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S.NO.	TOPIC
1.	COMMUNITY RIGHTS AND FOREST CONSERVATION
2.	PM TO LAUNCH RS. 24,000/-CR SCHEME FOR VULNERABLE TRIBAL GROUPS
3.	PRELIMS POINTERS

COMMUNITY RIGHTS AND FOREST CONSERVATION

SOURCE: [THE HINDU](#)

WHY IN NEWS?

The Forest Conservation Amendment Act of 2023 has garnered attention due to its far-reaching implications on forest governance, indigenous rights, and environmental sustainability. This legislative shift, aimed at addressing climate change and deforestation, has sparked debates and concerns for several key reasons.

WHAT IS THE FOREST (CONSERVATION) AMENDMENT ACT, 2023?

➤ Background:

- ✓ Post-Independence, significant forest land was declared reserved or protected.
- ✓ Some forested areas were excluded, and non-forest areas were included in 'forest' lands.
- ✓ The 1996 Godavarman case suspended nationwide tree felling, applying the FC Act to recorded or forest-like lands.



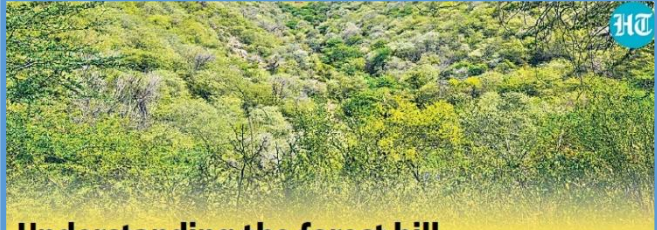
➤ Key Provisions of the Forest (Conservation) Amendment ACT 2023:

- ✓ **Scope Enhancement:**
 - Introduction of a Preamble broadens the Act's scope.
 - Renaming as Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhinyam, 1980 reflects its potential.
- ✓ **Applicability Clarity:**
 - Act, initially for notified forest land, expanded to revenue and recorded forest lands.
 - Amendments clarify application to recorded forest lands, private forest lands, and plantations.
- ✓ **Exemptions for Afforestation:**
 - Proposed exemptions to boost afforestation and plantation outside forests.
 - It excludes forests converted for non-forest use after December 12, 1996, and land within 100 kilometers of the China and Pakistan border for central government projects.
 - Includes exemptions for strategic projects, connectivity, security infrastructure, and public utility projects.
 - The amendment also opens avenues for initiatives like ecotourism, drawing criticism from tribal communities and human rights activists.
- ✓ **New Forestry Activities:**
 - Addition of activities like frontline forest staff infrastructure, ecotourism, zoo, and safari.
 - Surveys and investigations in forest areas not considered non-forestry activities.
- ✓ **Climate Change Focus:**
 - Recognition of areas in combating climate change efforts.
 - Aligns with international commitments like Net Zero Emission by 2070.
- ✓ **Empowering Local Communities:**
 - Encourages establishment of zoos, safaris, and ecotourism owned by the government.
 - Raises awareness, protects wildlife, and creates livelihoods for local communities.



KEY FEATURES OF THE FOREST (CONSERVATION) AMENDMENT ACT:

- **Land Under Act:**
 - ✓ Applies to **land declared as a forest under the Indian Forest Act, 1927**, or any other law.
 - ✓ Covers land notified as a **forest on or after October 25, 1980**, in government records.
 - ✓ **Excludes land changed from forest to non-forest use before December 12, 1996**, authorized by state/UT.
- **Exemptions:**
 - ✓ **Exempts specific land types**, including areas near borders for strategic projects, security-related infrastructure, and public utility projects.
 - ✓ **Exempts forest land along rail lines, public roads, and areas for roadside amenities** up to 0.10 hectares.
 - ✓ Subject to guidelines, terms, and conditions specified by the central government.
- **Assignment/Leasing:**
 - ✓ Requires **prior central government approval for state governments to assign forest land** to any entity.
 - ✓ **Extended to all entities**, including those owned or controlled by the government.
 - ✓ Approval subject to terms and conditions **set by the central government**.
- **Permitted Activities:**
 - ✓ **Restricts de-reservation of forests and non-forest use**, with central government approval for lifting such restrictions.
 - ✓ **Specifies excluded activities for non-forest purposes**, including conservation, management, and development of forest and wildlife.
 - ✓ **New additions to excluded activities: zoos, safaris, ecotourism facilities, silvicultural operations**, and other purposes specified by the central government.
 - ✓ Central government may **set terms and conditions to exclude certain surveys** from non-forest purposes.
- **Power to Issue Directions:**
 - ✓ **Grants the central government the authority to issue directions for Act implementation** to recognized authorities/organizations at the central, state, or UT levels.



Understanding the forest bill

1 Contentious clauses
Covers land declared forest under the Indian Forest Act, 1927 or any other law; those not recorded under the laws but notified as forest in govt records as on or after Oct 25, 1980, except such land whose land use was changed from forest to non-forest purpose on or before Dec 12, 1996, also to be covered

2 No prior forest clearance required in cases where:
a) Forest land within 100km of IB, and used for construction of projects of national importance
b) For work on strip forests alongside a rail line
c) For activity in up to 5 ha in LWE areas

Potential impact of bill
● Northeast states worry that exempting nod for work along international borders would subject ecologically fragile forest areas to a change in land use
● Dilution of SC's 1996 Godavarman judgment that widened the scope of Forest Conservation Act
● Experts say bill violates Forest Rights Act - a claim dismissed by Centre

Centre's defence on exemptions
● Unclear government records
● Need to provide connectivity to roadside amenities, habitation, railway lines
● Plantation on non-forest land
● Security-related projects of national importance

KEY ISSUES AND ANALYSIS OF THE FOREST (CONSERVATION) AMENDMENT ACT:

- **Exclusion of Specific Forest Lands:**
 - ✓ The **Act specifies certain forest lands covered by the Act**, excluding those not notified before **October 25, 1980**, and those changed to non-forest use before **December 12, 1996**.
 - ✓ This may contradict the Supreme Court's intent to **apply the Act to all forests**, as per the **1996 judgment**.
- **Impact on Forest Cover and Wildlife:**
 - ✓ Excluding land recorded as a forest in government records, **but not notified before 1980**, may have adverse effects on forest cover and wildlife.
 - ✓ **Exemptions for land changed to non-forest use before 1996** might allow non-forest activities without Act approval.



- **Exemptions for Border Areas:**
 - ✓ Exemptions for security-related projects near borders may cover large portions of forest-rich states in the north-east.
 - ✓ The potential impact on biodiversity and forest cover raises concerns.
- **Delay in Security Projects**
 - ✓ While aiming to fast-track security projects, blanket exemptions may not address delays at the state level.
 - ✓ Delays in forest clearances for security projects are often attributed to state-level processes and compliances.
- **Lack of Conditions for Exemptions:**
 - ✓ The Bill lacks conditions seen in previous guidelines, potentially leading to unregulated exemptions for certain projects.
 - ✓ Previous guidelines included conditions like avoiding National Parks/Wildlife Sanctuaries and deeming diverted land as forest land.
- **Balancing Conservation and Economic Activities:**
 - ✓ The Bill introduces new activities without the need for central government approval, potentially impacting the balance between conservation and economic development.
 - ✓ The blanket exemption raises questions about the necessity for a case-by-case examination.
- **Unclear Purpose of Zoos in Forests:**
 - ✓ Exempting zoos from prior approval raises questions about the necessity of having zoos within forests.
 - ✓ The Bill lacks clarity on the purpose of establishing zoos in forest areas.

Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006

Recognition of Rights:

- ☛ Acknowledges individual and community rights, including self-cultivation, habitation, grazing, fishing, and access to biodiversity for Scheduled Tribes and traditional forest dwellers.

Protection Against Eviction:

- ☛ Safeguards forest dwellers from eviction without proper rehabilitation, ensuring fair compensation under the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Settlement Act, 2013.

Objectives of FRA:

Undoing Historical Injustice:

- ☛ Addresses historical injustices by recognizing and securing land tenure, livelihood, and food security for forest-dwelling Scheduled Tribes and traditional communities.

Conservation and Development:

- ☛ Strengthens the conservation regime by entrusting Forest Rights holders with responsibilities for sustainable use, biodiversity conservation, and empowers Gram Sabha for local policymaking.

JPC RECOMMENDATIONS AND PARLIAMENTARY APPROVAL:

- **JPC Recommendations:**
 - ✓ The Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) report, despite critical comments, was largely disregarded. With minimal opposition representation in the JPC, the bill swiftly passed both houses without substantial debates.
 - ✓ Lack of collaborative discussions with southern states added to the concerns.
 - ✓ Post-enactment, the Odisha government's attempt to revoke "deemed forest" status faced public backlash.
- **Erosion of Prior Consent Provision:**



- ✓ Amendments in **2016 and 2017 mandated prior consent from tribal grama sabhas** for non-forest purposes.
- ✓ The recent revision **removes this necessity, leaving room for state-level steering committees to engage grama sabhas.**
- ✓ However, **preconceptions about Adivasi resistance to development hinder proactive state engagement.**
- **Compensatory Afforestation Concerns:**
 - ✓ **Compensatory afforestation, outlined in the amendment,** aims to streamline projects but raises environmental concerns.
 - ✓ The law mandates **afforestation for lost land but lacks specificity regarding tree types,** allowing discretion.
- **Impact on Forest Rights Act (FRA):**
 - ✓ Despite notable impacts in various regions, the **Forest Rights Act faces reduced enthusiasm for implementation by both central and state governments.**
 - ✓ **Governments opt to dilute forest areas rather than amend the FRA,** limiting Adivasi claims and ignoring the growing issue of human-animal conflicts.

WAY FORWARD:

- **Inclusive Consultations:**
 - ✓ **Facilitate inclusive consultations with indigenous communities,** environmental experts, and stakeholders to ensure diverse perspectives are considered.
- **Impact Assessment:**
 - ✓ Conduct a **comprehensive impact assessment to understand the potential consequences** on biodiversity, forest cover, and the livelihoods of local communities.
- **Refinement of Exemptions:**
 - ✓ Review and **refine the exemptions provided, particularly in border areas,** considering the ecological significance of the regions involved.
- **Balancing Economic and Environmental Goals:**
 - ✓ **Establish a balance between economic development goals and environmental conservation,** ensuring that exemptions do not compromise long-term sustainability.
- **Monitoring and Review Mechanism:**
 - ✓ Implement a **robust monitoring and review mechanism to assess the actual impact of the amendments on forests,** wildlife, and local communities over time.
- **Transparent Decision-Making:**
 - ✓ **Ensure transparency in decision-making processes,** clarifying the criteria for exemptions and providing a clear rationale for each decision.
- **Adaptive Management Strategies:**
 - ✓ Develop **adaptive management strategies that allow for adjustments** based on evolving environmental, social, and economic scenarios.



PYQs

Prelims

Q. Consider the following statements: (2019)

1.As per recent amendment to the Indian Forest Act, 1927, forest dwellers have the right to fell the bamboos grown on forest areas.

2.As per the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, bamboo is a minor forest produce.

3.The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 allows ownership of minor forest produce to forest dwellers.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Ans: (b)





PM TO LAUNCH RS. 24,000/-CR SCHEME FOR VULNERABLE TRIBAL GROUPS

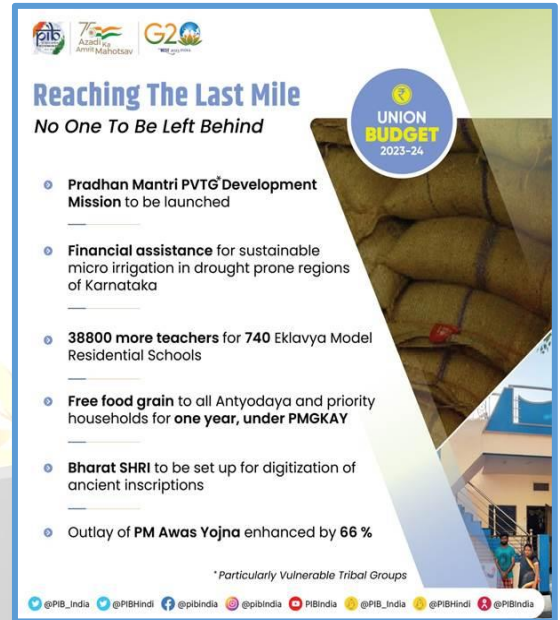
SOURCE: [INDIAN EXPRESS](#)

WHY IN NEWS?

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launches a Rs 24,000-crore scheme for the holistic development of **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)**.

PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TRIBAL GROUPS (PVTGS):

- **Identification and History:**
 - ✓ PVTGs represent the **most vulnerable among tribal groups in India.**
 - ✓ Originally termed **Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs)** in **1973**, renamed **PVTGs in 2006** for a more inclusive term.
 - ✓ Government initiatives **to identify and recognize these groups started in 1975**, initially with 52 groups, **later expanded to 75 in 1993.**
- **Basic Characteristics:**
 - ✓ **Homogenous communities** with small populations.
 - ✓ **Relatively isolated**, often with no written language.
 - ✓ Simple technology and a **slower rate of societal change.**
- **Identification Criteria:**
 - ✓ Criteria for identifying PVTGs include **pre-agricultural technology, low literacy, economic backwardness, and a declining or stagnant population.**
- **Geographical Distribution:**
 - ✓ **Odisha has the highest number** of PVTGs.
 - ✓ A total of **75 PVTGs spread across 18 states and Union Territories.**



GOVERNMENT SCHEME(S) FOR PVTGS:

- **Government Scheme - Development of PVTGs:**
 - ✓ The Ministry of Tribal Affairs administers the '**Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG)**' scheme.
 - ✓ **Centrally Sponsored Scheme with 100% Central assistance.**
 - ✓ Aims at **comprehensive socio-economic development while preserving culture.**
 - ✓ Involves **habitat level development with financial assistance** provided based on state proposals.

Scheme Name	Objective
<i>Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)</i>	✓ Comprehensive socio-economic development , retaining culture and heritage of PVTGs.
<i>Special Central Assistance (SCA) to Tribal Sub-Scheme (TSS)</i>	✓ Strengthening educational, health, and livelihood initiatives for the PVTGs.
<i>Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006</i>	✓ Recognizing and securing the rights of forest-dwelling tribal communities , including PVTGs.



Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006

✓ Recognition of **rights to forest resources for livelihood, habitation, and socio-cultural needs of tribal communities**, including PVTGs.

➤ **Funds Allocation and Utilization:**

- ✓ Funds released and utilized under the scheme in recent years:
- ✓ 2016-17: Rs. 338.00 crore (Released) / Rs. 319.96 crore (Utilized)
- ✓ 2017-18: Rs. 239.46 crore (Released) / Rs. 223.19 crore (Utilized)
- ✓ 2018-19: Rs. 250.00 crore (Released) / Rs. 12.30 crore (Utilized)

➤ **State and Union Territory-wise PVTGs:**

- ✓ Lists the PVTGs along with respective states or Union Territories.
- ✓ Involves groups from **Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, and Andaman & Nicobar Islands.**

State / UT Name	PVTGs Name
<i>Andhra Pradesh and Telangana</i>	1. Bodo Gadaba, 2. Bondo Poroja, 3. Chenchu, 4. Dongria Khond, 5. Gutob Gadaba, 6. Khond Poroja, 7. Kolam, 8. Kondareddis, 9. Konda Savaras, 10. Kutia Khond, 11. Parengi Poroja, 12. Thoti
<i>Bihar and Jharkhand</i>	13. Asurs, 14. Birhor, 15. Birjia, 16. Hill Kharia, 17. Konvas, 18. Mal Paharia, 19. Parhaiyas, 20. Sauda Paharia, 21. Savar
<i>Jharkhand</i>	Same as above
<i>Gujarat</i>	22. Kathodi, 23. Kohvalia, 24. Padhar, 25. Siddi, 26. Kolgha
<i>Karnataka</i>	27. Jenu Kuruba, 28. Koraga
<i>Kerala</i>	29. Cholanaikayan (a section of Kattunaickans), 30. Kadar, 31. Kattunayakan, 32. Kurumbas, 33. Koraga
<i>Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh</i>	34. Abujh Macias, 35. Baigas, 36. Bharias, 37. Hill Korbas, 38. Kamars, 39. Saharias, 40. Birhor
<i>Chhattisgarh</i>	Same as above
<i>Maharashtra</i>	41. Katkaria (Kathodia), 42. Kolam, 43. Maria Gond
<i>Manipur</i>	44. Marram Nagas
<i>Odisha</i>	45. Birhor, 46. Bondo, 47. Didayi, 48. Dongria-Khond, 49. Juangs, 50. Kharias, 51. Kutia Kondh, 52. Lanjia Sauras, 53. Lodhas, 54. Mankidias, 55. Paudi Bhuyans, 56. Soura, 57. Chuktia Bhunjia
<i>Rajasthan</i>	58. Seharias
<i>Tamil Nadu</i>	59. Kattu Nayakans, 60. Kotas, 61. Kurumbas, 62. Irulas, 63. Paniyans, 64. Todas
<i>Tripura</i>	65. Reangs
<i>Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand</i>	66. Buxas, 67. Rajis
<i>West Bengal</i>	68. Birhor, 69. Lodhas, 70. Totos
<i>Andaman & Nicobar Islands</i>	71. Great Andamanese, 72. Jarawas, 73. Onges, 74. Sentinelese, 75. Shorn Pens

WAY FORWARD FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF PVTGS:

➤ **Holistic Development:**

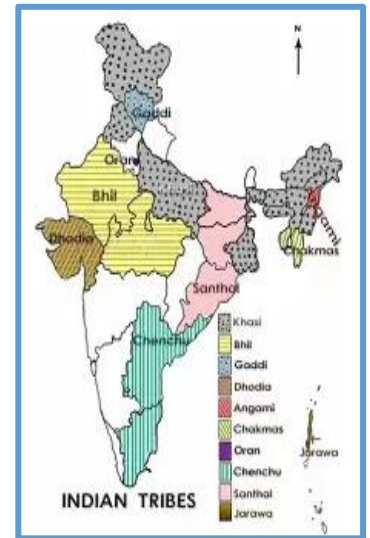
- ✓ Implement comprehensive **schemes addressing education, healthcare, livelihood, and infrastructure.**

➤ **Customized Interventions:**

- ✓ **Tailor strategies to the unique needs of each PVTG, avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach.**



- **Infrastructure Focus:**
 - ✓ Develop basic amenities like roads, housing, and clean water in PVTG habitations.
- **Preserve Culture:**
 - ✓ Ensure development efforts preserve and promote the cultural heritage of PVTGs.
- **Education and Skills:**
 - ✓ Emphasize education and skill development for PVTG youth to enhance employability.
 - ✓ Improve healthcare services focusing on preventive, curative, and reproductive health.
- **Land and Livelihood Security:**
 - ✓ Secure land and promote sustainable livelihoods for PVTGs.
- **Community Participation:**
 - ✓ Empower PVTG communities in decision-making through local governance institutions.
 - ✓ **Inclusive Approach:** Collaborate with NGOs and civil society for diverse perspectives and successful initiatives.



PYQs

Q. Consider the following statements about Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in India:

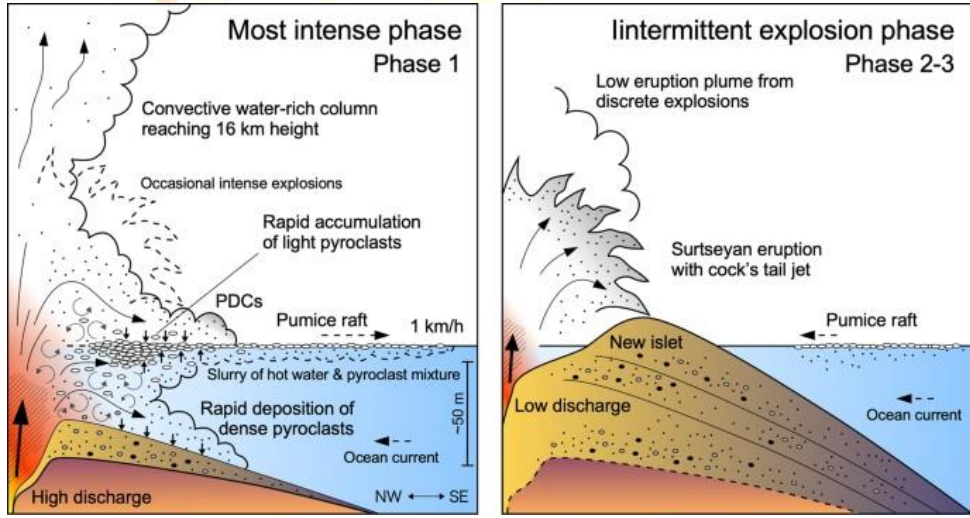
1. PVTGs reside in 18 States and one Union Territory.
2. A stagnant or declining population is one of the criteria for determining PVTG status.
3. There are 95 PVTGs officially notified in the country so far.
4. Irular and Konda Reddi tribes are included in the list of PVTGs.

Which of the statements given above are correct? (CSP 2019)

- (a) 1, 2 and 3
- (b) 2, 3 and 4
- (c) 1, 2 and 4
- (d) 1, 3 and 4



PRELIMS POINTERS:

Topic	Details
Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA)	<p>WHY IN NEWS? The Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral emphasized the pivotal role of establishing networks and partnerships like the Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) in safeguarding the security and stability of the Indian Ocean Region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Initiative by Quad nations for maritime security in the Indo-Pacific.▪ Introduced during the 2022 Tokyo summit.▪ Objective: Monitor "dark shipping," prevent illegal activities.▪ Geographical Focus: Pacific Islands, Southeast Asia, Indian Ocean region.▪ Aims for security, stability, comprehensive system, and safety of critical sea lines.▪ <u>Encourages cooperation among like-minded nations.</u>▪ Recognizes Indo-Pacific's geopolitical significance.
PHREATOMAGMATIC ERUPTION NEAR OGASAWARA ISLANDS	<p>WHY IN NEWS? <u>New island near Japan's Ogasawara Island chain formed by a phreatomagmatic eruption.</u></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Involves both magma and water, leading to explosive interaction.• Ogasawara Islands: Volcanic arc with 30+ islands, UNESCO World Heritage site.
BROADCASTING SERVICES BILL	<p>WHY IN NEWS? I&B Ministry releases draft bill to replace Cable and TV Act.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expands scope to cover DTH, OTT platforms, Digital Media, IPTV.• Aims for modernization, self-regulation innovations, and accessibility guidelines.• Introduces Content Evaluation Committees and a Broadcast Advisory Council.• Aligns with the government's goal of promoting ease of doing business in the broadcasting sector.



NON-MELANOMA SKIN CANCER

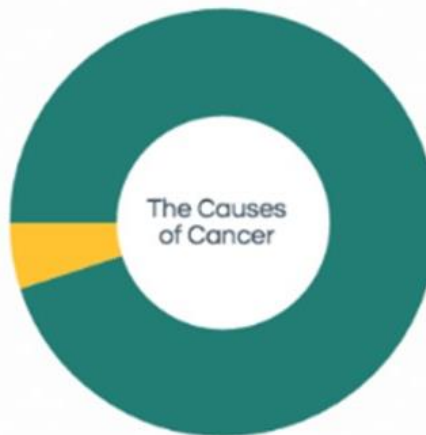
WHY IN NEWS? WHO and ILO report: One-third of nonmelanoma skin cancer deaths caused by outdoor work.



- In 2019, 1.6 billion exposed to solar radiation, 19,000 deaths.
- Report recommends government policies for protection.
- **Non-melanoma skin cancer types: Basal cell carcinoma (BCC), squamous cell carcinoma (SCC).**
- **Symptoms** include unusual patches on sun-exposed areas.
- **Treatment** involves surgery, radiotherapy, targeted medicines, photodynamic therapy, chemotherapy.

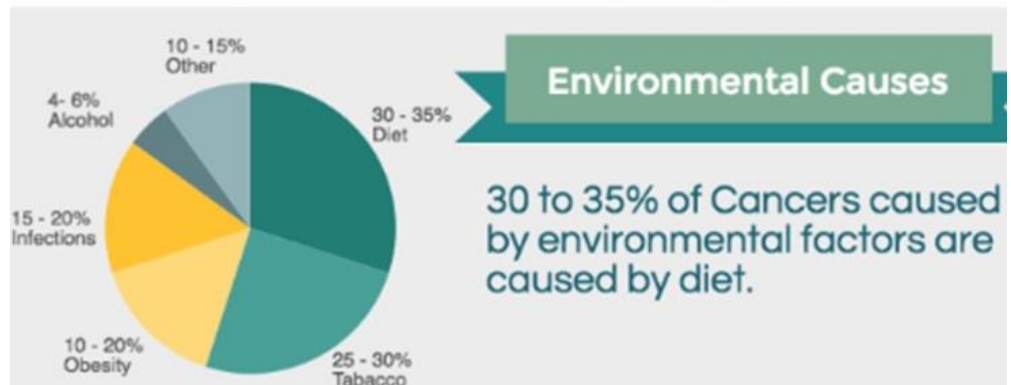


5%
of cancers are caused by genetic facts



95%

of cancers are caused by environmental or lifestyle factors.



Environmental Causes

30 to 35% of Cancers caused by environmental factors are caused by diet.

VAMPIRE VIRUSES AND BACTERIOPHAGES

WHY IN NEWS? 'Vampire Viruses' have been recently discovered on US soil for the first time.

- **Vampire viruses** are pathogens that attach themselves to other viruses for the purpose of replication.
- They originate when a bacteriophage connects with a soil-based virus, utilizing the latter's resources for independent survival.
- The sybiotic relationship between these two pathogens is termed a satellite and a helper.
- The satellite virus relies on the helper virus for constructing a protective shell, called a capsid, covering its genetic material and aiding in DNA replication.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Bacteriophages (BPs) are viruses that infect and eliminate bacteria without harming human or animal cells.➤ Thousands of phage varieties exist, each capable of infecting specific types of bacteria or archaea.
EXERCISE CORPAT AND BONGOSAGAR	<p>WHY IN NEWS? 4th edition of BONGOSAGAR, 5th edition of CORPAT.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Bilateral naval exercise between India and Bangladesh.▪ Joint patrolling along IMBL, maritime exercises.▪ INS Kuthar, INS Kiltan, and Maritime Patrol Aircraft participated.
LAKE TITICACA	<p>WHY IN NEWS? water levels at Lake Titicaca are now reaching record lows, worsened by the El Nino weather phenomenon, compounding a long dry spell and rare high temperatures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Highest navigable body of water globally, located at 3,810 meters above sea level.➤ On the border of Peru and Bolivia.➤ <u>Second-largest Lake in South America.</u>➤ Tiquina strait separates it into two bodies of water.➤ Averages 140-180 meters in depth.➤ Designated Ramsar Site of International Importance.➤ <u>More than 25 rivers drain into it, including the Ramis.</u>➤ 41 islands, with Titicaca Island being the largest.➤ Lake Titicaca is known for its cultural and ecological significance.

