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S.NO. TOPIC

1.	PUBLIC GOOD VS FREEBIES
2.	HARYANA'S EMPLOYMENT RESERVATION LAW
3.	PRELIMS POINTERS

PUBLIC GOOD VS FREEBIES

SOURCE: [INDIAN EXPRESS](#)

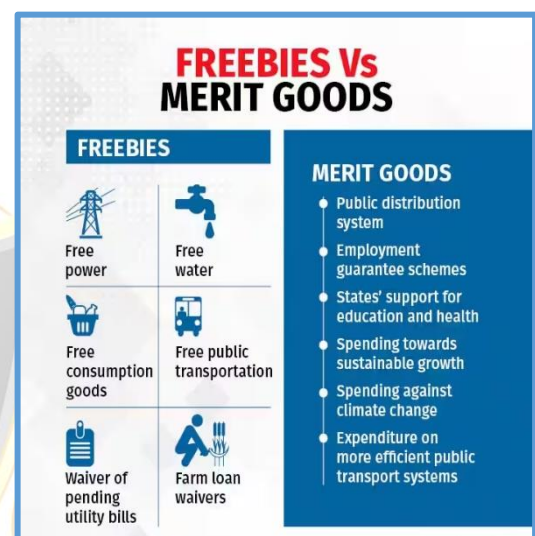
WHY IN NEWS?

Ongoing state elections witness condemnation from the intellectual class regarding the expansive welfare agenda adopted by political parties. Criticism centers on what is perceived as "reckless election promises" and fiscal irresponsibility in a race for competitive populism.

DEFINING PUBLIC GOOD VS. FREEBIE:

Public Good:

- **Purpose and Intent:**
 - ✓ Aimed at **promoting the overall welfare and development of society.**
 - ✓ Intended to **benefit the public at large rather than specific individuals or groups.**
- **Long-Term Impact:**
 - ✓ **Focus on sustainable development and long-term benefits for the community.**
 - ✓ Examples include **infrastructure projects, healthcare initiatives, and education programs.**
- **Social Equality:**
 - ✓ Geared towards **reducing societal inequalities and ensuring equal access to essential services.**
 - ✓ Addresses the fundamental needs of the population, contributing to social harmony.
- **Government Investment:**
 - ✓ Typically involves **substantial government investment in key sectors for the betterment of society.**
 - ✓ **Funding is directed towards initiatives** that positively impact the collective well-being.
- **Policy Alignment:**
 - ✓ Aligned with **broader policy goals** and national development objectives.
 - ✓ Implementation often **requires careful planning and coordination** to achieve lasting positive outcomes.



Freebie:

- **Immediate Gratification:**
 - ✓ Aimed at **providing immediate, tangible benefits** to individuals or **specific voter groups.**
 - ✓ Often implemented **with the intention of garnering support during elections.**
- **Short-Term Focus:**
 - ✓ Emphasis on **short-term gains** and immediate **relief for targeted beneficiaries.**
 - ✓ Examples include **cash transfers, free gadgets, and direct pecuniary benefits.**
- **Broad Audience Appeal:**
 - ✓ Designed to attract a broader audience, appealing to popular sentiments.
 - ✓ May **lack a strategic, long-term vision** and be driven by populist considerations.



- **Potential Popularity:**
 - ✓ Political parties may use freebies as a **strategy to gain popularity and secure votes.**
 - ✓ Often involves measures perceived as generous but may **not contribute significantly to overall development.**
- **Limited Impact on Social Equality:**
 - ✓ **May not address deep-rooted social inequalities** or contribute substantially to societal progress.
 - ✓ **Benefits are often transactional and may not lead to sustained improvement** in living standards.
- **Election-Centric:**
 - ✓ **Commonly associated with election seasons**, where parties make promises to attract voters.
 - ✓ **Implementation may lack comprehensive planning**, leading to potential fiscal challenges.

CRITIQUE OF POPULIST PROMISES:

- **Legal Examination:**
 - ✓ The Supreme Court is examining a **petition urging the Election Commission to restrain parties from making "irrational freebies."**
 - ✓ Worries are voiced about **the potential impact on state finances and the provision of basic amenities.**
- **Caution from RBI:**
 - ✓ The RBI cautions against the **"growing preference for distribution of 'freebies'"** as a risk to state finances.
 - ✓ **State Finance: A Risk Analysis' report by the RBI (June 2022) highlights a slowdown in state revenues.**
 - ✓ Highlights the **need for prudence in fiscal decisions related to populist promises.**
 - ✓ Violation of the **Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) rules** leading to a **potential debt trap.**
- **Recognition of Fiscal Constraints:**
 - ✓ There is acknowledgment that **state finances have inherent limitations.**
 - ✓ Punjab's electricity subsidy **constitutes over 16% of total revenues**, contributing to **financial strain.**
 - ✓ Rising expenditure on **non-merit freebies**, expanding contingent liabilities, and **overdue DISCOMs contribute to financial challenges.**
 - ✓ The emphasis is on a **thorough review of trade-offs for all expenditures**, considering the finite nature of financial resources.
- **Governance Hurdles:**
 - ✓ Governance for **development is acknowledged as intricate and subject to contingencies.**
 - ✓ Infrastructure projects and direct benefits are deemed more manageable for execution and communication.
- **Debt-GSDP Ratio:**
 - ✓ Punjab, Rajasthan, Kerala, West Bengal, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Haryana have the **highest debt-GSDP ratios.**
 - ✓ Indicates the **proportion of liabilities to the state's economy size.**
- **Impact on Party Foundation:**
 - ✓ Relying **excessively on direct benefits** is seen as a potential threat to the **party's ideological foundation.**
 - ✓ The transactional nature of benefits makes it **difficult to align with a coherent ideological framework.**
- **Threat to Party Identity:**





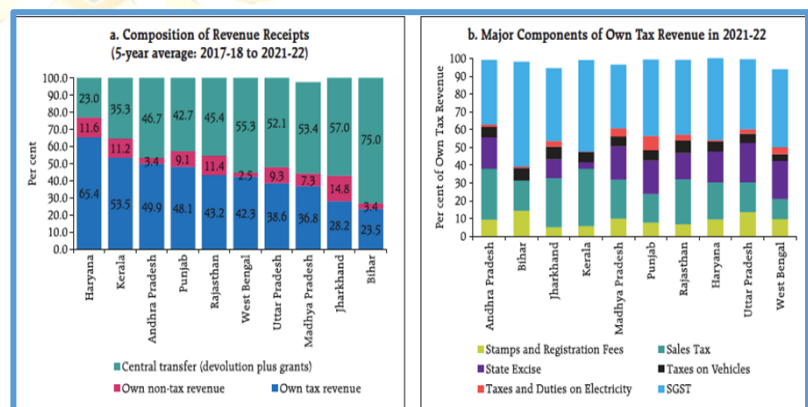
- ✓ Leaders prioritizing **immediate benefits over an ideological framework** risk diluting the party's long-term identity.
- ✓ The emphasis is on **striking a balance between offering direct benefits and maintaining a robust party platform.**

Arguments in Support of Freebies:

- **Economic Upliftment:**
 - ✓ Initiatives like the **Public Distribution System (PDS) in India**, providing **free distribution of essentials**, contribute to economic upliftment.
 - ✓ PDS has been **instrumental in addressing food security, benefiting millions of households.**
- **Industrial Growth Boost:**
 - ✓ States **providing free items like sewing machines, cycles, and saris** stimulate the sales of related industries.
 - ✓ Tamil Nadu and Bihar have **witnessed increased industrial activity** due to such free distribution programs.
- **Educational Investment:**
 - ✓ **Free distribution of laptops, books, and Internet access** supports talent development in fields like **medicine, science, and technology.**
 - ✓ States implementing such **programs have seen a rise in the number of skilled professionals contributing to national growth.**
- **Poverty Reduction:**
 - ✓ Freebies play a **crucial role in less developed states with high poverty rates.**
 - ✓ States offering **free infrastructure like toilets and roads** have experienced improvements in living standards and poverty reduction.
- **Basic Needs Addressed:**
 - ✓ Freebies ensure access to **basic necessities like food, healthcare, and education.**
 - ✓ Programs **targeting basic needs directly benefit the vulnerable population**, creating a more inclusive and just society.

CHALLENGES IN CURTAILING FREEBIE CULTURE:

- **Debt and Financial Deficits:**
 - ✓ Many states are in **debt and financially deficit, limiting their ability** to invest in essential infrastructure.
 - ✓ Constraints on **spending for capital projects like roads, public infrastructure, and hospitals.**
- **Corruption Growth:**
 - ✓ Freebie practices **facilitate corruption growth, leading to leakage of goods and funds.**
 - ✓ Challenges in **ensuring that the intended benefits of freebies reach the masses**, exacerbating corruption concerns.
- **Taxpayer Burden:**
 - ✓ Freebies are **funded by taxpayers, not political parties**, putting the **financial burden on the public.**





- ✓ **Direct or indirect impact on taxpayers** as the source of funding.
- **Regulatory Deficiency with ECI:**
 - ✓ The Election Commission of India (ECI) **lacks the authority to regulate or penalize political parties** for electoral promises.
 - ✓ Offering freebies **falls within the jurisdiction of the respective party**, leading to regulatory challenges.
- **Financial Viability Uncertainty:**
 - ✓ Political parties **often omit clarifying funding sources for freebies**, leaving the **financial viability of populist policies unclear**.
 - ✓ **Lack of transparency** regarding the **economic feasibility of promises**.
- **Information Gap for Voters:**
 - ✓ **Limited information on the financial aspects** of freebies prompts political parties to engage in a **competitive cycle of promising more**.
 - ✓ Voters may **lack awareness of the fiscal implications** and economic consequences.
- **Supreme Court's Response:**
 - ✓ Recent Supreme Court judgment **proposes the formation of an apex body to address the issue of freebies and poll promises**.
 - ✓ The body **includes stakeholders like Niti Aayog, Law Commission, Finance Commission, RBI**, and members of ruling and opposition parties.
- **Shift from Previous Stand:**
 - ✓ Contrasts with the **court's 2013 judgment (S. Subramaniam Balaji vs Tamil Nadu)**, stating that election promises do not constitute a 'corrupt practice.'
 - ✓ The shift emphasizes the **need for an apex body to oversee and regulate electoral promises**.

WAY FORWARD FOR MANAGING FREEBIES:

- **Effective Voter Engagement:**
 - ✓ **Financial Implications Inquiry:**
 - Encourage voters **to inquire about the financial implications** of populist promises.
 - **Foster awareness for voters to make informed** decisions about election campaigns.
- **Empowering Election Commission:**
 - ✓ **Enhanced ECI Authority:**
 - **Strengthen the Election Commission of India (ECI)** with **greater authority to regulate political party expenditures**.
 - Implement **statutory provisions or warnings** on fund use to curb excessive freebies.
- **Model Manifesto Implementation:**
 - ✓ **Structured Model Manifesto:**
 - Develop and **implement a Model Manifesto for all political parties to follow**.
 - Introduce measures **under the Model Code of Conduct (MCC)** to promote responsible promise-making.
- **Spending Limit on Welfare Schemes:**
 - ✓ **Fixed Spending Limits:**
 - **Fix a spending limit for welfare schemes**, such as **1% of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP)** or state revenue expenditure.
 - Ensure **judicious implementation of welfare programs** without overburdening state finances.



HARYANA'S EMPLOYMENT RESERVATION LAW

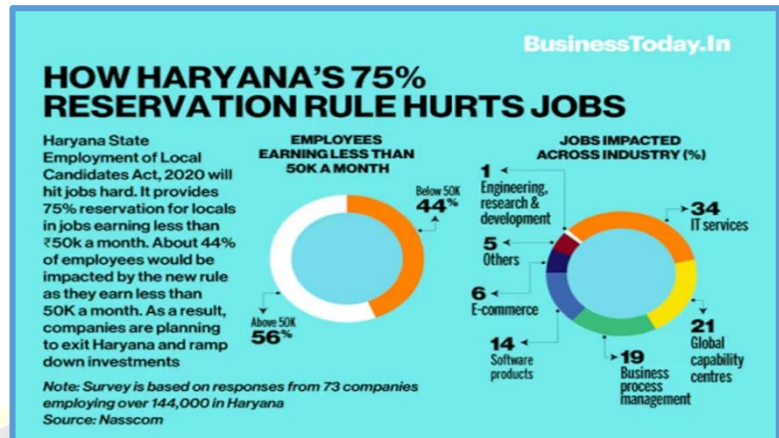
SOURCE: [THE HINDU](#)

WHY IN NEWS?

The Punjab and Haryana High Court, on **November 17**, invalidated the **Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Act, 2020**, which guaranteed **75% reservation for locals in private sector jobs**. The court ruled the law as **unconstitutional and in violation of fundamental rights**.

OVERVIEW OF THE RESERVATION LAW:

- **Enactment of the Law (November 2020):**
 - ✓ Haryana passed the **Haryana State Employment of Local Candidates Bill in 2020**.
 - ✓ Mandated employers to **reserve 75% of jobs paying a monthly salary below ₹30,000 for local residents**.
- **Applicability of the Law:**
 - ✓ Applies to all private entities, including companies, trusts, societies, partnerships, and limited liability partnerships.
 - ✓ Covers any entity **employing 10 or more persons for manufacturing or providing services**.
- **Definition of 'Local Candidate':**
 - ✓ **Domiciled** in Haryana for the **past five years**.
 - ✓ **Mandatory registration** on a designated portal for availing benefits.
- **Exemptions and Penalties:**
 - ✓ Companies can **seek exemption for not finding local candidates** with desired skills.
 - ✓ **Violations result in fines** ranging from ₹10,000 to ₹2 lakh.



LEGAL CHALLENGES TO THE LAW:

- **Basis of Challenge:**
 - ✓ **Industry associations** challenged the law's validity, citing violations of **constitutional articles**.
 - ✓ Alleged infringement of **Article 19 (freedom of residence and profession)** and **Article 14 (equality before the law)**.
- **Contentions and Defence:**
 - ✓ State argued the law aimed to protect the **livelihood of domiciled people**.
 - ✓ **Invoked Article 16(4) of the Constitution, empowering the State to create reservations for underrepresented classes**.

Similar Laws in Other States:

- **Existence of Similar Laws:**
 - ✓ **Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh** have enacted laws providing reservations in the **private sector**.
 - ✓ **Andhra Pradesh's law** faced constitutional challenges.

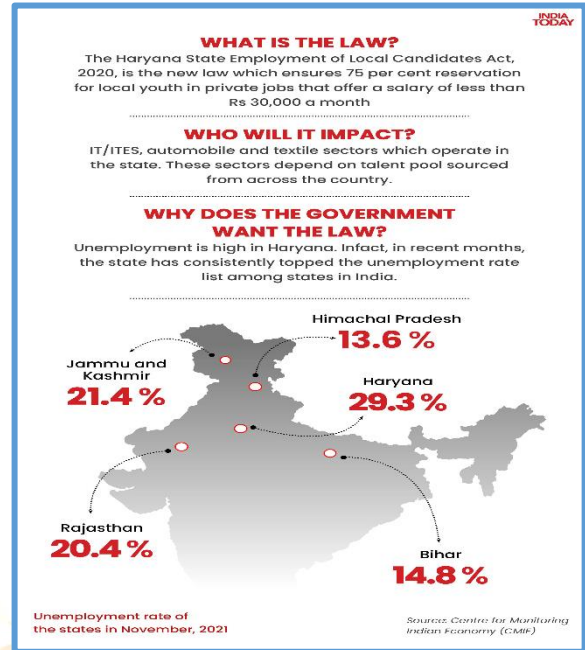
LOCAL PREFERENCE

Maharashtra Private sector to employ 80% domiciled workers (Maha residents for more than 15 years); Status: Planned, not implemented	for state govt jobs; Status: 70% quota applied, 'children of MP' at planning stage
Haryana Ordinance mandating 75% quota for locals in private sector jobs; Status: Planned, not implemented	Karnataka Pvt industries to give priority to Kannadigas in clerical and shop-floor jobs; Status: Rules amended, follow-up law not passed yet
Madhya Pradesh 70% quota in pvt sector jobs for locals; only 'children of MP' to be eligible	Andhra Pradesh Up to 75% quota for locals in govt and pvt sector; Status: Law passed, yet to be implemented



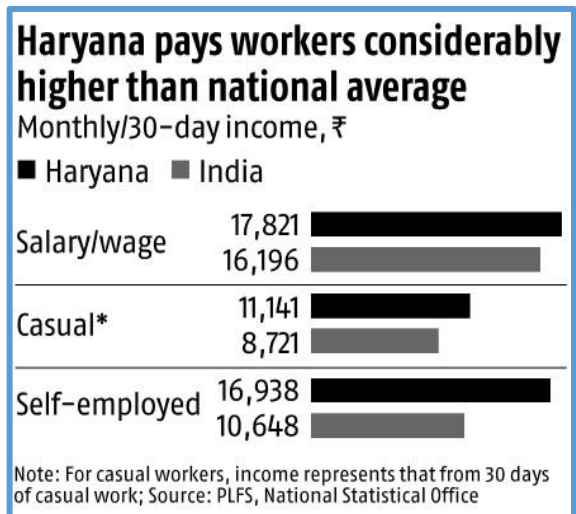
ADVANTAGES OF JOB RESERVATION FOR LOCALS:

- **Constitutional Validity:**
 - ✓ Constitutionally justifiable as **Article 16** doesn't prohibit domicile-based reservation.
 - ✓ Valid within the constitutional framework and complies with the spirit of equality.
- **Equality and Equal Protection:**
 - ✓ Promotes equality by reserving jobs for the weakest sections of society.
 - ✓ Aligns with the principle of Equal Protection of Law under Article 14.
- **Solution for Unemployment:**
 - ✓ Addresses unemployment challenges by providing job opportunities to locals.
 - ✓ Considered a suitable solution amid stagnant job creation.
- **Constitutional Special Provisions:**
 - ✓ Justified by special provisions in the constitution for certain states like Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.
 - ✓ Aligns with constitutional flexibility under Article 371D and E for unique circumstances.
- **Boost to Local Economy:**
 - ✓ Local hiring contributes to the local economy by circulating earnings within the community.
 - ✓ Companies supporting local employment may stimulate economic growth.
- **Operational Cost Reduction:**
 - ✓ Hiring locally reduces relocation costs for companies.
 - ✓ Lower operational costs can lead to more competitive pricing for goods and services.
- **Improved Productivity:**
 - ✓ Local employees are likely to be more familiar with the language, culture, and business environment.
 - ✓ Enhances productivity and efficiency in the workplace.



DISADVANTAGES OF JOB RESERVATION FOR LOCALS:

- **Investor Exodus Risk:**
 - ✓ May trigger an exodus of investors, impacting sectors reliant on skilled manpower.
 - ✓ **Example:** Haryana faced a 30% drop in investments due to the local reservation law.
- **Impact on Existing Industries:**
 - ✓ Raises concerns about hindering the free movement of manpower, affecting existing industries.
 - ✓ Potential shift of businesses from the state to other regions.
- **Talent Crunch in Specific Sectors:**
 - ✓ Imposing reservations on gig and platform companies could result in a severe talent shortage.





- ✓ Risks impeding the **growth of industries relying on specialized skills.**
- **Constitutional Violation:**
 - ✓ May be against the **constitutional guarantees of freedom of movement and employment.**
 - ✓ **Contradicts Articles 14, 15, 16, and 19** that safeguard against discrimination based on birthplace.

Judicial Intervention and Supreme Court's Role:

- **High Court's Interim Order (February 3, 2022):**
 - ✓ High Court stayed the law, later set **aside by the Supreme Court for insufficient reasons.**
- **High Court's Ruling and Reasons for Quashing:**
 - ✓ **Unconstitutionality and Discrimination:**
 - Court declared the **law unconstitutional**, impairing the **right to carry on an occupation under Article 19(1)(g).**
 - Emphasized **discrimination against individuals from other states**, creating **artificial barriers.**
- **Violation of Constitutional Provisions:**
 - ✓ **Article 35 prevents state legislatures** from legislating on matters within the **purview of Article 16(3).**
 - ✓ **Sections 6 and 8 of the Act** were deemed as promoting an **'Inspector Raj,'** enhancing state control over private employers.

WAY FORWARD:

- **Legal Review and Amendment:**
 - ✓ Conduct a comprehensive **legal review and amend the law to address constitutional concerns.**
- **Strategic Implementation of Reservation:**
 - ✓ Implement the reservation policy in a manner that **doesn't impede the free movement** of labor across the country.
- **Focus on Economic Recovery:**
 - ✓ Emphasize economic recovery as a means **to address the concerns prompting Job for Locals Legislations (JRFL) and generate ample job opportunities.**
- **Explore Alternatives:**
 - ✓ **Investigate alternative mechanisms to address rising unemployment** while respecting constitutional principles.
- **Conduct Impact Assessment:**
 - ✓ Undertake a **thorough impact assessment of the reservation law** on industries and employment.
- **Encourage Inclusive Employment Practices:**
 - ✓ **Promote voluntary adoption of inclusive employment** practices by companies.
- **Enhance Public Awareness:**
 - ✓ Increase public awareness regarding constitutional rights and complexities of the issue.



PRELIMS POINTERS:

TOPIC

DISCRIPTION

TANTALUM



WHY IN NEWS? A team of researchers from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Ropar has found the presence of tantalum, a rare metal, in the Sutlej River sand in Punjab.

- ❖ **Rare metal with atomic number 73, named after the Greek mythological figure Tantalus.**

Properties:

- Grey, heavy, very hard, and highly corrosion-resistant.
- Forms a durable oxide layer when exposed to air, making it resistant to removal even in harsh acid environments.
- Ductile in its pure form, with the ability to be stretched into thin wires without breaking.
- Almost entirely resistant to chemical attack at temperatures below 150°C, attacked only by specific acids.
- Exhibits an extremely high melting point, surpassed only by tungsten and rhenium.

Applications:

- Widely utilized in the electronics sector, particularly in capacitors for portable electronic devices.
- Tantalum capacitors can store more electricity in smaller sizes with minimal leakage.
- Used as a cost-effective substitute for platinum due to its high melting point.
- Applied in the manufacturing of components for chemical plants, nuclear power plants, aircraft, and missiles.
- Non-reactive with bodily fluids, making it suitable for surgical equipment and implants, such as artificial joints.

RARE-EARTH ELEMENTS:

- The rare-earth elements (REE), also called the **rare-earth metals, lanthanides** (although yttrium and scandium, which do not belong to this series, are usually included as rare earths), are a set of 17 nearly indistinguishable lustrous silvery-white soft heavy metals.
- Though rare-earth elements are technically relatively plentiful in the entire Earth's crust (cerium being the 25th-most-abundant element at 68 parts per million, **more abundant than copper**), in practice this is spread thin across trace impurities, so to obtain rare earths at usable purity requires processing enormous amounts of raw ore at great expense, thus the name "rare" earths.





**ATMOSPHERIC
WAVES EXPERIMENT**



WHY IN NEWS? Atmospheric Waves Experiment is a first-of-its-kind NASA experimental attempt aimed at studying the interactions between terrestrial and space weather.

Atmospheric Waves Experiment (AWE):

NASA's Pioneering Experiment: NASA's innovative experiment focusing on studying interactions between terrestrial and space weather.

Mission Details:

- Part of NASA's Helio physics Explorers Program.
- Aims to investigate connections between lower atmospheric waves and upper atmosphere interactions.

Launch and Location: Set to launch and be positioned on the exterior of the International Space Station (ISS).

Observation Focus: Observes Earth from the ISS to record airglow, the colourful light bands in the atmosphere.

Space Weather Understanding: Seeks to comprehend the forces shaping space weather in the upper atmosphere.

Measurement Location: Measures airglow at the mesopause (85 to 87 km above Earth) in the infrared bandwidth.

Resolution Capability: Capable of resolving waves at finer horizontal scales compared to conventional satellite observations.

Ionosphere Health Impact: Crucial for maintaining smooth communication, particularly for the ionosphere at the edge of space.

Mission Objectives:

- Conducts focused mapping of colourful airglows in Earth's atmosphere.
- Equipped with Advanced Mesospheric Temperature Mapper (ATMT) to scan the mesopause using imaging radiometers.
- Aims to convert collected brightness data into temperature maps, providing insights into airglow movements and their role in the upper atmosphere and space weather.