



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

23rd September 2026



Recognising Women Farmers



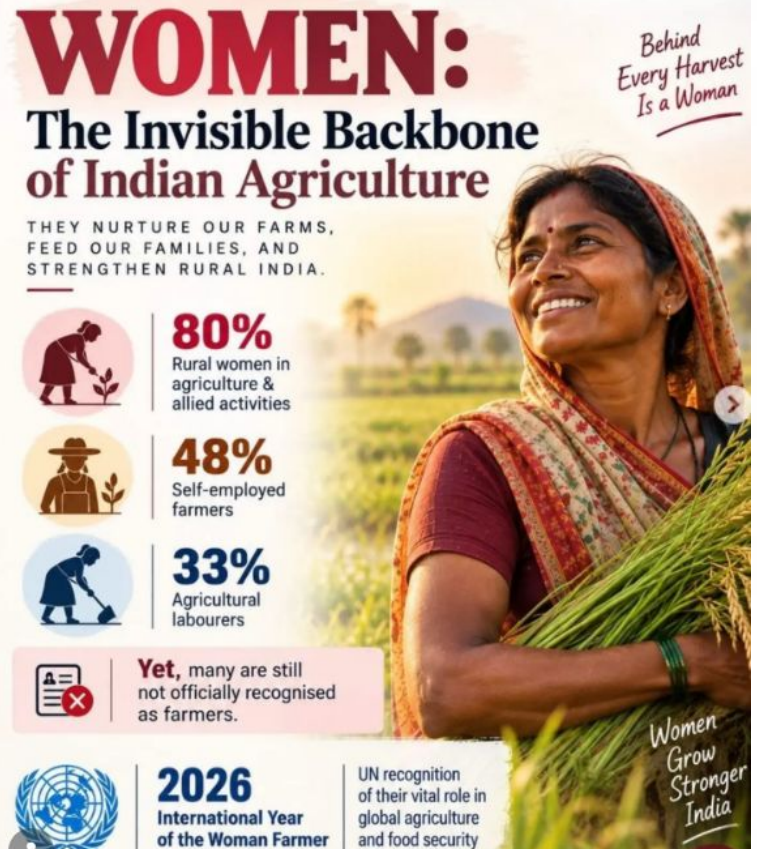
CONTEXT: Maharashtra has enacted the Maharashtra Women Farmers' Empowerment Act, 2026, becoming the first State to give a legal framework for recognising women as farmers irrespective of land ownership.

Recognising Women Farmers

- **Women play a major role across the agricultural value chain:**
 - Sowing
 - Weeding
 - Transplantation
 - Harvesting
 - Livestock management
 - Post-harvest processing
 - Marketing
- Yet their **contribution remains under-recognised**.
- Among **rural agricultural workers**:
 - Women: ~110 million
 - Men: ~127 million
- Women contribute labour to agriculture without necessarily receiving the identity, ownership or economic benefits associated with being a farmer.

Value Addition

- **15th October** – Rashtriya Mahila Kisan Diwas
- According to **Oxfam India report**, 30% cultivators and 42% agriculture labours are women, yet female operational land holders only 14%.



“Men are into farming when there is sufficient land, irrigation and availability of credit, women are into farming when the situation is exactly the opposite”



Recognising Women Farmers



CONTEXT: Maharashtra has enacted the Maharashtra Women Farmers' Empowerment Act, 2026, becoming the first State to give a legal framework for recognising women as farmers irrespective of land ownership.

Why Are Women Farmers Not Recognised?

A. Land Ownership Bias

- "Farmer" = "Person whose name appears in land records."
- But women may:
 - Work on family land
 - Cultivate leased land
 - Work as agricultural labourers
 - Manage farms after male migration
 - Work on land owned by husbands or other relatives
 - Without their names in land records.

B. Patriarchal Property Practices

- Even where women have legal inheritance rights, actual ownership and control may remain limited.

C. Informality of Women's Agricultural Work

- Unpaid family workers
- Seasonal labourers
- Small cultivators
- Tenant cultivators
 - Such work is often poorly captured in administrative databases.

Why Does Recognition Matter?

A recognised farmer can more easily access:

1. Credit

- Banks and institutions can identify beneficiaries.

2. Insurance

- Access to agricultural insurance and compensation can improve.

3. Government Schemes

- For example:
- PM-KISAN, Input subsidies

4. Extension Services

- Recognition enables women to receive:
 - Training
 - New technologies
 - Climate-resilient practices
 - Information about markets

5. Decision-Making

- It strengthens women's role in decisions relating to:
 - Crops
 - Farm investment
 - Income
 - Credit
 - Land use

📌 Example: PM-KISAN

- The article highlights that women's share among PM-KISAN beneficiaries remains significantly below their share among agricultural workers.

Maharashtra's Women Farmers' Empowerment Act, 2026

Key feature

- It recognises women engaged in agriculture for **at least one agricultural season**, irrespective of:
 - Land ownership
 - Nature of land
 - Whether land is formally registered in their name



Recognising Women Farmers



CONTEXT: Maharashtra has enacted the Maharashtra Women Farmers' Empowerment Act, 2026, becoming the first State to give a legal framework for recognising women as farmers irrespective of land ownership.

- **It covers categories such as:**
 - Landless cultivators
 - Agricultural labourers
 - Agricultural workers
 - Plantation workers
 - Pastoralists
 - Women involved in allied agricultural activities

Regional Examples & Best Practices

- **Kerala – Kudumbashree**
 - Enabled women to participate in collective farming and agricultural activities.
- **Odisha – KALIA scheme**
 - Incorporated women among beneficiaries.

Structural Problems Faced by Women Farmers

Lack of Land Ownership

- Only 13.9% of agricultural land is in women's names due to Patrilineal inheritance, social norms, limited legal awareness, etc.

Limited Access to Agricultural Resources

- Without legal recognition or land titles.

Limited Decision-Making Power

- Men control crucial decisions such as crop selection, sale of produce, and allocation of income.

Feminisation of Agriculture and Double Burden

- With men migrating for work, women are increasingly responsible for managing farms and household duties simultaneously.

Vulnerability to Climate Change

- Women have limited access to climate information, resilient seeds, irrigation technology, and extension services.
- This reduces their ability to adapt to heatwaves, erratic rainfall, and other climate risks.

Nutrition and Health Crisis

- Many rural diets remain cereal-dominated and nutritionally poor, resulting in high levels of anemia and micronutrient deficiencies among women.



CONTEXT: Maharashtra has enacted the Maharashtra Women Farmers' Empowerment Act, 2026, becoming the first State to give a legal framework for recognising women as farmers irrespective of land ownership.



Way Forward:

Empowering
Women Farmers
Stronger Food Systems

1 Create Gender-Inclusive Farmer Databases

- Include women cultivators
- Tenant farmers
- Landless agricultural workers
- Women involved in allied activities



2 Improve Land Rights

- Joint land titles
- Effective implementation of inheritance rights
- Recognition of women's tenancy



3 Gender-Responsive Schemes

Government schemes should track:

- Female beneficiaries
- Asset ownership
- Income impact



INCLUSIVE SCHEMES
STRONGER COMMUNITIES

4 Strengthen Women's Collectives

Promote:

- SHGs
- FPOs
- Cooperatives
- Collective farming



5 Improve Access to Technology

Develop:

- Women-friendly farm machinery
- Digital agricultural services like Agristack, digital land records.
- Extension programmes targeted at women



6 Recognise the Entire Agricultural Value Chain

Women should be recognised not only as cultivators but also as actors in:



Recognise • Include • Empower

WOMEN FARMERS | RESILIENT AGRICULTURE | SUSTAINABLE TOMORROW

MAINS PRACTISE QUESTION

“Women constitute a significant agricultural workforce but remain largely invisible as farmers.” Examine the reasons and consequences of this recognition gap.

(15 Marks, 250 words)



Land-free Path to Solar Power



CONTEXT: As India rapidly expands solar power, land availability is an emerging constraints for large solar parks. An important alternative is Canal-Top Photovoltaics (CTPV) — installing solar panels over existing canals.

What is Canal-Top Solar Photovoltaics?

- Canal-Top Photovoltaics (CTPV) involves installing solar panels over existing irrigation canals using specially designed elevated structures.
- **The design depends upon:**
 - Canal width
 - Orientation
 - Solar radiation
 - Structural requirements
 - Maintenance access
 - Grid connectivity
- **Example** - 📌 Gujarat (2012)
 - Canal-top solar installations have been developed over the **Narmada canal** network.

Why is Canal-Top Solar Important for India?

A. Saves Land

- This is the biggest advantage.
- 20 MW of canal-top solar has been estimated to save nearly 100 acres of land.
- This is particularly important where:
 - Land prices are high
 - Agricultural land is scarce
 - Land acquisition is difficult

B. Reduces Water Evaporation

- Solar panels provide shade over the canal surface.
- This can reduce:
 - Solar radiation reaching water
 - Evaporation losses
- This is particularly useful in water-stressed regions.

C. Better Solar Panel Performance

- Water beneath the panels can have a cooling effect.
- Lower panel temperatures can potentially improve photovoltaic efficiency.
- Thus water infrastructure + solar infrastructure can create operational synergies.



Land-free Path to Solar Power



CONTEXT: As India rapidly expands solar power, land availability is an emerging constraints for large solar parks. An important alternative is Canal-Top Photovoltaics (CTPV) — installing solar panels over existing canals.

Conventional Solar	Canal-Top Solar
Requires large land parcels	Uses existing canal space
Land acquisition may be difficult	Minimal additional land requirement
Can compete with agriculture/ecosystems	Can avoid direct land-use competition
Water evaporation not addressed	Can reduce canal evaporation
Easier construction	More complex structures
Lower structural costs	Higher structural costs
Easier maintenance	Maintenance can be challenging

Major Challenges

Canal-Top Solar (CTPV): Promising, but not without hurdles

Innovative
Idea,
Real-World
Challenges

Clean Energy
Efficient Land Use
Water Conservation

A High Initial Cost

Panels need elevated structures capable of:

- Withstanding wind loads
- Supporting equipment
- Allowing canal maintenance

Therefore, CTPV can be more expensive than ground-mounted solar.



HIGHER INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS

B Operation & Maintenance

Maintenance becomes more difficult because panels are located above water.

Challenges include:

- Cleaning
- Panel replacement
- Access for workers
- Electrical maintenance
- Structural inspection



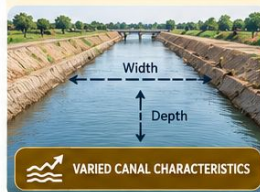
HARDER MAINTENANCE

C Canal Geometry

Canals differ considerably in:

- Width
- Depth
- Orientation
- Bank design
- Water flow

A standardised design may therefore not work everywhere.



VARIED CANAL CHARACTERISTICS

D Grid Connectivity

A solar project is viable only when electricity can be efficiently evacuated.



If the site is far from a substation:

- Transmission infrastructure costs rise
- Power evacuation becomes difficult
- Project economics weaken



HIGHER TRANSMISSION COSTS

E Water Management & Maintenance Conflicts

Canals require periodic:

- Desilting
- Repairs
- Inspection
- Cleaning
- Structural maintenance

Solar structures must therefore be designed without obstructing normal canal operations.



MUST NOT HINDER CANAL OPERATIONS



Land-free Path to Solar Power

CONTEXT: As India rapidly expands solar power, land availability is an emerging constraints for large solar parks. An important alternative is Canal-Top Photovoltaics (CTPV) — installing solar panels over existing canals.



Mains Practice Question

How can the integration of water and energy infrastructure help India achieve its renewable-energy and water-security objectives simultaneously?

(10 marks, 150 words)



Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number :** 13

At UN summit, Jaishankar calls for reformed multilateralism

- **Reformed multilateralism:** Existing global institutions need greater representation, transparency and participation.
- **Changing world order:** Global power is becoming more multipolar, requiring institutional restructuring.
- **UN reform:** Reform should reflect the contemporary distribution of economic and geopolitical power.
- **Global South:** India can act as a bridge between developed countries and developing nations.
- **International law:** Effective multilateralism requires respect for international law, rules and norms.
- **4F Crisis:** Fuel + Food + Fertiliser + Finance require coordinated global action.
- **Geopolitical tensions:** Conflicts and strategic competition are weakening the spirit of international cooperation.
- **Participatory governance:** Global institutions need more inclusive and transparent decision-making.
- **Strategic autonomy:** India can advocate issue-based coalitions while maintaining strategic independence.



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Regulatory Bodies
Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number : 15**

- Before SEBI, **Controller of Capital Issues** was the regulatory authority.
- SEBI was established in:
 - **1988** (non-statutory body).
 - Became a **statutory body in 1992** under the SEBI Act, 1992
 - Functions under the **Ministry of Finance**.
- **SEBI's three core objectives:**
 - Protect the interests of investors
 - Development of securities market
 - Regulate the securities market
- **Composition:**
 - Chairperson (appointed by Central Government)
 - 2 members from Ministry of Finance
 - 1 member from RBI
 - 5 other members (at least 3 whole-time)
- **Powers**
 - Quasi-legislative (make regulations)
 - Quasi-executive (investigate)
 - Quasi-judicial (impose penalties)
- **Can:**
 - Levy penalties
 - Suspend trading
 - Bar companies/intermediaries
- **Appeals lie with:**
 - Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT)

- **Important Areas Regulated**
 - Stock exchanges (e.g., BSE, NSE)
 - Mutual funds
 - IPOs
 - Derivatives market
 - Portfolio managers
 - Credit rating agencies

Exam Traps

- SEBI was established as a statutory body in 1988 → **WRONG**
- SEBI regulates only stock exchanges → **WRONG**
- SEBI functions under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs → **WRONG**
- The RBI has no representation on the SEBI Board → **WRONG**
- SEBI is responsible for monetary policy in India → **WRONG**



Election to Rajya Sabha



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Polity

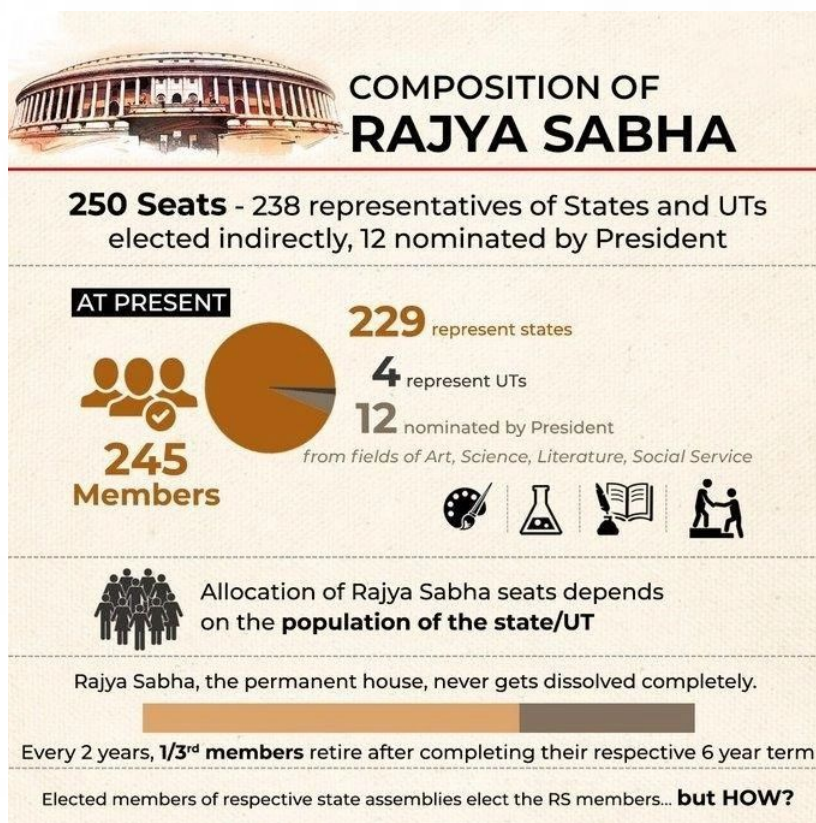
Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number : 14**

- **Constitutional Provision:**
 - **Article 80** deals with the composition and election to Rajya Sabha.
- **Nature** of Election:
 - Indirect election
 - Members are elected by elected members of State Legislative Assemblies.
- **Electoral System:**
 - Proportional Representation (PR)
 - By means of Single Transferable Vote
- Voting by Open ballot.
- Who Votes:
 - Elected MLAs of the concerned State.
 - Nominated MLAs do not vote.
- **Nominated** Members:
 - 12 Rajya Sabha members are nominated by the President.

- **Qualifications:**
 - Candidate must be a citizen of India.
 - Minimum age: 30 years.
- **Term:**
 - Rajya Sabha is a permanent House.
 - Members serve for 6 years.
 - One-third retire every 2 years.
- Election Authority:
 - Elections are conducted by the ECI.
- Important Distinction:
 - **Lok Sabha** – Direct election by people
 - **Rajya Sabha** – Indirect election by elected MLAs

Exam Traps

- Rajya Sabha members are directly elected by the people → **WRONG**
- Rajya Sabha elections use First-Past-the-Post system → **WRONG**
- Nominated MLAs can vote in Rajya Sabha elections → **WRONG**
- Rajya Sabha elections are conducted through secret ballot → **WRONG**
- Rajya Sabha is dissolved after every five years → **WRONG**



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Sports
Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number : 17**

- Continental **multi-sport event** for Asian countries.
- Organising Body:
 - Olympic Council of Asia (OCA)
- First Edition:
 - **1951** – Held in **New Delhi**, India.
- Frequency:
 - Held **every 4 years**
- Latest Edition:
 - 20th Asian Games, **Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.**
- **Next Edition:**
 - 21st Asian Games.
 - Doha, Qatar, scheduled for 2030.
- **India as Host:**
 - Hosted the Asian Games in 1951 and 1982, both in New Delhi.
- Mascot – **Honohon**

Exam Traps

- The first Asian Games were held in Tokyo in 1958 → WRONG
- The first Asian Games were hosted by China → WRONG
- Asian Games are organised by the International Olympic Committee → WRONG
- Asian Games are held every two years → WRONG
- India has hosted the Asian Games only once → WRONG



SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Art & Culture
Newspaper : The Hindu **Page Number : 14**

- Instituted in **1954**, they are India's most prestigious film honours.
 - Administered by the **Directorate of Film Festivals** (DFF) under the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting
 - Presented annually by the **President** of India.
- Around **400 feature films in 34 languages** were considered by the jury, highlighting the diversity.
 - Several **regional films** and artists were honoured.
- **The DFF** was established in 1973.
 - It organizes major film events such as the National Film Awards, the Indian Panorama, and the International Film Festival of India (IFFI)

Dadasaheb Phalke Award

- Instituted: **1969**
- First Recipient: **Devika Rani**
- Purpose:
 - Recognises outstanding contribution to the Indian cinema.
 - Considered the **highest honour** in Indian cinema.
- Named After:
 - **Dhundiraj Govind Phalke** (Dadasaheb Phalke)
- Dadasaheb Phalke:
 - Directed **Raja Harishchandra**.
 - Released in **1913**.
 - Regarded as India's first full-length feature film.

Exam Traps

- National Film Awards were instituted in 1969 → **WRONG**
- National Film Awards are administered by the Ministry of Culture → **WRONG**
- Dadasaheb Phalke Award was instituted in 1954 → **WRONG**
- Dadasaheb Phalke Award is given for Best Feature Film → **WRONG**



23rd September 2026

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the Maharashtra Women Farmers' Empowerment Act, 2026:

1. It is the first legal framework in India to recognise women as farmers irrespective of land ownership.
2. Recognition under the Act requires engagement in agriculture for at least one agricultural season.
3. The Act excludes landless agricultural labourers and pastoralists from its coverage.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) All three
- d) None

Answer: b

Q2. With reference to Canal-Top Photovoltaics (CTPV), consider the following statements:

1. CTPV panels can reduce water evaporation from canals by providing shade.
2. Cooler surface conditions beneath the panels can potentially improve solar panel efficiency.
3. CTPV structures are generally cheaper to construct than conventional ground-mounted solar plants.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: a

Q3. Consider the following statements about the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI):

1. SEBI was established in 1988 as a statutory body.
2. SEBI functions under the Ministry of Finance.
3. The Reserve Bank of India has one nominated member on the SEBI Board.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: b

Q4. With reference to elections to the Rajya Sabha, consider the following statements:

1. Members of the Rajya Sabha are elected through the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote.
2. Nominated members of State Legislative Assemblies are entitled to vote in Rajya Sabha elections.
3. Voting in Rajya Sabha elections is conducted through open ballot, not secret ballot.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) All three
- d) None

Answer: b

Q5. Consider the following statements regarding the National Film Awards:

1. They are presented annually by the Vice President of India.
2. The Dadasaheb Phalke Award, given under this framework, was instituted in 1969.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 Only
- b) 2 Only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: b





VAJIRAM & RAVI

Institute for IAS Examination

A unit of Vajiram & Ravi IAS Study Centre LLP

9-B, Bada Bazar Marg, Old Rajinder Nagar,
New Delhi - 110060 • Ph.: 41007400, 41007500

New No. 62, P Block, 6th Avenue, Anna Nagar,
Chennai - 600040 • Ph.: 044-4330-2121

Visit us at : www.vajiramandravi.com