Paigahs, who were renowned art patrons, extended their unrivaled beauty and elegance to their magnificent graves. The Paigah Tombs are one of the many wonders that decorate the city and appear in the most enticing historical accounts.
- The mosaic tile work that has been inlaid demonstrates the magnificent artistry of the Paigahs. The first person to be interred there was Abdul Fateh Khan Tegh Jung in 1786.
- This location later became the family maqbara, which was constructed according to the generations of the family members and was largely renovated by his son Amir-e-Kabir I (some additions were made by Sir Asman Jah, Sir Khurshid Jah, and Sir Vikar Ul Umra in the 1880s).



Paigah Tombs

Architecture:

- These tombs have lovely marble carvings set into their lime and mortar construction.
- It is made up of exquisite marble tile works with floral carvings and themes.
- It shows Indo-Islamic architecture, which is a fusion of the Rajputana and Asaf Jahi architectural traditions.
- The Mughal, Persian, and Deccan styles are all represented well in the stucco (plaster) work.
- Each tomb has been exquisitely carved, making them all priceless works of art. These buildings' stuccowork is intricately detailed.
- The geometrical carvings on them have helped them grow to be quite well-liked. Along with the geometric patterns, there are also very elaborate and lovely flower patterns, trellis marble fencing, and canopies.
- Most tourists visit the tombs of Asman Jah and Begum Khurshid Jah. The marble constructions were formerly embellished with precious and semi-precious stones, whose colors changed with the seasons.
- A wall that surrounds the tombs is embellished with latticework, and exotic floral, and geometric patterns. Different decorations, such as fruits, drums, serpents, flowers, vases, etc., are used on each wall.

Parshuram Kund Festival

This article covers “Daily current events “and the topic is ‘Parshuram kund Festival ’ which is in news, it covers “Art and culture” In GS-1, the following content has relevance for UPSC.

For Prelims: About Parshuram kund festival

For Mains: GS-1, Art and Culture

Why in news:

From January 12 to January 16, Arunachal Pradesh will host the Parshuram Kund Festival.

About:

- In the lower reaches of the Lohit River in Arunachal Pradesh’s Telu Shati/Tailung area of the Mishmi plateau, there is a Hindu pilgrimage site called Parshuram Kund.
- The region of the hills where the Mishmi people live.
- It is a revered holy site of worship for Hindus and is immersed in their religion.
- It is encircled by thick forests and is located within the Kamlang reserve woodlands.
- The Parshuram Kund Mela, which is held annually in the Telu Shati/Tailung area of the Lohit District, is the main event of Makar Sankranti, which falls on the 14th and 15th of January.
- The Lohit district of Arunachal Pradesh, India, 21 kilometers north of Tezu, on the Brahmaputra plateau in the lower reaches of the Lohit River, is a Hindu pilgrimage place.
- Each January, on the occasion of Makar Sankranti, devotees and sadhus take a sacred bath in the water of the well.
- Also known as the Kumbh of the Northeast,.
- It is a monument to the mythical sage Parshuram, which has religious importance. The neighboring states of Manipur and Assam, as well as the rest of India, draw tourists to this well-known festival.
- Under the Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD) Scheme of the Ministry of Tourism, the project “Development of Parashuram Kund” has been authorized.

Status of Gig Economy in India

This article covers “Daily current events” and the topic is about ‘Gig economy’ which is in news, it covers the Indian Economy” In GS-3, and the following content has relevance for UPSC.

For Prelims: About Gig Economy in India, Gig workers

For Mains: GS-3, Issues associated with Gig economy, Social security for Gig worker

About:

The trend of people working temporary or flexible jobs, frequently through online platforms like Uber, Ola, Swiggy, and Zomato, is known as the “gig economy” in India. Due to the increased flexibility and independence, it provides for individuals, as well as the potential cost savings for employers, this form of work has become more and more popular in recent years.

Concerns exist over the gig economy workers’ lack of benefits and job stability, though. India’s gig economy is anticipated to expand more in the future, but in order to safeguard employees’ rights and guarantee fair treatment, it should also be supported by laws and other policies from the government.

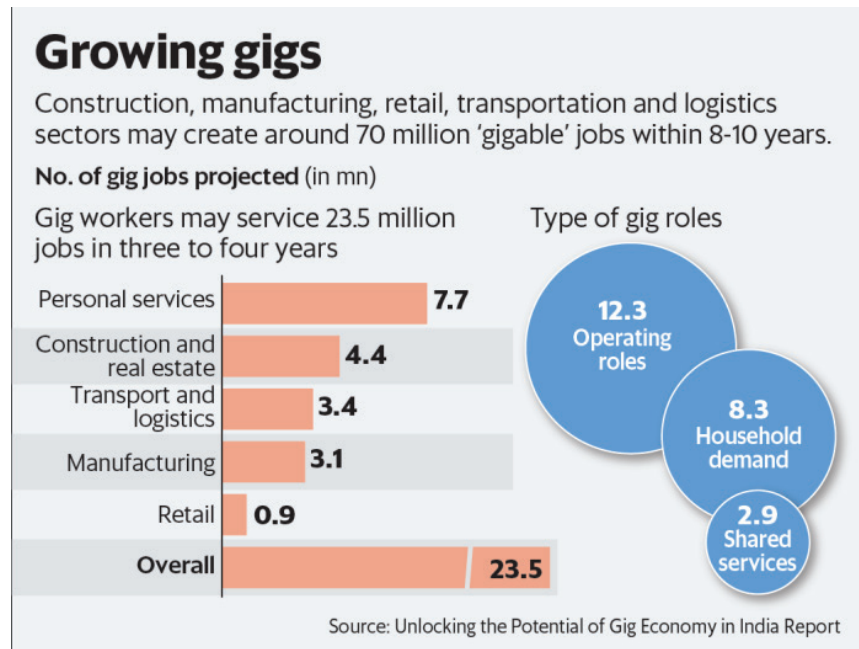
WHAT DOES “GIG ECONOMY” MEAN

- In a gig economy, businesses contract with independent workers for brief assignments and temporary roles are popular.
- The term “gig worker” refers to a person who performs work or takes part in a gig work arrangement and makes money from such activities outside of the typical employer-employee relationship.
- 15 million people are employed in India’s gig economy, which includes sectors like software, shared services, and professional services, according to a report by Boston Consulting Group.

India’s position:

- The gig economy industries, which employ both blue-collar and white-collar workers, are thought to be responsible for 56% of new jobs created in India.
- While the gig economy is common in India’s blue-collar industries, there is also an increasing need for gig workers in certain white-collar positions, such as project-specific consultants, salesmen, web designers, content writers, and software engineers.
- Up to 90 million employment in India’s non-agricultural industries might be supported by the gig economy, and over the “long term,” this could increase GDP by 1.25%.
- The gig economy will play a significant role in closing the income and unemployment gap as India draws closer to its declared aim of having a USD -5 trillion economy by 2025.
- A report titled “India’s Booming Gig and Platform Economy” was just released by NITI Aayog.
- The report projects that by 2029–30, India’s gig employment will increase to 2.35 crore.
- According to the research, the gig economy employed 77 lakh (7.7 million) employees in 2020–21. They made up 1.5% of India’s overall labour force or 2.6% of the non-agricultural workforce.

India's Gig Economy's Growth Factors:



Gig Economy

- Demand for flexible work is rising, which makes the gig economy particularly appealing to Indian employees seeking flexible work schedules that let them manage their personal and professional lives.
- **Demographic factors:** The vast and growing number of young, educated, and ambitious Indians who are looking to improve their livelihoods through side income creation is another element driving the gig economy.
- **E-commerce expansion:** The rapid expansion of e-commerce in India has significantly increased demand for delivery and logistics services, which in turn has fueled the expansion of the gig economy in that country.
- **Internet and mobile technology are on the rise:** It has been simpler for employees and businesses to connect through online platforms because to the increasing use of smartphones and the availability of high-speed internet, which has facilitated the rise of the gig economy.
- **Economic Liberalization:** Increased competition and a more open market as a result of the Indian government's economic liberalisation policies have fueled the expansion of the gig economy.

Concerns related to the Gig Economy in India:

- **Lack of Employment and Social Security:** Many gig workers in India aren't protected by labour laws and aren't eligible for benefits like health and retirement plans.
- Furthermore, gig workers frequently may not have the same level of protection as regular employees in the event of an accident or illness.
- The gig economy mainly relies on technology and internet connectivity; for individuals who do not have access to these resources, this presents a barrier and worsens income disparity.
- **Lack of Information:** Policy makers find it challenging to comprehend the extent, scope, and effects of India's gig economy because there is a dearth of information and study on this sector.

- **Exploitation by Businesses:** Gig workers in India may not have the same legal safeguards and are frequently paid less than regular employees.
- In an effort to shield themselves from responsibility and avoid paying taxes, some businesses may misclassify gig employees as independent contractors.
- Due to their frequent independence and potential lack of a physical office, gig workers might not have the same social networks and support systems as regular employees.

Way Ahead:

- **Clear Regulations:** The Indian government should create clear regulations and policies for the gig economy to guarantee that gig workers are protected and that businesses are held responsible.
- **Social Security Blanket:** To maintain financial security for older workers, the government should make sure that gig workers have access to social security programmes like pension plans and health insurance.
- Additionally, gig workers should have access to all regular employees' labour rights, including the ability to organise and form unions.
- **Education and Training:** To improve gig workers' abilities and boost their earning potential, the government should fund education and training initiatives.
- **Encourage fair competition and innovation:** The government can promote fair competition by enforcing fair trade laws and by establishing regulations that prevent businesses from misclassifying employees as independent contractors.
- Additionally, by offering tax breaks, money, and other forms of assistance to businesses developing new business models and technology, the government can promote innovation in the gig economy.
- **Linking Women's Empowerment:** It's important to create the necessary social and physical infrastructure to encourage women's participation in the gig economy.



Kesavananda Bharati case in association with the doctrine of Basic structure

This article covers “Daily current events “and the topic is ‘kesavananda Bharti case’ which is in news, it covers the ‘Indian polity’ In GS-2, and the following content has relevance for UPSC.

For Prelims: About basic structure

For Mains: GS-2, kesavanada bharti case, its evaluation and interpretation

Why in news:

The “Basic Structure” doctrine was recently brought up again by the Vice President during the 83rd All-India Presiding Officers Conference in Jaipur, particularly in light of the Supreme Court’s decision to invalidate the National Judicial Appointments Commission Act of 2015.

About

- In accordance with new difficulties, the Indian Constitution may be amended under Article 368, which also takes into account unexpected and unforeseen circumstances that were not taken into account by the constitution’s authors.
- In a major ruling in the Kesavananda Bharati case from 1973, the Supreme Court held that while Parliament had the authority to change the Constitution, it could not alter its core values or structural foundations.
- However, this core idea was left undefined and has subsequently begun to take on new dimensions.
- A statute may be declared ultra vires or illegal if it violates any provision of the Constitution. Courts employ judicial review as a tool to analyze and determine the legitimacy of any amendment presented by the Parliament.
- The breadth of the Parliament’s amending authority still became a point of never-ending contention between the Parliament and the Supreme Court.

Kesavananda Bharati, who was he

- Kesavananda Bharati, a Hindu monk in Kasargod, Kerala, and the leader of the Edneer Mutt, was born in 1940. He contested the Constitution (29th Amendment) Act of 1972, which reinstated the Kerala Land Reforms Act, 1963,
- The First Amendment’s 1951 addition of Article 31-B and the 9th Schedule to the Constitution gave land reform policies a “protective cover” that made it difficult for them to be legally challenged.
- He claimed that this action infringed upon his fundamental rights to property, freedom of religion (Article 26), and religion (Article 25). (Article 31).

What is meant by “Basic structure”

- In the famous case of Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala in 1973, the Supreme Court acknowledged the term “fundamental structure” for the first time.
- **Definition:** The dignity and independence of the individual are considered to be of the utmost

significance and cannot be damaged by any type of change, according to Indian court definitions of basic structure.

Evolution of Basic Structure through Supreme Court's interpretations:

A.K. Gopalan v. State of Madras:

According to the Supreme Court, only arbitrary executive activity is covered by Article 21 protection—not arbitrary legislative action.

Second, the Supreme Court ruled that “personal liberty” solely refers to freedom pertaining to an individual's person or body.

Shankari Prasad, Case 1951:

The Supreme Court concluded that altering Fundamental Rights is likewise within the scope of the Parliament's ability to modify the Constitution pursuant to Article 368.

Because of this, the Parliament may limit or eliminate any of the Fundamental Rights by passing a law amending the Constitution, and such a law will not be unconstitutional under Article 13.

The Berubari Union Case from 1960:

The Supreme Court claims that the Preamble reveals the overarching goals that underlie the Constitution's many articles and serves as a window into the minds of the document's authors.

The Supreme Court clearly stated that the Preamble is not a component of the Constitution and is not enforceable in a court of law despite the fact that it has been acknowledged for its importance.

Golaknath case 1967:

The Supreme Court ruled that no Fundamental Right can be eliminated or limited by the Parliament.

The Supreme Court ruled that the Directive Principles cannot be implemented by amending the Fundamental Rights.

By passing Constitutional Amendment Acts, the Parliament has the authority to limit or eliminate any of the Fundamental Rights, according to the 24th Amendment Act (1971), which was approved by the legislature.

Additionally, the 25th Amendment Act added a new Article 31C that stated that no law intended to implement the socialistic Directive Principles would be invalidated for violating the Fundamental Rights guaranteed by Articles 14, 19, or 31.

Kesavananda Bharati Case 1973:

It included a property dispute, and on April 24, 1973, a special bench of the Supreme Court of India of 13 judges concluded that Article 368 of the constitution did not provide the Parliament the power to alter the fundamental structure of the Constitution with a 7–6 majority.

The Court proposed the “Basic Structure of the Constitution,” which was inviolable even by a constitutional change.

Raj Narain v. Indira Gandhi Case (1975):

The Supreme Court upheld and used the essential structure of the constitution theory.

The Supreme Court rejected a section of the 39th Amendment Act (1975) that maintained the Prime Minister's and the Lok Sabha Speaker's election disputes outside the purview of any courts.

The 42nd Amendment Act 1976:

The Parliament responded to this judicially developed notion of "fundamental structure" by enacting Act to amend Article 368 and stating that there is no restriction on the constituent power of Parliament.

Furthermore, no modification may be challenged in court on any grounds, including a claim that it violates a fundamental right.

Minerva Mills v. Union of India (1980):

The Supreme Court declared that "the Indian Constitution is established on the foundations of the balance between the Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles."

As long as the alteration does not weaken or undermine the Constitution's fundamental principles, the Parliament may amend the Fundamental Rights to implement the Directive Principles.

Waman Rao case (1981):

The Kesavananda Bharati case was used as the date of demarcation for the Basic Structure concept, which was restated to hold that it should not be applied retroactively to review the legitimacy of any change to the Constitution that occurred previous to that date.

Indra Sawhney case (1992):

The scope and application of Article 16(4), which mandates the reservation of jobs for members of underprivileged sections, were scrutinised by the SC. With a few restrictions (such as the exclusion of the creamy layer, no reservations in promotions, the total reserved quota shall not exceed 50%, etc.), it upheld the constitutional legitimacy of the 27% reservation for OBCs.

Rule of Law was now included to the list of fundamental elements of the constitution.

R. Bommai Case 1994):

Federalism has been referred to as the Constitution's "fundamental feature" by the Supreme Court, which established that it is a federal document.

It further noted that just because the Center has more authority than the States under the structure of our Constitution, it does not follow that the States are merely the Center's appendages.

Critical Evaluation of kesavananda Bharti case: In Support:

The Basic Structure Doctrine strikes a balance between the duties of Parliament and the Supreme Court in maintaining the interconnected web of the Indian Constitution, according to American constitutional scholar Granville Austin.

According to legal expert Upendra Baxi, the concept paves the stage for substantial social transformation through peaceful democratic methods by facilitating constitutional amendment.

In Against:

The Kesavananda judgment's diversity of viewpoints offered no clarity, making it an ambiguous authority with which to restrict the Parliament's amending powers.

It has resulted in: Judicial Activism, in which the court renders judgements based, in whole or in part, on the Judge's political or personal views rather than on current or established legislation.

Judicial overreach is the term for the judiciary's undue meddling with the legislative and executive branches.

The Basic Structure Doctrine is anti-democratic, according to Raju Ramachandran, a former Additional Solicitor General of India, because it eventually makes the court's own assessment of its scope of authority and efficacy the only restriction on the use of its own judicial power.

There is also criticism that, in the end, the unelected judges have taken on the political authority that the Constitution does not grant them.

Way Ahead:

The constitution must be amended to account for and manage the tension between the political system and constitutional principles as a result of the changing needs of the public.

Even while the judiciary must be respected, the ambiguity surrounding the fundamental structure needs to be reviewed in light of the fact that Parliamentary sovereignty and autonomy cannot be limited or compromised since they are fundamental to the survival of democracy.

