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CONVERTING COURT CASE BACKLOGS INTO TREASURE TROVES

Converting court case backlogs into treasure troves

Every Chief Justice of India coming into office has the spectre of the legal system's backlog haunting him or her, as does every senior and concerned member of the higher judiciary. It is an ever present phenomenon – currently, the Supreme Court of India has 82,000 cases, the High Courts over 62 lakh, and the lower courts close to five crore. Nearly 50 lakh cases have been pending for more than 10 years.

It is an adversarial system

It is not that our judges are not hard working or efficient; the great majority of them are. But we are a country with a vast population that is used to thinking that the court will resolve disputes with whoever it may be – neighbour, shareholder, supplier, government, *et al.* We have one of the lowest judge to population ratios – 21 judges for every million citizens. And we rely on the adversarial system which means that virtually every case sees multiple interim applications during its passage, and plural appeals after the first passage is crossed. We also have shortages of infrastructure and capacity, in terms of brick and mortar, and finance and human resources. Just keeping the judiciary going on functional mode is a Herculean task – so daunting by itself that reform and restructure, while certainly the subject of well meaning and some well-thought-out initiatives, rarely gain the prominence and push to make for system game-changing.

Data governance is one field where sensible classification will avoid repetitive engagement and make for quicker disposal. Appointing retired judges to serve in ad hoc capacity does help to ameliorate the situation to a limited extent. Wider perspective solutions would require a focus on large swathes of litigation, for example, landlord tenant disputes and cheque bouncing cases, to see whether tweaking the law can make it less than advantageous to have the matter taken to court. Compensatory or even punitive costs are commonly used abroad to deter frivolous or



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The legal system's haunting backlog is a problem with a solution – India needs to look at mediation

unnecessary litigation. We use them rarely since we prize access to justice and want to avoid roadblocks.

The elephant in the room is of course the government. Being a player in nearly half the disputes coming to court, reform will be stunted unless it learns to litigate less and becomes more amenable to settlement options. There is hope on this latter score, but for now, we move to another possibility for reform.

This is the gigantic backlog, the enormous waiting room, with its cavernous vaults and storage shelves and racks bursting with the claims for redress and justice of millions of citizens and causes. Long stay here is by itself denial of justice. Sometimes when the case is dusted for delivery to the judge's table, the cause is forgotten or less crucial, or the original proponents are in another world, hopefully a litigation free one. But it is this spectre of unfinished business, a too obvious sign of failure of delivery, that haunts judges. There is nothing good about the backlog.

The pitch for mediation

But there may be. Unlikely as this may sound at first, this may be yet another instance of a problem masking a solution. Let us consider the process of mediation. Nascent and fledgling in the 1990s, mediation started to make its mark in 2005 in India, primarily as an adjunct of the court sector. Lawyer led and judge guided, it provided the opportunity for disputants to sit with a trained neutral, in an atmosphere of confidentiality, with no one imposing a result; just a bit of guidance and nudging to make the parties come up with options for a practical, fair and mutually acceptable solution. A focus on long-term interests, some legal realism and a dose of the rather grim alternatives to settlement propel the shift from attacking the other to jointly attacking the problem. The cases come from a swathe of civil and commercial, personal and property, and matrimonial and mercantile disputes.

The results are encouraging. So too is the

ready adoption by the Bar of this alternative (now christened as appropriate) method of dispute resolution, as witnessed by the thousands of willing mediators. It has now to move to full-fledged professional avenues, drawing in better usage from business, government and other disputants, and in the process, providing gainful remuneration to practitioners of this new vocation. But certainly, mediation has caught on in the judicial system, and there is hardly any judge who does not speak of its merits and how it is the way of the future.

Getting it to work

So, to get to the point, finally. For the judge the backlog is a burden. For the mediator, it is a treasure trove. In front of us, or rather hidden in courtly dungeons, are the hundreds of cases which just have to be assigned to mediators to handle. And the mediators are there in sufficient numbers and backed by years of experience. All it needs is a simple system of primary identification of these cases, asking parties to choose their mediator or assigning them a trained and experienced one, and ensuring that a reasonable fee is paid for the service. When you compare the cost of mediating a case, for the system and for the parties, it is a fraction of litigating that case. You do not need vast logistical and administrative infrastructure, and you are saved multiple hearings spread over indeterminable time spans. Most cases in mediation take just a handful of sessions; complex ones take more but this is nothing when compared to the boxes of litigative papers to deal with and the swallowing up of calendars. And when it works, the results achieved in mediation outweigh by far anything you can get in litigation – not just a practical solution which both parties accept, but often a restoration of relationships.

So, perhaps it is time we take the keys, rechristen our chamber of horrors as the birthing place for mediations, and apply the principle by which mediators live and work – turning the problem into the opportunity for solution.

Why in News?

- Judicial Reforms, Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR), Access to Justice, Pendency of Cases

Syllabus

- GS Paper 2 – Indian Polity & Governance





Key Takeaways from the Article

- ❑ **Judicial Backlog Crisis:**
 - Supreme Court has **82,000 pending cases**, High Courts over **62 lakh**, and lower courts **close to 5 crore**.
 - **50 lakh cases** have been pending for over **10 years**.
- ❑ **Structural Issues:**
 - **Low Judge-to-Population Ratio:** **21 judges per million people**, among the lowest globally.
 - **Adversarial System:** Encourages multiple interim applications and appeals, delaying resolutions.
- ❑ **Infrastructural and Financial Deficiencies:**
 - Limited resources hinder judicial efficiency.
- ❑ **Government as a Major Litigant:**
 - The government is a party in nearly **50% of court cases**, exacerbating pendency.
- ❑ **Role of Mediation in Reducing Backlogs:**
 - Mediation, **formalized in 2005**, offers an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanism.
 - Encourages **voluntary settlements** with a neutral mediator, reducing litigation burden.
 - Works well for **civil, commercial, matrimonial, and property disputes**.
- ❑ **Advantages of Mediation:**
 - **Quicker resolution:** Most cases resolve in a few sessions.
 - **Lower cost:** Both for litigants and the judicial system.
 - **Restoration of relationships:** Unlike litigation, mediation fosters mutual agreement and goodwill.

Supreme Court	80.7 Thousand
High Court	62.12 Lakh
Lower Courts	4.44 Crore
Total	5.07 Crore

Source: Law Ministry



Way Forward

- Implement a **structured process** to identify suitable cases for mediation.
- Establish a **Pre-Litigation Resolution Board** to resolve disputes before reaching courts.
- Improve the **judge-to-population ratio** through judicial appointments and ad-hoc judges.
- Conduct awareness campaigns about **mediation benefits** among litigants and legal professionals.
- Amend laws to **disincentivize frivolous litigation** and make ADR a **mandatory first step** before formal court proceedings.

Mains Practice Questions

Q.1 Judicial pendency is one of the biggest challenges to India's justice system. Discuss how mediation can serve as a viable solution to the problem and suggest measures to institutionalize it. **(250 words)**





THE US VISIT, VIEWED THROUGH INDUSTRY'S BUSINESS LENS

The U.S. visit, viewed through industry's business lens

P rime Minister Narendra Modi's brief and official working visit to the United States last week was significant in many ways, reiterating the strong bonds between the two nations and igniting a new momentum in the economic relationship. The visit was replete with productive outcomes for industry of both sides, with major announcements across trade, defence, technology and energy.

From the perspective of Indian industry, the initiatives announced are likely to help India itself integrate more deeply into global supply chains, boost its technology and innovation attainments, and drive its participation in the defence industrial sector.

Towards a trade push

First, it is a pivotal decision that there was an initiation of the first phase of a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) to reduce trade barriers and streamline regulatory processes. Such an agreement would encourage United States companies to invest in India which would include the purposes of plugging India into their supply chains. The \$500 billion trade target by 2030 is ambitious but possible, potentially with sectoral sub-targets and easier cross-border procedures.

Several measures have already been taken to address tariffs on both sides. The mention of exporting industrial goods from the U.S. to India and labour-intensive products from India to the U.S. as well as agricultural products highlights that exports from both sides would be encouraged. This is supported by the intention to encourage greenfield investments, including by Indian companies in the U.S.

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) had endorsed this target in its report in 2020, and believes that sectors such as IT, pharma, garments and textiles, among several others, would gain from the joint commitment to Mission 500.

While the U.S. market is already relatively open to Indian exports, a well-structured BTA would be mutually beneficial, particularly if it facilitates



Chandrajit Banerjee

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The Prime Minister's brief visit and the announcements made will add momentum to the India-U.S. economic relationship

greater U.S. investment and technology transfers to India.

A technology, defence and energy focus

Second, the U.S.-India Transforming the Relationship Utilizing Strategic Technology (TRUST) underscores the deepening strategic and technological partnership between the two nations and opens further avenues for private sector cooperation with their governments and academia. With a range of sectors identified such as defence, artificial intelligence (AI), semiconductors, quantum computing, biotechnology, energy, and space, TRUST will help foster closer innovation and technology partnerships with U.S. tech giants. Additionally, the INDUS Innovation initiative aims to accelerate research and development in cutting-edge sectors.

India is emerging as a key player in the AI economy and the U.S.-India Roadmap on AI Infrastructure is expected to attract investments in data centres, computing power and AI models. This initiative could enhance funding opportunities for Indian startups in AI and encourage significant investments in areas such as fintech, healthtech, agritech and other developmental solutions, not just for India but also for the Global South.

Third, defence sector initiatives reinforce the India-U.S. strategic partnership through expanded technology transfers, joint production, and industrial collaboration. The launch of a 10-year Framework for the U.S.-India Major Defense Partnership this year signifies a transformative shift in bilateral defence ties. Agreements were reached for the co-production of various systems which can promote indigenous manufacturing, skill development, and economic growth. With a potential for offset clauses, Indian industry can gain hugely from the defence agreements announced during the visit.

Fourth, energy cooperation was another critical area of discussion, with a focus on establishing long-term strategic linkages as India

seeks to diversify its energy sources. The leaders underscored the importance of increasing hydrocarbon production to enhance global energy stability and affordability. India's Union Budget 2025-26 commits to collaborating with the private sector on the development of small modular reactors (SMRs), wherein U.S. companies will play a vital role in advancing this capability. Given India's ambitious net-zero targets, the U.S., with its vast natural gas reserves, can serve as a reliable energy supplier, strengthening India's energy security.

Fifth, the two countries have pledged to further the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) through joint infrastructure projects. With both countries entering into plurilateral arrangements in these regions, infrastructure creation could be fast-tracked, with possible spin-offs for the participation of Indian industry in railways, roadways, smart cities and industrial zones. The mention of undersea cables connecting India and the U.S. would give impetus to India's digital economy and services exports as well.

Links in higher education

Sixth, on education, the leaders decided to boost higher education institutional cooperation, which includes setting up of campuses by leading U.S. educational institutions in India. This would bring comfort to Indian students. Legal mobility is expected to be streamlined as well.

Indian industry is committed to working with both governments to maintain this momentum, advocating pro-business policies and ensuring industry feedback in implementation. With collaborative spirit and sustained reform, the benefits of this visit can be fully realised, positioning India's economy on a high-growth trajectory. In sum, Mr. Modi's U.S. visit, viewed through industry's business lens, is more than a diplomatic success. It is a blueprint for India to leverage global partnerships in becoming an economic powerhouse, innovating and prospering in tandem with its strategic ally.

Why in News?

- India-U.S. Relations, Bilateral Agreements, Strategic Partnerships

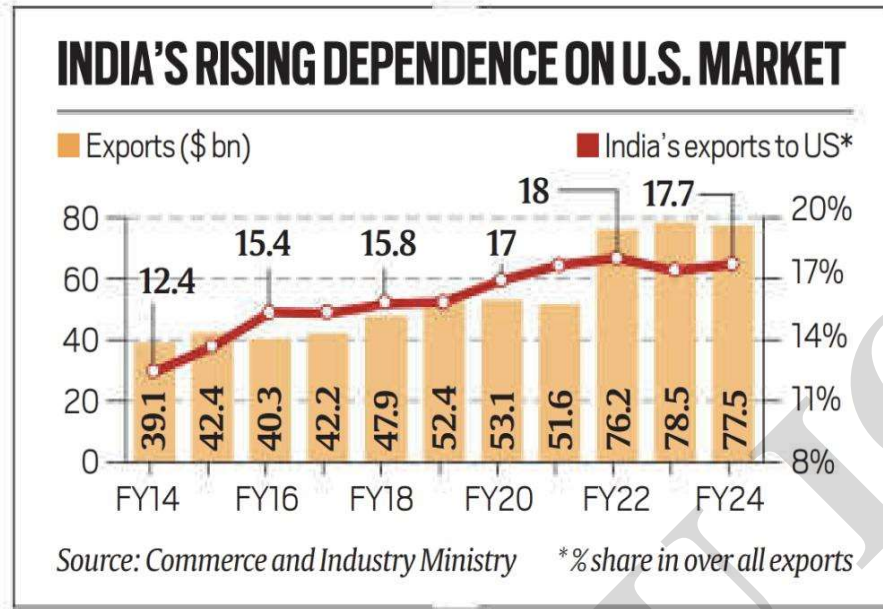
Syllabus

- GS Paper 2 – International Relations
- GS Paper 3 – Indian Economy

Key Takeaways from the Article

- Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) and Economic Cooperation**
 - Initiation of the first phase of a **Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) to reduce trade barriers and simplify regulations.**
 - Target set for **\$500 billion bilateral trade by 2030**, supported by easier cross-border trade procedures.
 - Focus on boosting **industrial goods exports from the U.S. and labourintensive exports from India** (e.g., textiles, IT, pharmaceuticals, agriculture).





❑ Technology and Innovation Collaboration

- **U.S.-India TRUST (Transforming the Relationship Utilizing Strategic Technology)** to deepen technological partnerships in **defence, AI, semiconductors, quantum computing, energy, and space.**
- **INDUS Innovation Initiative** to accelerate R&D in emerging technologies.
- **U.S.-India AI Roadmap** aims to boost **AI startups, fintech, healthtech, and agritech,** benefiting India and the Global South.

❑ Defence and Security Partnership

- A **10-year Framework for the U.S.-India Major Defense Partnership** to enhance **technology transfers, joint production, and industrial cooperation.**
- Agreements on **co-production of defence equipment,** boosting India's **indigenous manufacturing and skill development.**

❑ Energy Security and Climate Cooperation

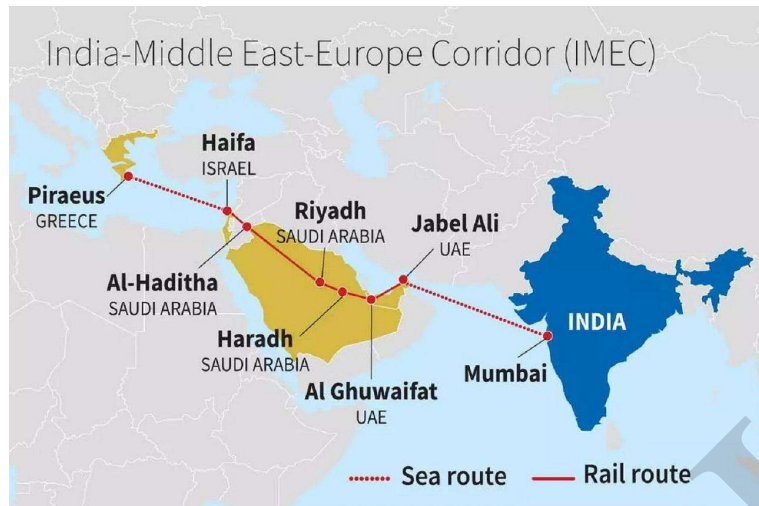
- Strengthening **long-term energy collaboration,** with U.S. firms assisting in **hydrocarbon production and natural gas supply.**
- India's **2025-26 Budget** focuses on **small modular nuclear reactors (SMRs),** with U.S. companies aiding in their development.
- Support for **India's net-zero targets** through clean energy initiatives.

❑ Infrastructure and Digital Economy Cooperation

- **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)** for joint **railway, roadway, and industrial zone development.**
- **Undersea cable project** to strengthen **India-U.S. digital connectivity,** boosting India's **IT and services exports.**

❑ Higher Education and Workforce Mobility

- Plans for **U.S. universities to set up campuses in India,** improving access to global education.
- Measures to streamline **legal mobility for Indian students and professionals.**



Way Forward

- Prioritize key sectors (**IT, pharma, textiles, semiconductors**) to facilitate trade growth.
- Implement **technology transfer mechanisms** and offset policies to strengthen indigenous defence production.
- Increase investment in **clean energy and nuclear technology** collaboration.
- Expedite **infrastructure development and trade connectivity**.
- Establish **joint R&D centers** and **digital infrastructure** to promote technology startups.





SOUTHERN DISCOMFORT

Southern discomfort

Delegated legislation from the Centre should not override States' plenary laws

With less than a week for the UGC's deadline to submit feedback on its draft regulations on the appointment and promotion of university teachers and Vice-Chancellors (V-C), States ruled by parties other than the BJP have ratcheted up their opposition. At a conclave in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Karnataka challenged the regulations, saying they would undermine the federal structure, diminish the powers of State legislatures, and weaken the autonomy of State universities. This is the second such conclave, with a previous meeting in Bengaluru including the governments of Himachal Pradesh and Jharkhand, and expressions of solidarity from Punjab. In Tamil Nadu and Kerala, the main Opposition parties are also supportive of the stances of the ruling parties there; some regional parties that belong to the BJP-led NDA have reportedly expressed their concerns in private. A key concern is the UGC's proposal to play an enhanced role in the selection and appointment of V-Cs of State universities. Under the new regulations, the search-cum-selection committees will comprise nominees of the Chancellor (usually the Governor in State universities), the UGC Chairman, and the University syndicate or senate, neatly cutting out State Higher Education departments which were responsible for setting up these expert panels. The Chancellor will appoint the V-C from

the list of three to five names shortlisted by the selection committee. UGC chairman M. Jagadesh Kumar has argued that the proposed structure "eliminates ambiguity and ensures a more transparent process", but States oppose the centralisation of power, leaving many State universities leaderless, especially in Tamil Nadu.

Apart from the allegation that the new regulations will dilute academic standards, increase commercialisation and politicisation, and reduce access to higher education for poor and disadvantaged students, the States have asked why they are being sidelined in university administration even while they continue to bear most of the financial costs for State-run higher education. Beyond higher education, there is a larger constitutional issue of Centre-State relations at stake: can delegated legislation such as the rules and regulations framed by the Union government and its agencies in the executive branch under a central law override the provisions of a plenary State law passed by a State legislature? The opposing States plan to send a high-level delegation to the Union Education Ministry and challenge the regulations in court, indicating a political and legal escalation of the issue. The UGC must not ignore this plethora of concerned voices and should remove anti-federal provisions from its draft before notifying the new regulations.

Why in News?

- State Opposition to UGC's Draft Regulations

Syllabus

- **GS Paper 2** – Indian Polity & Governance

Key Takeaways from the Article

Q.2 Explain the concept of **delegated legislation** and discuss its **implications** on the **plenary legislative powers of states** within a federal structure.

- Delegated legislation refers to **rules, regulations, by-laws, and orders** made by executive authorities under a statute passed by the legislature.
- Its purpose is to provide **administrative efficiency** and **technical expertise** in rulemaking, as Parliament and State legislatures cannot anticipate every detail.





- ❑ **Types:**
 - **Statutory Instruments** – Rules framed under a legislative Act.
 - **By-laws** – Regulations made by local or statutory bodies.
 - **Executive Orders** – Directions issued by the executive for implementation.
- ❑ **Impact of Delegated Legislation on States' Plenary Laws**
- ❑ **Encroachment on State Powers**
 - The **Union government issues rules and regulations** that may conflict with **State laws**, violating the federal structure.
 - Example: **Farm Laws (2020)**, which were enacted under an **Entry in the Concurrent List**, overriding States' existing agricultural policies.
- ❑ **Undermining Federalism**
 - **Article 245 & 246** of the Constitution define the **legislative competence** of the Union and States.
 - **Delegated legislation by the Centre** sometimes bypasses State laws, weakening **State autonomy** in policy implementation.
- ❑ **Lack of Parliamentary Scrutiny**
 - Delegated legislation is **not debated in Parliament** the way primary legislation is.
 - States are often **not consulted**, even when regulations affect areas under **State jurisdiction**.
- ❑ **Judicial Concerns**
 - The **Supreme Court** has ruled in multiple cases that **executive rulemaking cannot override plenary legislation** by the States.
 - In *State of Tamil Nadu vs. Union of India*, the SC observed that **delegated legislation cannot override the federal structure of the Constitution**.

Way Forward

- Any **delegated legislation affecting State subjects** should be made after consultation with the **concerned State governments**.
- Parliamentary and **State legislative committees** should review **delegated legislation** to check for conflicts with State laws.
- The Supreme Court and High Courts should have a **structured mechanism to assess and strike down** rules that infringe upon **State powers**.
- Delegated legislation must ensure **speedy governance** while maintaining **constitutional principles of federalism**.
- A balanced approach—where both the **Union and States cooperate** in rule-making—is essential to maintain the **spirit of cooperative federalism**.





CONCEPT OF SEXUAL EQUALITY MUST BE PART OF SYLLABUS: SC

Concept of sexual equality must be part of syllabus: SC

Moral and ethical training, etiquette must be made part of the school syllabus, Justice Nagarathna tells Union government, judge says parents must stop discrimination between daughter and son

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday told the Centre that the concept of sexual equality and moral and ethical training of how men should behave with women respectfully must become a part of school syllabus.

“Moral and ethical training, etiquette must be made part of the school syllabus. There must be a module to inculcate this in schools at a very early age for children... Now, schools do not have moral education. Certain schools have it, but the class is usually cancelled and some other subjects are taken,” Justice B.V. Nagarathna, heading a Bench comprising Justice S.C. Sharma, observed.

Justice Nagarathna said equality between daughters and sons must start at home. But, instead, discrimination starts at home with the parents.

“Parents are more focused on restraining their daughters and not their sons. The word ‘discrimi-



Parents are more focused on restraining their daughters and not their sons. The word ‘discrimination’ must go from our vocabulary

B.V. NAGARATHNA
Supreme Court judge

nation’ must go from our vocabulary,” the judge said.

The court was hearing a writ petition filed by petitioner-in-person and senior advocate Aabad Ponda, who said the root cause for the surge in rape cases and incidents of crimes against women was the lack of education at the basic level about equality among the sexes.

‘Tremendous strain’

“Fifty per cent of our population, women, are living under tremendous strain and insecurity. There is a rise in the misogynistic and barbaric attitude towards women. Education must start at the smallest level to change the attitude towards women,” Mr. Ponda submitted.

Justice Nagarathna agreed that many social circles still believed that a woman neither belonged to her parents’ home nor the in-laws’ home after marriage.

Awareness that a woman was independent, her own person, and commanded respect and equal treatment in society must be inculcated in society, the judge noted.

Justice Nagarathna said environmental science started being taught in schools as a subject on the orders of the Supreme Court. Likewise, moral education must become a part of the school syllabus.

The court ordered the government to place on record any measures taken by it so far to include the concept of sexual equality

in school syllabus.

Mr. Ponda’s plea also recommended using advertisements and the visual media for conveying zero tolerance to rape.

“Awareness of the stringent laws against rape must be advertised in cinema halls and in the media. There is no point if the person knows about these laws after he is sentenced to 20 years or is about to be hung to death,” Mr. Ponda argued. He said knee-jerk reactions like making punishments harsher after a gruesome crime was hardly a solution.

Efforts to bridge the gap

The petition said efforts have to be made to bridge the gap between the law and the understanding and dissemination of the law to the public.

“The need of identifying the real cause of this crime is the first requirement. Once this is done, the next step would be to try to find measures to revolutionise the male mindset in the country amongst a large portion of the populace and instill in them the fear of the law,” it said.

Why in News?

- Gender Equality
- SC Judgements
- Moral Education + Gender Sensitization

Syllabus

- **GS Paper 1** – Indian Society
- **GS Paper 2** – Governance & Social Justice
- **GS Paper 4** – Ethics





Key Takeaways from the Article

- ❑ **Supreme Court's Directive to the Centre**
 - SC Bench led by **Justice B.V. Nagarathna** emphasized the need to **include sexual equality, moral training, and etiquette** in the school syllabus.
 - Called for **early-stage education** on how men should respectfully behave with women.
- ❑ **Gender Discrimination Begins at Home**
 - Justice Nagarathna pointed out that **discrimination starts with parents** who focus on **restraining daughters but not sons**.
 - Stressed that the **word 'discrimination' must be erased from social vocabulary**.
- ❑ **Link Between Lack of Education and Rising Crimes Against Women**
 - Advocate **Aabad Ponda's** petition highlighted that the **rise in crimes against women is due to a lack of basic education on gender equality**.
 - Called for **education at an early level** to change societal attitudes.
- ❑ **Awareness Campaigns on Stringent Laws**
 - Suggested **advertising strict anti-rape laws** in **cinema halls and media** for public awareness.
 - Stressed that **punishment alone is not a solution**—mindset change is needed.
- ❑ **Need for Social Reform**
 - Justice Nagarathna noted that **many still believe women do not belong to either their parents' or in-laws' home**.
 - Called for **awareness on women's independence, dignity, and equality**.

Way Forward

- Introduce structured **moral and ethical education modules** in schools.
- Use **mass media, cinema halls, and digital platforms** to spread awareness on gender equality and strict laws against sexual crimes.
- Conduct **gender sensitization workshops for parents and educators** to promote equality at home and school.
- Engage **NGOs, civil society, and religious institutions** in spreading awareness on women's rights and dignity.
- Ensure **stringent enforcement of laws** while focusing on **preventive measures and education**.





PRELIMS SAARTHI

Jhumoir Binandini

- Jhumoir Dance – Assam

Record rehearsal



In sync: Artistes rehearsing for a mega Jhumoir Binandini dance event in Guwahati on Friday, in an attempt to set a world record. PTI

Critical Minerals

- ❑ **India's Critical Mineral Reserves (Estimated)**
 - **Lithium:** 12.3 million tonnes
 - **Nickel:** 189-194 million tonnes
 - **Cobalt:** 45 million tonnes
 - **Graphite:** 211-244 million tonnes
 - **Rare-earth elements:** 230 million tonnes
- ❑ **Limited domestic resources of minerals**
 - **Cobalt,**
 - **Niobium,**
 - **Germanium,**
 - **Rhenium**

Centre to put more critical mineral mines on auction

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Following the Cabinet approval for a ₹16,300-crore National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) in January, India plans to auction more mines by 2031, Union Minister of State for Mines and Minerals Satish Chandra Dubey said on Friday.

Speaking at a meeting organised by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), he said the government had already auctioned 24 critical mineral blocks domestically. "We aim to auction as many critical mineral blocks as possible by 2031," he said.

He underlined that public-private partnerships were critical in achieving these objectives. "We must work as complementary partners and as a team to build a self-reliant India," he stated. The NCMM envisages a separate investment of ₹18,000 crore by public sector units.

While developing new mines is a major focus area, India's paucity of natural resources means that it has to shore up initiatives to extract valuable minerals from mine waste and reprocess tailings – the residue from crushed ores.

Tailings contain valuable amounts of critical materials, offering potential as a secondary source to enhance the supply and mitigate risks from increasing demand, said a report by FICCI and consulting firm Deloitte.

According to the report, India has domestic lithium resources of 12.3 million tonnes; nickel deposits of 189-194 million tonnes; cobalt 45 million tonnes; graphite 211-244 million tonnes; rare-earth elements resources of 230 million tonnes.

The challenges India face include the unavailability of quality reserves of cobalt, niobium, germanium, and rhenium. The absence of good quality exploration data results in weak investor interest, with 24 out of the 49 critical mineral blocks remaining unauctioned. India is also grappling with challenges in the economic extraction of critical minerals due to deposits being too deep to viably extract with the available technology.

Prelims Practice Question

Q.3 Jhumoir Dance is a traditional folk dance of which Indian state?

- (a) Himachal Pradesh (b) Assam
(c) Punjab (d) Madhya Pradesh

