

# TATHASTU ICS

CURRENT AFFAIRS

21 AUGUST

KK/AJ

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S.No.	TOPIC
1.	IRRIGATION IN FOCUS AS INDIA MOVES TOWARDS DRIEST-EVER AUGUST
2.	MEDIATION BILL: AN INCOMPLETE SETTLEMENT
3.	COMBATING STEREOTYPES

## IRRIGATION IN FOCUS AS INDIA MOVES TOWARDS DRIEST-EVER AUGUST

SOURCE: [THE ECONOMIC TIMES](#) , [TOI](#) , [DECCAN HERALD](#) , [WMO](#)

### WHY IN NEWS?

1. India is currently experiencing its **driest August in a century**, with a 7% deficit in cumulative monsoon rainfall compared to the long period average (LPA).
2. Weather predictions indicate that India's rainfall for August might fall below 180 mm, marking the **lowest amount since 1901**.
3. The sowing of Kharif crops has been negatively impacted, with **pulses sowing showing a decrease of 10% in comparison to the previous year**.
4. The retail **inflation for pulses has surged to 13% in July**, and the inflation rate **for toor dal stands at 34%**.
5. Agricultural outcomes are closely intertwined with the southwest monsoon, and a **recent research paper by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) explores the changing dependence and the evolving role of enhanced irrigation in this context**.

CHARACTERISTIC	VALUE
Gross irrigated area (2021-22)	106.7 million hectares (mha)
Net irrigated area (2021-22)	65.0 mha
Irrigated area as percentage of net area sown (2021-22)	45.0%
Major sources of irrigation (2021-22)	Canals (62%), wells (26%), tanks (10%), and others (2%)
States with the highest irrigated area (2021-22)	Punjab (22%), Uttar Pradesh (18%), and Andhra Pradesh (13%)
States with the lowest irrigated area (2021-22)	Arunachal Pradesh (0.1%), Meghalaya (0.2%), and Mizoram (0.3%)
Budget allocation for irrigation (2022-23)	Rs. 44,000 crores
Progress under Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY) (2022-23)	24.77 mha

(SOURCE: [MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE](#))

**TYPES OF IRRIGATION:**

1. **Surface Irrigation:**
  - a. **Flood Irrigation:** This involves the flooding of fields with water diverted from rivers, canals, or reservoirs. It is commonly used in areas with flat terrain.
  - b. **Furrow Irrigation:** In this method, water is allowed to flow in small channels (furrows) between rows of crops. It's suitable for row crops like vegetables.
  - c. **Basin Irrigation:** Fields are divided into basins, and water is directly applied to each basin. It's useful for crops that need a relatively level field.
2. **Subsurface Irrigation:**
  - a. **Subsurface Drip Irrigation:** Water is delivered directly to the root zone of plants through buried pipes or tubes. This conserves water and reduces weed growth.
  - b. **Subsurface Bubble Irrigation:** Similar to drip irrigation, but water is applied in the form of air bubbles, which helps maintain soil structure.
3. **Drip Irrigation:** In this method, water is delivered directly to the root zone of plants through a network of pipes, tubes, and emitters, minimizing water wastage.
4. **Sprinkler Irrigation:**
  - a. **Traditional Sprinkler Irrigation:** Water is distributed through overhead sprinklers, resembling rainfall. It's suitable for a wide range of crops.
  - b. **Center Pivot Sprinkler Irrigation:** Circular fields are irrigated by rotating sprinklers mounted on wheeled towers, usually in large-scale agriculture.
5. **Lift Irrigation:**
  - a. **Manual Lift Irrigation:** Water is manually lifted from sources like wells or rivers using devices like buckets or containers.
  - b. **Mechanical Lift Irrigation:** Pumps, such as electric or diesel pumps, are used to lift water from sources to higher areas for irrigation.
6. **Rainwater Harvesting:**
  - a. **Traditional Rainwater Harvesting:** Rainwater is collected and stored for irrigation purposes in tanks, ponds, or other storage systems.
  - b. **Rooftop Rainwater Harvesting:** Rainwater falling on rooftops is collected and stored for irrigation or domestic use.
7. **Springs and Seepage Irrigation:**
  - a. **Spring Irrigation:** Utilizing water emerging naturally from springs for irrigation.
  - b. **Seepage Irrigation:** Using water seeping from higher ground to lower areas for irrigation.
8. **Check Dam Irrigation:** Small dams constructed across seasonal streams or rivers to store water for irrigation.
9. **Canal Irrigation:** Water is diverted from rivers into main canals, which are then distributed into smaller channels (distributaries) to irrigate fields.
10. **Tank Irrigation:** Rainwater is stored in tanks or reservoirs, and this stored water is used for irrigation.
11. **Percolation Tanks:** These are structures designed to enhance groundwater recharge, which can indirectly support irrigation.
12. **Localized Irrigation:** Water is applied directly to the root zone of individual plants, often using handheld tools or small pipes.

#### DIFFERENT PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH IRRIGATION:

1. **Water Scarcity:** In regions like Marathwada in Maharashtra, farmers often face water scarcity during dry seasons, leading to reduced crop yields and economic challenges.
2. **Waterlogging and Soil Salinity:** In parts of Punjab and Haryana, excessive irrigation and poor drainage have caused waterlogging and increased soil salinity, affecting crop growth and soil quality.
3. **Groundwater Depletion:** The over-extraction of groundwater for irrigation in regions like Rajasthan has caused falling water tables, leading to long-term sustainability concerns and reduced water availability.
4. **Inefficient Water Use:** Traditional flood irrigation methods in areas like Uttar Pradesh result in significant water wastage due to runoff and evaporation, reducing the overall efficiency of water use.
5. **Energy Intensity:** Farmers using diesel pumps for irrigation in states like Bihar incur high fuel costs, impacting their profitability and contributing to environmental pollution.
6. **Erosion and Sedimentation:** Uncontrolled runoff from irrigated fields in hilly regions like Uttarakhand can lead to soil erosion and sedimentation in downstream water bodies.
7. **Environmental Impact:** In the Indira Gandhi Canal command area of Rajasthan, excessive irrigation has led to the loss of wetlands and negatively affected local biodiversity.
8. **Conflicts over Water Allocation:** The disputes between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu over the sharing of Cauvery River water for irrigation have resulted in legal battles and social tensions.
9. **Lack of Modernization:** Many small-scale farmers in remote regions continue to use traditional irrigation methods, limiting their ability to increase productivity.
10. **Infrastructure Decay:** In areas with outdated canal systems, such as parts of Uttar Pradesh, the lack of maintenance can result in water losses and reduced system efficiency.

#### SCHEMES/INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE IRRIGATION:

- **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY):**
  - Launched in 2015, it aims to enhance water use efficiency through a mix of effective water management and distribution techniques, sustainable on-farm water use, and decentralized water source development.
  - **Components:** Har Khet Ko Pani (Water to Every Farm), Per Drop More Crop, Micro Irrigation Fund, Watershed Development, etc.
- **Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Program (AIBP):** This program provides financial assistance for major and medium irrigation projects to expedite their completion and improve water availability for agriculture.
- **Command Area Development & Water Use Efficiency (CAD & WUE) Program:** The program focuses on optimizing irrigation systems in command areas to reduce water wastage and enhance water use efficiency.
- **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY):** Launched in 2016, this crop insurance scheme provides financial support to farmers in case of crop losses due to natural calamities, including inadequate irrigation.
- **National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA):** The mission promotes sustainable agricultural practices, including efficient irrigation, soil health management, and integrated farming systems.
- **Neeranchal National Watershed Project:** This project aims to enhance sustainable water management in rainfed areas through community participation, soil conservation, and efficient water use.

- **Micro-Irrigation Fund:** Launched under PMKSY, this fund provides financial assistance to promote the adoption of micro-irrigation technologies like drip and sprinkler systems.



## MEDIATION BILL: AN INCOMPLETE SETTLEMENT

SOURCE: [IE](#)

### WHY IN NEWS?

The Mediation Bill 2021, which seeks to reduce the duration required for concluding mediation processes, has received the endorsement of Parliament following its approval by both houses. As a result, India now possesses specific legislation overseeing mediation (referred to as Samadhan). However, there is a need for certain improvements in certain aspects of the bill.

### KEY FEATURES OF THE BILL:

#### 1. Mediation Prior to Litigation:

- a. Before approaching a court or specific tribunals, parties are required to make an attempt to resolve civil or commercial disputes through mediation.
- b. In case pre-litigation mediation does not result in a settlement, parties can request the court or tribunal to refer them to mediation at any point.

#### 2. Exclusions from Mediation:

- a. The Bill includes a list of disputes considered unsuitable for mediation.
- b. These encompass disputes involving minors or individuals with mental incapacity, matters tied to criminal prosecution, and disputes affecting third-party rights.
- c. This list can be modified by the central government.

#### 3. Scope of Application:

- a. The Bill applies to mediations conducted within India: Involving solely domestic parties, involving at least one foreign party and related to commercial disputes (international mediation), When the mediation agreement specifies adherence to this Bill, in cases where the central or state government is a party, the Bill's provisions extend to commercial and other designated disputes.

#### 4. Mediation Procedure:

- a. The mediation process is confidential and should conclude within 180 days, extendable by 180 days at the parties' discretion.
- b. A party retains the option to withdraw from mediation following two sessions.
- c. Court-annexed mediation will adhere to rules established by the Supreme Court or High Courts.

#### 5. Mediator Selection:

- a. Mediators can be chosen by parties through mutual agreement or a mediation service provider.
- b. Mediators are obligated to disclose any potential conflicts of interest that might impact their impartiality. Subsequently, parties can decide to replace the mediator if they wish.

### CONCERNS HIGHLIGHTED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE:

#### 1. Pre-Litigation Issues:

- a. The committee raised several important concerns about the mandatory and coercive nature of pre-litigation mediation.
- b. They emphasized that making pre-litigation mediation compulsory might lead to delays in cases and offer a tool for uncooperative litigants to extend the case resolution process.

2. **Concerns with Clause 26:** The committee expressed opposition to Clause 26 of the draft legislation, which grants the Supreme Court or High Court the authority to establish laws regarding pre-litigation mediation as per their interpretation.
3. **Exclusion from Non-Commercial Disputes:** Committee members questioned the decision to not apply the provisions of the Bill to disputes or matters of a non-commercial nature that involve the Government and its affiliated agencies.
4. **Appointments Discussion:** The committee engaged in deliberations regarding the qualifications and the process of appointing the Chairperson and Members of the proposed Mediation Council.

#### OTHER DISPUTE RESOLUTION MECHANISMS:

Mechanism	Description
<b>Arbitration</b>	A private process where parties agree to resolve disputes through an arbitrator's decision.
<b>Mediation</b>	A neutral third party assists disputing parties in reaching a mutually acceptable settlement.
<b>Conciliation</b>	Similar to mediation but the conciliator may suggest solutions and propose settlement terms.
<b>Negotiation</b>	Parties directly communicate to settle a dispute without involving any third party.
<b>Lok Adalat</b>	Informal courts where retired judges, social activists, or legal professionals mediate disputes.
<b>Online Dispute Resolution (ODR)</b>	Uses technology platforms to resolve disputes online, including arbitration and mediation.
<b>Judicial Settlement</b>	Judges encourage parties to reach a settlement through negotiation and discussion.
<b>Expert Determination</b>	A neutral expert assesses technical issues and makes a binding decision on the dispute.

#### WAY FORWARD:

- **Awareness and Training:**
  - Launch awareness campaigns to educate the public, legal professionals, and stakeholders about the benefits of mediation and the provisions of the new legislation.
  - Organize training programs to enhance the skills of mediators and promote a better understanding of the mediation process.
- **Refinement of Bill:**
  - Engage in a comprehensive review of the Mediation Bill to identify specific provisions that need refinement or clarification.
  - Consider seeking input from legal experts, mediation practitioners, and stakeholders to ensure that the Bill is well-balanced and effective.
- **Guidelines and Rules:** Develop clear and comprehensive guidelines or rules for the implementation of the Mediation Bill, including procedures for pre-litigation mediation, the role of mediators, confidentiality measures, and the mediation timeline.
- **Incorporate Feedback:** Create a mechanism for gathering feedback from mediators, parties involved in mediations, and other stakeholders to continuously improve the implementation of the legislation.

## COMBATING STEREOTYPES

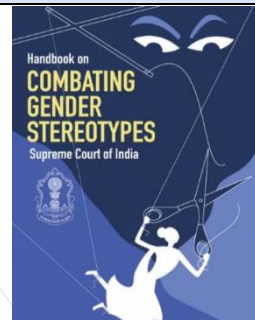
SOURCE: [TH](#), [SC](#)

### WHY IN NEWS?

- The Supreme Court of India has taken a significant step to challenge outdated ideas, especially those affecting women, by releasing a special guide.
- This guide introduces new words for lawyers and judges to use in court, aiming to fight harmful beliefs.

### HANDBOOK ON COMBATING GENDER STEREOTYPES:

- The handbook provides a list of biased words and suggests better alternatives for legal documents.
- Its main aim is to provide legal experts with the means to “identify, understand, and challenge stereotypes about women.”
- It includes a list of terms that promote gender bias and offers alternative, fairer terms to be used in legal documents.



### OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE HANDBOOK:

- **Challenging Old Beliefs:** The Supreme Court's initiative aims to discard old-fashioned and harmful stereotypes, particularly those related to women, through the 'Handbook on Combating Gender Stereotypes.'
- **CJI's Vision:** The handbook is introduced by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, who explains its purpose: to help legal professionals recognize and counter gender-based stereotypes.
- **Language Transformation:** The handbook includes a glossary of terms that contribute to gender bias and suggests better alternatives to be used in legal writings

## Combating stereotypes



Gender-unjust terms	What should be used instead...	Stereotype	Why the handbook says they should be avoided
Affair	Relationship outside of marriage	Women are physically weaker than men.	While men and women are physiologically different, it is not true that women are physically weaker. A person's strength does not depend solely on gender but also on factors like genetics, nutrition
Career woman	Woman	Women who work outside of the home do not care about their children.	It has no correlation with a woman's love or concern for her children. Parents of all genders may work outside while also caring for their children.
Eve teasing	Street sexual harassment	Men who sexually assault or rape are typically strangers and not known to the woman.	Very often men sexually assault or rape a woman known to them... The woman may be a colleague, employer, neighbour, or family member, etc
Fallen woman	Woman	Rape is a crime which taints the honour of the survivor/victim. If the rapist marries her, her honour is restored.	Rape does not taint the honour of the survivor/victim or her family. The marriage of the rapist to the survivor/victim does not restore honour. It intensifies the trauma. Rape is a criminal offence, which cannot be undone by marriage.
Housewife	Homemaker	Transgender individuals cannot be raped.	Transgender individuals can be raped. In fact, transgender individuals are one of the groups which are most vulnerable to sexual violence because they are stigmatised and face structural discrimination.
Ladylike	Use a gender neutral description of behaviour or characteristics (eg: amusing or assertive)		
Marriageable age	A woman who has attained the legal age required to marry		
Mistress	Woman with whom a man has had romantic or sexual relations outside of marriage		
Prostitute	Sex worker		
Provider/Breadwinner	Employed or earning		
Provocative clothing /dress	Clothing/dress		
Sex change	Sex reassignment or gender transition		
Spinster	Unmarried woman		
Transsexual	Transgender		
Unwed mother	Mother		



## WHY SUCH A MOVE?

### [A] Language inflicting Stereotypes

- ❑ The handbook points out terms in legal language that promote gender bias and provides suggestions for change.
- ❑ **Examples of Change:** Instead of using “adulteress,” the handbook recommends using “Woman who has engaged in sexual relations outside of marriage” to avoid disrespectful language.
- ❑ **Removing Biases:** The handbook encourages using simple terms like “woman” and “wife” instead of prefixes like “chaste” or “obedient.”
- ❑ **Using Neutral Language:** Instead of negatively using “effeminate,” the handbook suggests using neutral terms like “confident” or “responsible.”

### [B] Avoiding labelling

- ❑ **Empowering Language:** The handbook suggests using “survivor” or “victim” to describe individuals affected by sexual violence.
- ❑ **Respecting Preferences:** The choice between “survivor” and “victim” should be based on the individual’s preference.

### [C] Conscious Reporting of Cases

- ❑ **Separating Attire and Consent:** The handbook emphasizes that a person’s clothing should never excuse unwanted touching; consent remains essential.
- ❑ **Breaking Stereotypes:** The handbook rejects the idea that delayed reporting of sexual assault means it didn’t happen.
- ❑ **Encouraging Reporting:** The handbook acknowledges the bravery required to report sexual offenses due to societal pressures.

## NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF GENDER STEREOTYPES:

- **Widespread Impact:** Gender stereotypes lead to exclusion and prejudice in workplaces, schools, and public places.
- **Education Example:** The handbook illustrates how stereotypes affect students from marginalized communities, adding stress during exams.
- **Government Data:** Minister Subhas Sarkar’s data on dropout rates among marginalized students is shared as an example.

## WAY FORWARD:

- **Education:** Integrate gender equality into school curricula and raise awareness about its importance.
- **Media Literacy:** Promote critical thinking about media portrayals of gender roles.
- **Positive Role Models:** Celebrate diverse individuals who challenge stereotypes in various fields.
- **Workplace Equality:** Implement policies for equal opportunities and fair treatment in workplaces.
- **Youth Engagement:** Empower young people to challenge stereotypes and promote equality.