



Yojna IAS

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MARCH 2024

WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS

YOJNA IAS WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS
25/03/2024 TO 31/03/2024

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CURRENT AFFAIRS

MARCH 2024

GOVERNMENT BONDS

THIS ARTICLE COVERS 'DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS' AND THE TOPIC DETAILS OF "GOVERNMENT BONDS". THIS TOPIC IS RELEVANT IN THE "ECONOMY" SECTION OF THE UPSC CSE EXAM.

WHY IN THE NEWS?

State governments recently raised a record Rs 50,206 crore through State Development Loan (SDL) Bond auctions, surpassing the Rs 27,810 crore target. This signals a strong demand for state government securities, which are part of Government Securities (G-Sec), issued similarly to Central Government securities.

ABOUT BONDS

- Within the financial system, bonds serve as debt security utilised by governments and corporations to procure capital.
- Functioning similarly to an IOU (an informal acknowledgement of debt), a bond represents a loan agreement between the issuer (borrower) and the investor (the creditor).
- By purchasing a bond, the investor extends credit to the issuer in exchange for a predetermined future repayment with interest.

GOVERNMENT BONDS

Government bonds, often called G-Secs in India, Treasuries in the US, or Gilts in the UK, are considered some of the safest investments. This is because they are **backed by the issuing government's guarantee**, reducing the risk of default. Here's a breakdown of **some common G-Secs**:

- **Treasury Bills (T-Bills)**: These are **short-term loans** issued **at a discount** and redeemed at face value upon maturity. They don't offer regular interest payments, but you earn a return based on the difference between the purchase price and the redemption value.
- **Cash Management Bills (CMBs)**: Introduced in India, CMBs are **ultra-short-term instruments** used by the government to manage temporary cash flow imbalances. Their maturities are even shorter than T-bills, **typically under 91 days**.
- **Dated G-Secs**: These are **longer-term bonds offering fixed or floating interest rates** (coupon

rates) paid twice a year. They provide investors with predictable income streams over periods ranging from 5 to 40 years.

- **State Development Loans (SDLs):** Beyond G-Secs, **some states in India may issue State Development Loans (SDLs)**. These function similarly to dated G-Secs but are backed by the creditworthiness of the issuing state instead of the national government.

BOND YIELD

A bond's yield represents the effective annual return an investor can expect to earn on their investment. Unlike some financial instruments, bond yields are not predetermined but rather possess a dynamic nature. This means they can fluctuate based on the prevailing market price of the bond itself. To delve deeper into bond yields, it's essential to comprehend the fundamental structure of a bond. Each bond is characterised by three key components:

- **Face Value:** This pre-defined sum represents the amount of money that will be repaid to the investor upon the bond's maturity.
- **Coupon Payment:** This signifies the fixed amount of interest distributed to the bondholder at periodic intervals, typically occurring twice a year.
- **Market Price:** In contrast to the face value, the market price of a bond is not fixed. It can deviate based on various factors influencing supply and demand within the secondary market where bonds are traded.

It's important to note that bonds also have a **coupon rate**. This fixed annual interest rate is expressed as a percentage of the bond's face value and serves as the basis for calculating the coupon payment.

THE YIELD CURVE: A GRAPHICAL INSIGHT INTO INVESTOR EXPECTATIONS

- The yield curve is a critical tool in **fixed-income analysis**, presenting a visual representation of interest rates for bonds with varying maturities. In essence, it depicts the returns that investors anticipate for lending their money over different time frames.
- This curve **serves as a valuable economic indicator**, particularly when its shape transforms. A noteworthy shift to an inverted yield curve, where **short-term rates exceed long-term rates**, can signal a potential economic slowdown.
- This inversion suggests that investors may be prioritising the security of shorter-term investments, potentially anticipating future interest rate cuts by the central bank or a weakening economy that could lead to reduced long-term returns.

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE YIELD CURVE

- **Market Demand and Bond Prices:** Consider a scenario where there's only one bond available, but multiple buyers are interested. This competition among buyers can drive up the bond's price during bidding.
- **Alignment with Economy's Interest Rate:** When the prevailing interest rate in the economy differs from the bond's initial coupon payment, market dynamics adjust the bond's yield to align with the current interest rate.
- **Analogy:** When the economy's interest rate exceeds the bond's yield, it's akin to placing a heavier weight on the side, representing the economy's interest rate in a seesaw analogy. This imbalance causes the seesaw to tilt towards the economy's interest rate side, indicating that the bond's yield is comparatively lower.

PRELIMS PRACTISE QUESTIONS

Q.1 In the context of the Indian economy, non-financial debt includes which of the following?

1. Housing loans owed by households
2. Amounts outstanding on credit cards
3. Treasury bills

How many of the statements above are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Answer: C

Q.2 Consider the following statements:

1. The Reserve Bank of India manages and services Government of India Securities but not any State Government Securities.
2. Treasury bills are issued by the Government of India and there are no treasury bills issued by the State Governments.
3. Treasury bills offer are issued at a discount from the par value.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: C

MAINS PRACTISE QUESTION

Q1. Do you think a focus on high bond yields can be detrimental to long-term infrastructure projects in a country? Why or why not?

POWERS OF THE GOVERNOR : CHALLENGES AND VARIOUS REFORM PROPOSALS RELATED TO THE POWERS GIVEN BY THE CONSTITUTION

SOURCE - THE HINDU AND PIB.

GENERAL STUDIES - POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE OF INDIA, SUPREME COURT, MONEY BILL, PRESIDENT, GOVERNOR, ARTICLE 200, ARTICLE 201, ARTICLE 361, POONCHI COMMISSION, VENKATACHALIAH COMMISSION, ARTICLE 31 A, DIRECTIVE PRINCIPLES OF STATE POLICY, DECISIONS TAKEN BY VARIOUS COMMITTEES POWERS OF THE GOVERNOR RELATING TO RECOMMENDATIONS.

WHY IN THE NEWS ?

- Recently, Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. By Ravi K. The refusal to allow Ponmudi to be re-inducted into the Tamil Nadu Cabinet is a completely inappropriate and unconstitutional example of the Governor's power.
- Following the decision of the Supreme Court of India, Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi administered the oath of office and secrecy to Ponmudi.
- Ponmudi's conviction in an alleged corruption case was recently stayed by the Supreme Court of India, resulting in his reinstatement of eligibility to be a member of the Legislative Assembly.
- Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi's stance that reinducting Ponmudi into the Cabinet on the basis of a stay on conviction would be against 'constitutional morality' was not legally sustainable.
- Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi, the stay imposed by a two-judge bench of the Supreme Court on the verdict of conviction given by the Madras High Court was only a kind of interim relief and meant that the conviction 'remained intact, but unexecuted' and that It was not equivalent to being turned over.
- In India, the legal consequences of a criminal conviction in a corruption case (loss of eligibility to be an MLA and, therefore, to be a minister) are suspended as soon as the conviction is stayed.
- As soon as the conviction is stayed, Parliament and State Legislatures reinstate the convicted person's membership, even if their seats have been declared vacant.
- Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi's tampering with the validity of the principles of 'ethics' and good governance is being interpreted as an abuse of the Governor's powers conferred by the Constitution.
- The recent action by the Governor of Tamil Nadu is also being seen as an example of accepting the limits of the powers given to the Rajpal and the failure of the Central Government to act on the increasing cases of pulling up of Governors by the Supreme Court. .
- Recently the Supreme Court of India noted that Ravi disposed of the bills pending with him only after it raised questions over his long inactivity.
- The recent high-handedness of the Governor of Tamil Nadu has brought to the fore the debate that "If the Governor does not follow the Constitution, what should the State do except approach a constitutional court?"
- Given the multiplicity of litigations related to the conduct of Governors in India every day, the Center should have provided remedial measures but this recent incident has once again sparked a debate on the conduct of Governors in India. The style of working of the Governor is not governed by the constitutional provisions of India, but at present the style of working of the Governor is inspired by the vested interests of any political party and given to him by the President of India on the advice of his employers i.e. the Central Government. Is running as per.
- The issue related to the Governor of Tamil Nadu has once again highlighted the issue of maintaining the colonial institution called the Governor. The Supreme Court reminded him that he was not an elected authority and he should not have kept the decision of the elected government



in abeyance.

- Recently, a special session was called by the Speaker of the Tamil Nadu Assembly and in addition, the State Government's decisions regarding sanctioning prosecution of AIADMK ministers, appointments to the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission and premature release of prisoners were approved by the Governor. It was retained by the Government for no apparent reason.

MAJOR CHALLENGES RELATED TO THE POST OF GOVERNOR IN INDIA :



APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNORS :

- The Governor is appointed by the President on the advice of the Central Government in India.
- Since the Governor is appointed by the President on the advice of the Central Government, questions always arise on the political neutrality and impartiality of the Governor in India.
- In India, many times an example is seen where a member of the ruling party at the Center was appointed as the Governor or he was removed or transferred due to political reasons. Which shows the dignity of the post of Governor in India and his importance. This itself is seen as a weakness of stability in the state.

POWERS AND ROLE OF THE GOVERNOR IN INDIA :

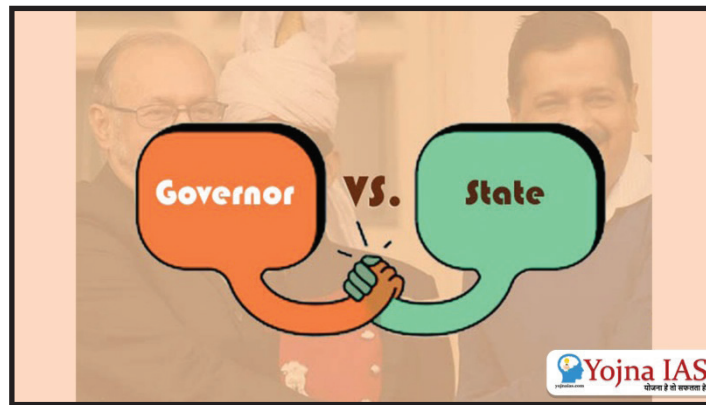
- The Constitution of India has provided various types of powers and various roles to the Governor.
- In India, the Governor has the powers to give assent to the bills passed by the state legislature, appoint the Chief Minister and other ministers, send reports to the President on various subjects of the state and discharge special responsibilities in some states.
- The roles and powers given to the Governor by the Constitution are often at the discretion of the Governor, which sometimes leads to conflict between the elected state government and the Governor in many states in India.



ACCOUNTABILITY AND IMMUNITY OF GOVERNORS :

- The Governor is considered equivalent to the President in the respective state government in India.
- In the context of the Governor, it has often been seen that he is seen acting as an agent of the Central Government.
- Governors in India are often appointed to check the power of the respective elected state governments.
- In India, the Governor can be removed from his post by the President with the consent of the Central Government.
- In reality, Governors in India are confident that as long as they continue to work in accordance with the Central Government, they will remain in office.
- According to Article 361 of the Constitution of India, the Governor of India is not answerable to the courts for his actions while in office as the head of the state.

POWERS OF THE GOVERNOR GIVEN BY THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION :



The Constitution of India mentions the powers of the Governor which are defined by Article 200 and Article 201 of the Constitution with respect to passing of bills.

According to Article 200 and Article 201 of the Constitution, when a Bill is presented to the Governor by the State Legislature, **They have the following options:-**

- He can give assent to the bill, which means the bill becomes an act or law.
- He cannot give his assent to the bill or can stop the bill, which means that the said bill has been repealed.
- He may send back to the State Legislature any Bill other than a Money Bill or some provision of that Bill with a message requesting reconsideration of it.
- If the said bill is passed again by the state legislature with or without amendments, then the Governor has to give his assent to that bill.
- The Governor may reserve a Bill for the consideration of the President, who may either assent to the Bill or withhold his assent, or may direct the Governor to send the Bill back to the State Legislature for reconsideration. .
- If any bill of any state in India can jeopardize the position of the High Court of that state, then it is mandatory for the Governor to stop that bill.
- It is within the discretion of the Governor to decide whether any Bill is against the provisions of the Constitution of India, the Directive Principles of State Policy or the larger interest of the country or is of serious national importance, or relates to compulsory acquisition of property under Article 31A of the Constitution. It happens.

ARGUMENTS TO BE PRESENTED IN FAVOR AND AGAINST ABOLISHING THE POST OF GOVERNOR IN INDIA :

- In India, when Governors behave inappropriately and unconstitutionally, it is often said that the post of Governor should be completely abolished in India. However this argument is both imprudent and unnecessary.
- The reasoning behind this being called imprudent is that because Westminster parliamentary democracy requires the presence of both the head of state and the head of government and abolishing the post of Governor would be tantamount to abolishing that entire parliamentary system. .
- The logic behind calling it unnecessary is that viable alternatives like judicial intervention or constitutional reform already exist. Therefore, it is unnecessary to abolish the post of Governor in India.

VIEWS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY REGARDING THE POST OF GOVERNOR IN INDIA :



- Some members of the Constituent Assembly in India, such as Dakshinayani Velayudhan, Vishwanath Das and H.V. Kamath was a strong critic of the provisions related to governors. His argument was that since the draft Constitution Government of India Act 1935 Where the center has been given too much power and the autonomy of the states has been reduced. Therefore, they also feared that the Governor would act as an agent of the Center and interfere in the work of the State Governments.
- Chief architect of the Constitution Dr.B.R. Ambedkar Had defended the existing provisions related to Governors. His argument was that there was little time to make changes to the Government of India Act 1935 and that governors were to act only in collaboration with state governments, not to rule or dominate them. The apprehension that the Governor would act according to the Centre, the possibility of which was highlighted by many members of the Constituent Assembly, was rejected by Dr. Ambedkar. He also did not say anything about why no reforms were made in the provisions related to the Governor, whereas many provisions of the Government of India Act 1935 were incorporated in the Constitution with necessary reforms.

IMPORTANT REFORMS RELATED TO THE GOVERNOR AT PRESENT :



JUDICIAL INTERVENTION :

- The Supreme Court can continue to monitor the conduct of governors and issue directions or observations to ensure that they act in accordance with the Constitution and law. This can help in preventing arbitrary or partisan actions of Governors and maintaining the federal principle or federal form of Indian polity.

TO IMPROVE THE CURRENT APPOINTMENT AND REMOVAL PROCESS :

- The existing Constitution of India can also be amended to change the process of appointment and removal of Governors in India, as suggested by the authors of 'Heads Held High'. This could include a more transparent and consultative mechanism, such as a collegium or parliamentary committee, which could select candidates on the basis of merit and suitability. The removal of governors could also be facilitated by requiring a resolution of the state legislature or a judicial inquiry. Can be made difficult.

MAKING THE GOVERNOR ACCOUNTABLE TO THE STATE BY GIVING HIM THE SAME STATUS AS THE PRESIDENT :

- The Governor can be made accountable to the State Legislature in the same way as the President is accountable to the Union Parliament. Arrangements like appointment by election and removal by impeachment can also be made for the Governor in India.

MAKING THE GOVERNOR AN ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE :

- The Governor may be an elected representative of the state rather than a person nominated by the Central Government. This can increase the accountability and legitimacy of this post and reduce the scope for interference or influence by the Centre. The Governor may be elected by the state legislature or by the people of the state, as in the case of the election of the President in India.

TO IMPEACH AND REMOVE FROM OFFICE :

- The Governor can be removed from his office by impeachment by the State Legislature on the grounds of violation of the Constitution or misconduct. By which it can provide checks and balances on the power and authority of the Governor and prevent any misuse of the office of the Governor. The process of impeaching the Governor can be modeled on the same lines as the process of impeaching the President, where a majority of the total membership and a two-thirds majority of the members present and voting in both Houses of the State Legislature are required in India.

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS RELATED TO THE GOVERNOR SUGGESTED BY THE SUPREME COURT AND VARIOUS COMMITTEES IN INDIA :

Some constitutional reforms related to the post of Governor have been suggested from time to time by the Supreme Court and various committees in India. Which are as follows –

RECOMMENDATIONS OF SARKARIA COMMISSION (1988) :

- The Governor should be appointed by the President after consultation with the Chief Minister of the concerned state.
- The Governor must be a person of eminence in some field of public life and must not belong to the State to which he is appointed.

- Except in rare and compelling circumstances, the Governor should not be removed before the completion of his term.
- The Governor should act as a bridge between the Center and the State and not as an agent of the Centre.
- The Governor should exercise his discretionary powers in a restrained and judicious manner and should not use them to weaken the democratic process but should use them to strengthen the democratic process of India.



SUGGESTIONS OF VENKATACHALIAH COMMISSION (2002) :

- The process of appointment of governors should be entrusted to a committee, consisting of the Prime Minister, Home Minister, Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the Chief Minister of the concerned state in India.
- The Governor in India should be allowed to serve a full term of five years unless he resigns or is removed by the President on the grounds of misbehavior or incompetence.
- The Central Government must consult the Chief Minister of the concerned state before taking any action related to the removal of the Governor in India.
- The Governor should also not interfere in the daily administration of the state. He should act as a friend, philosopher and guide of the state government and use his discretionary powers sparingly.

SUGGESTION OF PUNCHHI COMMISSION (2010) :

- Punchhi Commission related to Governors in India recommended removing the phrase 'during the pleasure of the President' from the Constitution, according to which the Governor can be removed at the pleasure of the Central Government.
- The Punchhi Commission also suggested that the Governor should be removed from his post only by a resolution of the state legislature, which would ensure greater stability and autonomy for any state in India.

B.P. JUDGMENT OF THE SUPREME COURT OF INDIA IN SINGHAL V. UNION OF INDIA (2010):

- B.P. Supreme Court of India in Singhal v. Union of India (2010) The decision regarding the post of Governor said that the President can remove the Governor at any time and without assigning any reason. This process can happen in India because the Governor holds his office 'during the pleasure of the President' under Article 156(1) of the Constitution of India. However, the Supreme Court also said that the removal of any person from the post of Governor should not be done in an arbitrary manner or on the basis of any improper reasons, but constitutional methods should be adopted for removing the Governor from the post in India.

CONCLUSION / PATH TO SOLUTION :

- The ongoing debate over the role of governors in India highlights the need for very subtle reforms, while complete abolition of the post is considered unwise. Therefore, transparent appointment of Governors in India, increase in their ex-officio accountability and limited discretionary powers will have to be used with restraint.
- It is extremely important to strike a balance between the interests of the State and the Center in India to ensure effective functioning of the office of the Governor without undermining the democratic principles or constitutional values, as the Governor in any State is merely a rubber stamp. Or Rajpal is not just an agent of the Central Government, rather the Rajpal often uses his wisdom and discretionary powers in collaboration with the State Government and the Chief Minister of the concerned State to ensure better administration in that State and to ensure a better, Develop sensible administrative system and also work towards making the state a developed state.
- Therefore, any position is relative to time. If with the changing times there is any attempt to transform the powers related to that post into a state with a better democratic system, then it is an indicator of India's democracy as well as its governance system imbued with constitutional values. Due to which the backbone of a stable, democratic, egalitarian state system in the state will be strengthened and the post of Governor in India will also be able to maintain its dignity, its constitutional values and its prestige. By coordinating with the Chief Minister and Cabinet of the concerned state, the Governor will be able to provide a transparent and just governance system to that state. Because whenever a government is irrational and inclined towards dictatorship, the whip of justice sitting on the post of Governor plays an important role in making that elected government full of judicial character and rational.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR PRELIMINARY EXAM :

Q.1. Consider the following statements regarding the Governor in India.

1. According to the Punchhi Commission, the Governor should be appointed by the President after consultation with the Chief Minister of the concerned state.
2. According to the Sarkaria Commission, the process of appointment of governors in India should be entrusted to a committee, which should include the Prime Minister, Home Minister, Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the Chief Minister of the concerned state.
3. The Governor is appointed by the President on the advice of the Central Government in India.
4. The Governor can send back to the State Legislature a Money Bill as well as any Bill or any Bill with a message requesting reconsideration of certain provisions of that Bill in India.

Which of the above statements is/are correct ?

- (A) Only 1 and 3
- (B) Only 2 and 4
- (C) Only 2
- (D) Only 3

Answer – (D)

PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAIN EXAM :

- Q.1. Outlining the process of appointment of Governor in India, discuss in detail the challenges related to the post of Governor in the light of the suggestions of various commissions related to the Governor and also present solutions to those challenges.

CINEMATOGRAPH (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023 GETS APPROVED BY THE PARLIAMENT

THIS ARTICLE COVERS 'DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS' AND THE TOPIC DETAILS OF "CINEMATOGRAPH (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023 GETS APPROVED BY THE PARLIAMENT". THIS TOPIC IS RELEVANT IN THE "POLITY AND GOVERNANCE" SECTION OF THE UPSC CSE EXAM.

WHY IN THE NEWS?

The Cinematograph (Amendment) Bill, 2023, was recently approved by both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. This bill extends the jurisdiction of the law beyond censorship to encompass copyright matters and introduces rigorous measures against piracy. Its primary objective is to make amendments to the current Cinematograph Act of 1952.

SIGNIFICANT PROVISIONS OF THE BILL

Combating Film Piracy

- **Stiffer Penalties:** The bill aims to deter film piracy by introducing stricter punishments for unauthorised recording and distribution of copyrighted content. Offenders could face jail terms ranging from 3 months to 3 years and fines between Rs. 3 lakhs and 5% of the film's production cost.

Streamlined Television and Online Broadcasting

- **Recertification for Other Media:** Previously, adult-rated films were banned from television. Broadcasters often made voluntary cuts and sought re-certification for a U/A rating from the CBFC. The bill formalises this practice, allowing films to be recertified for television and "other media" platforms.
- **Perpetual Validity of Certificates:** The 10-year validity period for CBFC certificates has been removed, granting them perpetual validity. This eliminates the need for filmmakers to re-certify their films after a decade.

Expanding Copyright Protection

- **Beyond Censorship:** This amendment broadens the scope of the Cinematograph Act, which currently focuses primarily on censorship, to encompass copyright protection. This aligns with the evolving film distribution ecosystem and aims to safeguard the intellectual property rights of filmmakers and content creators.

Limited Government Intervention in CBFC Decisions

- **CBFC's Autonomy:** The bill emphasises the autonomy of the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC). This move aligns with the 2000 Supreme Court judgement in K.M. Shankarappa vs Union of India, which limited the government's revisional powers over CBFC decisions.

Enhanced Age-Appropriate Viewing

- **Granular Age Ratings:** The amendment introduces a new age rating system for films that require parental guidance. The current U/A category will be **split into three distinct categories:**
 1. U/A 7+,

2. U/A 13+,

3. U/A 16+

This aligns with age-based classifications already existing for streaming platforms and recommendations put forward by the **Shyam Benegal Committee**.

THE NEED FOR A MODERN FILM LAW

The Indian film industry faces a significant challenge: rampant online piracy. While the Cinematograph Act of 1952 governs film certification for theatrical release, it lacks provisions to address the piracy crisis plaguing the digital age.

Limitations of the Existing Law

- The 1952 Act focuses solely on theatrical releases, leaving online content vulnerable to piracy.
- Its age-based film certification categories are limited, lacking the granularity needed for today's diverse audience.

The Rise of Piracy and OTT Platforms

- India has emerged as a global leader in pirated content consumption, highlighting the urgency for legislative action.
- The booming OTT industry operates under separate regulations, creating inconsistencies in content governance.

Efforts Towards Modernization

- Recognising these issues, the government has made attempts to update the Cinematograph Act.
- Committees led by Justice Mukul Mudgal and filmmaker Shyam Benegal were formed to address film certification and legal frameworks.

The Need for a Comprehensive Solution

- These efforts underscore the need for a modernised film law that effectively combats piracy across all platforms – theatrical, online, and emerging media.
- A robust legal framework is crucial to safeguard intellectual property rights, promote content creation, and ensure a healthy and sustainable film industry in India.

ABOUT THE CINEMATOGRAPH ACT OF 1952

The Cinematograph Act of 1952 serves as a cornerstone for film regulation in India. Enacted by the Parliament, it aims to ensure that films exhibited publicly adhere to societal norms and sensitivities.

Key Provisions

- **Certification Guidelines:** The Act establishes principles for film certification, considering factors like national security, public order, decency, and respect for the judiciary.
- **Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC):** Section 3 empowers the establishment of the CBFC, popularly known as the Censor Board. This statutory body under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting regulates film exhibitions by following the Act's provisions.
- **Appellate Tribunal:** The Act allows for the formation of an Appellate Tribunal to address appeals against decisions made by the CBFC.

MAINS PRACTISE QUESTION

Q1. How important is it for cinematic laws to strike a balance between artistic freedom and societal norms, especially concerning content available on OTT platforms?

RELEVANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL IN THE CURRENT GEOPOLITICAL CONTEXT

UN Security Council calls for cease – fire in Gaza

SOURCE – THE HINDU AND PIB

GENERAL STUDIES – INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, UNITED NATIONS, UN SECURITY COUNCIL IMPORTANCE AND POWERS, NEED FOR CHANGE IN UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

WHY IN THE NEWS ?



- Recently, on 25 March 2024, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has called for an ‘immediate ceasefire’ and the release of all hostages by Hamas, five and a half months after Israel launched its attack on Gaza.
- About 32,000 Palestinian civilians have been killed and about 74,000 people have been injured in the Gaza-Israel war.
- In this war, more than 90 percent of Gaza’s population has been displaced and almost all the population is in dire straits of starvation.
- America, which has vetoed every resolution in the United Nations for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, remained absent from this voting. This indicates a change in the policy of the Biden administration regarding this war.

- All UNSC members, including Britain, have voted in favor of the ceasefire proposal.
- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has canceled a previously scheduled visit to Washington by two of his close Cabinet aides in anger over a ceasefire proposal, and by China and Russia in the context of the unconditional release of hostages pending a ceasefire. This supported proposal has also been strongly criticized.
- About 1,200 Israeli civilians were killed after Hamas declared a cross-border war on October 7, 2023.
- On the day of the attack on Israel by Hamas, the entire world was in sympathy and solidarity with Israel. But what Israel did in the next few months to punish the entire population of Gaza for the actions of Hamas has turned international opinion against it.
- In such a situation, if Israel makes an objective assessment of the situation on humanitarian grounds, then it should immediately follow the UNSC resolution and declare a cease – fire.

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL (UNSC) :

- The United Nations Security Council is considered the largest forum for managing the security of various countries at the global level.
- The responsibility of maintaining peace and order in the world and ensuring compliance with the principle of collective security rests with the United Nations Security Council.
- The temporary membership of the United Nations Security Council changes from time to time.

INTRODUCTION TO THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL :



- The United Nations Security Council is the most important body of the United Nations, which was formed in the year 1945 during the Second World War.
- Headquarters of the United Nations Security Council located in New York City.
- The Security Council has five permanent members – the United States, China, France, Russia, and the United Kingdom (UK) – collectively known as the P5.
- The United Nations Security Council originally had only 11 member countries, which was expanded in the year 1965 into an international organization with members from 15 countries.
- The permanent member countries of the Security Council have the power of veto, while apart from these permanent member countries, 10 other countries who are included in the Security

Council as temporary members for two years, have the power of veto. Is not provided.

- The membership of these countries on the Security Council was designed to reflect the post-World War II balance of power.

IMPORTANCE AND POWERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL :

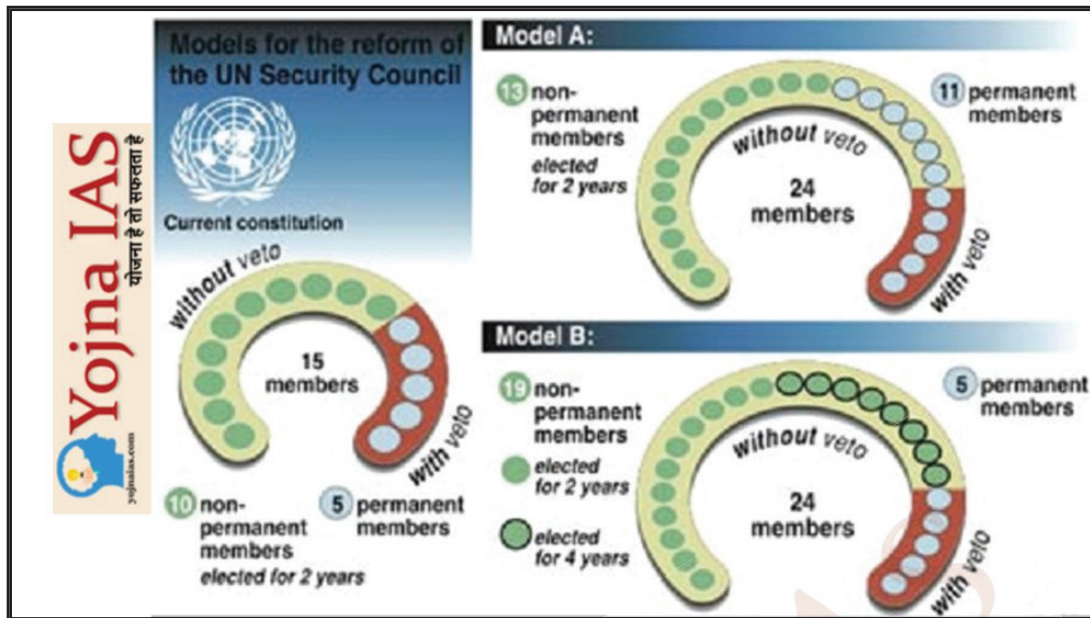
- The United Nations Security Council is the most powerful body of the United Nations whose primary responsibility is to maintain international peace and security of all countries.
- Its main powers also include contributing to peacekeeping operations, enforcing international sanctions and taking military action through Security Council resolutions.
- It is the only UN body with the authority to issue resolutions binding on UN Security Council member states.
- It was established through a Charter of the United Nations in which all member states are bound to follow the decisions of the Security Council.
- Currently the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council have the right to veto power. **Veto power means – ‘Prohibition power’.**
- If any one permanent member does not agree with the decision of the permanent members, then he can stop that decision by using veto power.

BENEFITS OF GETTING PERMANENT MEMBERSHIP IN THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL :



- The United Nations Security Council is a major decision-making body of the United Nations.
- To impose any sanctions on any country or to implement any decision of the International Court of Justice, member states require the support of the Security Council.
- By getting India permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council, India may be able to have a stronger say in global geopolitics.
- After getting permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council, India will also get the power of veto power.
- Permanent membership of the Security Council will help strengthen a mechanism to address external security threats and state-sponsored terrorism against India.

NEED FOR CHANGE IN THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL IN PRESENT ERA :



- The United Nations Security Council is the principal global body for maintaining international peace and security, but it is in constant need of reform in order to better respond to the diverse challenges arising globally in the twenty-first century.
- In the twenty-first century, countries all over the world are facing global challenges like various types of cyber crimes, bio-crimes and the increasing spread of nuclear bombs. In such a situation, there is a need for comprehensive changes in the United Nations Security Council as per the trends of increasing crimes at present.
- The United Nations Security Council was established in 1945 according to geopolitics. Present-day geopolitics is now quite different in nature from the backdrop of the Second World War.
- The need for reform has been felt in the world since the end of the Cold War. It requires a number of reforms, the most important of which are organizational structure and procedural reforms.
- At present, Europe has the highest representation among the five permanent countries of the United Nations Security Council. Whereas only 5 percent of the total world population resides in Europe.
- No country from Africa and South America is a permanent member of the Security Council. Whereas more than 50 percent of the work of the United Nations is related to African countries alone.
- Despite playing an important role in peacekeeping operations at the global level, the stance of other countries like India is being ignored by the current members. India, the world's largest and emerging fifth economic superpower, needs permanent membership in it as per the present times. Is.
- There is a need to reform the structure of the United Nations because it is dominated by America, while at the global level other countries also stand as emerging economic superpowers in relation to America. America has also been ignoring the United Nations and other international organizations on the strength of its military and economic power, which no economic superpower country can tolerate at present. Therefore, there is an urgent need to make changes in this organization according to the global needs of the present time and the changing nature of crimes.

ARGUMENTS GIVEN IN FAVOR OF INDIA GETTING PERMANENT MEMBERSHIP IN THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL :



- India is the second most populous country in the world, with a population of about one billion and forty crore. Where about 1/5th of the total population of the world resides.
- At present, India is an emerging economic superpower of the world. India's growing status as an economic superpower on the global stage further strengthens India's claims for permanent membership of the UN Security Council. At present India is the fifth largest economy in the world. Apart from this, India is also among the three largest economies of the world in terms of GDP based on PPP.
- India is now counted among the most influential countries in economic organizations like WTO, BRICS and G-20.
- India has also successfully hosted an economic organization like G-20 in the year 2023.
- India's foreign policy has historically been to promote world peace and brotherhood, and India has always believed in the concept of "**Vasudeva Kutumbkam**".
- India is also the country sending the largest number of troops to the United Nations.

CONCLUSION / PATH TO SOLUTION :

- India's temporary membership of the United Nations Security Council will certainly be an important effort to move towards permanent membership.
- Permanent membership will bring India at par with America, Britain, France, China and Russia at the level of global politics.
- Therefore, India also needs to make more serious efforts for permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council.
- The United States has historically used its veto power to shield Israel from Security Council decisions.
- Nearly a third of its negative votes since 1972 have been on resolutions critical of Israel.
- China has used the veto more frequently in recent years, although it has historically been more

restrained than the United States or Russia, with Beijing now rejecting twenty resolutions.

- The full name of the Soviet Union was the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Russia was the principal republic of the USSR.
- Since the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, China and Russia have vetoed more than a quarter of the time. In contrast, France and the United Kingdom (Britain) have not used their veto power since 1989 and have also asked other P5 members to use it less.
- The ongoing war between Israel and Hamas is increasing tensions in Israel's relations with its closest allies, including the United States.
- If Israel continues this war, it will further increase its domestic and international challenges. In addition, many more lives will be lost in the unprotected, battered, besieged, bombed Gaza Strip.
- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu now has only two options.
- It should seriously consider the appeal of the UNSC and stop this war, allow rapid humanitarian assistance to Gaza and continue dialogue and dialogue with Hamas through international mediators for the release of all hostages and withdrawal of its forces from the Gaza Strip. Keep. Or
- Benjamin Netanyahu should push his country Israel into the darkness of permanent war.
- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu should continue negotiations and dialogue with Hamas through international mediators for the withdrawal of its forces, following the UN Security Council's call for a ceasefire in Gaza, in order to save more lives. Can be saved and human sensibilities, human identities and humanity can be protected on this earth.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR PRELIMINARY EXAM :

Q.1. Consider the following statements regarding the United Nations Security Council.

1. Headquarters of the United Nations Security Council in the United States Washington DC. Located in the city.
2. The Security Council has five permanent members – the United States, China, France, Russia, and the United Kingdom (UK) – collectively known as the P5.
3. It was formed in the year 1943 during the Second World War.
4. The permanent member countries of the Security Council have the power of veto, while the non-permanent member countries do not have the power of veto.

Which of the above statement / statements is/are correct?

- (A). Only 1 and 3
- (B). Only 2 and 4
- (C). Only 1 and 2
- (D). Only 2 and 4

Answer – (B)

PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAIN EXAM :

Q.1. Explaining the 'Power of Veto', Discuss what is the relevance of the work and powers of the United Nations Security Council in the current geopolitical context ? Is there a need to change its current form ? Give a logical answer.

ASI TO DELIST 18 PROTECTED MONUMENTS

THIS ARTICLE COVERS 'DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS' AND THE TOPIC DETAILS OF "ASI TO DELIST 18 PROTECTED MONUMENTS MAINS PRACTICE QUESTIONS". THIS TOPIC IS RELEVANT IN THE "HISTORY" SECTION OF THE UPSC CSE EXAM.

WHY IN THE NEWS?

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has chosen to remove 18 centrally protected monuments from its list, determining that they lack national significance. These 18 monuments were previously categorised by the ASI as untraceable on an earlier list.

DELISTING OF MONUMENTS

- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), operating **under the Union Ministry of Culture**, holds responsibility for safeguarding and preserving specific monuments and archaeological sites deemed of national significance.
- This **duty is outlined in The Ancient Monuments Preservation Act of 1904** and The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act 1958 (**AMASR Act**).
- Delisting a monument entails its exclusion from ASI's conservation, protection, and maintenance efforts. **According to the AMASR Act, construction-related activities are prohibited around protected sites.** Once delisted, the area becomes open to regular construction and urbanisation endeavours.
- The list of protected monuments undergoes changes through additions and removals. **Presently, ASI oversees 3,693 monuments**, which will decrease to 3,675 after the ongoing delisting process concludes in the coming weeks. This marks the first significant delisting endeavour in several decades.
- According to **Section 35 of the AMASR Act, if the Central Government deems that any ancient or historical monument** or archaeological site and remains previously declared as nationally significant **no longer holds such importance, it reserves the right to declare** through official notification in the Official Gazette **that the said monument or site has ceased to be of national importance** for the purposes **outlined in the AMASR Act.**

RATIONALE BEHIND DELISTING

The rationale behind delisting stems from two primary challenges:

- **Enigma of Untraceable Monuments:** Over time, some monuments, particularly smaller or lesser-known ones, have vanished due to the relentless march of urbanisation, neglect, or the construction of dams and reservoirs. In some cases, the precise location or current state of these monuments remains a mystery, making preservation efforts impractical.
- **Haunting Absence of Missing Monuments:** A report from the Ministry of Culture submitted in December 2022 painted a concerning picture. It revealed that a staggering 50 of India's 3,693 centrally protected monuments were missing. This highlights the immense challenges faced in safeguarding historical sites across the vast expanse of the country.

DEVELOPMENT VS. PRESERVATION

- The delisting exercise, however, has triggered concerns that extend far beyond mere numbers. Critics argue that delisting signifies a potential loss of irreplaceable historical treasures. These monuments, even the smaller ones, represent invaluable threads in the tapestry of India's rich heritage. Losing them would be akin to erasing a part of the nation's collective memory.
- The delisting exercise also underscores the ongoing tension between development and heritage conservation. As India strides towards progress, infrastructure needs and rapid urbanisation often create pressure on historical sites. Striking a harmonious balance between these competing priorities remains a complex challenge.

CHARTING A COURSE FOR THE FUTURE: BEYOND DELISTING

The delisting exercise serves as a stark reminder of the multifaceted challenges in safeguarding India's cultural heritage. To navigate this complex landscape effectively, a multi-pronged approach is necessary:

- **Strengthening Documentation:** Creating and maintaining comprehensive records of monuments, including their location, historical significance, and current condition, is crucial. Robust documentation can aid in better tracking and protection of these historical treasures.
- **Resource Allocation:** Preserving historical sites requires adequate funding for security personnel, conservation efforts, and restoration projects. Prioritising budgetary allocation for ASI's activities is essential for safeguarding these irreplaceable monuments.
- **Public Awareness and Community Engagement:** Raising public awareness about the importance of preserving cultural heritage is vital. Fostering a sense of community ownership and encouraging public participation in protecting historical sites can create a powerful bulwark against neglect and destruction.

ABOUT ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND REMAINS ACT, 1958 (AMASR ACT)

- **Preserves Historical Sites:** The AMASR Act aims to protect ancient and historical monuments, archaeological sites, and remains considered nationally important.
- **Regulates Archaeological Activities:** The Act regulates archaeological excavations to ensure responsible exploration and preservation of historical artefacts.
- **Protects Sculptures and Artefacts:** It safeguards sculptures, carvings, and other objects of historical significance.
- **Establishes ASI as Custodian:** The Act establishes the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) as the official custodian responsible for managing and maintaining protected monuments.
- **Limits Construction Around Monuments:** To prevent damage from development activities, the Act prohibits construction within a 100-metre radius of protected monuments (known as the "prohibited area"). This restriction applies even to public works projects, with limited exceptions.
- **Safeguarding Iconic Monuments:** The AMASR Act provides protection to iconic Indian monuments like the Taj Mahal, Ajanta Caves, Sanchi Stupa, and Konark Sun Temple.

MAINS PRACTISE QUESTIONS

- Q1. In what ways do monuments provide insights into the socio-economic structures, religious beliefs, and political systems of ancient civilisations?
- Q2. What are the potential economic repercussions of neglecting or failing to adequately preserve historically significant monuments, both in terms of tourism revenue and broader economic development?

PREVENTION OF MONEY LAUNDERING ACT (PMLA) 2002 AND ARREST OF CHIEF MINISTER IN INDIA

SOURCE – THE HINDU AND PIB.
GENERAL STUDIES PAPER 2 – POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

WHY IN THE NEWS?



- Recently, on March 22, 2024, a Delhi court sent Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to the custody of India's central agency Enforcement Directorate (ED) till March 28, 2024 in the 'Delhi Liquor Policy' case.
- In the history of India's democratic system, Arvind Kejriwal has become the first Chief Minister of the country to be arrested by India's central agency Enforcement Directorate while holding the post of Chief Minister.
- India's central agency Enforcement Directorate told the court that "Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal is the mastermind of the Delhi liquor policy scam and the mastermind and main accused of this scam.
- Prior to this case, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren had resigned from the post of Chief Minister of Jharkhand before being arrested by the ED.

BACKGROUND OF DELHI LIQUOR POLICY/ DELHI EXCISE POLICY SCAM :

- Two cases related to the Delhi Liquor Policy scam have been registered in India – one by the CBI,

and the other by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a case of alleged money laundering.

- The Delhi Liquor Policy scam came to light following a report submitted by Delhi Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar to Lieutenant Governor Vinay Kumar Saxena in July 2022, which alleged procedural lapses in the formulation of the Delhi Excise Policy 2021 – 22.
- Delhi Excise Policy Case 2021 – 22 came into force in Delhi in November 2021, but this policy was abolished in July 2022.
- Under the Delhi Excise Policy Case 2021 – 22, it has been alleged that “the leaders of Aam Aadmi Party’s Delhi government have sought exemption from license fee from liquor mafia and operators associated with the liquor business and also to extend its period – – Bribes were taken by the Delhi government in lieu of providing preferential treatment such as relief due to the disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the bribe money was used to fund assembly elections in Punjab and Goa in early 2022 and these This was done to influence the elections”.
- India’s central agency Enforcement Directorate also alleged that the scam was dictated by a policy of 12% profit in lieu of 6% kickback to give the wholesale liquor business to private individuals and entities instead of government shops designated by the Delhi government.

MEANING OF MONEY LAUNDERING :

- Money laundering is a process that transforms illegally earned money or black money in such a way that it appears to have been obtained from legitimate sources or it becomes legitimate money.
- Money laundering in India is not only an independent crime but also a process to cover up the crime of hiding black money already committed.
- Money laundering’ The term originated from mafia groups in the United States. Mafia groups earned huge amounts of money from extortion, gambling, etc. and this money was disguised as legitimate sources (e.g. laundromats). Money laundering became a concern in the United States around the 1980s.
- “Money Laundering” Popularly known as hawala transactions in India. It was most popular in India during the 1990s when the names of many leaders were exposed in it.
- Money laundering refers to disguising black money earned illegally as legitimate money. Money laundering is a way of hiding money obtained illegally.
- The money obtained through money laundering is invested in such works or in such investments that even the investigating agencies are not able to trace the main source of the money.
- It is said that a person who misappropriated money in the process of laundering money obtained illegally is a “launderer”.
- In the process of money laundering, black money earned through illegal means turns white and returns to its rightful owner in the form of legal tender.

MONEY LAUNDERING : AN ORGANIZED CRIME :

- There is a very deep connection between money laundering and organized crime. Money launderers earn huge profits from drug trafficking, international counterfeiting, arms smuggling etc.
- The risk of criminals being caught is eliminated once these profits are converted into illegal assets through money laundering. In such situations, new crimes are committed.

PREVENTION OF MONEY LAUNDERING ACT (PMLA) 2002 IN INDIA :

- The Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) was passed in 2002. After that this Act was implemented on 1 July 2005.
- PMLA – 2002 was enacted in response to India's global commitment (Vienna Convention) to combat money laundering.
- The Money Laundering Act in India was enacted in 2002, but has been amended 3 times (2005, 2009 and 2012). The last amendment made in it in the year 2012 got the assent of the President on January 3, 2013 and this law came into force across India from February 15, 2013.
- The PMLA (Amendment) Act, 2012 has included concealment, acquisition and possession of money and use of proceeds of crime in the list of offenses.
- PMLA, RBI, SEBI and Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) were brought under PMLA in 2002 and hence all the provisions under this Act apply to all financial institutions, banks, mutual funds, insurance companies and their financial intermediaries. Are.
- According to PMLA – 2002 “Any person or entity who, directly or indirectly, attempts to engage or knowingly aids or knowingly is a party or is actually involved in any process or activity involving the proceeds of crime, including concealing, possessing, acquiring or using it and presenting it as untainted property or claiming it to be untainted property, he shall be guilty of the offense of money laundering”.
- The main objective of this Act is to prevent money laundering. Its objective is to prevent the use of black money in economic crimes, to seize property involved in or derived from money laundering and to curb other crimes related to money laundering. The Enforcement Directorate is responsible for investigating crimes under this Act.
- The provision of punishment under PMLA is: Under PMLA, property earned through the crime of money laundering is confiscated. Under this, there is a provision for rigorous imprisonment for at least 3 years to 7 years.

CENTRAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (CBI) :

- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in India was established on 1 April 1963.
- The Central Bureau of Investigation is a major investigating agency of the Government of India.
- It has been established to investigate various types of cases related to criminal and national security in India.
- The Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) is governed by the Act this in India
- its establishment of anti-corruption Santhanam Committee (1962-1964) Was done on the suggestions of.
- Presently CBI works under the Department of Personnel, Ministry of Personnel, Pensions and Public Grievances, Government of India.

MAIN FUNCTIONS OF CENTRAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (CBI) :

- The main function of the Central Bureau of Investigation in India is to investigate cases of corruption, bribery and misconduct by Central Government employees under the Prevention of Corruption Act against Indian officials, public sector undertakings, corporations and bodies owned or controlled by the Government of India.
- One of the main functions of the Central Bureau of Investigation in India is to investigate cases related to violation of fiscal and economic laws, i.e., cases related to violation of laws related to

export and import controls, customs and central excise, income tax and foreign exchange regulations. To do. For example – bank related fraud. Matters relating to Foreign Exchange Violation, Counterfeit Indian Currency Notes and Import-Export in India.

ENFORCEMENT DIRECTORATE :

- The Enforcement Directorate was established by the Central Government in 1956 In India.
- It is a special financial investigation agency under the Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, whose headquarters is located in New Delhi.
- The major functions of the Enforcement Directorate include; Involves investigating cases related to violations of FEMA, 1999, “Hawala” transactions and violations of foreign exchange rules and other types of violations under FEMA.
- The Enforcement Directorate is a multi-disciplinary organization set up to investigate the crimes of money laundering and violations of foreign exchange laws.
- Money laundering in India was earlier dealt with under the provisions of the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1973 but later FERA was replaced by FEMA.

MAIN FUNCTIONS OF ENFORCEMENT DIRECTORATE :

The main functions of the Enforcement Directorate are as follows –

The Enforcement Directorate in India investigates cases related to suspected violations under the provisions of FEMA. The following cases have been included in cases relating to suspected cases of violation of laws in India:–

1. Overestimating the export price and underestimating the import price.
 2. Transactions done under Hawala.
 3. Buying property abroad outside India.
 4. Illegal collection of large amounts of foreign currency.
 5. Illegal trading in foreign currency.
 6. Matters relating to violation of foreign exchange rules and other types of violations under FEMA.
- The Enforcement Directorate (ED) in India first collects intelligence regarding a case of violation under FEMA's 1999 laws, and then shares it with case-related agencies in India. The Enforcement Directorate in India receives intelligence and secret information from complaints etc. through the intelligence agencies of the Center and the state concerned.
 - The Enforcement Directorate in India has the power to attach or confiscate the property of those found guilty of violating FEMA.
 - “Attachment of property” under Chapter III of the Money Laundering Act [Section 2 (1) (D)] means confiscation of property, includes transfer or conversion of property to another person and prohibition of sale of the said property; Is.
 - Against those who violate this rule under the Money Laundering Act; It also includes carrying out search, seizure, arrest, and prosecution actions etc.
 - The Money Laundering Act provides for the legal extradition of criminals from the respective states for the transfer of money laundering as well as completion of proceedings related to the transfer of criminals.
 - The Enforcement Directorate in India is empowered to adjudicate cases of violation of the erstwhile FERA Act 1973 and subsequent FEMA, 1999 in India and decide the penalty imposed at

the conclusion of settlement proceedings.

- Thus, the main objectives of setting up the Enforcement Directorate include taking legal action against those involved in money laundering in the country, which includes confiscating their assets.

CONCLUSION :



- The arrest of Delhi Chief Minister and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Arvind Kejriwal by the Enforcement Directorate in India raises questions about Indian democracy and the socialist nature of India.
- The arrest of a prominent opposition leader and a sitting Chief Minister of an Indian state just ahead of the Lok Sabha general elections to be held in 2024 was also seen as an attempt by the ruling government at the central level in India to harass its main opposition political party..
- At present, Kejriwal himself is trapped in the same argument which he had popularized among the general public of India during the Anna movement. But wrong with wrong is never right.
- Various states in India have been accused of misusing central investigative agencies, intimidating opposition political parties or being biased against states ruled by their political opponents by the government in power at the Centre. In such a situation, the Central Investigating Agencies also need to remain impartial, independent and neutral and need to implement the powers conferred by the Constitution of India under their jurisdiction without any bias and impartially so that in the future there is a need for Centre-State conflict in India. There should not be a situation of deadlock in relationships.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR PRELIMINARY EXAM :

Q.1. Consider the following statements regarding Prevention of Money Laundering Act 2002.

1. The first Prevention of Money Laundering Act was passed in India in 2002. Which was implemented all over India from July 1, 2005.

2. Money laundering refers to disguising black money earned illegally as legitimate money.
3. RBI, SEBI and Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) are also included under PMLA, 2002 in India. Therefore, all the provisions of this Act apply to all financial institutions, banks, mutual funds, insurance companies and their financial intermediaries.
4. Under PMLA 2002, property earned through the offense of money laundering is confiscated and there is a provision for rigorous imprisonment of not less than 3 years to 7 years.

Which of the above statement / statements is/ are correct?

- (A) Only 1, 2 and 3
- (B) Only 2, 3 and 4
- (C) None of these
- (D) All of these

Answer – (D)

PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAIN EXAM :

Q.1.What do you understand about money laundering? Discuss what are the challenges before the Enforcement Directorate under the major provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act 2002 in India and what are its solutions ?

GOOGLE RELEASES AI PRODUCTS SIMA AND ALPHA-GEOMETRY

THIS ARTICLE COVERS 'DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS' AND THE TOPIC DETAILS OF "GOOGLE RELEASES AI PRODUCTS SIMA AND ALPHAGEOMETRY". THIS TOPIC IS RELEVANT IN THE "SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY" SECTION OF THE UPSC CSE EXAM.

WHY IN THE NEWS?

Google DeepMind has recently unveiled a range of Artificial Intelligence (AI) products centred around Predictive AI Models. These include SIMA (Scalable Instructable Multiworld Agent) and AlphaGeometry.

ABOUT SIMA

- SIMA stands out from traditional AI models like OpenAI's ChatGPT or Google Gemini. Unlike AI models, SIMA is an AI Agent capable of independent decision-making and action.
- Enhancing gaming experiences with its ability to process data and take autonomous actions.
- SIMA serves as a versatile AI assistant that is adept at various tasks within virtual environments.

HOW SIMA WORKS

- Acting as a game-assisting AI, SIMA enhances gaming experiences through its autonomous capabilities.
- Capable of understanding and executing commands in diverse virtual settings, from dungeon exploration to castle construction.

- Learns and adapts through user interactions, continually improving its performance and versatility.

SIMA'S TRAINING JOURNEY

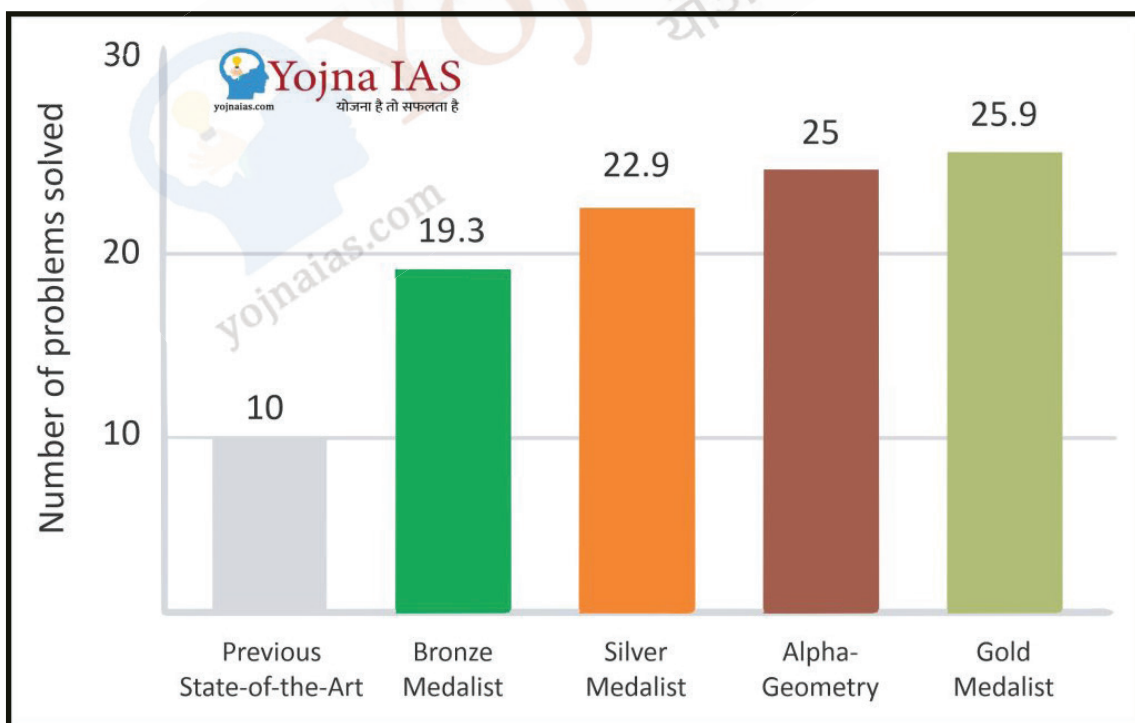
- Developed through a collaboration between Google DeepMind and eight game studios. Trained on nine different video games, including Teardown and No Man's Sky.
- Mastered skills like navigation, resource mining, and spaceship flying to excel in diverse gaming scenarios.
- Tested in various research environments, including Unity's Construction Lab, to validate its capabilities.

ABOUT ALPHAGEOMETRY

DeepMind's latest innovation, AlphaGeometry, is revolutionising the way AI tackles the complexities of geometry. Unlike its general-purpose AI counterparts, **AlphaGeometry is a specialised system designed to crack challenging geometric problems** often encountered in higher mathematics.

This powerful tool leverages a unique combination of two key techniques:

- **Neural Language Processing (NLP) Inspiration:** Borrowing from the human brain's structure and function, AlphaGeometry **utilises a cutting-edge neural language model**. This component excels at generating intuitive ideas and potential solutions, mimicking the initial brainstorming phase of human problem-solving.
- **Symbolic Reasoning:** AlphaGeometry doesn't stop at creative brainstorming. It houses a symbolic deduction engine, the system's reasoning powerhouse. This engine applies established logical rules and mathematical knowledge to refine the ideas suggested by the NLP model. Through a systematic approach, it guides AlphaGeometry towards a solution.



PREDICTIVE AI FUNCTIONALITY

Predictive AI models use a combination of techniques to analyse data and make forecasts about future events. Here's a breakdown of their key functionalities:

DATA ANALYSIS

- **Large Datasets:** Predictive AI models are trained on massive amounts of historical data. This data can include anything from sales figures and customer behaviour to weather patterns and social media trends.
- **Pattern Recognition:** The models use sophisticated algorithms to identify patterns and relationships within the data. These patterns can then be used to make predictions about future events.
- **Statistical Techniques:** Predictive AI models often leverage statistical methods to analyse data and calculate probabilities. This allows them to quantify the likelihood of different future outcomes.

MAKING PREDICTIONS

- **Regression Analysis:** This technique is used to identify relationships between variables and predict continuous outcomes, such as future sales or stock prices.
- **Classification:** Classification algorithms categorise data points into different groups. This is useful for tasks like predicting whether a customer is likely to churn (cancel their service) or whether a loan applicant is a good credit risk.
- **Time Series Analysis:** This technique focuses on analysing data that is collected over time, such as daily sales figures or website traffic patterns. It allows models to identify trends and forecast future values in the time series.

MODEL REFINEMENT

- **Machine Learning:** Many predictive AI models are machine learning models. This means they can learn and improve over time as they are exposed to new data.
- **Validation:** The accuracy of a predictive AI model is crucial. Model developers use validation techniques to assess the model's performance and identify areas for improvement.

REAL-WORLD APPLICATIONS

Predictive AI models are used in a wide range of industries and applications, including:

- **Finance:** Predicting stock market trends, assessing credit risk, and detecting fraudulent activity.
- **Healthcare:** Identifying patients at risk of developing certain diseases, optimising resource allocation, and personalising treatment plans.
- **Retail:** Predicting customer demand, optimising inventory management, and personalising marketing campaigns.
- **Manufacturing:** Predicting equipment failures, optimising production processes, and improving supply chain efficiency.

PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTION

Q1. With the present state of development, Artificial Intelligence can effectively do which of the following?

1. Bring down electricity consumption in industrial units
2. Create meaningful short stories and songs

3. Disease diagnosis
4. Text-to-Speech Conversion
5. Wireless transmission of electrical energy

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

Answer: B

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTION

- Q1. Examine the ethical considerations surrounding the use of AI in surveillance and privacy infringement. How does the collection and analysis of personal data by AI systems raise concerns about individual privacy, autonomy, and civil liberties? What ethical guidelines should govern the development and deployment of AI surveillance technologies?**

INDIA EMPLOYMENT REPORT 2024 AND UNEMPLOYMENT IN INDIA

SOURCE – THE HINDU AND PIB.

GENERAL STUDIES – GROWTH OF INDIAN ECONOMY, UNEMPLOYMENT, INDIA EMPLOYMENT REPORT 2024, NATIONAL SAMPLE SURVEY, PERIODIC LABOR FORCE SURVEY.

WHY IN THE NEWS ?



- Recently on 26 March 2024, the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the Institute for Human Development (IHD) have jointly published a report named India Employment Report 2024.
- According to this report, a total of 83% of the unemployed youth looking for work in India are

unemployed.

- According to the report, overall labor force participation, workforce participation and employment rates in India have improved in recent years after a long-term decline during 2000-2019.
- India's youth population was 27% in 2021, which will reduce to 21% by 2036 and 70 to 80 lakh more youth will join the workforce every year.
- The report states that youth employment in India is largely of poor quality compared to adult employment.
- Youth in India are most likely to be employed in vulnerable occupations or informal sectors.
- According to this report, India has the highest youth unemployment rate among youth with graduate degrees and it is higher among women than men.
- The proportion of women who are not engaged in employment, education or training is almost 5 times higher than their male counterparts (48.4% vs. 9.8%).

INTRODUCTION TO HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE :

- The Institute of Human Development (IHD) was established in the year 1998 under the aegis of the Indian Society of Labor Economics (ISLE).
- Its objective is to contribute to the building of a society that promotes and values an inclusive social, economic and political system that is free from poverty and deprivation.
- It conducts research in the areas of labor and employment, livelihoods, gender, health, education and other aspects of human development.

IMPORTANT FACTS OF INDIA EMPLOYMENT REPORT 2024 :

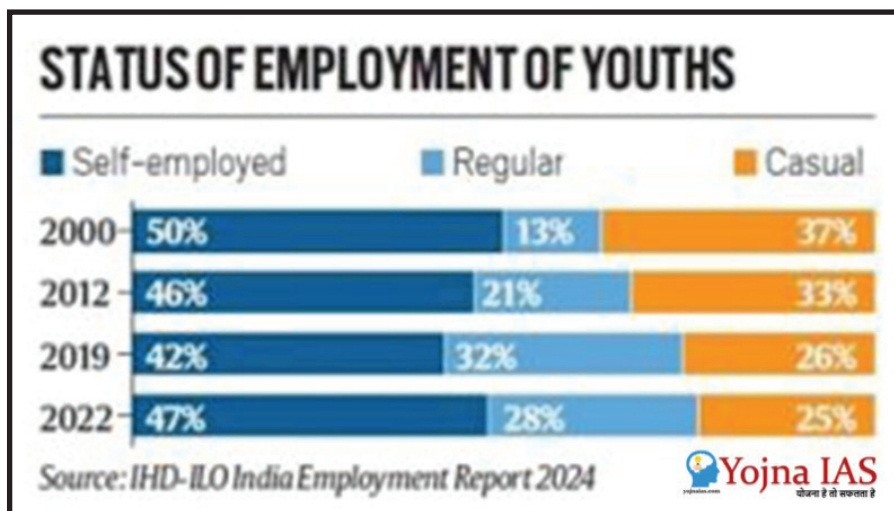
- The India Employment Report 2024 is the third edition in a series of regular publications by the Human Development Institute on labor and employment issues, jointly released in partnership with the International Labor Organization (ILO).
- This report examines the emerging economic labor market, educational and skill scenarios in India and the challenges facing youth employment in the context of the changes witnessed over the last two decades.
- The report also highlights recent trends in the Indian labor market, indicating the challenges that currently exist with respect to youth unemployment and new challenges that may arise in the future, as well as improvements in some outcomes, including COVID-19. Challenges arising from the 19 pandemic are also included.

HIGHLIGHTS OF INDIA EMPLOYMENT REPORT 2024 :

- The India Employment Report 2024 is based primarily on the analysis of data from the National Sample Survey and Periodic Labor Force Survey between the year 2000 and the year 2022..

EMPLOYMENT SCENARIO AND CURRENT TRENDS IN INDIA :

- The female labor market participation rate in India, especially in rural areas, has increased rapidly by 2019 after a significant decline in earlier years.
- One of the most important features of the Indian labor market is the slow and steady transition of the workforce from agricultural to non-agricultural sectors.



- The main areas of employment available in India are self-employment and casual employment.
- In India, about 90 percent of the workforce is employed informally while about 82 percent of the workforce is engaged in the informal sector.
- There was a slight upward trend in wages of casual workers during 2012–22, while real wages of regular workers either remained stable or declined.
- Migration levels in India have not been adequately recorded through official surveys.
- Rates of urbanization and migration are expected to increase significantly in the future.
- The migration rate in India is expected to be around 40 percent in 2030 and the urban population will be around 607 million.

MAJOR CHALLENGES RELATED TO YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN INDIA :

- A large portion of India's population is of working age, which is expected to remain in the potential demographic dividend zone for at least another decade.
- Every year in India, about 7-8 million youth join the labor force whose productive utilization could yield a demographic dividend for India.
- Labor market participation of youth in India has been much lower than that of adults and was on a long-term (2000–19) declining trend, mainly due to greater participation in education.
- At present, youth unemployment in India has increased almost three times, from 5.7 percent in the year 2000 to 17.5 percent in 2019, but it is expected to reduce to 12.1 percent in the year 2022.

MAJOR SUGGESTIONS OF INDIA EMPLOYMENT REPORT 2024 TO IMPROVE THE EMPLOYMENT SECTOR :

The report recommends focusing on five key policy areas for action to tackle unemployment in India. Which is an important suggestion especially related to youth unemployment in India –

1. **To promote employment creation.**
2. **To improve the quality of employment.**
3. **Addressing labor market inequalities and making changes at the policy level.**
4. **strengthening skills and active labor market policies, and**
5. **Bridging the knowledge gap on labor market patterns and youth employment.**

PATH TO SOLUTION :

- **'The India Employment Report 2024'** The employment sector in India presents a disappointing scenario.
- Focusing on the current state of youth employment in India, the report paints a sobering picture of the widely publicized 'demographic dividend' in the country, calling for prompt and targeted policy interventions to tackle it and for India's technologically growing economy. There is a need to give priority to the training of youth.
- A large number of educated youth are still unable to meet the job criteria due to unavailability of jobs and deficiencies in the quality of education relative to the participation of educated youth in better paying jobs in India. On which there is a great need to pay attention to the policy makers of India.
- India has high rates of youth deprived of employment, education or training, and working conditions among the majority of employed youth are poor, with large groups of youth taking advantage of broader socio-economic benefits. Wages in India have either stagnated or seen a decline due to inflation, even though India's economy is growing at a high rate.
- As the process of 2024 general elections to the Lok Sabha in India begins, politicians have focused on creating employment and improving the quality of education and training for a technologically growing economy, not only in their election campaigns but also in their policy making. There is an urgent need to consider the causes by giving priority.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR PRELIMINARY EXAM :

Q.1. Consider the following statements regarding India Employment Report 2024.

1. According to this report, A total of 83% of youth in India are unemployed.
2. The Human Development Institute was established in the year 1998 by the Indian Society of Labor Economics.
3. This report is jointly published by the International Labor Organization and the Institute of Human Development.
4. There is a slow and steady transition of the workforce from agricultural to non-agricultural sectors in the Indian labor market.

Which of the above statement / statements is/are correct ?

- (A). Only 1, 2 and 3
- (B). Only 2, 3 and 4
- (C). None of these.
- (D). All of these.

Answer - (D)

PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR MAIN EXAM :

Q.1. Underlining the important facts of India Employment Report 2024, Discuss in detail the major challenges related to youth employment in India and its solutions.

GREEN ELECTIONS

THIS ARTICLE COVERS 'DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS' AND THE TOPIC DETAILS OF "GREEN ELECTION". THIS TOPIC IS RELEVANT IN THE "POLITY AND GOVERNANCE" SECTION OF THE UPSC CSE EXAM.

WHY IN THE NEWS?

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has expressed apprehension regarding the environmental hazards linked with the utilisation of non-biodegradable substances in electoral processes. Since 1999, it has consistently encouraged political parties and candidates to refrain from using plastic or polythene for creating election-related materials during campaign periods.

ABOUT GREEN ELECTIONS

Green elections entail conducting electoral activities while minimising their ecological impact. This includes various measures aimed at reducing waste, conserving resources, and promoting eco-friendly practices throughout the electoral cycle.

KEY PRINCIPLES OF GREEN ELECTIONS

- **Sustainable Campaign Materials:** Candidates and political parties prioritise the use of eco-friendly materials such as **recycled paper, biodegradable banners, and reusable signage.**
- **Digital Outreach:** Leveraging digital platforms like **social media, websites, and email campaigns to minimise paper usage** and reduce the carbon footprint associated with traditional campaigning methods.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Adopting energy-saving measures for campaign events, including the **use of LED lighting, sound systems with low power consumption,** and organising rallies in locations accessible by public transportation.

BENEFITS OF GREEN ELECTIONS

- **Environmental Conservation:** By reducing waste generation and resource consumption, green elections contribute to environmental conservation efforts and help mitigate climate change.
- **Public Awareness:** Promoting eco-friendly practices during electoral campaigns raises public awareness about environmental issues and fosters a culture of sustainability.
- **Long-Term Impact:** Implementing green election practices sets a precedent for future electoral processes, encouraging continuous improvement in environmental stewardship within the political sphere.
- **Cost Savings:** While initially requiring investment in sustainable infrastructure and practices, green elections often lead to long-term cost savings. By reducing the need for disposable campaign materials, minimising energy consumption, and optimising resource usage
- **Setting a Positive Example:** By adopting green election practices, political entities demonstrate their commitment to environmental responsibility and leadership. This sets a positive example for other sectors of society and encourages broader adoption of sustainable practices beyond the electoral arena.

CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

- **Cost Implications:** Transitioning to green election practices may involve initial investment in eco-friendly materials and technologies, which could pose financial challenges for candidates and electoral bodies.
- **Behavioural Change:** Encouraging widespread adoption of sustainable practices requires a shift in attitudes and behaviours among political stakeholders, voters, and electoral staff.
- **Accessibility Concerns:** Ensuring inclusivity in green election initiatives by addressing accessibility barriers, particularly for marginalised communities, is crucial for equitable participation in the democratic process.
- **Infrastructure Limitations:** In some regions, inadequate infrastructure may hinder the adoption of green election practices. Limited access to recycling facilities, renewable energy sources, and sustainable transportation options can pose logistical challenges and impede efforts to minimise the environmental footprint of electoral activities.

SOME SUCCESSFUL ECO-FRIENDLY ELECTORAL INITIATIVES TAKEN IN INDIA AND THE WORLD

KERALA'S GREEN CAMPAIGN

During the 2019 general election, the Kerala State Election Commission took proactive steps to encourage political parties to avoid single-use plastic materials in their campaigns. This initiative aimed to reduce plastic waste and promote eco-conscious practices among political entities. Additionally, the Kerala High Court imposed a ban on non-biodegradable materials like flex banners, pushing for the use of more sustainable alternatives such as wall graffiti and paper posters.

GOA'S ARTISAN-CRAFTED ECO-FRIENDLY BOOTHS

In 2022, the Goa State Biodiversity Board introduced eco-friendly election booths for the Assembly elections. These booths were constructed using biodegradable materials crafted by local traditional artisans, showcasing a blend of sustainability and traditional craftsmanship. This initiative not only reduced the environmental impact of the election process but also supported local artisans and promoted eco-friendly practices.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS IN THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, KERALA

Government bodies in Thiruvananthapuram collaborated with the district administration to ensure green elections by implementing various eco-friendly practices. This collaboration included conducting training sessions for election workers in villages to raise awareness about environmental stewardship and promote sustainable election practices. By involving local communities and emphasising the importance of eco-conscious initiatives, Thiruvananthapuram set a commendable example for fostering green elections.

SRI LANKA'S CARBON-SENSITIVE CAMPAIGN

Key takeaway: Measured emissions, offset them with tree planting, raising environmental awareness. It reduced emissions through careful monitoring and engaged the public in reforestation efforts.

ESTONIA'S DIGITAL VOTING REVOLUTION

Key takeaway: Introduced digital voting as an alternative to paper ballots. It eliminated paper waste associated with traditional voting systems.

PRELIMS PRACTISE QUESTION

Q1. Consider the following statements:

1. According to the Constitution of India a person who is eligible to vote can be made a minister in a State for six months even if he/she is not a member of the Legislature of that State.
2. According to the Representation of People Act, 1951, a person convicted of a criminal offence and sentenced to imprisonment for five years is permanently disqualified from contesting an election even after his release from prison.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) Both 1 and 2
- (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: D

MAINS PRACTISE QUESTION

- Q1. Reflect on the role of technology in promoting eco-friendly electoral practices, particularly in the context of digital voting systems and online campaigning. What opportunities and challenges does technology present in achieving green elections?**



योजना है तो सफलता है