



**INSIGHTSIAS**

SIMPLIFYING IAS EXAM PREPARATION

# INSTA PT 2021 EXCLUSIVE PART-2

## GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

APRIL 2021 – JUNE 2021

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## Ministry of Women and Child Development

### 1. One Stop Centre Scheme

The Central government will set up **One Stop Centres (OSCs) across 10 missions** to provide assistance to Indian women who are survivors of gender-based violence.

- The missions where the OSCs will come up are Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, UAE, Jeddah and Riyadh in Saudi Arabia, Australia, Canada and Singapore.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development will also set up 300 OSCs in the country in addition to the nearly 700 existing ones across all districts. “The aim will be to cover districts with high rates of crimes against women.”

#### **About the scheme:**

Popularly known as **Sakhi, Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)** has formulated this **Centrally Sponsored Scheme**.

It is a **sub – scheme of Umbrella Scheme for National Mission for Empowerment of women**.

**Target group:** The OSC will support all women including girls below 18 years of age affected by violence, irrespective of caste, class, religion, region, sexual orientation or marital status.

#### **The Centres will be integrated with a Women Helpline to facilitate access to following services:**

1. Emergency response and rescue services.
2. Medical assistance.
3. Assistance to women in lodging the FIR.
4. Psycho- social support and counselling.
5. Legal aid and counselling.
6. Shelter.
7. Video conferencing facility.

#### **Funds:**

The Scheme will be funded through **Nirbhaya Fund**. The Central Government will provide **100% financial assistance to the State Government /UT Administrations under the Scheme**.

#### **Need for protection:**

1. **Gender Based Violence (GBV)** is a global health, human rights and development issue that transcends geography, class, culture, age, race and religion to affect every community and country in every corner of the world.
2. **The Article 1 of UN Declaration** on the Elimination of Violence 1993 provides a definition of gender – based abuse, calling it “any act of gender – based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life”.
3. **In India, gender based violence has many manifestations;** from the more universally prevalent forms of domestic and sexual violence including rape, to harmful practices such as, dowry, honour killings, acid attacks, witch – hunting, sexual harassment, child sexual abuse, trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation, child marriage, sex selective abortion, sati etc.

### 2. PM CARES For Children- Empowerment of COVID Affected Children

The scheme has been **launched for support & empowerment of Covid affected children**.

**Eligibility:** All children who have lost both parents or surviving parent or legal guardian/adoptive parents due to Covid 19 will be supported under the scheme.

#### **Features of the scheme:**

**1. Fixed Deposit in the name of the child:**

PM CARES will contribute through a specially designed scheme to create a corpus of Rs 10 lakh for each child when he or she reaches 18 years of age. This corpus:

- Will be used to give a monthly financial support/ stipend from 18 years of age, for the next five years to take care of his or her personal requirements during the period of higher education and
- On reaching the age of 23 years, he or she will get the corpus amount as one lump-sum for personal and professional use.

**2. School Education: For children under 10 years**

- The child will be given admission in the nearest Kendriya Vidyalaya or in a private school as a day scholar.
- If the child is admitted in a private school, the fees as per the RTE norms will be given from the PM CARES.
- PM-CARES will also pay for expenditure on uniform, text books and notebooks.

**3. School Education: for children between 11-18 years:**

- The child will be given admission in any Central Government residential school such as Sainik School, Navodaya Vidyalaya etc.
- In case the child is to be continued under the care of Guardian/ grandparents/ extended family, then he or she will be given admission in the nearest Kendriya Vidyalaya or in a private school as a day scholar.
- If the child is admitted in a private school, the fees as per the RTE norms will be given from the PM CARES.
- PM CARES will also pay for expenditure on uniform, text books and notebooks.

**4. Support for Higher Education:**

- The child will be assisted in obtaining education loan for Professional courses / Higher Education in India as per the existing Education Loan norms. The interest on this loan will be paid by the PM CARES.
- As an alternative, scholarship equivalent to the tuition fees / course fees for undergraduate/ vocational courses as per Government norms will be provided to such children under Central or State Government Schemes. For children who are not eligible under the existing scholarship schemes, PM CARES will provide an equivalent scholarship.

**5. Health Insurance**

- All children will be enrolled as a beneficiary under Ayushman Bharat Scheme (PM-JAY) with a health insurance cover of Rs. 5 lakhs.
- The premium amount for these children till the age of 18 years will be paid by PM CARES.

## Ministry of Defence

**1. Negative imports list for defence**

The **Defence Ministry** has notified the **second negative import list** — now renamed as the **'positive indigenisation list'** — of 108 items that can now be only purchased from indigenous sources.

- The list comprises complex systems, sensors, simulator, weapons and ammunitions like helicopters, next generation corvettes, Air Borne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) systems, tank engines.

**Significance and implications of this move:**

1. Recognises the potential of local defence industry.

2. Invigorate impetus to domestic Research and Development by attracting fresh investment into technology and manufacturing capabilities.
3. Provides an excellent opportunity for 'start-ups' as also Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

### What is the negative imports list policy?

Introduced in August 2020, the negative list essentially means that the Armed Forces—Army, Navy and Air Force—will only procure such items from domestic manufacturers.

- The manufacturers could be private sector players or Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs).

### Why was this policy needed? What will be the impacts?

As per **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute**, India has been the second largest importer between 2014 and 2019 with US\$ 16.75 billion worth of imports during this period.

- **The government wants to reduce the dependence on imported items in defence** and give a shot in the arm to the domestic defence manufacturing industry.
- By denying the possibility of importing the items on the negative list, **the domestic industry is given the opportunity to step up and manufacture them for the needs of the forces.**

## 2. Corporatization of ordnance factory board

The Union Cabinet has approved a plan to corporatize **the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB)**.

### Ordnance Factory Board (OFB):

It is an umbrella body for the ordnance factories and related institutions, and is currently a **subordinate office of the Ministry of Defence (MoD)**.

The **first Indian ordnance factory was set up in the year 1712 by the Dutch Company** as a GunPowder Factory, West Bengal.

- OFBs will be responsible for different verticals of the products such as the Ammunition and Explosives group will be engaged in production of ammunition while a Vehicles group will engage in production of defence mobility and combat vehicles.

### What Will Change?

According to the plan, the 41 companies will reportedly be grouped under the new entities that will function like any other existing defence public sector undertaking (DPSU) like Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) or Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).

### Significance of new structure:

1. The restructuring is aimed at transforming the ordnance factories into **productive and profitable assets**, deepen their specialisation in product range, **enhance competitiveness and improve quality and cost-efficiency**.
2. The restructure would **help in overcoming various shortcomings** in the existing system of the OFB by eliminating inefficient supply chains and provide these companies incentive to become competitive and explore new opportunities in the market.
3. It will **allow these companies autonomy as well as help improve accountability and efficiency**.

## Ministry of Road Transport & Highways

### 1. Vehicle scrappage policy

India's **vehicle scrapping policy**, or the "Voluntary Vehicle-Fleet Modernisation Programme" was unveiled in Parliament in March 2021 by Union Road Transport & Highways Minister.

#### About the Vehicle Scrappage Policy:

1. Old vehicles will have to pass a **fitness test** before re-registration and as per the policy **government commercial vehicles more than 15 years old and private vehicles which are over 20 years old will be scrapped** (it doesn't matter if they run on diesel or petrol).
  2. As a disincentive, **increased re-registration fees** would be applicable for vehicles 15 years or older from the initial date registration.
  3. The state governments may be advised to **offer a road-tax rebate of up to 25% for personal vehicles and up to 15% for commercial vehicles** to provide incentive to owners of old vehicles to scrap old and unfit vehicles.
- Automated Fitness Centres will have tracks and equipment suitable to test for various criteria such as **emission norms, braking and other parameters**, without human intervention.
  - When a car is scrapped, apart from metals including iron and steel, many other parts may emerge that can be refurbished and ploughed back into use. In a **circular economy**, products, materials, equipment and infrastructure are kept in use for longer, thus improving productivity.

## Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

### 1. Cable TV network rules

The Information and Broadcasting Ministry has amended the **Cable Television Network Rules, 1994** regulating Cable TV networks, providing for a "**statutory**" mechanism for complaints raised by citizens regarding any content broadcast.

#### Overview of Cable Television Networks (Amendment) Rules, 2021:

1. It provides for a **three-level grievance redressal mechanism** — self-regulation by **broadcasters**, self-regulation by the **self-regulating bodies** of the broadcasters, and oversight by an **Inter-Departmental Committee** at the level of the Union government.

#### Procedure for grievance redressal:

1. A viewer can file a complaint directly to the **broadcaster**, who will have to respond within 15 days.
2. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, the complaint can be escalated to **the self-regulating bodies** set up by TV channels, which should deal with the case in 60 days.
3. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the self-regulating body, he may, within 15 days of such decision, prefer **an appeal to the Central Government** for its consideration under the Oversight Mechanism.
4. Such appeals will be dealt with by **the Inter-Departmental Committee** set up under the Oversight Mechanism.

#### Composition of the committee:

The committee will be headed by the Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and have members from various ministries.

#### Powers of the committee:

1. Recommend the Centre to advise, issue a warning, censure, admonish or reprimand a broadcaster, or seek an apology.
2. Ask the broadcaster to include a warning card or a disclaimer, or to delete or modify content, or take the channel or a programme off-air for a specified time period, where it is satisfied that such action is warranted.

#### Present Grievance redressal mechanism:

At present, there is an institutional mechanism by way of an Inter-Ministerial Committee to address the grievances of citizens relating to the violation of the Programme/Advertising Codes under the Rules, but **it does not have statutory backing.**

#### Significance of the new rules:

1. It paves the way "for a **strong institutional system for redressing grievances.**
2. It places **accountability and responsibility on the broadcasters and their self-regulating bodies.**

#### About [the Cable Television Networks \(Regulation\) Act, 1995](#):

1. The law **prescribes imprisonment up to two years or fine up to ₹1,000 or both** for the first offence, and imprisonment up to five years and with fine up to ₹5,000 if any media governed under the CTN Act violates the provisions and the "Programme Code".
2. The code, which contains an elaborate list of don'ts for cable TV channels, states that **no programme should be aired that contains anything obscene, defamatory, false, and suggests innuendos and half-truths.**

## Minister of Corporate Affairs

### 1. MCA21 Version 3.0

Minister of Corporate Affairs has launched the first phase of Ministry of Corporate Affairs' (MCA) MCA21 Version 3.0 (V3.0).

#### What is MCA 21?

MCA21 is an e-Governance initiative of Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) that enables easy and secure access of the MCA services to the corporate entities, professionals and citizens of India. It is **the first Mission Mode e-Governance project of Gol.**

#### MCA21 3.0:

- MCA21 V3 is a technology-driven forward-looking project, envisioned to strengthen enforcement, promote Ease of Doing Business, enhance the user experience, and facilitate seamless integration and data exchange among Regulators.
- The project will have Micro-services architecture with high scalability and capabilities for advanced analytics.
- It will have additional modules for e-Adjudication, e-Consultation and Compliance Management.

## Ministry of Commerce & Industry

### 1. National Startup Advisory Council

- Constituted by the 'Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).
- Its role is to advise the Government on measures needed to build a



strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and startups in the country to drive sustainable economic growth and generate large scale employment opportunities.

#### Functions of NSAC:

- Suggest measures to foster a culture of innovation amongst citizens and students.
- Promote innovation in all sectors of economy across the country, including semi-urban and rural areas.
- Support creative and innovative ideas through incubation and research and development to transform them into valuable products.

#### Structure of NSAC:

- The National Startup Advisory Council will be **chaired by the Minister for Commerce & Industry**.
- The Council will consist of the non-official members, to be nominated by the Central Government.
- The nominees of the concerned Ministries/Departments/Organisations, not below the rank of Joint Secretary to the Government of India, will be ex-officio members of the Council.

### 2. Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS)

The Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS) has been launched.

#### About the Startup seed fund:

- The Fund aims to provide financial assistance to startups for proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market entry, and commercialization.
- Rs. 945 Crore corpus will be divided over the next 4 years for providing seed funding to eligible startups through eligible incubators across India.
- The scheme is expected to support an estimated 3,600 startups through 300 incubators.
- Nodal Department: Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade.

#### Significance:

- The **SISFS** will **Secure** seed funding, **Inspire** innovation, **Support** transformative ideas, **Facilitate** implementation, and **Start** startup revolution.
- The Scheme will create a robust startup ecosystem, particularly in Tier 2 and Tier 3 towns of India, which are often deprived of adequate funding.

#### Need for the scheme:

- Easy availability of capital is essential for entrepreneurs at the early stages of growth of an enterprise.

- Funding from angel investors and venture capital firms becomes available to startups only after the proof of concept has been provided. Similarly, banks provide loans only to asset-backed applicants.
- It is essential to provide seed funding to startups with an innovative idea to conduct proof of concept trials.

### 3. e-SANTA

- It is an electronic marketplace providing a platform to connect aqua farmers and the buyers.
- Launched by Union Commerce Ministry.
- It will enable the farmers to get a better price and the exporters to directly purchase quality products from the farmers enhancing traceability, a key factor in international trade.
- The term e-SANTA was coined for the web portal, meaning Electronic Solution for Augmenting NaCSA farmers' Trade in Aquaculture.
- e-SANTA will 'RAISE' the lives & income of farmers by: Reducing Risk, Awareness of Products & Markets, Increase in Income, Shielding Against Wrong Practice and Ease of Processes.

## Ministry of Power

### 1. Integrated Power Development Scheme (IPDS)

A 50 kWp Solar roof top was recently inaugurated in Solan, Himachal Pradesh under [the Integrated power development scheme](#) of the **Ministry of Power**, Government of India.

- The project further reinforces the '**Go Green**' Initiative of the government envisaged in the **Urban Distribution scheme** of the government of India.

#### About IPDS:

[Power Finance Corporation\(PFC\)](#) is the Nodal agency for implementation of the scheme.

Launched in 2014 by **Ministry of Power** with the objectives of:

1. Strengthening of sub-transmission and distribution network in the urban areas.
2. Metering of distribution transformers /feeders / consumers in the urban areas.
3. IT enablement of distribution sector and strengthening of distribution network under R-APDRP.

#### Significance of the scheme:

The scheme will help in reduction in AT&C losses; establishment of IT enabled energy accounting / auditing system, improvement in billed energy based on metered consumption and improvement in collection efficiency.

#### Restructured Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programme (R-APDRP):

Launched in July 2008 with focus on establishment of base line data, fixation of accountability, reduction of AT&C losses upto 15% level through strengthening & up-gradation of Sub Transmission and Distribution network and adoption of Information Technology during XI Plan.

## Ministry of Railways

### 1. Research Design & Standards Organization (RDSO)

Indian Railways' Research Design & Standards Organization (RDSO) has recently become **the nation's first institution to be declared as Standard Developing Organization (SDO)** under the mission called **"One Nation One Standard"** on Bureau of Indian Standards.

#### Benefits of this recognition:

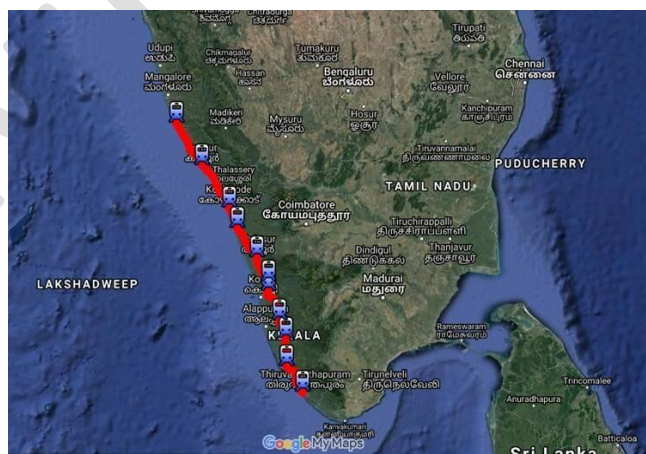
1. Larger participation of industry/vendors/technology developers/MSME's in Indian Railways supply chain.
2. The competitiveness amongst the industry will increase.
3. There will be a reduction in cost and quantum improvement in the quality of product and services.
4. There will be smooth induction of latest evolving & emerging technologies on Indian Railways.
5. Dependence on imports will reduce and "Make-in-India" will get a boost.
6. Improved ease-of-doing-business.
7. RDSO will be recognized on international standards-making bodies and there will be integration with global supply chain/global trade.

#### About the "One Nation One Standard":

- The mission was envisioned on the line of 'one nation, one ration card' scheme in order to ensure quality products in the country.
- The purpose is **to converge multiple standards with the BIS** which is a recognised national body for standardisation in India.
- The idea is **to develop one template of standard for one given product** instead of having multiple agencies set it.

### 2. Kerala's SilverLine project

- It is Kerala's flagship **semi high-speed railway project** aimed at reducing travel time between the state's northern and southern ends.
- It links Kerala's southern end and state capital Thiruvananthapuram with its northern end of Kasaragod.
- The line is proposed to be 529.45 kms long, covering 11 districts.
- The project is being executed by the **Kerala Rail Development Corporation Limited (KRDC)**. KRDC, or K-Rail, is a joint venture between the Kerala government and the Union Ministry of Railways.



## Ministry of Finance

### 1. Stand Up India Scheme

Five years ago the Stand Up India scheme was launched by the government to promote entrepreneurship among women, Scheduled Castes (SC) & Scheduled Tribes (ST). So far:

- Banks have sanctioned more than ₹25,000 crore to over 1.14 lakh accounts.
- Women-led enterprises have dominated the sanctions so far under the scheme, which has now been extended till 2025.

**About the Stand Up India Scheme:**

- Stand Up India Scheme was launched on 5 April 2016 to promote entrepreneurship at the grass-root level of economic empowerment and job creation.
- This scheme seeks to leverage the institutional credit structure to reach out to the underserved sector of people such as SCs, STs and Women Entrepreneurs.
- The objective of this scheme is to facilitate bank loans between Rs.10 lakh and Rs.1 crore to at least one SC or ST borrower and at least one woman borrower per bank branch for setting up a Greenfield enterprise.
- The offices of SIDBI and NABARD shall be designated Stand-Up Connect Centres (SUCC).

**Eligibility under Stand Up India Scheme:**

1. SC/ST and/or women entrepreneurs; above 18 years of age.
2. Loans under the scheme are available for only Greenfield project.
3. Borrower should not be in default to any bank or financial institution.
4. In case of non-individual enterprises at least 51% of the shareholding and controlling stake should be held by either an SC/ST or Woman entrepreneur.

## Ministry of Panchayati Raj

### 1. A Model Panchayat Citizens Charter

A **Model Panchayat Citizens Charter/ framework** for delivery of the services across the 29 sectors, aligning actions with localised **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, was released recently.

- It has been prepared by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) in collaboration with **National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (NIRDPR)**.

**Significance:**

The Citizen Charter would ensure transparent and effective delivery of public services for sustainable development and enhanced citizen service experiences; deepening inclusive and accountable Local Self Governments by incorporating diverse views while designing and delivering services.

**Need for:**

- Panchayats constitute the third tier of government in the rural areas and represent the first level of Government interaction for over 60 per cent of the Indian populace.
- Panchayats are responsible for delivery of basic services as enshrined under **article 243G of the Constitution of India**, specifically in the areas of Health & Sanitation, Education, Nutrition, Drinking Water.

**About Citizens' Charters:**

- **Citizens' Charters initiative** is a response to the quest for solving the problems which a citizen encounters, day in and day out, while dealing with the organisations providing public services.
- The concept of Citizens' Charter enshrines **the trust between the service provider and its users**.
- The concept was **first articulated and implemented in the United Kingdom in 1991**.

**Six principles of the Citizens Charter movement as originally framed, were:**

- (i) Quality: Improving the quality of services.
- (ii) Choice: Wherever possible.
- (iii) Standards: Specify what to expect and how to act if standards are not met.
- (iv) Value: For the taxpayer's money.

(v) Accountability: Individuals and Organisations.

(vi) Transparency.

#### In India:

The concept of citizen's charter was **first adopted at a 'Conference of Chief Ministers of various States and Union Territories' held in May 1997 in the national capital.**

## 2. SWAMITVA scheme

The scheme has been extended to all states. Earlier, it was launched only for 9 states.

#### Overview and key features of the 'Swamitva Yojana':

Launched on **Panchayati Raj Diwas** (April 24th, 2020).

- The scheme seeks to map residential land ownership in the rural sector using modern technology like the use of drones.
- The scheme aims to revolutionise property record maintenance in India.
- The scheme is piloted by **the Panchayati Raj ministry.**
- Under the scheme, residential land in villages will be measured using drones to create a non-disputable record.
- **Property card for every property in the village** will be prepared by states using accurate measurements delivered by drone-mapping. These cards will be given to property owners and will be recognised by the land revenue records department.

#### Benefits of the scheme:

- The delivery of property rights through an official document will enable villagers to access bank finance using their property as collateral.
- The property records for a village will also be maintained at the Panchayat level, allowing for the collection of associated taxes from the owners. The money generated from these local taxes will be used to build rural infrastructure and facilities.
- Freeing the residential properties including land of title disputes and the creation of an official record is likely to result in appreciation in the market value of the properties.
- The accurate property records can be used for facilitating tax collection, new building and structure plan, issuing of permits and for thwarting attempts at property grabbing.

#### Need for and significance of the scheme:

The need for this Yojana was felt since several villagers in the rural areas don't have papers proving ownership of their land. In most states, survey and measurement of the populated areas in the villages has not been done for the purpose of attestation/verification of properties. The new scheme is likely to become a tool for empowerment and entitlement, reducing social strife on account of discord over properties.

## Ministry of Home Affairs

### 1. Cybercrime volunteer programme

The Union Home Ministry has said it does not maintain a centralised list of volunteers enrolled under **the cybercrime volunteer programme** since **the police is a "State subject" under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution.**

#### Background:

In response to a **Right to Information Act (RTI)** application on the total number of volunteers who have applied under the Cybercrime Volunteers Programme of the National Cybercrime Reporting Portal, the Ministry said the information could be sought directly from the respective States and Union Territories.

**About the cybercrime volunteer programme:**

**Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)** has envisaged the Cyber Crime Volunteers Program to bring together citizens with passion to serve the nation on a single platform and contribute in the fight against cybercrime in the country.

The volunteers are registered, and their services utilised, by the respective State/UTs as per their requirement.

- The programme **targets to rope in around 500 persons to flag unlawful content on the Internet.**

**Roles and functions:**

- The volunteers shall “maintain strict confidentiality of tasks assigned/carried out by them”.
- The State Nodal Officer of States/UTs also reserves the right to take legal action against the Volunteer, in case of violation of terms and conditions of the Program.
- The volunteers are barred from issuing any public statement about their association with this program and are also “strictly prohibited” from using the name of Ministry of Home Affairs or claim to have an association with the ministry on any social media or public platform.

**Concerns:**

1. No information available on how the Ministry will ensure that the program is not misused by certain elements to extract misguided personal or political vendettas.
2. No process in place for withdrawal of complaints once submitted.
3. No clear definition of unlawful content which would relate to “anti-national” activities.
4. This may violate the decision of the Supreme Court in **Shreya Singhal v Union of India (2013)** which highlights the need to ensure that overbroad restrictions on online speech are not used as a tool by the State to criminalise free speech on the internet.

## Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment

### 1. SAGE Portal

The **Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment**, launched the **SAGE (Seniorcare Aging Growth Engine) initiative** and SAGE portal to support India’s elderly persons.

- The portal will be a “one-stop access” of elderly care products and services by credible start-ups.
- The start-ups selected under SAGE will be those which will provide new innovative products and services to elderly persons in various areas like health, travel, finance, legal, housing, food among others.
- The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment will act as a facilitator for this scheme.
- A fund of upto Rs.1 crore as one-time equity will be granted to each selected start-up.

### 2. Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID) Program

1. The program aims to **create a pool of grass-root rehabilitation workers at community level** who can work alongside ASHA and Anganwadi workers to handle cross disability issues and facilitate inclusion of persons with disabilities in the society.
2. The program has been designed to provide competency based knowledge and skills among these workers to enhance their ability for successfully discharging their duties. These workers will be called '**Divyang Mitra**' i.e. friends of persons with disabilities.
3. The National Board of Examination in Rehabilitation under the Rehabilitation Council of India will conduct examinations and award certificates to pass-out candidates.

## Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs

### 1. Special Window for Affordable & Mid-Income Housing (SWAMIH)

Centre's Special Window for Affordable & Mid-Income Housing (SWAMIH) has completed its **first residential project**.

- The residential project -- Rivali Park in suburban Mumbai -- is the first housing project in India to have received funding under the SWAMIH Fund.

#### **About SWAMIH Fund:**

- The SWAMIH Fund was **launched in November 2019**.
- SWAMIH Investment Fund has been formed to complete construction of stalled, RERA-registered affordable and mid-income category housing projects which are stuck due to paucity of funds.
- The fund was set up as a **Category-II AIF (Alternate Investment Fund) debt fund** registered with SEBI.
- The Investment Manager of the Fund is **SBICAP Ventures**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of SBI Capital Markets, which in turn is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the State Bank of India.
- The **Sponsor of the Fund is the Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance**.

#### **Who will be the investors of the fund?**

AIFs created/funded under the Special Window would solicit investment into the fund from the Government and other private investors including cash-rich financial institutions, sovereign wealth funds, public and private banks, domestic pension and provident funds, global pension funds and other institutional investors.

### 2. EatSmart Cities Challenge

- The Challenge is envisioned as a competition among cities to recognize their efforts in adopting and scaling up various initiatives under **Eat Right India**.
- This unique challenge, in partnership with Smart Cities Mission will create an environment of right food practices and habits, strengthen the food safety and regulatory environment, build awareness among the consumers and urge them to make better food choices in India's major cities.
- The challenge is open to all Smart Cities, capital cities of States/UTs, and cities with a population of more than 5 lakh.

## Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises

### 1. National Programme on Advanced Chemistry Cell Battery Storage

The Cabinet has approved the proposal of **Department of Heavy Industry** for implementation of **the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme** 'National Programme on Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage' for achieving manufacturing capacity of Fifty (50) GigaWatt Hour (GWh) of ACC and 5 GWh of "Niche" ACC.

#### **About the scheme:**

- It is a ₹18,100 crore production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for building Tesla-style giga factories to manufacture batteries.
- The plan is to set up 50 gigawatt hour (GWh) manufacturing capacity for advanced chemistry cell batteries by attracting investments totaling ₹45,000 crore.

- As part of the scheme, each selected ACC battery storage manufacturer would have to commit to set up an ACC manufacturing facility of minimum 5GWh capacity and ensure a minimum 60% domestic value addition at the project level within five years.

### What are Advanced Chemistry Cells (ACC)?

ACCs are the new generation of advanced storage technologies that can store electric energy either as electrochemical or as chemical energy and convert it back to electric energy as and when required.

### Significance of the scheme:

All the demand of the ACCs is currently being met through imports in India.

- The National Programme on Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage will reduce import dependence.
- It will also support the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative. ACC battery Storage manufacturers will be selected through a transparent competitive bidding process.

## Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways

### 1. National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC):

Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways and Ministry of Culture have signed an MoU for Cooperation in Development of **National Maritime Heritage Complex at Lothal, Gujarat.**

- NMHC would be developed as an international tourist destination, where the maritime heritage of India from ancient to modern times would be showcased.
- The unique feature of NMHC is the recreation of **ancient Lothal city**, which is one of the prominent cities of the ancient Indus valley civilization dating to 2400 BC.



## Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports

### 1. Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay National Welfare Fund For Sportspersons

The Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports (MYAS) has approved an amount of Rs 2 Lakh for Karnataka's V Tejaswini Bai, who won the Arjuna Award in 2011 and was a member of the Women's Kabaddi team that won gold medals at the 2010 and 2014 Asian Games respectively.

- The financial assistance has been approved from **the Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay National Welfare Fund for the Sportspersons (PDUNWFS).**

### About the Fund:

- Set up in March, 1982 with a view to assisting outstanding Sportspersons of yesteryear, living in indigent circumstances who had brought glory to the Country in sports.
- The scheme was revised in May, 2016 to provide for lump sum ex-gratia assistance to outstanding Sportspersons of yesteryears.
- Provision of pension has been done away with** as there is already a Scheme of Pension for Meritorious Sportspersons.

**The Fund shall be utilized for the following objectives:**

1. To provide suitable assistance to outstanding sports persons now living in indigent sportspersons.
2. To provide suitable assistance to outstanding sports persons injured during the period of their training for competitions and also during the competitions, depending on the nature of the injury.
3. To provide suitable assistance to outstanding sports persons who bring glory to the country in the international field and who are disabled as an after effect of their strenuous training or otherwise and to provide them assistance for medical treatment.
4. To administrator and apply the funds of the Fund to promote the welfare of the sports persons generally in order to alleviate distress among them and their dependents in indigent circumstances.
5. To administer and apply the funds of the Fund for active sports persons individually or collectively as a group.
6. To do all other things which are incidental to the above objectives.

## NITI Ayog

### 1. Surakshit Hum Surakshit Tum Abhiyaan

NITI Aayog & Piramal Foundation have launched **Surakshit Hum Surakshit Tum Abhiyaan** in **112 Aspirational Districts**.

- Campaign Will Provide Covid Home-Care Support to 20 Lakh Citizens.
- The Abhiyaan is being part of a special initiative, **Aspirational Districts Collaborative**, in which local leaders, civil societies and volunteers work with district administrations to address emerging problems across key focus areas of the Aspirational Districts Programme.

### 2. Poshan Gyan

- It is a national digital repository on health and nutrition.
- Launched by NITI Aayog, in partnership with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Centre for Social and Behaviour Change, Ashoka University.
- The Poshan Gyan repository is conceptualized as a resource, enabling search of communication materials on 14 thematic areas of health and nutrition across diverse languages, media types, target audiences and sources.



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## Important Acts / Bills

### 1. Model Tenancy Act

The Union Cabinet has approved [the Model Tenancy Act \(MTA\)](#).

- States and Union territories can now adopt the Model Tenancy Act by enacting fresh legislation or they can amend their existing rental laws suitably.

#### Highlights of the Model Law:

- Applicable prospectively** and will not affect the existing tenancies.
- Written agreement is a must** for all new tenancies. The agreement will have to be submitted to the concerned **district 'Rent Authority'**.
- The law also speaks about roles and responsibilities of landlord and tenants.
- No landlord or property manager can withhold any essential supply** to the premises occupied by the tenant.
- If tenancy has not been renewed**, the tenancy shall be deemed to be renewed on a month-to-month basis on the same terms and conditions as were in the expired tenancy agreement, for a maximum period of six months.
- Compensation in case of non-vacancy:** On the expiry of extended period of six months of agreed tenancy period or the termination of tenancy by order or notice, the tenant shall be a tenant in default and liable to pay **compensation of double of the monthly rent for two months and four times of the monthly rent thereafter**.
- A landowner or property manager may enter a premise in accordance with written notice or notice through electronic medium** served to the tenant at least twenty-four hours before the time of entry.

**Model Tenancy Act**

- Will not affect the existing tenancies
- Written agreement must for all new tenancies
- Separate rent authorities, courts and tribunals to be set up in every district
- States and Union territories can adopt Model Tenancy Act by enacting fresh legislation or they can amend their existing rental laws suitably

#### Significance:

It is an important piece of legislation that promises **to ease the burden on civil courts, unlock rental properties stuck in legal disputes, and prevent future tangles** by balancing the interests of tenants and landlords.

### 2. National Food Security Act (NFSA)

Centre amends Food Security rules **to prevent ration leakage, corruption**.

- The government said that this amendment has been made as an attempt to take forward the reform process envisaged under **Section 12 of the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013** by way of improving **the transparency of the operation of the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) under NFSA**.

The Centre has informed the Supreme Court that the States and the Union Territories have purchased nearly 3.7 lakh tonnes of foodgrains at concessional rates from [the Food Corporation of India](#) to supply to migrants without ration cards and others outside the protective cover of [the National Food Security Act \(NFSA\)](#).

#### Significance:

- This amendment aims to ensure the right quantity to beneficiaries in the distribution of subsidised food grains under **the National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013** as per their entitlement.
- It also **incentivizes states who have been using ePoS efficiently** and encourages states to improve efficiency in ePoS operations and generate savings.

**The amendment:**

According to the amendment, states that are operating their ePoS devices judiciously and are able to generate savings from the additional margin of Rs 17 per quintal can now utilise the savings for purchase, operations and maintenance of electronic weighing scales and their integration with the point of sale devices.

**One Nation One Ration Card system:**

The Supreme Court has directed all states and UTs to implement [the One Nation, One Ration Card system](#).

**What is One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC)?**

The ONORC scheme is aimed at enabling migrant workers and their family members to buy subsidised ration from any fair price shop anywhere in the country under [the National Food Security Act, 2013](#).

- The One Nation One Ration Card scheme was initially started in four states in August 2019. Now, two years later, it is enabled in 33 states and UTs covering almost 86.7 per cent of the NFSA population (about 690 million NFSA beneficiaries) in the country.

**Implementation:**

To promote this reform in the archaic **Public Distribution System (PDS)**, the government has provided incentives to states.

The Centre had even set **the implementation of ONORC as a precondition for additional borrowing** by states during the Covid-19 pandemic last year.

- At least 17 states, which implemented the ONORC reform, were allowed to borrow an additional Rs 37,600 crores in 2020-21.

**How does ONORC work?**

- ONORC is based on technology that involves details of beneficiaries' ration card, Aadhaar number, and electronic Points of Sale (ePoS).
- The system identifies a beneficiary through biometric authentication on ePos devices at fair price shops.
- The system runs with the support of two portals — **Integrated Management of Public Distribution System (IM-PDS) and Annavitran**, which host all the relevant data.

**About National Food Security Act is already covered in previous Government Schemes Module.**

**3. [Legal Metrology \(Packaged Commodities\) Rules, 2011](#)**

Importers of medical devices, used particularly for providing oxygen support to Covid-19 patients, were **allowed to import these devices without prior mandatory declaration for three months**.

**Background:**

The Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011, make it mandatory to get the approvals prior to the import.

But, considering the pandemic situation of COVID-19 and to meet the demand of (sic) medical devices, the Central Government had given permission.

**About the Legal Metrology Act 2009:**

- The Department of Consumer Affairs, administers the Legal Metrology Act 2009.
- The act provides for application of legal requirements to measurements and measuring instruments.
- The objective of Legal Metrology is to ensure public guarantee from the point of view of security and accuracy of the weighments and measurements.

- The Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities), Rules 2011 are primarily intended to ensure that the consumers are able to make informed choices by being informed of essential declarations on the pre-packed commodities.

#### 4. Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985

The Punjab government has approved a reward policy to encourage information and inputs leading to recovery of drugs under **the Narcotic Drugs And Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.**

##### **Highlights:**

- The policy will recognise government servants-informers-sources for their role in providing inputs leading to the recovery of substantial quantity of drugs and in successful implementation of various provisions of the NDPS Act, 1985 and PIT NDPS Act, 1988.
- The quantum of reward for successful investigation, prosecution, forfeiture of illegally acquired property, preventive detention and other significant anti-drug work shall be decided on case-to-case basis.

##### **Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985:**

1. The Act is designed to fulfill India's treaty obligations under **the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.**
2. The Act 1985 sets out the statutory framework for drug law enforcement in India.
3. Under the Act, the cultivation, production, manufacture, possession, sale, purchase, transportation, warehousing, consumption, inter-State movement, transshipment and import and export of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances is prohibited, except for medical or scientific purposes and in accordance with the terms and conditions of any license, permit or authorization given by the Government.
4. The Central Government is empowered to regulate the cultivation, production, manufacture, import, export, sale, consumption, use etc of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.
5. State Governments are empowered to permit and regulate possession and inter-State movement of opium, poppy straw, the manufacture of medicinal opium and the cultivation of cannabis excluding hashish.
6. The Central Government is empowered to declare any substance, based on an assessment of its likely use in the manufacture of narcotics drugs and psychotropic substances as a controlled substance.
7. Both the Central Government and State Governments are empowered to appoint officers for the purposes of the Act.



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## Miscellaneous

### 1. Indemnity from liability

**Serum Institute** had asked for **indemnity from liability**, stating that **all vaccine manufacturers, whether Indian or foreign, should be protected against legal suits for any severe side effects.**

#### What is indemnity clause?

In simple terms, **indemnity means security against a loss or other financial stress.**

- **In legal terms, it means a contractual obligation of one party to compensate another party due to the acts of the former.**
- The clause is **commonly used in insurance contracts.**

In the case of India, if the government gives an indemnity to foreign vaccine makers to roll out their vaccine in the country, **the government, and not the vaccine maker, would be liable to compensate any citizen who claims to have side effects after taking the vaccine job.**

#### What are 'Bridging trials'?

'Bridging trials' are **localised clinical trials which generate data related to the impact of foreign medicines/vaccines on the indigenous population before they are rolled out for the public.**

These trials are important in ascertaining the efficacy and potential side-effects related to the medicine/vaccine.

- Besides clearance on indemnity clause, foreign vaccine makers including Pfizer and Moderna had sought relaxation on the requirement for a post-approval bridging trial for its vaccine.

#### Are there any exceptions to indemnification?

There are a number of common exceptions to indemnification.

An indemnification provision may exclude indemnification for claims or losses that result from the indemnified party's:

1. Negligence or gross negligence.
2. Improper use of the products.
3. Bad faith failure to comply with its obligations in the agreement.

### 2. NPR slips valid for long-term visas

Union Home Ministry has clarified that **migrants belonging to six non-Muslim minority communities from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh**, while applying for **long-term visas (LTVs)**, can also produce **National Population Register (NPR)** enrolment slips as proof of the duration of their stay in India.

#### Background:

The **NPR number** is part of an illustrative **list of more than 10 documents that could be provided to apply for an LTV**, which is a precursor to **acquiring Indian citizenship either by naturalisation or registration** under Section 5 and 6 of the **Citizenship Act, 1955**, for the six communities — **Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis, Christians and Buddhists** — from the three countries.

- The special provision of LTVs for Hindus and Sikhs from Pakistan and Afghanistan was first made in 2011.

#### What are LTVs?

For foreigners of non-Indian origin, a longer-term visa is classed as one that permits the holder to stay in India for longer than 180 days (six months) continuously. The main visas that provide this are the Employment, Entry and Student visas.

#### Benefits of LTV:

- People belonging to minority communities from neighbouring countries having LTVs are allowed to purchase a small house for their family and can even establish a business.
- They are eligible to obtain Aadhaar card, PAN card and driving licences. The LTV also allows them to buy property.

#### Acquisition and Determination of Indian Citizenship:

There are **four ways in which Indian citizenship can be acquired**: birth, descent, registration and naturalisation. The provisions are listed under [the Citizenship Act, 1955](#).

#### By Registration:

Citizenship can also be acquired by registration. Some of the mandatory rules are:

1. A person of Indian origin who has been a resident of India for 7 years before applying for registration.
2. A person of Indian origin who is a resident of any country outside undivided India.
3. A person who is married to an Indian citizen and is ordinarily resident for 7 years before applying for registration.
4. Minor children of persons who are citizens of India.

#### By Naturalisation:

- A person can acquire citizenship by naturalisation if he/she is ordinarily resident of India for 12 years (throughout 12 months preceding the date of application and 11 years in the aggregate) and fulfils all qualifications in the third schedule of the Citizenship Act.

**About NPR is already covered in previous Polity Module.**

### 3. [Hallmarking of gold](#)

The government had announced the phased **implementation of mandatory [hallmarking of gold jewellery](#)** with effect from June 16, 2021.

#### What is hallmarking of gold?

Hallmarking is the “accurate **determination and official recording of the proportionate content of precious metal in precious metal articles.**”

- So, it is like a “**guarantee of purity or fineness**” of precious metal articles.

[The Bureau of Indian Standard \(BIS\)](#) operates **gold and silver hallmarking scheme in India.**

#### Metals covered under the purview of hallmarking:

1. Gold jewellery and gold artefacts.
2. Silver jewellery and silver artefacts.

#### Exceptions:

1. Export and re-import of jewellery as per Trade Policy of Government of India — Jewellery for international exhibitions, jewellery for government-approved B2B domestic exhibitions.
2. Watches, fountain pens and special types of jewellery such as Kundan, Polki and Jadau.

#### What was the need of making hallmarking mandatory?

1. **India is the biggest consumer of gold.** However, the level of hallmarked jewellery is very low in the country- only 30% of Indian gold jewellery is hallmarked. Main reason behind this is **non-availability of sufficient assaying and hallmarking centres (A&HC).**

2. The mandatory hallmarking will **protect the public against lower caratage and ensure consumers do not get cheated while buying gold ornaments.**
3. It will also **help to get the purity as marked on the ornaments.**
4. It will **bring in transparency and assure the consumers of quality.**



#### 4. What loss of safe harbour means for Twitter?

Twitter has lost its **intermediary status** in India over non-compliance of **the new IT rules** that came into effect on May 26, 2021.

##### **What does intermediary status mean?**

As per **Section 2 (1) of the Information Technology Act**, an intermediary is a person/entity that receives, stores and transmits information or provides service for transmission of information.

- **This includes** telecom service providers, network service providers, internet service providers, search engines, online payment sites, online-auction sites, online-marketplaces and even cyber cafes.

Please note, **intermediary status is not a registration granted by the government.**

##### **Benefits of this status:**

Intermediaries are protected under **Section 79 of the Information Technology Act** that states that **they cannot be held liable for the third party content published on their platform** as long as they comply with the legal order to take down content from courts or other authorities.

##### **What is safe harbour protection?**

Consider, a user's tweets go viral and that results in death or violence. Now, **under safe harbour protection Twitter cannot be held liable just because of it.** However, they will have to take down the content if they get a legal order from the court or authorities. This is what termed as **safe harbour protection.**

##### **How does this impact Twitter, then?**

In the short run, since the protection accorded to Twitter under Section 79 of the IT Act is now gone, it opens up the platform to the possibility of any and all penal action that is likely to be taken against it as a publisher of content.

- This means that if someone puts out any content on Twitter that leads to some form of violence, or violates any Indian law with respect to content, not only the person that has put out the tweet will be held responsible, even Twitter will be legally liable for the content as it no longer has the protection.

##### **Who will decide intermediary status?**

It is the courts, not the government, who will decide on whether Twitter or other social media intermediaries can lose this status under law.

##### **Why do platforms want safe harbour?**

Platforms such as Twitter and Facebook, which have millions of users, argue that they cannot possibly be aware of every post, just as the managing director of Amazon does not always know all the items being sold on the online marketplace.

- As a result, they cannot be held liable. Removing safe harbour protections would mean that the platforms have to actively police and sensor whatever content is available on their services, which in turn could violate free speech and other fundamental rights.

## 5. Information Technology (Guidelines for Intermediaries and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021

New IT rules to regulate digital content, featuring a **code of ethics and a three-tier grievance redressal framework**, have come into force (May 26).

### **Background:**

On February 25, the Centre framed **the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules 2021**, in the exercise of powers under **section 87 (2) of the Information Technology Act, 2000** and in supersession of the earlier Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines) Rules 2011, which will come into effect from May 26, 2021.

### **Overview of the new rules:**

1. It mandates a **grievance redressal system** for over the top (OTT) and digital portals in the country. This is necessary for the users of social media to raise their grievance against the misuse of social media.
2. **Significant social media firms** have to appoint a **chief compliance officer** and have a **nodal contact person** who can be in touch with law enforcement agencies 24/7.
3. **A grievance officer:** Social media platforms will also have to name a **grievance officer** who shall register the grievance within 24 hours and dispose of it in 15 days.
4. **Removal of content:** If there are complaints against the dignity of users, particularly women - about exposed private parts of individuals or nudity or sexual act or impersonation etc - social media platforms will be required to remove that within 24 hours after a complaint is made.
5. **A monthly report:** They also will have to publish a monthly report about the number of complaints received and the status of redressal.
6. There will be **three levels of regulation for news publishers** -- self-regulation, a self-regulatory body, headed by a retired judge or an eminent person, and oversight from the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, including codes of practices and a grievance committee.

### **What is a significant social media intermediary and benefits obtained under it?**

Social media companies with more than 50 lakh registered users will be considered 'significant social media intermediaries', as per the new norms.

### **What happens in case of non compliance?**

- Social media giants such **could face a ban** if they do not comply with the new Information Technology rules.
- They also run the risk of losing their status as **"intermediaries"** and may become liable for criminal action if they do not comply with the revised regulations.

## 6. Jivan Vayu

- It is nation's first power-free CPAP device 'Jivan Vayu'.
- Developed by IIT Ropar.

### **What is CPAP?**

- Continuous positive airway pressure therapy (CPAP) uses a machine to help a person who has obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) breathe more easily during sleep.
- A CPAP machine increases air pressure in your throat so that your airway doesn't collapse when you breathe in.

## 7. Integrated Theatre Command

An integrated theatre command envisages a **unified command of the three Services, under a single commander, for geographical areas that are of strategic and security concern.**

- The commander of such a force will be able to bear all resources at his disposal — from the Army, the Indian Air Force, and the Navy — with seamless efficacy.
- The **integrated theatre commander will not be answerable to individual Services.**
- Integration and jointness of the three forces will avoid duplication of resources. The resources available under each service will be available to other services too.
- **The Shekatkar committee** has recommended the creation of 3 integrated theatre commands — northern for the China border, western for the Pakistan border, and southern for the maritime role.

### 8. National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI)

It is a not-for-profit organization (section 8 of the Companies Act 2013) working since 2003 for spreading the internet infrastructure to the citizens of India through the following activities:

1. Internet Exchanges through which the internet data is exchanged amongst ISP's, Data Centers and CDNs.
2. .IN Registry, managing and operation of .IN country code domain and .भारत IDN domain for India.

### 9. Biotech-KISAN Programme

1. It is a farmer-centric scheme for farmers, developed by and with farmers under the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology.
2. It is a pan-India program, following a hub-and-spoke model and stimulates entrepreneurship and innovation in farmers and empowers women farmers.
3. It identifies and promotes local farm leadership in both genders. Such leadership helps to develop science-based farming besides facilitating the transfer of knowledge.

### 10. Maritime State Development Council (MSDC)

- The MSDC is an apex advisory body for the development of the maritime sector and aims to ensure integrated development of Major and non-Major Ports.
- **It was constituted in 1997** to assess in consultation with State Governments, the future development of existing and new Minor Ports by the respective Maritime States either directly or through captive users and private participation.
- The MSDC also monitors the development of minor ports, captive ports and private ports in the Maritime States.

### 11. Project Seabird

It is **the largest naval infrastructure project for India.**

- The project aims at creation of a naval base at Karwar on the west coast of India.
- Upon completion, the program will provide Indian Navy with its largest naval base on the west coast and also the largest naval base east of the Suez Canal.
- This would further bolster the operational readiness of the Armed Forces and help in augmenting trade, economy & humanitarian aid operations.

### 12. Why and how of creating a district?

Malerkotla became the 23rd district in Punjab.

#### **How are new districts carved?**

- The power to create new districts or alter or abolish existing districts rests with the State governments.
- This can either be done through an executive order or by passing a law in the State Assembly.
- Many States prefer the executive route by simply issuing a notification in the official gazette.

#### **Does the Central government have a role to play here?**

The **Centre has no role to play in the alteration of districts or creation of new ones**. States are free to decide.

The **Home Ministry comes into the picture when a State wants to change the name of a district or a railway station**.

- The State government's request is sent to other departments and agencies such as the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Intelligence Bureau, Department of Posts, Geographical Survey of India Sciences and the Railway Ministry seeking clearance. A no-objection certificate may be issued after examining their replies.

### 13.SC: personal guarantors liable for corporate debt

In November 2019, a government notification had allowed creditors, usually financial institutions and banks, to move against personal guarantors under the Indian Bankruptcy and Insolvency Code (IBC).

- The Supreme Court has now upheld this move.
- The court said there was an "intrinsic connection" between personal guarantors and their corporate debtors.

#### **Implications:**

This will allow lenders to **initiate insolvency proceedings against personal guarantors**, who are usually promoters of big business houses, along with the stressed corporate entities for whom they gave guarantee.

**About IBC is already covered in previous Economy Module.**

### 14.D-voter, or doubtful voter

Those persons whose citizenship was doubtful or was under dispute were categorized as 'D-Voters' during the preparation of **National Register of Citizens in Assam**.

- They have **not been defined in the Citizenship Act, 1955 or the Citizenship Rules of 2003**.

#### **Who is a declared foreigner?**

A declared foreigner, or DF, is a person marked by Foreigners' Tribunal (FT) for allegedly failing to prove their citizenship after the State police's Border wing marks him or her as an illegal immigrant.

#### **What is a Foreigners tribunal?**

The Foreigner tribunals are set up under **the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964**.

The tribunals are **quasi-judicial bodies**, to determine if a person staying illegally is a "foreigner" or not.

**Composition:** Advocates not below the age of 35 years of age with at least 7 years of practice (or) Retired Judicial Officers from the Assam Judicial Service (or) Retired IAS of ACS Officers (not below the rank of Secretary/Addl. Secretary) having experience in quasi-judicial works.

#### **Who can set up these tribunals?**

The **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** has amended **the Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964**, and has empowered district magistrates in all States and Union Territories to set up tribunals (quasi-judicial bodies) to decide whether a person staying illegally in India is a foreigner or not.

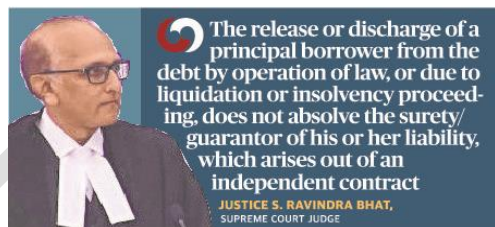
- Earlier, the powers to constitute tribunals were vested only with the Centre.

#### **Who can approach these tribunals?**

#### **The IBC Noose Tightens**

The Supreme Court has dismissed challenge to invocation of personal guarantees for corporate borrowers under the Insolvency Code

- The decision is expected to boost banks' recovery efforts involving large bad loans
- Promoters and related parties, who often act as personal guarantors,
- left with no escape route
- Approval of resolution plan for a corporate debtor, does not extinguish personal guarantor's liability for the balance



The **amended order (Foreigners (Tribunal) Order, 2019)** also empowers individuals to approach the Tribunals.

- Earlier, only the State administration could move the Tribunal against a suspect.

### 15. Kerala's 'Bell of Faith' for rural elders

The **'Bell of Faith' scheme** will now be **implemented for senior citizens staying alone in villages.**

- Previously, this scheme was **successfully implemented in a number of urban households in Kerala.**

**What is the 'Bell of Faith' scheme all about?**

- It is a safety project conceived under Kerala's **Community Policing Scheme.**
- It will help elderly citizens **attract the attention of their neighbours using a loud, remote-controlled alarm in emergencies.**
- It has been **under implementation in Kerala since 2018.**



**Significance of the Project:**

It sets an example for **community participation** to ensure the well-being and safety of the elderly. It can be of great support for the aged during the COVID-19 pandemic as many live in fear for their health.

### 16. Plea to decriminalise begging

The Supreme Court has asked Centre and four States to respond to a plea **to decriminalise begging.**

**What's the case?**

The plea has referred to **the August 2018 verdict of the Delhi High Court** which had decriminalised begging in the national capital and said provisions of **the Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959**, which treats begging as an offence cannot sustain constitutional scrutiny.

- It argues that the provisions of the statutes criminalising the act of begging put people in a situation to make an **unreasonable choice between committing a crime or not committing one and starving**, which goes against the very spirit of **the Constitution and violates Article 21 i.e. Right to Life.**

**Other Issues involved:**

As per the Census 2011, the total number of beggars in India is 4,13,670 and the number has increased from the last census.

The government has the mandate to provide social security to everyone and ensure that all had basic facilities, as embedded in **the Directives Principles of State Policy in the Constitution.**

However, the presence of beggars is evidence that the state has failed to provide these basic facilities to all its citizens.

- Therefore, instead of working on its failure and examining what made people beg, criminalising the act of beggary is irrational and against the approach of a socialist nation as embedded in the preamble of our Constitution.

**Begging is also a peaceful method** by which a person sought to communicate their situation to another, and solicit their assistance. Thus, criminalising begging is violative of **Article 19(1)(a)-freedom of speech guarantee.**

**Beggary Laws In India:**

There is **no central Act on beggary**, however, many States and Union Territories have used certain sections of **the Bombay Prevention of Beggary Act, 1959**, as the basis for their own laws. The Act, 1959 **criminalises begging.**

- Through these legislations, the governments try to maintain public order, addresses forced begging or “begging rackets”, prevent annoyance to tourists.

### 17. Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland (RIIN)

The Nagaland government has reportedly been trying to revive **the RIIN exercise**.

#### **What is RIIN?**

Launched in July 2019.

The objective is to prevent outsiders from obtaining fake indigenous certificates for seeking jobs and benefits of government schemes.

- The RIIN will be the master list of all indigenous inhabitants of the state.
- The RIIN list will be based on “an extensive survey”.
- It will involve official records of indigenous residents from rural and (urban) wards and would be prepared under the supervision of the district administration.

#### **What's the concern?**

- Locals are apprehensive of “dreadful consequences” if the “advocates of RIIN” implement the identification process with **December 1, 1963 – the day Nagaland attained statehood – as the cut-off date** for determining the “permanent residents” of the State. This date is likely to exclude Nagas who have come from beyond the boundaries of Nagaland.
- They also fear that **the non-indigenous Nagas could be treated as “illegal immigrants”** and their lands and property confiscated.

### 18. World Press Freedom index

The World Press Freedom Index 2021 has been released by the media watchdog group Reporters Without Borders.

- **Norway topped the index for the fifth year in a row.**
- India remained at **the 142nd position among 180 countries.**

#### **About World Press Freedom Index:**

- Published annually by **Reporters Without Borders since 2002**, the World Press Freedom Index measures the level of media freedom in 180 countries.
- It is based on an evaluation of media freedom that measures pluralism, media independence, the quality of the legal framework and the safety of journalists.
- It also includes indicators of the level of media freedom violations in each region.
- It is compiled by means of a questionnaire in 20 languages that is completed by experts all over the world. This qualitative analysis is combined with quantitative data on abuses and acts of violence against journalists during the period evaluated.

### 19. MANAS app

- MANAS App is a well-being App that stands for **Mental Health and Normalcy Augmentation System**.
- It is endorsed as a national program by the Prime Minister’s Science, Technology, and Innovation Advisory Council (PM-STIAC).
- MANAS is a comprehensive, scalable, and national digital wellbeing platform and an app developed to augment the mental well-being of Indian citizens.
- MANAS App integrates the health and wellness efforts of various government ministries, scientifically validated indigenous tools with gamified interfaces developed/researched by various national bodies and research institutions.