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SIMPLIFYING IAS EXAM PREPARATION



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SUMMARY***

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## GS1

# CONTRIBUTIONS OF WOMEN AND WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

## Syllabus: Indian Society/ Indian History

4 **Context:** The [article](#) highlights the **often-underappreciated role of women in India's journey towards becoming a re-public**, focusing on their efforts in securing national freedom and women's rights, particularly the right to vote.

### Women's contribution to Freedom Struggle:

6 Throughout India's struggle for independence, **women emerged as stalwart contributors, playing diverse and pivotal roles** that shaped the trajectory of the freedom movement. Their involvement spanned various spheres, encompassing **leadership, activism, revolutionary endeavours, and community mobilization**.

### Women played a multifaceted role in India's freedom struggle:

- **Mass Mobilization:** Women took part in protest marches, boycott campaigns and mass agitations.
  - For example, **Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay** led the **Salt Satyagraha** in Bombay by mobilizing thousands of women. **Women picketers in Bengal** protested the **Simon Commission** wearing black sarees.
  - Women students joined the **Quit India movement** by going on strikes and processions. This challenged the conservative social norms that restricted women's public presence.
- **Underground Activism:** Women undertook underground and revolutionary activities against British rule.
  - For example: **Bhikaji Cama** unfurled the Indian flag in **Stuttgart, Germany** in 1907 as part of expatriate revolutionary activities. **Kalpana Dutt** transported bombs and weapons for revolutionary groups in Bengal.
  - **Aruna Asaf Ali** went underground during the Quit India movement and carried out sabotage attacks.
  - By directly attacking British institutions, **women shed their conventional non-violent image**.
- **Social Reforms:** Many women connected the national struggle to social reform causes.
  - For example, **Sarojini Naidu, Annie Besant and Vijayalakshmi Pandit** demanded women's political representation and suffrage rights.
  - **Pandita Ramabai** campaigned for widows' rights and reform of Brahminical traditions that suppressed women.
  - **Tarabai Shinde** wrote a landmark feminist critique of patriarchy in her 1882 text **Stri**

### Purush Tulna.

- **Leadership role:** Beyond these three dimensions, women like Lakshmi Sahgal, Aruna Asaf Ali, Sucheta Kripalani and Rajkumari Amrit Kaur held leading organizational positions in the freedom struggle.

**Feminist movements in pre-independent India:** They played a crucial role in ensuring women's rights were guaranteed in the Constitution.

1. **1917 - Memorandum of Demands:** Women activists presented a memorandum of demands to Montagu and Lord Chelmsford, urging enfranchisement.
2. **1917 - Formation of IWA:** The Women's Indian Association (WIA) was established to address women's socio-economic challenges, becoming the first national body advocating for female suffrage.
3. **1918 - Travel for Support:** WIA and others travelled to Britain in 1918 to garner international support for their causes.
4. **Congress Resolutions:** Sarojini Naidu championed women's rights within the Congress party, moving resolutions for women's enfranchisement in Bijapur and Bombay.
5. **1921 - First Victory:** The Government of India Act, 1919 allowed provincial legislatures to enfranchise women, with Madras becoming the first province to grant women the right to vote in 1921.
6. **1925 - Bengal Campaigns:** The enfranchisement Bill faced defeat in the Bengal Legislative Council. Suffragists, led by the Bangiya Nari Samaj, organized extensive awareness campaigns, resulting in the Bill's passage in 1925.
7. **Formation of All India Women's Conference (AIWC):** In 1927, women-led organizations formed the AIWC. Initially focused on women's education, AIWC later advocated against child marriage, raised the age of consent, and opposed polygamy.
8. **Nehru Report & Beyond on Right to Vote:** The Nehru Report of 1929 called for equal civic rights, but Britain resisted the expansion of this right.
9. **Government of India Act 1935:** This Act expanded voting rights, enabling women to participate in public offices. In the 1936-37 elections, women leaders advocated for universal adult franchise.
10. **Adoption of Indian Woman's Charter:** In 1945-46, AIWC adopted this charter, demanding equality, women's economic empowerment, and reforms in personal laws.
11. **Post-Partition Issue:** After Partition, reservation of seats on religious grounds emerged as a key issue.

**Gender equality and women's rights role in Post-Independent India:**

- **Constitutional, Institutional and legal-** FR- Right to equality **Art 14, 15 16**, Right to life- **Art 21**,
  - **DPSP- Article 39** requires the State to di-

rect its policy towards securing for men and women equally the right to an adequate means of livelihood, and equal pay for equal work.

- **Right to property- Art. 300-A**, Universal adult franchise- **Art 326**
- **National Commission for Women-** review the Constitutional and Legal safeguards for women, recommend remedial legislative measures, facilitate redressal of grievances and advise the Government on all policy matters affecting women.
- **Laws- Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, Special Marriage Act 1954, Hindu Succession Act 1956, Dowry Prohibition Act 1961, Domestic Violence Act 2005;** etc
- **Economic-** Women have played a pivotal role in helping the growth of the Indian economy. **Women contribute approximately 17-18% of the total GDP.** Although they are strong in the farming and dairy sector, India's rapid urbanization has not yet encouraged more women to join the labour force.
  - **Entrepreneurs-** Many women have **broken the societally imposed glass ceiling** to reach the top positions in organizational ladders. Many have started their own company creating jobs for thousands. Eg- **Kiran Mazumdar Shaw** founder of **Biocon Ltd**, **Falguni Nayar** associated with **Nykaa**.
- **Security-** They **constitute 12% of the Police force, 0.56% of the army, 1.08% of the air force, and 6.5% of the navy.** Women have become Fighter pilots for the Air Force. Thus their role in the security domain is gradually increasing and becoming more significant.
- **Employment-** Women now make up **34% of the IT workforce** in India and the country is now almost at a **50:50 gender parity rate in STEM graduates.**
- **Grass root Democracy-** The 73rd and 74th CAA made provisions for 33% reservation for women in the institutions of local self-government. Participation is crucial in **policy formulation and regulation, Acting as role models for women's empowerment, Empowerment of women, Less corruption** and improved efficiency.
- **Education-** AISHE (All India Survey on Higher Education) 2019-20 report, according to which women in India now hold a **49% share in total enrolment in higher education.**
- **Social Contributions-**
  - **Anti-Dowry movements:** In the 1980s several women's and other progressive organizations formed a joint front in Delhi called "Dahej Virodhi Chetna Manch".
  - **Chipko Movement-** In this movement the women symbolically tied sacred threads around the trees, faced police firing in February 1978, and later courted arrest. This movement continued under the leadership of **Sri Sunderlal Bahuguna** in various villages.
  - **Narmada Bachao Andolan** is one of its kind of a social movement led by **Medha Patkar**.

It is the active and huge participation and engagement of women that have led to the huge success of the movement.

**Conclusion**

Thus, from mass activism to underground attacks to spearheading social reforms, women **played a multifaceted and pivotal role in expanding the scope**, presence and impact of India's national movement and in post-independent India development.

**Insta Links:**  
[Women's Liberation Movement](#)

**Mains Links**

**Q. Discuss the significance of contributions made by women freedom fighters during the second half of the 20th century.**

**Prelims Links:**

In the context of Indian history, the Rakhmabai case of (1884) revolved around? (UPSC 2020)

1. women's right to gain education
2. age of consent
3. restitution of conjugal rights

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

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

**Answer: B**

**About Tamil inscription found:**

- The 16th-century Tamil inscription, found inside the Vishnu temple, **provides historical details about pottery-making and a donation for lighting the perpetual lamp in the temple.**



**GALLANTRY AWARDS**

**Context:** The President has approved Gallantry awards for **80 Armed Forces personnel, including 12 posthumous honours, on the eve of the 75th Republic Day.**

- These awards comprise **six Kirti Chakras** (three posthumous), **16 Shaurya Chakras** (two posthumous), **53 Sena Medals** (seven posthumous), **one Nao Sena Medal** (Gallantry), and **four Vayu Sena Medals** (Gallantry).

**About Gallantry awards**

They are announced **twice a year (on Republic Day and Independence Day)**. Gallantry awards are honours conferred upon **individuals**, particularly **members of the military or security forces**, for acts of **exceptional bravery, courage, and valour displayed in the face of danger or during active combat.**

Facts for Prelims (FFP)

**STONE INSCRIPTIONS OF GRANTHAM**

**Context:** A research team from Tamil Nadu has discovered **two stone inscriptions near Kangayam in Tamil Nadu.**

- The inscriptions **include an 11th-century Grantham and a 16th-century Tamil inscription.**

**About Grantham Inscriptions:**

- The **Grantham inscriptions**, created by Tamils for **writing the North Indian language**, were found near the **Amman shrine inside the Siva Temple.**
- The stone, bears graffiti marks and writings on all four sides, **depicting symbols such as standing lamps, 'Trishul,' conch, and moon symbols.**

**SOUTH ASIAN UNIVERSITY**

**Context:** The Delhi High Court has observed that the **South Asian University (SAU)** has the **status of an "international organisation"** and is entitled to **"privilege and immunity"** from the writ jurisdiction under **Article 226 of the Constitution of India.**

- The university is **characterized as an international institution**, deriving its powers from a **2007 inter-governmental agreement.**

**Background:**

- This came during a **hearing on pleas by SAU's associate professors**, who faced show cause notices for their alleged involvement in a student protest.

- The court stated that SAU enjoys international organization privileges and immunities, and the dispute **should be addressed through the Arbitral Tribunal as agreed upon in the employment contracts, dismissing the maintainability of the pleas.**

**Article 226** of the Constitution of India gives **High Courts the power to issue writs, orders, and directions to enforce fundamental rights and other purposes**. This includes the power to issue writs to **any person or authority, including the government**.

Article 226 gives High Courts extraordinary jurisdiction to **address legal injury**. This allows the High Court to **consider public interest and equity when making decisions**.

## KUTIA KONDH TRIBE

**Context:** Two individuals from the **Kutia Kondh community, considered one of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in Odisha**, have been invited as special guests to attend the Republic Day parade in New Delhi.

- Every year, representatives from **PVTGs are invited by the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs for Republic Day events**.

### About Kutia Kondh:

The Kutia Kondh community is located in the **Belaghara area of Kandhamal district in Odisha**.

The Kutia Kandha are a major section of the Kandha tribe who speak **Kui, a Dravidian language**. They are known for their buffalo **sacrifice ritual, called "Kedu"** to worship their Earth Goddess".

## AMU MINORITY STATUS DISPUTE

**Context:** The legal dispute over **Aligarh Muslim University's (AMU) minority status** is currently under consideration by a **seven-judge Supreme Court Bench** led by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud.

### Background to the issue:

The dispute over **AMU's minority character** originated in **legal challenges to the AMU Act of 1920**, with significant amendments in 1951 and 1965. Changes included replacing the 'Lord Rector' with a 'Visitor' (President of India) and **allowing non-Muslims in the University Court**. The **SC's 1967** ruling held that AMU, being a central university, **couldn't be considered a minority institution**. This raised questions about AMU's minority character, challenging the notion that its establishment solely relied on the efforts of the Muslim minority. In 1981, AMU was recognized as an **"institution of national importance"** by the Union government.

Following the SC's 1967 ruling, protests erupted and it led to an amendment affirming AMU's minority status in 1981. However, the **Allahabad High Court nullified the 1981 Act in 2005**, rejecting the reservation. In 2019, a three-judge Bench referred the dispute to a seven-judge Bench.

### Observations by SC in the case:

Observations	Supreme Court's Stance
On Minority Status	The court emphasized that <b>regulation by statute doesn't diminish minority status</b> . Article 30 doesn't mandate exclusive administration by the minority community.  <b>Article 30(1) of the Constitution</b> grants religious and linguistic minorities the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice
Can have Secular Administration	<b>A minority institution can have a secular administration</b> and admit students from diverse communities; it need not exclusively offer religious courses.
Majority Community in Administration	The <b>presence of majority community</b> members in administrative roles <b>doesn't necessarily dilute the minority character</b> of educational institutions.

### Constitutional and Statutory Provisions regarding minorities in India:

Provisions	Details
Article 29	Grants <b>the right to conserve distinct language, script, or culture</b> for any section of citizens in India. Protects <b>both religious and linguistic minorities</b> . The term 'section of citizens' includes both <b>minorities and the majority</b>
Article 30(1)	Empower religious and linguistic minorities to establish and administer educational institutions. Ensures <b>non-discriminatory aid</b> from the Union government.
Article 25	Protects <b>freedom of conscience and the practice, profession, and propagation</b> of religion.
Article 26	Grants religious denominations the right to establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes.
Article 27	Provides freedom from compulsory payment of taxes for promoting any particular religion.

<b>Article 28</b>	Allows freedom regarding attendance at religious instruction or worship in certain educational institutions.
<b>National Commission for Minorities (NCM)</b>	Established in 1992 under the NCM Act. Advises central and state governments on the <b>welfare and development of minority communities</b> . Initially covered Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, and Parsis; Jains were included in 2014.
<b>SC: TMA Pai Case</b>	For Article 30 rights, religious and linguistic minorities should be considered <b>state-wise</b> .
<b>SC: Inamdar Case</b>	The state <b>cannot impose reservation policy on minority</b> and non-minority unaided private colleges. Reservation in private, unaided educational institutions was declared unconstitutional.

**About AMU:**

AMU traces its origins to the **Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental (MOA) College established by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in 1875** to address educational backwardness among Muslims. In 1920, an Act of the Indian Legislative Council granted the University status, transforming it into Aligarh Muslim University (AMU).

## SODA LAKE AND THE ORIGIN OF LIFE

**Context:** Scientists from the University of Washington discovered a shallow “soda lake,” Lake Chance, in Canada, resembling Darwin’s “warm little ponds” that might have initiated life on Earth.

These soda lakes, containing high levels of **dissolved carbonates, sodium, and phosphates**, address the long-standing “phosphate problem” in the emergence of life. While conventional bodies of water have low phosphate levels, soda lakes, like **Last Chance Lake** in Canada, show concentrations up to 1 million times higher. The study suggests that such environments, prevalent on early Earth, could also be common on other planets, aiding **origin-of-life research** and the search for habitable conditions beyond our solar system.

**About Darwin’s “warm little ponds” hypothesis:**

It proposes that **life on Earth may have originated in shallow bodies of water** with high temperatures, where complex molecules could spontaneously form. These ponds, resembling soda lakes, could provide the ideal conditions for the synthesis of key biomolecules

**What is the “phosphate problem”?**

It refers to a **challenge in theories about the emergence of life** on Earth. **RNA and DNA**, crucial molecules for life, as well as the membranes of living cells, require a backbone of naturally occurring **molecules of the element phosphorus**, known as phosphates. However, concentrations of phosphates needed to form these biomolecules in laboratory experiments are up to **1 million times higher** than the levels normally found in rivers, lakes, or oceans. This disparity between required and naturally occurring phosphate levels poses a hurdle in understanding **how life’s essential building blocks** could have formed under natural conditions on Earth.

**About Last Chance Lake:**

It is a shallow, murky soda lake in **British Columbia, Canada**. It’s located on federal land and sits above volcanic rock.

Mapping

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC-INDIA: JETCO

**Context:** The Union Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the signing of a protocol for the establishment of a **Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) between the Department of Commerce** and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic.

**What is the Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO)?**

The Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) is a **bilateral mechanism** established between two countries to facilitate **economic collaboration and trade relations**. It serves as a platform for **discussions, information exchange, and cooperation between** the participating nations, aiming to strengthen economic ties, enhance trade and industry, and address challenges in the export and import of goods and services.

**Significance of the Agreement:**

The protocol can also **serve as a gateway to the larger Latin American and Caribbean markets**. Currently, there is no bilateral institutional mechanism for trade and commerce between the two countries. India imports gold from the Dominican Republic and exports pharmaceuticals, marine products, motor vehicles, two and three-wheelers, etc. The agreement will give a boost to India’s exports.

India has Joint Economic and Trade Committee (JETCO) agreements with various countries, including the **United Kingdom, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, South Korea, Canada, Mauritius, and Oman**.

### About the Dominican Republic

It is a **Caribbean nation** that shares the **island of Hispaniola with Haiti** to the west. Its terrain comprises **rainforest, savannah and highlands**, including Pico Duarte, the Caribbean's tallest mountain. Its capital city is **Santo Domingo**.

