



Yojna IAS

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APRIL-MAY 2023

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

YOJNA IAS WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

APRIL -MAY 2023

RAJASTHAN PLATFORM-BASED GIG WORKERS (REGISTRATION AND WELFARE) BILL, 2023

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "Rajasthan Platform-based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Bill, 2023". The topic "Rajasthan Platform-based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Bill, 2023" has relevance in the Governance section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the Rajasthan Platform-based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Bill, 2023

For Prelims:

What is the Rajasthan Platform-based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Bill, 2023? What are the provisions of the Rajasthan Platform-based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Bill, 2023?

For Mains:

GS 3: Economy

What are the key drivers of the Gig Economy?

What are the issues related to the Gig economy?

What are the relevant solutions?

What is the Rajasthan Platform-based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Bill, 2023?

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot announced in the state budget that he plans to introduce a groundbreaking 'Gig Workers Welfare Act', making it the first of its kind in India. Gehlot cited companies like Ola, Uber, Swiggy, and Zomato that hire gig workers for short-term transactions but do not employ them full-time, depriving them of benefits.

What are the provisions of the Rajasthan Platform-based Gig Workers (Registration and Welfare) Bill, 2023?

Under this, a Gig Workers' Welfare Board will be established, and a Gig Workers' Welfare and Devel-

opment Fund will be set up with a fund of Rs 200 crore.

What is the Legal Framework for Gig Economy Workers?

- **Existing Legislation:** The Code on Wages, 2019, establishes a universal minimum wage and floor wage across organised and unorganised sectors, including gig workers. Additionally, the Code on Social Security, 2020, recognizes gig workers as a new occupational category.
- **Associated Issues with the Security Code:**
- **Lack of Guaranteed Benefits:** The Code on Social Security Bill, 2020, provides that platform workers are eligible for benefits such as maternity benefits, life and disability cover, old-age protection, provident fund, employment injury benefits, and more. However, eligibility does not guarantee that these benefits will be received. The Central government can create welfare schemes that cover these aspects of personal and work security from time to time, but they are not guaranteed.
- **Unclear Responsibility:** The Code stipulates that the provision of basic welfare measures is a joint responsibility of the Central government, platform aggregators, and workers. However, it does not specify which stakeholder is responsible for delivering what quantum of welfare.

What are the key drivers of the Gig Economy?

There are several key drivers of the Gig economy, including:

- **Technological Advancements:** Advances in digital technology, particularly the rise of mobile devices and cloud computing, have enabled workers to connect with potential clients and customers from anywhere and at any time. This has created new opportunities for freelance workers to find work and for businesses to access a wider pool of talent.
- **Changing Attitudes Towards Work:** Many people today value flexibility and autonomy in their work, and are willing to trade the stability of a traditional job for the freedom of self-employment.
- **Economic Pressures:** The uncertain economic conditions and increasing competition have made many organisations seek ways to remain agile and cost-effective. The gig economy offers organisations an opportunity to tap into a flexible and cost-efficient workforce, which allows them to scale up or down quickly to meet their needs.
- **Demographic Shifts:** The emergence of younger generations, who are more comfortable with technology and prioritise flexibility and work-life balance, is also driving the growth of the Gig economy. Additionally, older workers who are looking to supplement their retirement income are also turning to gig work.
- **A Start-up Culture Emerges:** Start-ups, being cautious of high fixed costs, have turned to hire contractual freelancers for non-core activities. Moreover, start-ups are increasingly seeking out skilled technology freelancers for specific projects in areas such as engineering, product development, data science, and Machine Learning (ML) to enhance their tech platforms.

What are the issues related to the Gig economy?

While the Gig economy offers several benefits, it also presents various issues, including:

- **Lack of Job Security:** Gig workers do not enjoy the same level of job security as traditional employees. They often work on a project-by-project basis and may not have a steady stream of income or benefits such as health insurance or retirement plans.
- **Unequal Treatment:** Gig workers are often treated differently from traditional employees, with limited access to legal protections and benefits. For instance, they are not entitled to minimum wage, overtime pay, or unemployment benefits.
- **Income Inequality:** The Gig economy has led to income inequality, with some workers earning significantly more than others. This is often due to the availability of higher-paying gigs in specific industries or geographic locations.
- **Lack of Regulation:** The Gig economy is largely unregulated, and there is little oversight of the relationship between gig workers and their employers. This can lead to exploitation and abuse, such as non-payment for services rendered or unsafe working conditions.
- **Lack of Social Interaction:** Gig work is often solitary, and workers may miss out on the social interaction and collaboration of traditional employment.

What are the relevant solutions?

There are several potential solutions to address the issues related to the Gig economy:

- **Legal Protections:** Governments can introduce new legal protections for gig workers, such as minimum wage laws, health insurance, and unemployment benefits. This would help to ensure that gig workers are treated fairly and have access to essential benefits and protections.
- **Collective Bargaining:** Gig workers can form unions or other forms of collective bargaining groups to advocate for their rights and interests. This would give them more bargaining power in negotiations with employers and help to level the playing field.
- **Platforms for Benefits:** Some companies have started to offer platforms for gig workers to access benefits, such as health insurance, retirement plans, and other services. These platforms could help to fill the gap in benefits for gig workers who may not have access to traditional employer-provided benefits.
- **Skill Development:** Governments and private organisations can invest in training programs and skill development initiatives to help gig workers develop new skills and increase their earning potential.
- **Technology-Based Solutions:** Technology-based solutions such as blockchain, smart contracts, and reputation systems could be used to provide gig workers with greater security and more transparent relationships with their employers.

Overall, these solutions aim to create a more equitable and sustainable Gig economy, where gig workers are treated fairly and have access to essential benefits and protections.

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KESAVANANDA BHARATI CASE

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "Kesavananda Bharati case". The topic "Kesavananda Bharati case" has relevance in the Polity section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the Kesavananda Bharati case

For Prelims:

What is the Kesavananda Bharati case?

What is the background behind the case?

For Mains:

GS 2: Polity

What is the Kesavananda Bharati case?

What is the significance of the Kesavananda Bharati case?

What are the issues that have come after the Kesavananda Bharati case?

Way forward

Why in the news?

Chief Justice of India (CJI) D.Y. Chandrachud on Monday announced that the Supreme Court has created a special webpage for the Kesavananda Bharati case in which a 13-judge Bench, the largest constituted in the court's history, through a wafer-thin majority of 7:6, held that Parliament cannot amend the "Basic Structure" of the Constitution.

What is the Kesavananda Bharati case?

The Kesavananda Bharati case is a landmark judgment in Indian constitutional law, delivered by the Supreme Court of India on April 24, 1973. The case was named after Kesavananda Bharati, the chief of the Edneer Mutt, a Hindu monastery in Kerala, who challenged the constitutional validity of several amendments to the Indian Constitution made by the Parliament.

What is the significance of the Kesavananda Bharati case?

- **Principle of Basic Structure:** The case is significant because it established the principle of "basic structure" of the Constitution, which means that certain provisions of the Constitution cannot be amended by the Parliament, as they form the basic framework of the Constitution and are essential to its identity.

- **Limitations on the power of the Parliament:** The Supreme Court held that while the Parliament has the power to amend the Constitution, it cannot use that power to alter or destroy its basic structure.

What is the background behind the case?

The cases leading to the final judgement of the Kesavanand Bharati case are as follows:

- **1951 – Sankari Prasad Case**

It held that the amendment power of the parliament is not limited because it can amend any part of the constitution, even Article-368 which provides the power to amend the parliament

- **1967- Golak Nath Vs State of Punjab**

The Supreme Court adopted a new approach and held that the parliament that cannot amend Part III of the constitution and made the fundamental right sacrosanct.

- **1973: Kesavananda Bharati Vs State of Kerala**

It held that parliament can alter and amend any part of the constitution but it cannot amend the basic structure of the constitution.

The court did not define what constitutes basic structure and it is through the various judgments we know what are the elements of the basic structure.

- **Minerva Mills vs. Union of India:**

The court reiterated its position on the basic structure and held that ‘the Indian Constitution is founded on the bedrock of the balance between the Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles.

The Parliament can amend the Fundamental Rights for implementing the Directive Principles, so long as the amendment does not damage or destroy the basic structure of the Constitution.

What is the significance of the Kesavananda Bharati case?

The Kesavananda Bharati case is significant in Indian constitutional law for several reasons:

- **Basic structure doctrine:** The case held that certain provisions of the Constitution cannot be amended by the Parliament, as they form the basic framework of the Constitution and are essential to its identity. This principle has since become a cornerstone of Indian constitutional law.
- **Limits on the Parliament’s power:** The case set important limits on the power of the Parliament to amend the Constitution. While the Parliament has the power to amend the Constitution, it cannot use that power to alter or destroy its basic structure. This protects the fundamental rights of citizens and the independence of the judiciary in protecting the Constitution’s basic structure.
- **Judicial review:** The case established the principle of judicial review in India, which means that the judiciary has the power to review the constitutional validity of laws passed by the Parliament. This strengthens the independence of the judiciary and ensures that the Constitution is upheld.
- **Significance for federalism:** The case also upheld the federal character of the Indian Constitution

and established the principle that the Parliament cannot alter the federal structure of the Constitution without the consent of the states. This ensures that the states have a significant role in the functioning of Indian democracy.

What are the issues that have come after the Kesavananda Bharati case?

There have been several issues that have arisen in the years since the judgment. Some of these issues include:

- **Ambiguity on the contents of 'basic structure':** The Kesavananda Bharati case did not provide a clear definition of what constitutes the "basic structure" of the Constitution, leading to debates and disagreements over what provisions of the Constitution are included in this category.
- **Judicial activism:** Some critics have argued that the Kesavananda Bharati case has led to judicial activism, with the judiciary taking on a more expansive role in interpreting and enforcing the Constitution, sometimes at the expense of the elected branches of government.
- **Disturbed balance of power:** The judgment has given the judiciary a prime position which comes at the cost of the decisions made by the legislature.

Way forward

Overall, the Kesavananda Bharati case continues to be a significant and debated landmark in Indian constitutional law, with ongoing implications for the functioning of Indian democracy.

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WATERBODY CENSUS

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "Water body Census". The topic "Water body Census" has relevance in the Environment section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of Water Body Census

For Prelims:

What is the Water Body Census?

For Mains:

GS 3: Environment

What are the findings of the Water Body Census?

What is the significance of the Water Body Census?

Way Forward

Why in the news?

The Ministry of Jal Shakti recently released the report of its first-ever census of water bodies.

What is the Water Body Census?

The Ministry of Jal Shakti has initiated the first-ever Census of Water Bodies in conjunction with the 6th Minor Irrigation (MI) Census through the centrally sponsored “Irrigation Census” program.

The primary aim of the Water Bodies Census is to establish a comprehensive national database of all water bodies by gathering data on critical factors such as their size, condition, encroachment status, usage, storage capacity, and level of storage.

What is the need for Water Body Census?

The use of water bodies data is also envisaged in the following fields:

- Authentic dataset for **estimation of recharge of groundwater**.
- Information obtained from MI Census and water body census will be highly useful in the **implementation of other water-related schemes** like Atal Bhujal Yojana.

Under Atal Bhujal Yojana, these data can be used for the assessment of Gram Panchayat-wise water budgets, preparation of realistic water security Plans, and planning various supply/ demand side measures through the convergence of ongoing schemes.

- The information will be relevant to State Governments involved in **farm-level irrigation and water management**.

What are the findings of the Water Body Census?

- **Total number of water bodies:** 24,24,540 water bodies have been enumerated in the country, out of which,
 - 97.1% (23,55,055) are in rural areas and only
 - 2.9% (69,485) are in urban areas.
- **States:**
 - West Bengal has the highest number of ponds & reservoirs.
 - Andhra Pradesh has the highest number of tanks.
 - Tamil Nadu has the highest number of lakes.
 - Maharashtra is the leading state for water conservation schemes.
- **Encroachment of water bodies:** 1.6% water bodies out of all the enumerated water bodies are

reported to be encroached out of which 95.4% are in rural areas and the remaining 4.6% in urban areas.

What is the significance of the Water Body Census?

The Census of Water Bodies launched by the Ministry of Jal Shakti has significant importance in several ways:

- **Better management of water resources:** This will help in better planning and management of water resources, leading to more efficient utilization of water and sustainable development.
- **Identification of encroachments:** This will help in identifying the areas where illegal encroachments have taken place and taking necessary action to remove them, thus protecting the water bodies.
- **Conservation of water bodies:** This information will help in taking necessary steps to conserve the water bodies and prevent them from drying up.
- **Improved irrigation infrastructure:** The data collected will help in identifying areas where minor irrigation infrastructure can be developed, leading to improved agricultural productivity.
- **Better disaster management:** The census will also help in identifying water bodies that are prone to flooding, which will enable the government to take necessary measures to prevent floods and manage them better in case they occur.

Sources:

<https://cdnbbsr.s3waas.gov.in/s3a70dc40477bc2adceef4d2c90f47eb82/uploads/2023/04/2023040672.pdf>

PREDICTOR DISCOVERY ALGORITHM (PDA)

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "Predictor Discovery algorithm (PDA)". The topic "Predictor Discovery algorithm (PDA)" has relevance in the Science and Technology section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of Predictor Discovery algorithm (PDA) For Prelims:

*Details of the newly developed technology that uses Artificial Intelligence in Weather Prediction **For***

Mains:

GS 3: Environment

What is the significance of the Predictor Discovery algorithm (PDA)?

What is the significance of Artificial intelligence in Weather Prediction?

Way Forward

Why in the news?

A newly devised algorithm powered by Artificial Intelligence can help increase the predictability of

the Indian Summer Monsoons (ISMR) 18 months ahead of the season.

What is the Predictor Discovery algorithm (PDA)?

The Predictor Discovery algorithm (PDA) is an algorithm made using a single ocean-related variable that could facilitate a skillful forecast of the Indian Summer Monsoons (ISMR) in time for making effective agricultural and other economic plans for the country.

How the new system is an improved version of the existing weather prediction models?

- **Less time lead of 1 month compared to other time-taking models:** While researchers have well established the scientific basis for ISMR predictability and made significant advances over the past century in understanding the variability and predictability of ISMR, the skillful prediction of ISMR even one month in advance has remained a major challenge.
 - Neither the potential (theoretically possible) skill (correlation between the predicted and observed ISMR) nor the actual skill of ISMR forecast are available at longer lead times–6, 12, 18, and 24- months ahead of the season.
- **Larger area coverage:** Traditionally, researchers select a predictor of ISMR based on the maximum correlation of an atmospheric or oceanic variable with ISMR over a region of the globe. Such a technique restricts in the realization of the true potential predictability of ISMR as it accounts for one predictor over a particular region at a time.
- PDA can work at any lead month over the entire tropical belt.

What is the significance of Artificial intelligence in Weather Prediction?

Artificial intelligence (AI) has emerged as a powerful tool in weather prediction:

1. Potential to **improve forecast accuracy and lead times.**
2. **Process large amounts of complex data** from various sources, such as satellite imagery, weather balloons, and atmospheric sensors
3. **Learn and identify patterns** and make predictions based on historical data.
4. Real-time data can be analyzed to make accurate and timely predictions.
 - For example, AI can be used to identify and track severe weather events, such as hurricanes and tornadoes, and to provide more accurate information on their path, intensity, and potential impact.

Way forward

Overall, the use of AI in weather prediction holds great promise for improving the accuracy and lead times of weather forecasts, ultimately helping to better prepare communities for severe weather events and mitigate their potential impact.

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STATE OF THE GLOBAL CLIMATE 2022

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "State of the Global Climate 2022". The topic "State of the Global Climate 2022" has relevance in the Environment section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic "State of the Global Climate 2022"

For Prelims:

What is the State of the Global Climate 2022 report?

For Mains:

GS 3: Environment

What are the finding of the State of the Global Climate 2022?

Why in the news?

The World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) has released the report What are the finding of the State of the Global Climate 2022?

What is the State of the Global Climate 2022 report?

The WMO's State of the Global Climate Report 2022 presents a comprehensive overview of key climate indicators such as:

1. Greenhouse gases
2. Temperatures
3. Sea level rise
4. Ocean heat and acidification
5. Sea ice and glaciers

What are the finding of the State of the Global Climate 2022?

1. The report notes that droughts, floods, and heatwaves continue to affect large parts of the world, and the costs of such events are increasing.
2. The report highlights that global mean temperatures for the past eight years have been the highest on record.
3. Sea levels and ocean heat are at unprecedented levels, with the trend projected to continue for centuries.
4. Antarctic sea ice has reached its lowest extent on record, and Europe has experienced record-breaking glacier melt.

What are the Socioeconomic and environmental impacts of climatic changes as highlighted

in the report?

- **Drought:** Climate change can exacerbate drought conditions by altering precipitation patterns, increasing evaporation rates, and drying out soils.
 - For example, the drought gripped East Africa, as of January 2023, it was estimated that over 20 million people faced acute food insecurity across the region, under the effects of the drought and other shocks.
- **Excessive Rain:** Climate change can also cause an increase in excessive rain or heavy precipitation events in some regions. Warmer air can hold more moisture, leading to more intense rainfall events when precipitation does occur.
 - For example, Record-breaking rain in July and August led to extensive flooding in Pakistan. There were over 1 700 deaths, and 33 million people were affected, while almost 8 million people were displaced.
 - Total damage and economic losses were assessed at US\$ 30 billion. July (181% above normal) and August (243% above normal) were each the wettest on record nationally.
- **Heatwaves:** High temperatures during heatwaves can cause heat stress and heatstroke, particularly among vulnerable populations such as the elderly, young children, and those with pre-existing health conditions. Heatwaves can also increase the risk of wildfires, damage to infrastructure such as roads and buildings, and power outages.
 - For example, Record-breaking heatwaves affected Europe during the summer. In some areas, extreme heat was coupled with exceptionally dry conditions. Excess deaths associated with the heat in Europe exceeded 15 000 in total across Spain, Germany, the UK, France, and Portugal.
 - Heatwaves in the 2022 pre-monsoon season in India and Pakistan caused a decline in crop yields. This, combined with the banning of wheat exports and restrictions on rice exports in India after the start of the conflict in Ukraine, threatened the availability, access, and stability of staple foods within international food markets and posed high risks to countries already affected by shortages of staple foods.
 - China had its most extensive and long-lasting heatwave since national records began, extending from mid-June to the end of August and resulting in the hottest summer on record by a margin of more than 0.5 °C. It was also the second-driest summer on record.
- **Food insecurity:** Climate change can also have significant impacts on food security by altering agricultural productivity, water availability, and food systems.
 - For example, as of 2021, 2.3 billion people faced food insecurity, of which 924 million people faced severe food insecurity. Projections estimated 767.9 million people facing undernourishment in 2021, 9.8% of the global population. Half of these are in Asia and one third in Africa.
- **Displacement:** As extreme weather events such as floods, hurricanes, and droughts become more frequent and severe, they can lead to the destruction of homes and infrastructure
 - For example, in Somalia, almost 1.2 million people became internally displaced by the catastrophic impacts of drought on pastoral and farming livelihoods and hunger during the year.

- Environment: Climate change has important consequences for ecosystems and the environment.
 - For example, a recent assessment focusing on the unique high-elevation area around the Tibetan Plateau, the largest storehouse of snow and ice outside the Arctic and Antarctic, found that global warming is causing the temperate zone to expand.

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MAHILA SAMMAN SAVING CERTIFICATE (MSSC)

This article covers "Daily Current Affairs" and the topic details "Mahila Samman Saving Certificate (MSSC)". The topic "Mahila Samman Saving Certificate (MSSC)" has relevance in the Governance section for the UPSC CSE exam.

Relevance of the topic "Mahila Samman Saving Certificate (MSSC)"

For Prelims:

What is Mahila Samman Saving Certificate (MSSC)?

What are the features of the scheme?

For Mains:

GS 2: Governance

What is the significance of the financial inclusion of women?

Why in the news?

The Prime Minister has urged women to enroll in Mahila Samman Saving Certificate (MSSC).

What is a Mahila Samman Saving Certificate (MSSC)?

The Mahila Samman Savings Certificate is a one-time savings scheme for women announced by the government in Budget 2023.

What are the aims and objectives of the Mahila Samman Saving Certificate (MSSC)?

Its main objective is to encourage women's involvement in investment and enhance their financial inclusion.

This scheme aims to empower women by providing them with a secure and reliable investment option that can help them meet their financial goals.

By promoting women's financial independence and literacy, this program can also help to strengthen their overall socioeconomic status.

What are the features of the scheme?

- **Guaranteed return:** Being a government government-supported scheme it offers a guaranteed rate of return.
- **Low Deposit limits:** A minimum amount of Rs. 1,000 or any other amount in multiples of Rs. 100.
- **Maturity:** The scheme comes with a lock-in period of two years.
- **Partial withdrawal:** The scheme also offers a partial withdrawal facility to withdraw your balance before maturity.

What is the significance of the financial inclusion of women?

- **Empowerment of Women:** It empowers women to take control of their financial lives, enabling them to save money, invest, and make informed financial decisions.
- **Economic well-being of the family:** With women becoming part of the financial system it leads to financial autonomy and the women are in a state to take control of their lives and family at large.
- **Reduce gender disparities** in income and wealth.
- **Promote gender equality**
- **Improve women's access to education and healthcare.**
- **Reduce the vulnerability of women** related to poverty, and strengthen their overall socio-economic status.

Therefore, this scheme will aid in promoting financial inclusion for women. Financial inclusion is crucial for achieving sustainable development goals and creating a more equitable and just society.

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