



INSIGHTSIAS

SIMPLIFYING IAS EXAM PREPARATION



***INSIGHTS
DAILY
CURRENT
AFFAIRS + PIB
SUMMARY***

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GS1

ANCIENT HISTORY: DEMOCRACY IN INDIA

Syllabus: Ancient History

Context: In the context of **India's 76th year of Independence**, the article highlights the debate surrounding the origins of **democracy** and **India's claim to being the "mother of democracy."**

What is Democracy?

Democracy is a system of government where power is vested in the hands of the people, allowing them to participate in decision-making through voting and representation.

The debate:

Western narrative claims that **democracy was invented in ancient Athens** before being rediscovered and spreading around the globe in modern times.

While ancient Greece is often associated with the birth of democracy, **India's historical references to democratic practices challenge this narrative.**

Aspect of Democracy:

Aspect	Examples from India's History
Early Democratic Practices	References in ancient texts like the Rig Veda and Buddhist scriptures suggest democratic forms of governance in India. The Vinay-Pitaka scripture regulated meetings and voting through a secret ballot system in Buddhist sanghas.
Ancient Republics	Ancient Indian states like the Lichhavis, Mallas, and Vajji confederations were republics with self-governing systems.
Representation and Decision-Making	Democratic practices within Gana sanghas involved decisions taken by members themselves. The governing style was maintained through conventions applicable to these groups.
Democratic Institutions	The mention of institutions like sabha, samiti, and sangha in texts indicates democratic setups, where discussions, resolutions, and equitable resource distribution were emphasized.
Diverse Governance	The coexistence of various forms of self-governing groups, such as warrior formations, religious fraternities, and economic organizations , showcased diverse democratic models in different contexts.

Recognition by Historians	Greek historian Diodorus Siculus mentioned India's independent and democratic republics, indicating external acknowledgement of democratic systems in ancient India.
Parallel Evolution	Just as Greek democracy evolved independently, Indian democracy evolved through ancient republics and assemblies . Indian democracy's roots are as ancient as those of Greek democracy.

Conclusion:

Despite historic roots, flaws in the system, such as the exclusion of certain groups, discrimination, and weak political rights exist. There is a need of protecting democracy, as gifts like democracy can also be vulnerable to erosion.

To know about democracy from a polity point of view: [Click here](#)

Insta Links:

- [India's democratic values have eroded significantly](#)
- [India's democracy, diminished and declining](#)

Mains Links:

Q. To enhance the quality of democracy in India the Election Commission of India has proposed electoral reforms in 2016. What are the suggested reforms and how far are they significant to make democracy successful? (UPSC 2017)

Prelims Links: UPSC 2021

Q. Which of the following factors constitutes the best safeguard of liberty in a liberal democracy?

1. A committed judiciary
2. Centralization of powers
3. Elected government
4. Separation of powers

Ans: 4

GS2

IMPACT OF THE DPDP BILL ON THE RTI ACT

Syllabus: Governance/ Government Policies and Interventions

Context: The recently passed [Digital Personal Data Protection Bill](#) in India has raised concerns among [privacy experts](#)

due to its potential impact on the landmark right to information (RTI) law.

Major Provision of the New Bill:

Aspect	Details
	The Digital Personal Data Protection Bill 2022 (DPDP) is India's new law aimed at regulating the collection, storage, and processing of personal data, based on the recommendation of the committee led by retired Justice B N Srikrishna .
Personal Data	Personal data is any data by which or in relation to which an individual can be identified E.g., Name, address
Rights of Individuals on Personal Data	Individual consent is required for collection and Processing. Individuals also have the right to withdraw consent and demand the erasure of data The bill mandates that individuals can access essential information in languages listed in the Indian Constitution's eighth schedule .
The 2022 Bill outlines seven principles:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Usage of personal data must be lawful, fair, and transparent. 2. Personal data should be used only for its intended purposes. 3. Data minimization is emphasized. 4. Data accuracy during collection is crucial. 5. Personal data shouldn't be stored indefinitely; limited storage duration is mandated. 6. Safeguards must prevent unauthorized data collection or processing. 7. Accountability lies with the entity determining data processing purpose and means
Data Principle and Data Fiduciary	The bill defines " Data Principal " as the individual whose data is collected, " Data Fiduciary " (e.g., Facebook) as the entity controlling data processing, and acknowledges parents/ guardians as "Data Principals" for children under 18.
Creation of an Independent Regulator	' Significant Data Fiduciaries ' handle substantial personal data and will be designated by the Central government based on specific criteria. They must appoint a ' Data Protection Officer ' and an independent Data Auditor .

Cross-Border Data Transfer	The bill permits cross-border data transfer to specified countries with strong data security measures, where the Indian government can access Indians' data. This is a departure from the previous bill, which mandated local data storage requirements.
Grievance Redressal	Establish a Data Protection Board for enforcing compliance. If Data Fiduciary's response is unsatisfactory, consumers can file complaints with this Board.
Penalties	Entities lacking " reasonable security safeguards " against data breaches face fines of up to Rs 250 crore. The proposed Data Protection Board could levy penalties of up to ₹500 crore for substantial non-compliance. Top of Form
Exemptions	The bill offers exemptions (by the government) for businesses based on user numbers and data volume , addressing concerns from startups about compliance burden. National security and government agency exemptions are retained, safeguarding India's interests.
Non-Personal Data	The bill mandates providing non-personal data to the government when demanded.

Other Concerns related to the draft Bill: [Click Here](#)

For Comparing India's proposal with other countries: [Click Here](#)

Insta Links:

[New draft digital data protection bill: How it compares with the older version and laws elsewhere](#)

Mains Links:

Q. The Digital Personal Data Protection Bill must ensure that individuals' personal data is collected and processed in a manner that respects their privacy rights under Article 21 of the Indian constitution. Comment.

[GS2](#)

NEET & TAMIL NADU'S PROTEST

Syllabus: Federalism/ Government Policies

Context: The conflict between Tamil Nadu and the Central government over NEET has broader implications related to equity and federalism

What is NEET?

NEET (National Eligibility Entrance Test) is the qualifying test for MBBS and BDS programs in Indian medical and dental colleges. It was introduced to standardize admissions across the country.

Tamil Nadu's Opposition: Tamil Nadu has been vehemently opposing NEET, citing various issues:

- **Adverse Effects:** A committee led by Justice A. K. Rajan found that **NEET negatively impacted the share of seats** historically enjoyed by Tamil Nadu Board of Secondary Examination (TNBSE) students.
- **Favoured CBSE Students:** NEET favoured Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) students over TNBSE students, creating an imbalance.
- **Coaching Dependency:** NEET led to a surge in the coaching industry, shifting focus from learning to exam preparation.
- **Social Inequality:** Repeated attempts to crack NEET disproportionately benefited **financially and socially privileged students**, excluding marginalized backgrounds.
- **Economic Disparities:** Merit-based admissions in state-run institutions contrasted with economically advantaged students getting admissions in private colleges based on poor NEET scores.
- **Exam Conduct Issues:** Discrepancies in exam conduct, including impersonation cases, raised concerns about the fairness of the exam.

The Digital Personal Data Protection Bill impacts the [Right to Information \(RTI\) Act](#) in the following ways:

- **Exemption of Personal Information:** The new data protection law changes a provision in the RTI Act to exempt "**personal information**" from being disclosed. This affects information sought under the RTI law.
- **Impact on Transparency:** Activists and experts are concerned that the change will reduce transparency and hinder the ability to access information.
- **Blanket Ban on Personal Information:** The new law introduces a blanket ban on personal information, making it difficult to access information even if it relates to **public activities or larger public interest**.
- **Increased Denials:** Officials are expected to deny more RTI requests using the personal information exemption, affecting the availability of crucial information.
- **Exception Burden:** While the change doesn't affect the provision allowing access if **public interest outweighs the harm**, it shifts the burden to individuals seeking information to **prove its public interest**.

Tamil Nadu attempted legislative actions to counter NEET: In 2017, the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly passed bills aiming to exempt the state from NEET-based admissions, but these bills were not granted approval by the President. In 2021, a new bill was introduced to admit students to **MBBS/BDS courses solely based on Class XII board scores**, bypassing NEET. In 2022, after the Governor returned the bill, it was readopted by the Assembly and sent back to the Governor. Currently, the bill is awaiting consideration by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Can states refuse to implement Central laws?

- Usually, when a state wants to **amend a Central law made under one of the items in the concurrent list**, it needs the clearance of the Centre.
- **When a state law contradicts a Central law** on the same subject, the law passed by Parliament prevails.

Why has the Constitution envisaged such an arrangement? This is an arrangement envisaged as **most Parliament laws apply to the whole of India and states amending the Central laws indiscriminately** could lead to inconsistencies in different regions on the application of the same law. In matters of trade and commerce, this could especially pose serious problems.

The other options available with the states are:

- To take the Centre to the Supreme Court over the validity of these laws.
- **Article 131** of the Constitution provides exclusive jurisdiction to the Supreme Court to adjudicate matters between the states and the Centre.
- **Article 254 (2) of the Constitution** empowers state governments to pass legislation which negates the Central acts in the matters enumerated under the Concurrent List.
 - **State legislation passed under Article 254 (2)** requires the assent of the President of India.

Way forward:

The complex issue of NEET and its impact on Tamil Nadu's education system requires a balanced solution that **addresses both equity concerns and the preservation of regional values**.

To resolve this matter, a multi-pronged approach could be considered.

- First, there should be a **comprehensive review of the NEET examination process** to ensure that it fairly evaluates students' aptitude and knowledge rather than solely relying on marks.
- Second, **alternative admission criteria that account for socioeconomic backgrounds** and contextual factors should be explored, enabling a more diverse pool of students to access medical education.

- Third, efforts should be made to **enhance the quality of education in state-run institutions**, providing students with the necessary skills to excel in competitive exams.
- Additionally, the central government and state authorities could **collaborate to establish a transparent and inclusive framework** for medical admissions that combines elements of **standardization and local autonomy**.

Insta Links:

[What is the Bill to scrap NEET in Tamil Nadu?](#)

Content for Mains Enrichment

MAJOR QUOTES AND SPEECHES OF PM MODI FROM 2014 ONWARDS

Year	Themes and Major Quotes
2014	Sangachhadhwam: We walk together, we move together, we think together, we resolve together and together we take this country forward
	Make in India
	Banking for All
2015	"I want to tell Team India comprising 1.25 billion people , that this country can become corruption-free."
2016	"The people of Balochistan, the people of Gilgit, the people of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir ... acknowledge the Prime Minister of India, they honour him."
2017	Against Religious Hatred: "Violence in the name of Aastha is not something to be happy about, it will not be accepted in India. Bharat Jodo. "
2018	" India 100% open defecation free , electrification, providing LPG gas connection to every woman , implementation of GST . The constitutional status given to the OBC Commission. "
2019	" Abrogation of Article 370 and 35A has been carried out in both Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha by a two-thirds majority."
2020	Atmanirbhar Bharat: "Today self-reliance is etched in the mind of every Indian. Self-reliant India is not just an expression, it has become the mantra for 130 crore countrymen. "
2021	" Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, and now Sabka Prayas are very important for the achievement of our goals."

2022	<p>Panch Pran” (Five Resolutions) for the coming 25 years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The first Pran is for the country to move ahead with the major resolve of a developed India. • The second Pran was to liberate ourselves from the mindset of slavery. • The third Pran was about feeling proud of the country’s heritage and legacy. • The fourth Pran was “unity and solidarity”. • The fifth Pran was the duty of citizens.
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Usage: The story can be used in an Essay question based on Agriculture

Facts for Prelims (FFP)

KARNAIL SINGH ISRU

Context: On India’s Independence Day, Punjab Chief Minister paid homage to **activist Karnail Singh Isru**, who died on the same day in **1955 while participating in the Goa Liberation Movement**.

- Karnail Singh Isru was born in 1930 in what is now **Pakistan and was inspired by the freedom movement against colonial rule**. He joined the **Communist Party of India (CPI)** and became part of the **Goa Liberation Movement**, which aimed to hoist the Indian flag in Goa.
- Isru left his home to join the movement without informing his family and was part of a group of **Satyagarhis led by Sahodrabai Rai**.
- However, upon entering Patradevi village in Goa, Portuguese forces opened fire, and Isru was fatally shot in the chest at the age of 25.

Goa was eventually annexed by India in 1961 through Operation Vijay.

In Goa, a **bronze bust of Isru was installed in a primary school in Patradevi village**. The legacy of Karnail Singh Isru serves as a reminder of the sacrifice made for India’s freedom struggle and the Goa Liberation Movement.



VISHWAKARMA YOJANA

Context: On India’s 77th Independence Day, Prime Minister announced the **upcoming launch of the ‘Vishwakarma Yojana’** which is set to be introduced on Vishwakarma Diwas (**September 17**).

- This scheme aims to **benefit individuals skilled in traditional craftsmanship, especially from the Other Backward Classes (OBC)** community.
- Skilled artisans like **weavers, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, laundry workers, and barbers, among oth-**

Major Quotes	
India’s Greatest Strength is Trust	It highlights the government’s emphasis on Trust-based governance.
Nation First	Emphasizes Patriotism and National interest
Reform, Perform and Transform	Highlights performance-driven governance
Sarvjan Hitay, Sarvajan Sukhaya	Welfare for All
<u>Amrit Kaal</u> is Kartavya Kaal- an era of Duty	Emphasizes duty and responsibility in Governance

TRADITIONAL RICE VARIETY: RED RICE

Varsha Sharma, a farmer from Himachal Pradesh, India, has faced challenges due to erratic rainfall and water diversion for industries, **impacting her rice farming**. She shifted to hybrid rice varieties and apple cultivation, but the **hybrid rice required excessive additives** that damaged the soil.

In 2018, she turned to red rice, a **traditional variety** that **thrives without chemicals and fertilizers (completely Organic)**, offering better nutrition and organic qualities. Red rice also commands a good **price in the market**, making it a favourable choice for many farmers.

Himachal Pradesh’s government **aims to expand red rice cultivation to 4,000 hectares**. The resurgence of traditional rice varieties like **red rice is transforming farming practices** in India, with indigenous seeds **proving resilient and sustainable**.

NGO helping Farmers: India’s Centre for Sustainable Agriculture (CSA), is an organisation that works with farmers to make farming more sustainable.

ers, will be empowered through this scheme.

- The scheme will encompass various elements such as financial aid, modern and green technology training, brand promotion, market connectivity, digital payments, and social security.

The initiative is in line with other successful government schemes like [Jan Dhan Yojana](#), [PM SvaNidhi](#), and [Ujjwala](#), and seeks to empower artisans and strengthen the agri-tech sector, including women self-help groups, by providing them with 15,000 drones and necessary training.

'SAMUDRA' MOBILE APP

Context: The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), a division of the Ministry of Earth Sciences, has introduced a new mobile application called 'SAMUDRA' - Smart Access to Marine Users for Ocean Data Resources and Advisories.

Features:

- This app offers comprehensive ocean-related information, benefiting seafarers and the fishing community.
- It provides real-time updates and critical alerts on oceanic disasters like tsunamis, storm surges, high waves, and swell surge alerts.
- It features interactive maps, charts, and animations to explain complex oceanic phenomena.

Benefits:

- The app is particularly valuable for fishermen as it offers Potential Fishing Zone (PFZ) advisories, guiding them to potential fish aggregation locations.
- The app also serves various public and private entities like the Indian Coast Guard, the Navy, and shipping industries.
- The app aligns with INCOIS's mission to serve the nation with ocean data and advisory services, contributing to sustainable ocean activities and the [Blue Economy](#).

DEEMED FORESTS

Context: The Odisha government has issued a letter to district officials stating that requests from industries to convert forest land for non-forestry purposes must now adhere to the amended Forest Act, and the category of 'deemed forests' will no longer exist.

- '[Deemed forest](#)' refers to forest land that meets the dictionary definition of a forest but hasn't been officially designated as such.
- However, this change in interpretation by the Odisha government is raising concerns about accelerated deforestation.
- Nearly half of Odisha's forest land was categorized

as 'deemed forest'. The amended Forest Act focuses on the official notification of forest areas in government and revenue records after 1980, leaving out the concept of 'deemed forest'.

- Protection under the Act prevents land diversion without the consent of the central government and local gram panchayats, while also requiring the planting of trees on twice the cleared area and imposing penalties to deter deforestation.
- The Ministry of Environment brought these amendments to the Forest Act to clarify its application, and it claimed that the changes align with the 1996 Supreme Court judgment on the matter.

However, concerns are being raised that this could lead to unchecked forest diversion and negatively impact forest rights and conservation efforts.

Forest (Conservation) Act of 1980:

- It was enacted to consolidate the law related to forest, the transit of forest produce and the duty leviable on timber and other forest produce.
- Approval for diversion of the land: Under the act, prior approval of the Central Government is required for diversion of forestlands for non-forest purposes.
- Four categories of forests: The Act deals with the forests, namely reserved forests, village forests, protected forests and private forests.

Reserved forest	A state may declare forestlands or wastelands as reserved forests and may sell the produce from these forests. Any unauthorized felling of trees quarrying, grazing and hunting in reserved forests is punishable with a fine or imprisonment, or both
Village forests	Reserved forests assigned to a village community are called village forests.
Protected forests	The state governments are empowered to designate protected forests and may prohibit the felling of trees, quarrying and the removal of forest produce from these forests. The preservation of protected forests is enforced through rules, licenses and criminal prosecutions

Mapping

GEORGIA

Context: Former United States President [Donald Trump](#) and 18 allies face charges, including the "Violation of the Georgia RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organisations) Act".

Trump has been charged with **40 crimes, including forgery, false statements, and conspiracy**. **RICO** law allows prosecutors to bundle seemingly unrelated crimes if they support a **common objective**, making it significant in this case. A conviction for racketeering in Georgia carries a 20-year prison term.

Georgia, a country at the intersection of Europe and Asia, is a former Soviet republic that's home to Caucasus Mountain villages and Black Sea beaches. It's famous for **Vardzia**, a sprawling cave monastery dating to the 12th century, and the ancient wine-growing region **Kakheti**

