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The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

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CONTEXT: Teenage girls across villages in Uttar Pradesh's Chandauli district are resisting child marriage with the assistance of Anganwadi workers who were once child brides themselves and are determined not to let another generation be forced into the same cycle.

Child Marriage in India – status:

- Marriage involving persons below the legally prescribed age.

Usually occurs in two forms:

- **Immediate marriage** – Minor girl (generally below 18 years) married to an adult man.
- **Future arrangement** – Families agree to marry children when they attain suitable age.

Key facts



One in three of the world's child brides live in India. Of the country's 223 million child brides, 102 million were married before turning 15.



Over half of Indian child brides live in five states: Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. Uttar Pradesh is home to the largest population of child brides, with 36 million.

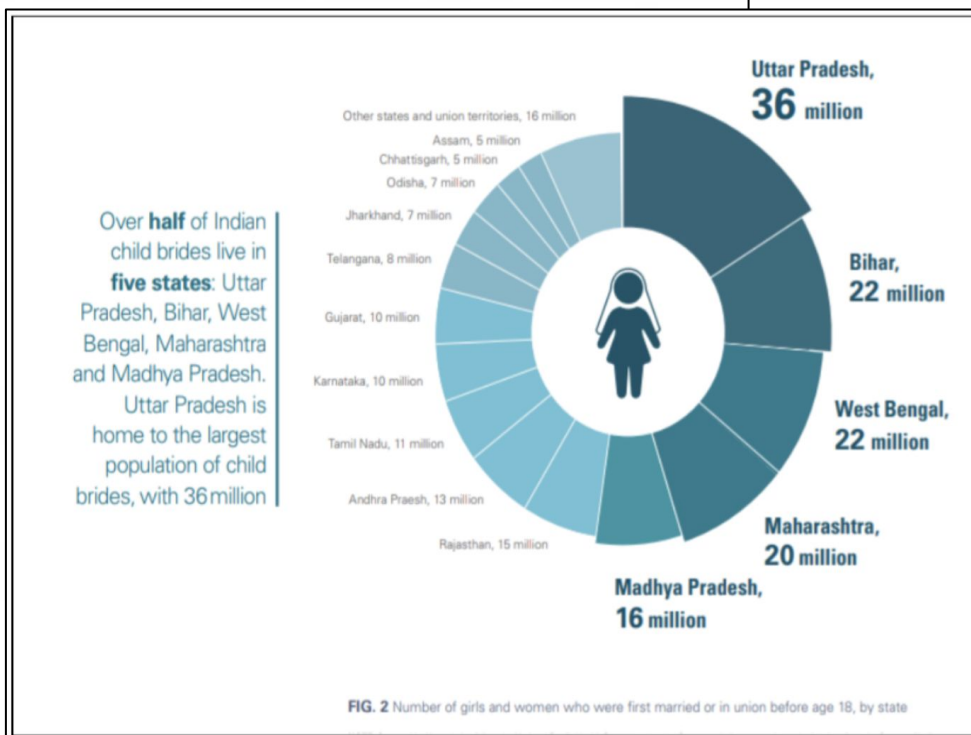


Approximately one in four young women in India were married or in union before their 18th birthday.



The prevalence of child marriage varies across states and union territories in India. Over 40 per cent of young women were married before turning 18 in Bihar and West Bengal, compared to less than 5 per cent in Lakshadweep.

| Law | Minimum Age Prescribed |
|---|--|
| Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 | 18 years for women, 21 years for men |
| Indian Christian Marriage Act, 1872 | 18 years for women, 21 years for men |
| Special Marriage Act, 1954 | 18 years for women, 21 years for men |
| Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA), 2006 | Prohibits marriage below 18 years for women and 21 years for men |



| NFHS Round | Prevalence of Female Child Marriage |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| NFHS-1 (1992-93) | 54.2% |
| NFHS-2 (1998-99) | 50.0% |
| NFHS-3 (2005-06) | 47.4% |
| NFHS-4 (2015-16) | 26.8% |
| NFHS-5 (2019-21) | 23.3% |



CONTEXT: Teenage girls across villages in Uttar Pradesh's Chandauli district are resisting child marriage with the assistance of Anganwadi workers who were once child brides themselves and are determined not to let another generation be forced into the same cycle.

Child Marriage in India – Factors Responsible

1. Socio-Cultural and Patriarchal Factors

- Patriarchal mindset and control over female autonomy
- Protection of family honour
- Caste and community pressures
- Traditional customs and social acceptance
- Preference for early childbearing

2. Poverty and Economic Vulnerability

- Economic distress remains one of the strongest drivers
- **NFHS-5** – 40% of girls from the poorest wealth quintile were married before 18, compared to only around 8% among the richest households.

3. Educational Deprivation

- NFHS – **48% of women with no schooling** were married before 18 compared to merely **4% among women with higher education**.

4. Gender Inequality and Safety Concerns

- Lower investment in girls' health, nutrition and education.

5. Weak Legal Enforcement and Governance Gaps

- **Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (2006)** and **POCSO Act**, enforcement remains inconsistent.
- **Low reporting rates, weak conviction levels, poor birth registration systems,**

6. Regional and Social Disparities

- Disproportionately concentrated among **SC/ST communities, rural populations and economically backward regions**.
- NFHS-5 reports that around **26% of women from SC/ST communities** were married below the legal age.

Child Marriage in India – Impact :

- **Educational Deprivation** – Less than 20% of married girls continue education.
- **Violation of Child Rights** – Exposes children, especially girls, to violence, abuse, exploitation and domestic coercion.
- **Cycle of Poverty** – Limited education and skills reduce employment opportunities, perpetuating intergenerational poverty.
- **Poor Maternal and Child Health** – maternal mortality, anaemia, low birth weight, stunting and undernutrition among children.
- **Population Growth** – Early and repeated childbearing contributes to high fertility rates and population pressure.
 - **Restricted Mobility and Agency** – Young brides often face limitations on movement, communication and decision-making.
 - **Social Isolation** – Limited peer interaction and dependence on marital households reduce emotional and social support systems.
 - **Reduced Access to Information** – Lesser exposure to media, digital platforms and awareness mechanisms limits empowerment.
 - **Gender Inequality** – Reinforces patriarchal norms by reducing women's autonomy, economic participation and leadership opportunities.



Child Marriage in India



CONTEXT: Teenage girls across villages in Uttar Pradesh's Chandauli district are resisting child marriage with the assistance of Anganwadi workers who were once child brides themselves and are determined not to let another generation be forced into the same cycle.

| Initiative / Law | Key Features |
|---|---|
| Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA), 2006 | Prohibits marriage below 18 years for girls and 21 years for boys; provides punishment for offenders; empowers Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPOs) . |
| POCSO Act, 2012 | Protects minors from sexual offences; strengthens legal safeguards against exploitation linked with child marriage. |
| Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 | Enables Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) to protect children vulnerable to forced or early marriage. |
| Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP), 2015 | Promotes education, survival and empowerment of girls; aims to challenge patriarchal and son-preference norms. |
| Bal Vivah Mukat Bharat Campaign | To reduce the prevalence of child marriage by 10% by 2026 and make India child marriage free by 2030. |
| Mission Shakti | Umbrella programme for women's safety, protection and empowerment; includes awareness and support mechanisms for vulnerable girls. |
| Sukanya Samridhi Yojana | Small savings scheme encouraging financial security and long-term welfare of girl children. |
| Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV) | Residential schools for girls from disadvantaged communities to improve retention in education and delay marriage. |
| National Scheme of Incentive to Girls for Secondary Education (NSIGSE) | Financial incentives to encourage girls to continue secondary education and prevent early marriage. |
| Childline 1098 | Emergency outreach service for children in distress, including those facing forced or child marriage. |
| Digital Birth Registration & Marriage Registration Efforts | Helps verify age and reduce fraudulent or underage marriages. |



CONTEXT: Teenage girls across villages in Uttar Pradesh's Chandauli district are resisting child marriage with the assistance of Anganwadi workers who were once child brides themselves and are determined not to let another generation be forced into the same cycle.

Child Marriage in India – Way ahead

- **Strengthen legal enforcement** through stricter implementation of PCMA and appointment of dedicated Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPOs).
 - **Move towards uniform minimum marriage age** across religions and communities to ensure gender equality and legal clarity.
 - **Expand girls' education** through free secondary and higher education, hostel facilities and safer school access.
 - **Promote economic empowerment of girls** via skill development, scholarships and conditional cash transfer schemes.
 - **Ensure women's safety and mobility** by improving policing, transport safety and grievance redressal mechanisms.
 - **Target high-prevalence districts** using district-wise databases, real-time monitoring and focused interventions.
- **Strengthen community awareness campaigns** involving schools, Anganwadi's, Panchayats, NGOs and religious leaders.
 - **Train frontline stakeholders** such as police, judiciary, teachers, ASHA and Anganwadi workers for early identification and prevention.
 - **Improve birth and marriage registration systems** to prevent age falsification and under-reporting.
 - **Encourage civil society participation** for counselling, rehabilitation and community-level behavioural change.
 - **Enhance data collection and monitoring** for evidence-based policymaking and better implementation.

Mains Practice Question

Q. "Child marriage in India is not merely a legal issue but a manifestation of deep-rooted socio-economic and patriarchal structures." Examine. (250 word / 15 Marks)



CONTEXT: The Iran crisis-induced supply shock in fertilisers and a below-normal monsoon may give a boost to bajra, moong and other pulses

The first is the threat from *gulabi sundi* or pink bollworm. Till 4-5 years ago, *kapas* (raw un-ginned cotton) yields were 10-12 quintals per acre. Last year, he harvested only 31 quintals from his 12 acres due to the insect pest, whose larvae bore into the bolls (fruits) of cotton plants and feed on the developing seeds and fibre inside, causing yield loss and lint discolouration.

The second reason is labour shortage for picking cotton, with the cost ranging from

Planting flexibility

The *bajra* Chander would sow in June 15-20 is harvestable three months later, giving him ample time to plant a 130-140 days

rabi (winter-spring) mustard crop by mid-October. After that is harvested, he can sow a 60-65 days *zaid* (summer) *moong* crop from mid-March to mid-April. "*Bajra* allows farmers to take an extra crop. With cotton (sowing time from mid-April to mid-May), they can only go for wheat in November and there is no scope to plant summer *moong* after that," adds Singh.

Input crunch

The third factor has to do with chemical inputs — fertilisers and pesticides.

For cotton, Chander applies two 50-kg bags of single super phosphate (SSP), half-a-bag of muriate of potash (MOP) and 10 kg of sulphur bentonite per acre during sowing, followed by one bag of di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) and two 45-kg urea bags after 1.5 months.

He also sprays multiple insecticides for controlling American bollworm, spotted bollworm, tobacco caterpillars, thrips, jassids and aphids.

"The total sprays are anywhere from five to 10 over the crop's life cycle of 180-185 days. And these chemicals don't work against *gulabi sundi*," points out Chander.

In *bajra*, per-acre fertiliser use is just two bags of SSP and two urea bags, with two 80-gram sprays of 'Proclaim' to control top borer. "I get 18-20 quintals/acre grain yield from Proagro 9001, which matures in 90-95 days. And only 1-2 irrigations are necessary, compared to 5-7 in cotton," he adds.

• Consumption/Sale of fertiliser products (lakh tonnes)

| | Urea | DAP | NP/NPK | SSP | MOP |
|---------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|
| 2016-17 | 296.14 | 89.64 | 84.14 | 37.57 | 28.63 |
| 2017-18 | 298.94 | 92.94 | 85.96 | 34.39 | 31.58 |
| 2018-19 | 314.18 | 92.11 | 90.28 | 35.79 | 29.57 |
| 2019-20 | 336.95 | 101 | 98.57 | 44.03 | 27.87 |
| 2020-21 | 350.43 | 119.11 | 118.11 | 44.89 | 34.25 |
| 2021-22 | 341.8 | 92.72 | 114.79 | 56.81 | 24.56 |
| 2022-23 | 357.25 | 104.18 | 100.74 | 50.17 | 16.32 |
| 2023-24 | 357.8 | 108.12 | 110.73 | 45.44 | 16.45 |
| 2024-25 | 387.74 | 92.81 | 142.14 | 49.28 | 22.02 |
| 2025-26 | 396.38 | 93.96 | 140.67 | 55.29 | 22.56 |

SOURCE: THE FERTILISER ASSOCIATION OF INDIA.

Millets

- Small-grained, drought resistant, seeded grasses.

Major types in India:

- Sorghum (Jowar), Pearl millet (Bajra), Finger millet (Ragi)
- Small millets: Foxtail, Kodo, Little, Barnyard, Proso, Browntop
- Mostly *kharif* crops, cultivated in rainfed, marginal areas

Top Producer of Millets in World

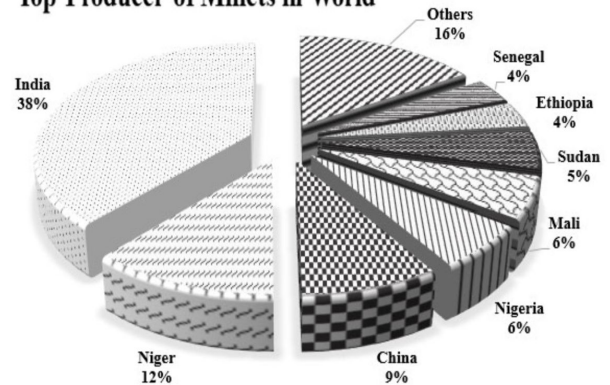


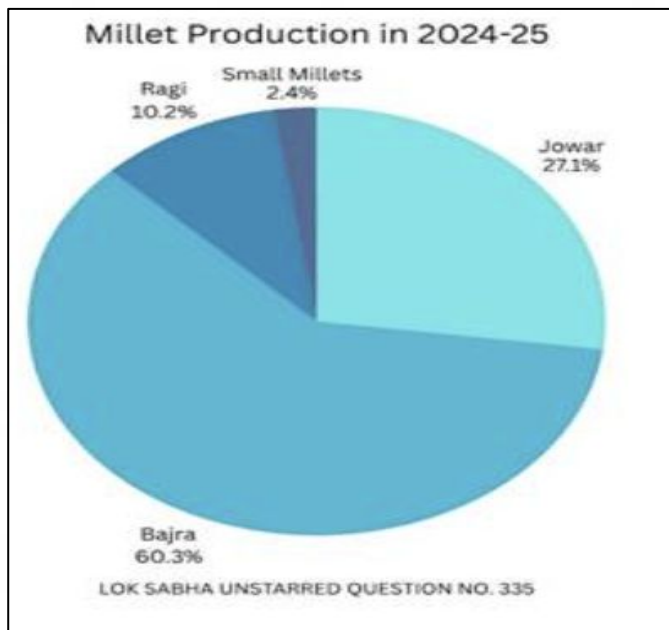
Figure 2: (a) Top producer of millets in world (%) (FAOSTAT, 2022)

Iran War, Monsoon Risks Fuel India's Millet Shift



CONTEXT: The Iran crisis-induced supply shock in fertilisers and a below-normal monsoon may give a boost to bajra, moong and other pulses

- India produced **180.15 lakh tonnes** of millets in **2024-25**, marking a steady rise compared to the previous year with an **increase of 4.43 lakh tonnes**. **Rajasthan** led in production, followed by Maharashtra and Karnataka.
- India exported **89,164.96 tonnes** of millets worth **\$37 million** in **2024-25**.
- As of May 2025, Cabinet approved MSP for Ragi for Marketing Season 2025-26 with the second highest absolute increase (₹596/quintal).
- Among all millet types, **bajra (60.3%)** was produced the most in the country.



- **Fibre** → gut health
- **Iron & Zinc** → combats anaemia
- **Calcium (especially Ragi)**
- **Gluten-free** → suitable for gluten intolerance
- **Triple burden of malnutrition** (undernutrition + micronutrient deficiency + lifestyle diseases)

Millets in India – Significance :

1. Climatic / Environmental Significance

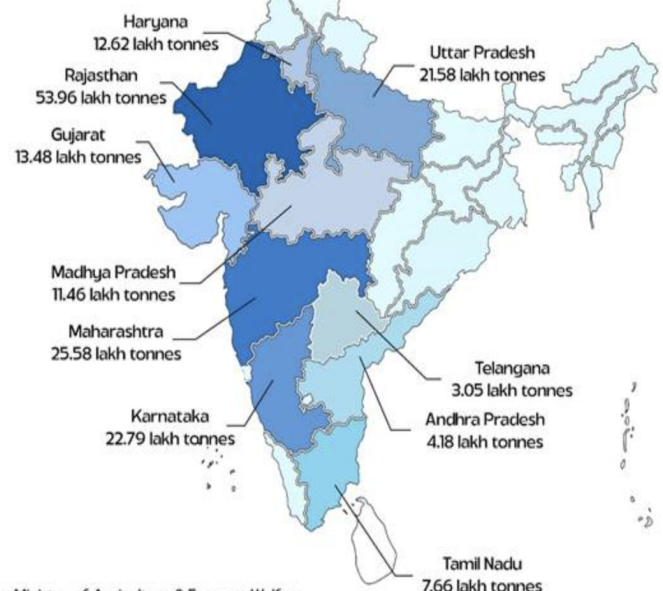
- **Low water requirement:** ~300-400 mm rainfall vs rice (~1200 mm)
- **Climate-resilient:** Tolerant to **drought, heat, poor soils**
- **Suitable for: Dryland agriculture (≈55% of India's net sown area)**

2. Health & Nutritional Significance

- **Low Glycaemic Index (GI)** → helpful in diabetes control

State-Wise Production of Millets

(2024-25)



Source: Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare



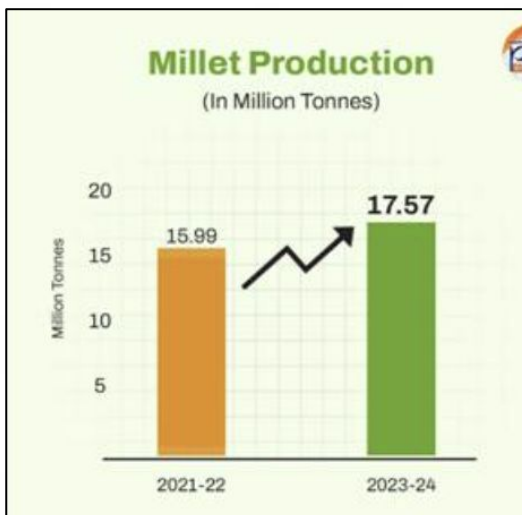
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3. Socio-Economic Significance

- Grown in **rainfed, tribal, and marginal areas**
- **Income stability for small farmers**
- Lower input cost → **higher net returns in risk-prone areas**
- **Nutritional security + livelihood security**

4. Political / Strategic Significance

- Staple for ~**60 crore people globally (Asia + Africa)**
- **International Year of Millets 2023: Global leadership in sustainable agriculture**
- India's **soft power in food systems**



Millets in India – Challenges :

Production Constraints

- **Low productivity** vs rice/wheat → farmer disincentive
- **Narrow MSP coverage** (mainly jowar, bajra, ragi)

2. Consumption Constraints

- **Dietary transition**
- **Perception issue:** Considered “poor man’s food”

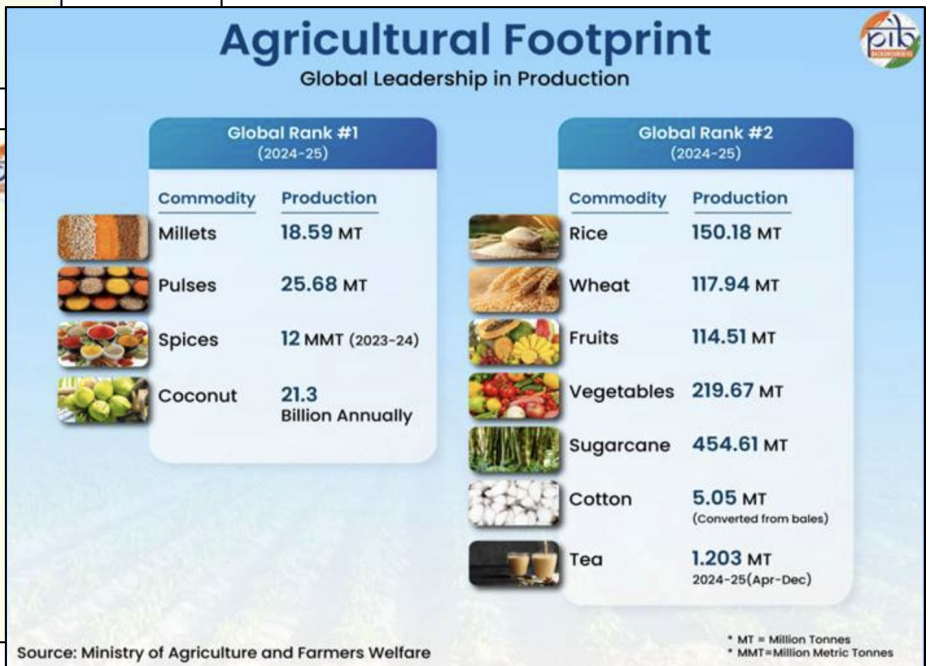
3. Processing challenges:

- No gluten → difficult dough handling (unlike wheat)
- Lack of: Awareness, branding, urban demand
- Lipase enzyme – Poor shelf life

4. Policy Bias

National Food Security Act 2013:

- Heavy subsidy on rice & wheat
- Millets largely excluded → demand distortion



Iran War, Monsoon Risks Fuel India's Millet Shift



CONTEXT: The Iran crisis-induced supply shock in fertilisers and a below-normal monsoon may give a boost to bajra, moong and other pulses

| Initiative / Scheme | Year / Ministry | Key Features / Objective |
|---|--|--|
| Shree Anna Initiative | 2023 | - Popularise millets ("Shree Anna" branding) - Increase domestic consumption - Promote Indian Institute of Millets Research (IIMR), Hyderabad as Centre of Excellence |
| PLI Scheme for Food Processing (Millets) | 2022-27 Ministry of Food Processing Industries | - Incentivises millet-based value-added products - Boosts processing, branding & exports |
| Nutri-Cereals Initiative | 2018 | - Millets rebranded as " Nutri-Cereals " - Focus on nutritional awareness |
| National Year of Millets | 2018 | - Awareness generation - Policy push for millet revival |
| Sub-Mission on Millets (under NFSM) | 2018 Ministry of Agriculture | - Area expansion & productivity enhancement - Improved seeds & agronomic practices |
| POSHAN Abhiyaan Integration | Ministry of Women & Child Development | - Inclusion of millets in nutrition programmes - Tackles malnutrition & anaemia |
| Mid-Day Meal & ICDS Inclusion | Various ministries | - Incorporation of millets in school meals & Anganwadi nutrition |
| International Year of Millets | 2023 (UN, led by India) | - Global recognition - Boost to exports & India's leadership in sustainable agriculture |



CONTEXT: The Iran crisis-induced supply shock in fertilisers and a below-normal monsoon may give a boost to bajra, moong and other pulses

Millets in India – Way Ahead

1. Seed technology & R&D push

- Expand MSP
- Develop **Special Agribusiness Zones (SABZ)**:
- Region-specific clusters (e.g., Ragi-Karnataka)
- Promote **Organic millet farming**

2. Market & Value Chain

- Strengthen: **Procurement + PDS inclusion**
- Develop: **Processing infrastructure**
- Encourage: Startups in **millet-based food products**

3. Demand Creation

- Awareness campaigns: Health benefits, lifestyle diseases
- Urban integration: Ready-to-cook / ready-to-eat millet foods

4. Trade & Global Positioning

- Improve quality standards for export
- Tap global demand health-conscious markets (US, EU)



Mains Practice Question

Q. Discuss the significance of millets in ensuring nutritional and climate security in India. (15 Marks / 250 Words)

14. गत वर्षों में कुछ विशेष फसलों पर जोर ने सस्यन पैटर्न में किस प्रकार परिवर्तन ला दिए हैं? मोटे अनाजों (मिलटों) के उत्पादन और उपभोग पर बल को विस्तारपूर्वक स्पष्ट कीजिए।
(उत्तर 250 शब्दों में दीजिए)
- How has the emphasis on certain crops brought about changes in cropping patterns in recent past? Elaborate the emphasis on millets production and consumption.
(Answer in 250 words) 15



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Fundamental Right & Governance

Newspaper : The Hindu Page Number : 9

The Norwegian journalist who wanted to ask Prime Minister Narendra Modi a question prefaced it by saying that her country had the freest press in the world, citing the World Press Freedom Index prepared annually by Reporters Without Borders. Press freedom, and even democracy, can apparently be ranked. India is ranked 157 in the World Press Freedom Index. Ukraine is at 55, Qatar at 75, Burkina Faso at 110, Oman at 127, Kuwait at 136 – countries some of which do not even hold a pro forma election rank higher on press freedom than India, according to this report.

Norway is number one. But what the ranking does not take into account is the unfiltered racism of an apparently free press – such as a Norwegian mainstream newspaper that portrayed Mr. Modi as a snake charmer, an age-old trope to depict India. The rankers have themselves clarified that the quality of journalism is not a criterion. The racism of the freest press does not affect its standing.

The contestations within the media space are often a reflection of society, and state control of the media is an extension of the control the state seeks to enforce across other domains of people's lives – movement, thinking, learning, and the mingling of populations. In Norway, the media, the society and the state share broadly the same consensus. Of its 55 lakh people, 95 per cent speak Norwegian and 60 per cent are affiliated to the Church of Norway. A largely homogenous country

February 2025. Mr. Trump, for his part, routinely seeks out confrontational interviews to make his point, while simultaneously seeking to delegitimise the media. Press conferences and probing interviews have become rare across India's leadership. No leader wants to take questions – whether in the legislature or the media. Political communication has become a one-way street in which the principal actor broadcasts without the inconvenience of

World Press Freedom Index

- Published annually by **Reporters Without Borders**
- First published in **2002**.
- Based on indicators such as:
 - I. Media independence
 - II. Journalist safety
 - III. Legal framework
 - IV. Political pressure
 - V. Transparency
 - VI. Censorship
- Ranking covers **180 countries and territories**.
- Norway has frequently ranked among the top performers.
- India's rank in recent years has remained in the lower category, reflecting concerns over media environment and journalist safety.
- The index is largely based on: **expert assessment questionnaires**, and **quantitative data on abuses/violence against journalists**.

That said, those who seek to dismiss Western standards as irrelevant are curiously selective in their approach. They would dismiss the Press Freedom Index but in the same breath celebrate some random ranking on Ease of Doing Business, or a foreign country's national honour conferred on their leader. The convenience of the dismissal gives it away. Rankings exist. They are often methodologically dubious, frequently corrupted by subjective factors and sometimes by outright prejudice. No global ranking is required to establish that the Indian media is under severe stress – from market forces and from state measures alike. Equally, no amount of fine print can sustain the argument that Kuwait belongs far above India on any honest measure of press freedom. The index's own methodology undermines its own conclusions at the extremes.

The better argument is not that rankings are worthless but that they are blunt instruments – useful for identifying broad patterns, unreliable as precise judgments.



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Drainage system

Newspaper : Indian Express Page Number : 15

No new dam in upper Ganga: The long road to 'consensus'

Nikhil Ghanekar
New Delhi, May 21

ON WEDNESDAY, the Union Government presented a 'consensus' view to the Supreme Court that it was not in favour of new hydroelectric projects (HEPs) on the Alaknanda and Bhagirathi Rivers, the headwater streams of the Ganga River.

The debate on damming the rivers was spurred by the 2013 Kedarnath disaster, which prompted the SC to order a scrutiny of existing and proposed projects in Uttarakhand, and freeze environmental and forest clearances for new HEPs.

The government's unified stand comes after over a decade of disagreements within. These centred around Uttarakhand's economic interests, efforts to maintain a minimum environmental flow in the Ganga, and assessments on their impact on the fragile Himalayan ecosystem.

Committees and conflicts

Based on the SC's 2013 order, the Union Environment Ministry constituted an expert body led by environmental expert Ravi Chopra. It was to study whether HEPs had a role in escalating the impact of the Kedarnath flood and to examine whether 24 such projects would significantly affect the biodiversity of the basins.

This expert body (EB-I) submitted that 23 of the 24 projects under review would harm biodiversity, and the Environment Ministry endorsed its view. However, the Central Electricity Authority and the Central Water Commission disagreed. They recommended hydropower, claiming a minimal environmental footprint and citing no grounds to link it to the 2013 disaster.

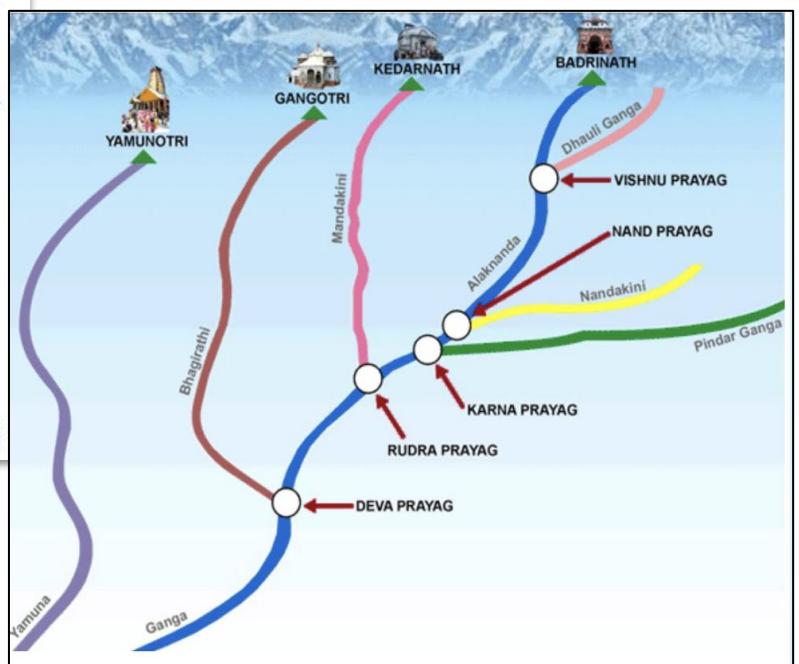
Meanwhile, six project developers who already had clearances moved court to lift the SC's freeze. Faced with differing views, the Supreme Court in 2015 directed the Environment Ministry to constitute another body: expert body-II.

Setup under hydrology expert BP Das, EB-II's mandate included 'cumulative impact and carrying capacity' assessment of the Ganga for the development of HEPs with a focus on glacial movement, seismic vulnerability, and socio-economic impacts.

- Origin - Gangotri Glacier (Uttarkashi district), Uttarakhand.
- Source - The Bhagirathi.
- At Devprayag, Bhagirathi meets Alaknanda → thereafter called Ganga.

Alaknanda River system:

- Origin: Satopanth Glacier above Badrinath
- Formed by Dhaul Ganga + Vishnu Ganga (meet at Vishnu Prayag/Joshimath)
- Pindar joins at Karna Prayag
- Mandakini (Kali Ganga) joins at Rudra Prayag



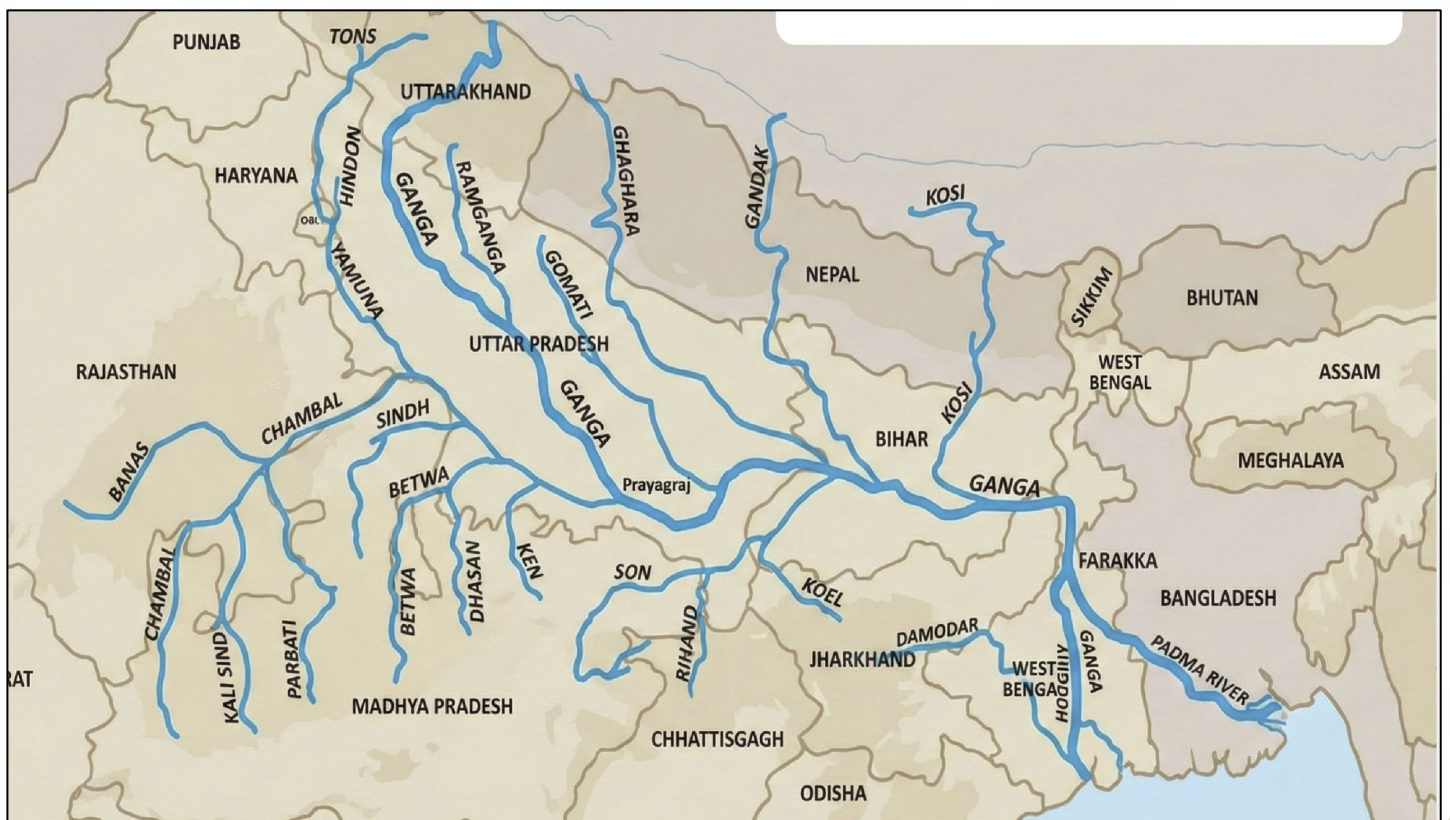
Upper Ganga Basin

SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : *Drainage system*

Newspaper : Indian Express **Page Number :** 15

| River | Origin | Confluence with Ganga |
|-----------|--|---------------------------|
| Ramganga | Garhwal hills near Gairsain | Near Kannauj (UP) |
| Gomati | Gomat Taal (near Pilibhit, UP) | Near Ghazipur (UP) |
| Ghaghara | Mapchachungo Glacier (Tibet/Nepal region) | Chhapra (Bihar) |
| Gandak | Nepal Himalayas (between Dhaulagiri & Everest) | Sonpur (near Patna) |
| Kosi | North of Mt. Everest (Tibet; Arun stream) | Near Kursela (Bihar) |
| Mahananda | Darjeeling Hills | West Bengal (joins Ganga) |

| River | Origin | Confluence with Ganga |
|---------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Yamuna | Yamunotri Glacie; Banderpunch Range (Uttarakhand) | Prayag (Allahabad) |
| Son | Amarkantak Plateau | Near Arrah (Bihar) |
| Damodar | Chotanagpur Plateau | Joins Hooghly (distributary of Ganga) |



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : *Regional and Global Groupings*

Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number :** 15

SAARC member India has begun an exercise to spot and resolve market access issues its drugs and pharmaceuticals face in other SAARC nations and Iran.

The Foreign Trade (South Asia) Division in the Department of Commerce is collecting inputs on the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS), Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and market access issues, pharma exporters body Pharmexcil said seeking details from its members recently.

West Asia impact

It also sought details on how the trade, with these countries, has been affected due to the West Asia war and crisis.

Pharmexcil said it would consolidate and present to the FT(SA) Division the information, shared by the members.

Pharmaceutical exports to the eight countries in 2024-25 stood at about \$1.2 billion. India's total pharmaceutical exports in the same fiscal year stood at \$30.47 billion.



SAARC Specialised Bodies

1. **South Asian University (SAU) – India**
2. **South Asian Regional Standards Organization (SARSO) – Dhaka**
3. **SAARC Development Fund (SDF) – Bhutan**
4. **SAARC Arbitration Council (SARCO) – Pakistan.**



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : *Regional and Global Groupings*
Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number :** 15

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Established | 8 December 1985 |
| Founding Summit | Dhaka, Bangladesh |
| Headquarters | Kathmandu, Nepal |
| Member Countries | India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Bhutan, Afghanistan, Pakistan |
| Latest Member | Afghanistan (2007) |
| Observers | Australia, China, EU, Iran, Japan, Mauritius, Myanmar, South Korea, USA |
| Official Working Language | English |
| Major Objective | Promote regional cooperation, economic growth, social progress, and cultural development in South Asia |
| Important Agreement | SAFTA (South Asian Free Trade Area), operational since 2006 |
| SAARC Satellite | Launched by India in 2017 for South Asian nations |



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : **Environment Conservation & International Organisation**

Newspaper : Indian Express **Page Number** : 07

The resolution titled 'Advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the obligations of States in respect of climate change' welcomed the July 2025 unanimous advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on States' obligations on climate change. It affirmed the importance of the ICJ's advisory opinion as an authoritative contribution to the clarification of existing international law.

INDIA ABSTAINED from voting on a UN General Assembly resolution calling on countries to comply with their obligations on climate change, voicing concern that the draft "undermines" the "sacrosanct architecture" of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

The resolution was adopted in the 193-member General Assembly on Wednesday with 141 votes in favour, eight against and 28 abstentions, including by India. India said it had en-

In the Explanation of Vote, First Secretary in India's Permanent Mission to the UN, Petal Gahlot, said adoption of the resolution by the General Assembly does not create binding commitments for India. "Our obligations arise only from outcomes adopted under the UNFCCC process... India was not in a position to vote in favour of this resolution," she said.

International Court of Justice (ICJ):

- World Court - principal judicial organ of the United Nations (UN).
- **Established** - 1945 by the Charter of the UN
- The seat of the Court is at the **Peace Palace in The Hague (Netherlands)**.
- **Official Languages:** French and English

Powers and Functions:

- It can act as a **dispute settlement body between two member States** in what are called "contentious cases."
- It can **accept requests to issue an advisory opinion on a legal question referred to it by a UN body or specialized agency**.
- The court's judgments in **contentious cases are final and binding on the parties to a case, and without appeal**.
- **Advisory opinions are not binding.**

Composition:

- It consists of **15 judges, all from different countries**
- **Elected to nine-year terms** by majority votes in the UN General Assembly and the Security Council.
- The judges, **one-third of whom are elected every three years**, are eligible for reelection.
- In addition, the ICJ Statute allows a state party to a case before it which does not have a judge of its nationality on the bench to appoint a person to sit as judge ad hoc in that specific case.



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : *Climate Change*

Newspaper : Indian Express **Page Number :** 07

SEVERAL STATES across India sweltered under blistering heat on Thursday, with Uttar Pradesh's Banda district again emerging as the hottest place in India at 47.6 degrees Celsius (°C). The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that "heat-wave" to "severe heatwave" conditions prevailed in several places of Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Jammu & Kashmir, Delhi, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh.

Qualitatively, heat wave is a condition of air temperature which becomes fatal to human body when exposed.

Quantitatively, it is defined based on the temperature thresholds over a region in terms of actual temperature or its departure from normal.

| Basis | Heat Wave | Severe Heat Wave |
|---|--|--|
| Minimum Temperature Threshold (by region) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plains: $\geq 40^{\circ}\text{C}$ Coastal areas: $\geq 37^{\circ}\text{C}$ Hilly regions: $\geq 30^{\circ}\text{C}$ | |
| Departure from Normal (when normal maximum temperature $\leq 40^{\circ}\text{C}$) | +4.5°C to +6.4°C above normal | $\geq +6.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ above normal |
| Departure from Normal (when normal maximum temperature $> 40^{\circ}\text{C}$) | +4°C to +5°C above normal | $\geq +6^{\circ}\text{C}$ above normal |
| Based on Actual Maximum Temperature | Actual maximum temperature $\geq 45^{\circ}\text{C}$ | Actual maximum temperature $\geq 47^{\circ}\text{C}$ |
| For Coastal Stations | Departure from normal $\geq 4.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ and actual maximum temperature $\geq 37^{\circ}\text{C}$ | |
| Condition for Official Declaration | Heat wave should persist in at least 2 stations of a meteorological subdivision for at least 2 consecutive days | |



Q1. Regarding the World Press Freedom Index 2026, consider the following statements:

1. It is published annually by Reporters Without Borders.
2. It measures a country's ranking on various parameters like media independence & journalist safety.
3. India's rank has improved to 151 out of 180 countries in the latest index.

How many of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None

Answer: b

Q2. Regarding the Ganga river & its tributaries, consider the following statements:

1. Ramganga joins the Ganga near Kannauj.
2. Gomati joins the Ganga near Ghazipur.
3. Gandak joins the Ganga at Sonpur near Patna.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 3 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) All of the above

Answer: d

Q3. With reference to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), consider the following statements:

1. SAARC was established in 1985 at the Dhaka Summit.
2. The headquarters of SAARC is located in Kathmandu, Nepal.
3. Afghanistan became the latest member of SAARC in 2007.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None

Answer: c

Q4. Which of the following statements regarding the International Court of Justice (ICJ) is not correct?

- a) The ICJ is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations.
- b) It was established in 1945 under the Charter of the United Nations.
- c) The headquarters of the ICJ is located in Geneva, Switzerland
- d) Advisory opinions given by the ICJ are not legally binding on all UN member states.

Answer: c

Q5. With reference to the criteria used by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) for declaring a Heat Wave and Severe Heat Wave, consider the following statements:

1. In plains, a heat wave may be declared when the maximum temperature reaches 40°C or more.
2. A severe heat wave is declared when the temperature departs by 6.5°C or more from the normal for that location.
3. For coastal stations, a heat wave can be declared only when the actual maximum temperature reaches 45°C.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) All of the above

Answer: a





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