

## Today's Prelims Topics

### Vizhinjam International Seaport

#### Context

The Vizhinjam International Seaport is expected to be commissioned in December 2024.

#### About Vizhinjam International Seaport

- It is **India's first deepwater transshipment port** located in Vizhinjam (near Thiruvananthapuram), Kerala.
  - **Deepwater Port:** Manmade structures that are used as ports or terminals to transport, store or handle oil and natural gas.
  - **Transshipment Port:** It is a transit hub where cargo is transferred from one ship to another while in transit to its final destination.
- It is built on a **design, build, finance, operate and transfer (DBFOT) model**.
  - **DBFOT model is a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model** under which a private partner is responsible for:
    - Designing the project
    - Building the project
    - Financing the project
    - Operating the project during the contracted period.
  - **Transferring the project back to the public sector** after the end of contract period.
- There are **12 Major Ports in India:** Chennai, Cochin, Deendayal (Kandla), Jawaharlal Nehru (Nhava Sheva), Kolkata, Mormugao, Mumbai, New Mangalore, Paradip, V. O. Chidambaranar (Tuticorin), Visakhapatnam and Kamarajar Port Limited.
  - Major Port at **Vadhavan, Palghar District, Maharashtra is under construction.**

#### UPSC PYQ

Q. Consider the following pairs: (2023)

1. Kamarajar Port First major port in India registered as a company
2. Mundra Port Largest privately owned port in India
3. Visakhapatnam Largest container port in Port India

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one pair
- (b) Only two pairs
- (c) All three pairs
- (d) None of the pairs

Answer: B

- **Largest container port of India:** Jawaharlal Nehru Port (Nhava Seva), Maharashtra

Source:

- [The Hindu - Remaining phases of Vizhinjam seaport to be finished by 2028](#)

## World craft city tag for Srinagar

### Context

A 3-day craft exchange initiative event was held in Srinagar following its recognition as a 'World Craft City' by the World Crafts Council (WCC) in June 2024. It reunited artisans from **Kashmir and Central Asia** after approximately 500 years.

### Similarities in Craft Techniques

- **Uzbekistan's suzani work and Kashmir's sozini embroidery** share similar techniques, colors, and floral motifs.
- The Kashmiri carpet industry uses **Persian techniques** like the Farsi baffle and Sehna knot for weaving wool and silk carpets.
- Kashmiri carpet patterns are named after **Iranian cities such as Kashan, Kirman, Tabriz, Isfahan and Meshed.**

### Contributions of Zain-ul-Abidin to Kashmiri Crafts:

- **Zain-ul-Abidin, the 9th Sultan of Kashmir Sultanate (15th century)**, brought master artisans from Samarkand, Bukhara and Persia to develop local industries.
- He promoted crafts like **wood carving, carpet weaving** and **papier-mâché**.
- Established workshops and provided state patronage to artisans, ensuring the flourishing of crafts.

### Key Craft Techniques

- **Sozni Work:** It is a detailed and intricate needlework style, particularly used on shawls. It uses floral and geometrical motifs with fine thread on wool and silk fabrics.
- **Wood Carving:** It is done on walnut wood using a chisel and hammer for intricate patterns.
- Originated from Persian techniques introduced during Zain-ul-Abidin's reign.
- **Sehna Knot (Carpet Weaving):** A Persian weaving method where the yarn loops around a warp thread for compactness and uniformity. It is used in Kashmiri carpets.

### World Crafts Council (WCC)

- WCC is a non-profit, NGO that aims to promote and preserve traditional crafts worldwide.
- It was established in **1964** and is headquartered in **Kuwait**.
- Its main objective is to promote crafts globally and improve the economic conditions of craftspeople.
- WCC organises events, exchanges, and awards to highlight and support traditional crafts and artisans worldwide.
- **World Craft Cities in India: Jaipur, Mamallapuram, Mysore & Srinagar.**

### Source:

- [The Hindu - Kashmiri, Central Asian artisans reconnect under one roof in Srinagar](#)

## Lapses in construction of New Pamban Bridge

### Context

The **Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS)** flagged significant lapses in planning and execution of New Pamban Bridge. The Railway Board has constituted a **five-member committee** to investigate the issues.

### Lapses Identified by the CRS

- The **lift span girder** was designed using **foreign codes** rather than **RDSO** standards.
- The standard procedure of forming a Technical Advisory Group for large infrastructure projects was bypassed.
- **Welding of primary stressed members** ( bottom and top chords) occurred at the site, violating the **Welded Bridge Code** (set of guidelines for the use of metal-arc welding in the construction of steel bridges).

### About New Pamban Bridge

- It is **India's first vertical-lift railway sea bridge**.
- The bridge is **2.05 km long**, featuring a **unique 72-m vertical lift span** for ship movement.
- It connects **Rameswaram on Pamban Island to Mandapam** on the mainland in Tamil Nadu.
- It will replace the **iconic Pamban Bridge, India's first sea bridge, which opened in 1914**.
- The new bridge is being built parallel to the old Pamban Bridge by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited.

### Research Design and Standards Organisation (RDSO)

- It is the sole Research and Development organisation of Indian Railways headquartered in **Lucknow (UP)**.
- The **KAVACH system** was developed by RDSO.
- RDSO was the first Institution to be declared a **Standard Developing Organization (SDO)** under **One Nation One Standard mission of Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)**.
- **Functions:**
  - Technical advisor to Railway Board, Zonal Railways and Production Units.
  - Develops new and improved designs for railway equipment.
  - Develops standards for materials and products, and provides detailed technical specifications for vendors.

### Source:

- [The Hindu - 'Railway Board has formed committee to probe CRS report on new Pamban bridge'](#)

## India's First Large-Scale Ocean Floor Cleanup in Sindhudurg

### Context

India launched its first large-scale ocean floor cleanup operation in **Maharashtra's Sindhudurg coral reefs** aimed at restoring marine biodiversity and ecosystems.

### Threats to Corals from Marine Debris

- **Physical Damage to Corals:** Ghost nets and other debris can entangle coral structures, causing them to break under the weight or movement of the nets.
- **Blockage of Sunlight:** Plastic debris reduces the amount of sunlight available to corals, which is essential for photosynthesis by **symbiotic algae (zooxanthellae)** that corals rely on for energy.
- **Chemical Leaching:** Plastics and other synthetic materials release harmful chemicals into the water, which disrupt coral growth and reproduction.
- **Spread of Diseases:** Debris acts as a vector for pathogens, increasing the risk of diseases such as coral bleaching and tissue loss syndromes.
- **Reduction in Biodiversity:** Damage to coral reefs impacts the entire ecosystem, reducing the habitat available for diverse marine organisms.

### About Corals

- Corals are calcareous rock-like structures formed from the skeletons of tiny, jelly-like animals called **coral polyps**.
- Also known as the "**rainforests of the sea**"- home to more than 25% of all marine life.
- Listed under **Schedule -I under Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**
- **Major coral areas of India:** Andaman islands & Nicobar islands, Gulf of Mannar, Palk Bay, Lakshadweep and Gulf of Kachchh, Malvan (Maharashtra), Netrani Island (Karnataka).
- **Ideal conditions for Coral Growth:**
  - **Tropical waters**-between **30°N and 30°S latitudes**.
  - **Ideal Depth:** 45 m to 55 m below sea surface, where there is abundant sunlight available.
  - **Temperature:** around 20°C.
  - **Moderate to low levels of salinity** (30–40 parts per 1000) and **free from sediments**

### Other Technologies for Coral Reef Conservation

- **Biorock Technology:** Involves deploying electrically charged structures to promote coral growth and strengthen existing coral reefs.
- **Cryomesh Technology:** Involves cryogenically freezing and storing corals, which later can be reintroduced to the wild.

**UPSC PYQ**

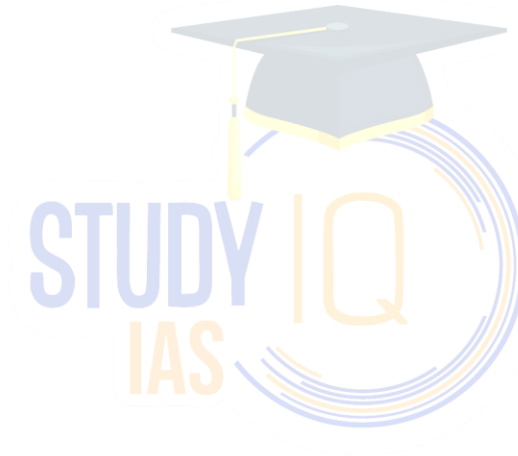
**Q. "Biorock technology" is talked about in which one of the following situations? (2022)**

- (a) Restoration of damaged coral reefs
- (b) Development of building materials using plant residues
- (c) Identification of areas for exploration/extraction of shale gas
- (d) Providing salt licks for wild animals in forests/protected areas

**Answer: A**

**Source:**

- [Times of India - 250kg of debris cleared from Sindhudurg reefs](#)



## Cancer & Immune System

### Context

Recent research conducted by Northwestern University in Chicago highlighted the potential role of the immune system, specifically white blood cells activated by severe infections, in combating cancer.

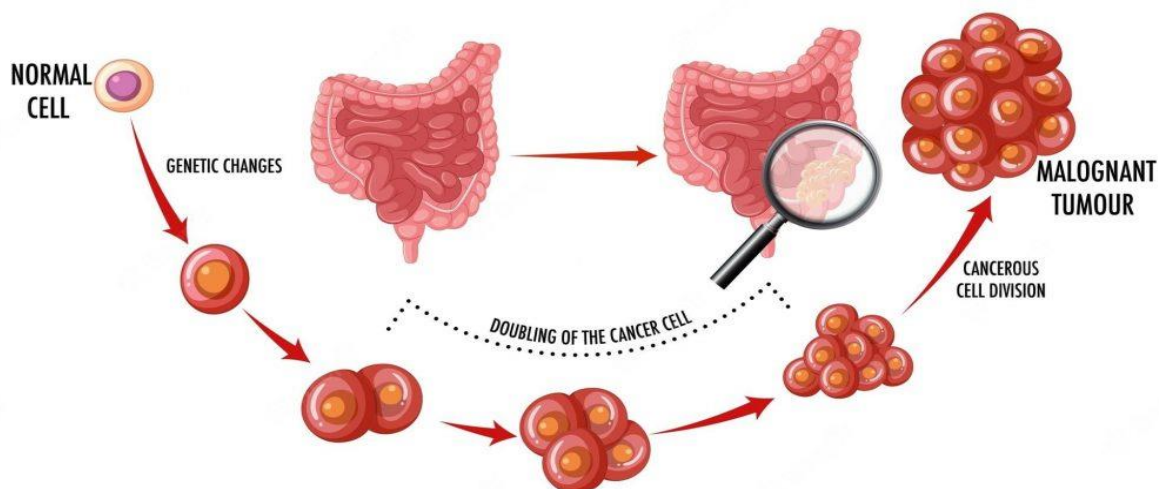
### About Cancer-Fighting White Blood Cells - I-NCMs

- These special white blood cells are called induced **non-classical monocytes (I-NCMs)**.
- They are created when the body goes through severe infections, like COVID-19 or is exposed to certain chemicals.
- Once formed, these cells leave the bloodstream and travel to tumours, where they attack cancer cells.
- **How do they find cancer?**
  - I-NCMs have a "sensor" called **CCR2**, which acts like an antenna. This antenna picks up signals sent out by cancer cells or areas of inflammation.
- After detecting these signals, I-NCMs move to the tumour and call for backup by summoning **natural killer (NK) cells**.
  - **NK cells** are powerful immune cells that can destroy cancer cells directly.

### Immunotherapy

- It is a treatment that uses the body's immune system to fight cancer, infections and other diseases.
- **Role of I-NCMs:**
  - During experiment Injecting I-NCMs into mice successfully reduced cancer **metastasis**.
  - I-NCMs act as a bridge, bringing NK cells to tumour sites to eliminate cancer cells.
- **CAR-T Cell Therapy:**
  - Another form of immunotherapy where T cells are reprogrammed in a lab and reinfused into the patient. These modified T cells directly attack cancer cells.

## CANCER DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



### Source:

- [The Hindu - Using body's defences against cancer](#)

## Wikipedia and ANI's defamation suit

### Context

Recently, the Delhi High Court directed Wikimedia to disclose the details of three administrators involved in its ongoing defamation case with ANI.

### About Wikipedia

- It is a community-driven platform, with content created and edited by volunteers.
- **Editorial Process:** Anyone can edit articles, provided edits are backed by reliable and verifiable sources.
- **Protection Measures:** Pages on controversial topics can be placed under "**extended confirmed protection**" or "**full protection**" to maintain neutrality.
  - Extended protection limits edits to experienced users, while full protection restricts editing to **administrators**.
  - **Administrators:** Selected by community elections based on reputation.
- **Wikimedia Foundation**, a non-profit based in the U.S., is not responsible for the content on Wikipedia. It provides the technical infrastructure to run the platform and ensures editors can contribute without technical barriers.
- ANI argued that Wikimedia violated **safe-harbour provisions and the IT (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021**.

### Safe Harbour in India: Legal Framework

- **Safe-Harbour Protection:**
  - It is a legal framework that shields intermediaries (such as social media platforms, online marketplaces or hosting services) from being held liable for the content uploaded by their users. **E.g.** Wikipedia, Google, Facebook etc.
  - **Section 79** of the **Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000** provides safe harbour protection to intermediaries if they adhere to:
    - **Due Diligence Requirements:** Regularly updating policies, user agreements, and moderation mechanisms.
    - **Timely Action:** Removing unlawful content upon notice or court orders.
- **Exclusions:** Platforms that fail to comply with these obligations lose their safe harbour status. Loss of status could result in legal liability for all user-generated content.

### Source:

- [The Hindu - Wikipedia and ANI's defamation suit](#)

## News in Shorts

### 13th National Seed Congress

- It is a 3 day conclave of policymakers, scientists, and farmers seeking transformative solutions, in the wake of climate change and increasing diseases in various crops.
- **Organisers of the conclave:** Union Agriculture Ministry, UP Agriculture Ministry, International Rice Research Institute, National Seed Research and Training Centre and Federation of Seed Industries of India.
- **International Rice Research Institute (IRRI):** It is a non-profit organization that conducts research and training on rice to improve the quality of life for communities that rely on rice as a subsistence food. **(Established in 1960, HQ-Manila, Philippines)**
- The seed industry has demanded “**one nation, one licence**” to promote research and development and use of hybrid seeds introduced by the private sector.

**Source:**

- [The Hindu - Farmers must get high-quality seeds, fertilizers, says Agriculture Minister](#)

### Cumbum Tank

- It is located in Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh.
- It is the **third-largest pond in the world, the second-largest in Asia and the first in India.**
- It is a medium irrigation project, built by the **Vijayanagar Princess Varadharajamma (also known as Ruchidevi), wife of Sri Krishna Devaraya.**
- It was formed by damming a gorge through which the **Gundlakamma and Jampaleru rivers** flow.
- It was included in the **World Heritage Irrigation Structures list of the International Commission of Irrigation and Drainage (ICID)** in 2020.

**Source:**

- [The Hindu - Cumbum Tank](#)

### Bromalites

- A recent study has revealed that dinosaurs' ability to adapt to new plants and climates was a major factor in their rise to dominance during the Late Triassic and Jurassic periods.
- Researchers have uncovered this information by analyzing **fossilized feces and vomit (bromalites).**
- **Bromalites:**
  - They are fossilized remains of an organism's digestive system and are considered trace fossils.
  - They can provide important information about the diet and other trophic factors of the organism that produced them, and can be used to **reconstruct ancient food webs.**

**Source:**

- [Indian Express- Learning about Dinosaurs from fossilized dunks](#)



## Editorial Summary

### 2025 Census and the National Register of Indian Citizens (NRIC)

#### Context

The 2025 Census in India will include an initiative to update the National Population Register (NPR), which is a critical step towards establishing the National Register of Indian Citizens (NRIC).

#### About National Register of Indian Citizens (NRIC)

- The **National Register of Indian Citizens (NRIC)** is an official government-maintained registry that records the names and details of all **Indian citizens**, distinguishing them from non-citizens residing in the country.

#### Distinction from NPR

- The **National Population Register (NPR)** is a database that contains a list of all **usual residents** of the country.
- **Criteria for Usual Resident:** A usual resident is someone who has:
  - Lived in a place for **six months or more**.
  - Plans to stay in the same place for **at least another six months**.
- **Objective:** The NPR aims to create a comprehensive identity **database** of **all residents in India**.
- **Method of Collection:** Data is collected through **house-to-house enumeration** during the **house-listing phase of the Census**.
- **Timeline:**
  - The NPR was first prepared in **2010**.
  - It was updated in **2015**.
- **Legal Backing:**
  - The NPR is prepared under the **Citizenship Act, 1955**.
  - It follows the **Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and Issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003**.
- **Mandatory Registration:** It is compulsory for every **usual resident of India** to register in the NPR.

#### Note:

- **National Population Register (NPR):** Focused on all residents, regardless of citizenship.
- **National Register of Indian Citizens (NRIC):** Exclusively verifies and documents Indian citizens.

#### Fact

- The **only state** where an NRC has been updated is **Assam (2019)** to identify illegal immigrants, particularly from Bangladesh.

- The NRIC, mandated by the **Citizenship Act 1955**, was conceptualized after the **1951 Census** and gained traction after the **Kargil War (1999)** based on recommendations by the **Subrahmanyam Committee**.
- This led to the inclusion of **Section 14A** was added to the **Citizenship Act**, which mandates:
  - Compulsory registration of citizens.
  - Issuance of identity cards to document citizenship status.

### Objectives and Benefits of NRIC

- The primary aim of the NRIC is to enhance national security by maintaining a verified registry of citizens.
- Additional benefits include:
  - Streamlining identity verification processes.
  - Reducing instances of identity fraud and duplication.
  - Enabling targeted welfare programs to ensure that benefits reach eligible recipients.
- The NPR serves as the foundational step in this process, differentiating between citizens and non-citizens through a multi-phase data collection strategy that includes both demographic and biometric information.

### Process for Developing NRIC

- Multi-phase process involving:
  - **Data Collection:** Comprehensive demographic data collected during houselisting operations of the Census.
    - Biometric data collected to eliminate duplicates.
  - **Transparency Mechanisms:** Public claims and objections invited.
    - Verification and appeals process to ensure accuracy and allow residents to challenge records.
  - **Detailed Inquiries:** Citizenship status inquiries finalize the National Register of Citizens (NRC).
  - **Final Step:** Issuance of identity cards, as mandated by the Citizenship Act.

### Distinction Between Aadhaar and NRIC

A common question arises regarding the necessity of NRIC when Aadhaar exists. It is crucial to recognize that:

- Aadhaar is a unique identification number (12-digit) issued by the UIDAI to residents **regardless of citizenship status**, primarily for identity verification linked to services **like banking and subsidies**.
- The NRIC, on the other hand, focuses specifically on **verifying citizenship status and requires proof of citizenship**.

Thus, while Aadhaar serves all residents, NRIC is exclusive to citizens, playing complementary yet distinct roles in India's governance framework.

### Challenges and Concerns Faced by NRIC (National Register of Indian Citizens)

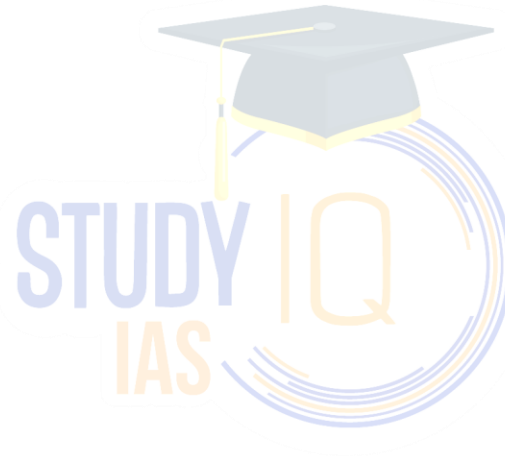
- **Exclusion of Marginalized Communities:** Vulnerable groups such as rural residents, economically weaker sections, and less-educated individuals may struggle to provide adequate documentation to prove citizenship.
  - Women and transitory populations face additional challenges due to lack of formal records like birth certificates or land ownership documents.
  - **E.g., About 1.9 million people were excluded**, many of whom were unable to meet documentation criteria despite being long-term residents.
- **Humanitarian Concerns:** Mass exclusions from the NRC could lead to significant social and economic displacement.
- **Administrative and Logistical Challenges:** The scale of verifying citizenship for over 1.4 billion people is a monumental task.

- **Lack of Effective Communication:** There are significant coordination issues among various government agencies involved in implementing the NRC.
  - Poor communication can lead to errors and mismanagement, complicating the verification process and undermining public trust
- **Data Privacy and Security:** Concerns over the misuse or unauthorized sharing of sensitive demographic and biometric data persist.
- **Exclusion from Electoral Processes:** Individuals whose names are not included in the NRC would lose their constitutional right to vote.

#### Way Forward

- Simplified documentation procedures.
- Robust public awareness campaigns.
- Transparent and fair verification mechanisms.
- Strong data protection laws to ensure privacy and security.

Source: [The Hindu: Census 2025 as a comprehensive citizen registry](#)



## Armed insurrection to parliamentary politics

### Context

The recent electoral success of Sri Lanka's Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP)-led National People's Power highlights a global trend where left-wing revolutionary groups, once committed to armed struggle, are adopting democratic means to achieve their goals.

### Historical Context and Ideological Roots

- Left-wing insurgencies are grounded in ideologies such as **Marxism-Leninism and Maoism**, viewing the capitalist state as an instrument of oppression.
- Armed struggle has traditionally been a central strategy for revolutionary groups like **Nepal's Maoists**, **El Salvador's FMLN**, and **India's CPI (Maoist)**.

### Challenges of Prolonged Insurgencies

- **Resource Intensity:** Insurgencies require sustained resources and popular support.
- **Public Sentiment:** Prolonged violence often alienates civilian populations, weakening support.
- **State Counterinsurgency:** Many insurgencies face powerful state retaliation, making armed resistance unsustainable.

### Key Examples of Transition

- **Nepal's Maoist Insurgency (1996-2006)**
  - Initiated a civil war to dismantle the monarchy and establish a people's republic.
  - Signed the **Comprehensive Peace Accord in 2006**, allowing integration into mainstream politics.
  - Played a key role in Nepal's transformation into a **federal democratic republic in 2008**.
- **El Salvador's FMLN (1980s-1992)**
  - A coalition of Marxist-Leninist guerrilla groups fought the U.S.-backed government.
  - Transitioned to a political party after the **1992 peace accords**.
  - Won national elections, shifting from revolutionary Marxism to democratic socialism.
- **India's Maoist Factions**
  - **CPI (Maoist)** continues armed struggle, particularly in rural areas, adhering to Mao's "protracted people's war."
  - **CPI (M-L) Liberation** abandoned violence in the 1980s, contesting elections and becoming a legitimate political entity.
- **Sri Lanka's JVP**
  - Led two violent uprisings in **1971 and the 1980s**, both brutally suppressed.
  - Shifted to parliamentary politics in the 1990s, advocating for **economic reform, social justice, and workers' rights**.

### Factors Driving the Transition

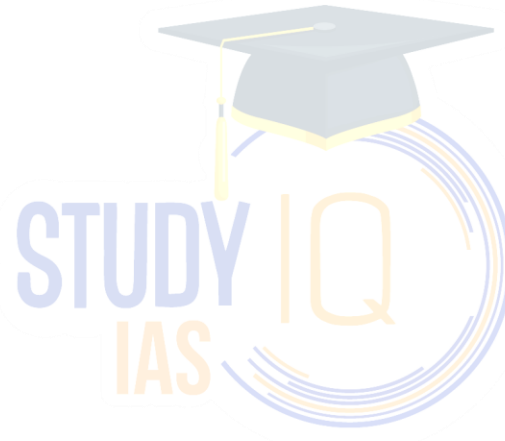
- **Strategic Realism:** Insurgencies face diminishing resources and public support.
  - Peace accords in **Nepal** and **El Salvador** allowed political influence without violence.
- **Public Sentiment:** Civilian casualties and prolonged hardship erode support for armed resistance.
- **International Pressure:** Global condemnation of insurgencies and mediation by actors like the **United Nations** (e.g., in El Salvador) encourage peaceful engagement.

- **Ideological Evolution:** Insurgent groups adapt revolutionary doctrines to fit democratic frameworks, maintaining core values of **social and economic justice**.

#### Responses and Implications

- **Legitimacy in Democracy:** Transitioning to political participation enhances trust in democratic processes.
  - Former insurgent groups can address the injustices that motivated their struggles.
- **Challenges in Governance:** Groups must balance revolutionary ideals with practical demands of governance.
  - They face **public scepticism** about their commitment to democratic norms.
- **Evolving Ideologies:** Parliamentary participation is seen as an adaptation to modern realities, reforming the state from within.
- **Inclusive Governance:** Examples like **Nepal's Maoists** show how these groups prioritize marginalized communities, fostering inclusivity.

Source: [The Hindu: Armed insurrection to parliamentary politics](#)



## Do new schemes ahead of elections amount to 'voter bribes'?

### Context

The recent trend of introduction of schemes just before elections seen in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh were under criticism.

### Background

- The Bharatiya Janata Party-led Mahayuti alliance's landslide victory in Maharashtra's November 2024 state elections has brought attention to the **Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana**, a direct benefit transfer (DBT) programme aimed at providing monthly financial assistance of ₹1,500 to poor women.
- Critics argue that such schemes may influence voter behavior unfairly, while experts debate the broader implications of DBT schemes on welfare policies.

### Pros and Cons of Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana and Similar DBT Schemes

#### Pros

- **Welfare Benefits for Marginalized Groups:** Provides **direct financial assistance** of ₹1,500 per month to women aged 21–65, particularly those with annual incomes below ₹2.5 lakh.
  - **Example:** Vulnerable women in rural areas welcome these schemes as a critical source of income.
- **Economic Relief at Vulnerable Times:** Supports objectives like **maternity benefits**, as seen in the Pradhan Mantri Mathrubhumi Dhana Yojana under the National Food Security Act, which provides ₹6,000 during pregnancy and lactation.
- **Bridging Gaps in Welfare Architecture:** Addresses the lack of welfare schemes for **informal sector workers**, such as the unorganized women's workforce who were historically excluded from maternity benefits (recognized only after the 2013 Food Security Act).
- **Political Visibility of Marginalized Issues:** Highlights the needs of the underprivileged during elections, which might otherwise remain ignored by policymakers.
- **Easier to Implement than Material Transfers:** DBTs eliminate some inefficiencies of material-based schemes (e.g., leakages in Public Distribution System).

#### Cons

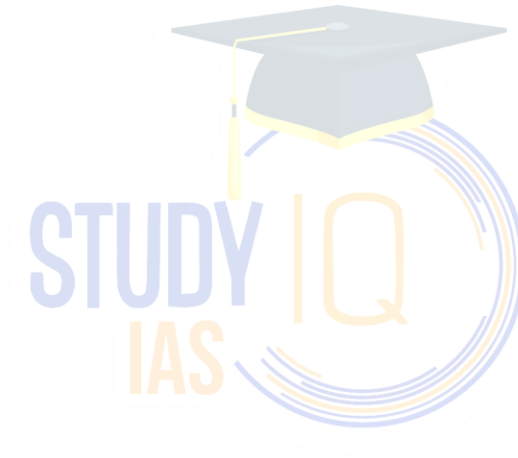
- **Lack of Long-Term Vision:** Focuses on **short-term electoral gains** rather than establishing robust, long-term welfare systems.
  - Risks being perceived as **election bribes** if announced close to elections.
- **Fiscal Trade-offs:** Diverts funding from other critical welfare programs.
  - **Example:** Karnataka's cash transfer budget (₹28,000 crore in 2024-25) is double the Union's allocation for midday meals.
- **Inferior to Employment-Based Programs:** Women would earn more through employment programs like **MNREGA** (₹29,000 annually for 100 days of work) compared to the ₹12,000 received annually under the scheme.
- **Weak Implementation and Oversight:** Lacks systems for **independent evaluation** and monitoring, as seen with earlier robust mechanisms like the Planning Commission's evaluation wing.
  - **Corruption risks:** Middlemen (e.g., banking correspondents) replicate malpractices seen in older schemes.

- **Reinforcement of Gender Norms:** Paying women for **unpaid domestic work** may reinforce traditional roles rather than encourage gender equity.
  - **Example:** Employment opportunities are more empowering than cash compensation.
- **Nutritional and Educational Trade-offs:** Health and nutrition goals could be better achieved through programs like **eggs in midday meals or anganwadis**.
  - **Example:** North Indian States struggle to meet children's nutritional needs, which cash transfers may not directly address.

### Balanced Perspective

While DBTs address immediate financial vulnerabilities, their utility as a welfare mechanism is diminished by fiscal trade-offs, weak oversight, and lack of systemic reforms. Long-term welfare programs like MNREGA or investments in health and education may yield broader and more sustainable benefits.

Source: [The Hindu: Do new schemes ahead of elections amount to 'voter bribes'?](#)



---

## Value Addition

---

### National Counter Terrorism Policy

#### Context

During the recently held Anti-Terror Conference 2024 (ATC), the Union Home Minister announced that the Ministry of Home Affairs is drafting a comprehensive national counter-terrorism policy and strategy.

#### About National Counter-Terrorism Policy and Strategy

- The policy includes a model **anti-terrorism squad (ATS) and special task force (STF)** framework for all States/UTs to ensure a unified and effective structure against terrorism.
- It aims to streamline communication, hierarchy and operational effectiveness within anti-terror units.
- **Uniform Anti-Terror Units:** States and Union Territories (UTs) will establish specialised anti-terror units with the following components:
  - Prison monitoring, language expertise, deradicalisation, financial intelligence.
  - Access to upgraded weapons recommended by the National Security Guard (NSG).
  - Standardised training modules designed by the NSG.
- **Proposed Model Anti-Terror Structure:**
  - Each unit will be led by an Inspector General (IG) or senior officer.
  - Supported by two Deputy Inspectors General (DIGs) and at least four Superintendents of Police (SPs).
- **Enhancing Coordination and SOPs:** Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for intelligence processing and inter-agency coordination between Central and State agencies will also be formulated.

#### Current Gaps and Status

- Only 18 States/UTs have dedicated ATS/STF or counter-terrorism units.
- In 13 States/UTs, these units are also designated as police stations.
- **Only six States/UTs have:**
  - Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for counter-terror operations.
  - Dedicated courts for terrorism-related cases.

#### Source:

- [Indian Express - Counter terror policy : MHA for specialised units in all states](#)