

POLITY AND GOVERNANCE**Context: Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Bill and J&K Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill****In News, why?**

- The Jammu and Kashmir Reservation (Amendment) Bill, 2023 and the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization (Amendment) Bill, 2023 were just passed by the Lok Sabha.
- In addition to designating one seat in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly for those who have been displaced from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), the bill aims to represent those who become refugees within their own nation.

What History Is There?

- There were separate regulations in place in Jammu and Kashmir for allocating Lok Sabha and Assembly seats prior to the revocation of Article 370.
- After Article 370 was repealed and the area became a Union Territory, a Delimitation Commission was established in March 2020.
- With a one-year deadline, this panel was entrusted with dividing not only the seats of J&K but also those of Assam, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, and Nagaland.
- The commission recently completed the delimitation process, which allowed the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization (Amendment) Bill, 2023 to support the expansion in J&K's legislative assembly seats from 107 to 114.

Which Two Bills Are These?

- The Jammu and Kashmir Reservation (Amendment) Bill, 2023 is what?
- It aims to modify the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Act, 2004's Section 2.
- The Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Act of 2004 gave Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and other socially and educationally disadvantaged groups preference for employment and admittance to professional institutions.
- A group of persons who were previously referred to as "weak and underprivileged classes (social castes)" may now be referred to as "other backward classes" according to the amendment bill.

Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2023:

- It aims to amend the 2019 Act and provide Kashmiri migrants and displaced people from the PoK representation in the Legislative Assembly.
- The intention is to propose two members of the Kashmiri migrant community, one of whom should be a woman, and to allow the lieutenant governor the authority to propose one nominee to the Legislative Assembly on behalf of the displaced people in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).
- With the passage of this bill, the Jammu and Kashmir legislative assembly will have 114 seats overall, with 7 seats set aside for members of scheduled castes and 9 seats for legislators from scheduled tribes.

How is the Zero Terror Plan Linked with the Abrogation of Article 370?

- The Indian government came up with a comprehensive plan known as the Zero Terror Plan to completely remove terrorism from Jammu and Kashmir. The goal of this plan is to have it fully implemented by 2026, having been in force for the last three years.
- Terrorism in the area has significantly decreased after Article 370, which gave Jammu and Kashmir special status, was repealed.

What is Delimitation?

- According to the Election Commission, delimitation is the process of establishing or redrawing the borders or limitations of geographical constituencies (Assembly or Lok Sabha seat) in a nation or province possessing a legislative body.
- The Delimitation Commission is an independent, powerful panel that oversees the delimitation process. Its decisions are final and unchallengeable in court.
- Under the Acts of 1952, 1962, 1972, and 2002, delimitation commissions were established four times: in 1952, 1963, 1973, and 2002.
- Over time, the process of redefining a constituency's area based on its population size (as determined by the most recent Census) has been undertaken.
- In addition to altering a constituency's boundaries, the procedure could alter a state's seat count.
- In keeping with the Constitution, this exercise also involves assigning SC and ST assembly seats.

Conclusion:

The two bills related to Jammu and Kashmir brought by the government will give justice to those deprived of their rights for the last 70 years by providing them reservation in jobs and admission in professional institutions to scheduled castes, tribes and other socially educationally backward classes and asserted that reservation to the displaced people will give them a voice in legislature

ECONOMY

Context: At its meeting in December, the Reserve Bank of India's monetary policy committee unanimously decided to maintain the current level of interest rates. Right now, the repo rate is 6.5 percent.

What exactly is the RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)?

- Within the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) plays a pivotal role in developing and carrying out the country's monetary policy. Its job is to keep prices stable while making sure that economic growth is balanced.

Make-up and Purpose:

- Governor of the RBI (presently Shaktikanta Das) serves as chairperson.
- Six Participants: three RBI nominees and three Central Government nominees
- Mandate: Until March 31, 2026, maintain annual inflation at 4% with a 6% upper tolerance and a 2% lower tolerance.

Important Roles:

- The rate at which the RBI loans to commercial banks is known as the repo rate.
- Determine the minimum proportion of deposits that banks must maintain with the RBI, known as the cash reserve ratio (CRR).
- Create and execute open market activities to control the financial system's liquidity.
- Investigate and evaluate the Indian economy and worldwide economic patterns.
- Make monetary policy announcements outlining the thinking behind the choices made.

The decision made at a recent RBI meeting

- The MPC decided to keep concentrating on the removal of accommodations by a vote of 5-1.
- RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said in a statement that the committee is prepared to take appropriate action and that policy must be "actively disinflationary" in order to guarantee that inflation stays within the central bank's target of 4%.

Current inflation trends

- The rate of inflation has been steadily declining in recent months.
- The consumer price index, which measures retail inflation, dropped to 4.87 percent in October from 7.44 percent in July.
- Food inflation, which decreased from 11.51% in July to 6.61% in October as food prices—particularly those of vegetables—moderated, has been the main cause of the fall.
- Concurrently, core inflation—which does not include the more erratic components related to food and fuel—has been steadily declining.
- The outlook for inflation in the near future is unclear, though. Given the availability and demand for key commodities like cereals, pulses, and sugar, there is a chance that food prices could rise in November and December.
- climate related uncertainties over the rabi crop raise questions over the trajectory of food prices.

Why did the RBI decide to hold the policy rate steady?

- This was also noted by RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, who pointed out that high frequency indicators do indicate a rise in vegetable costs, which could lead to higher inflation.
- As a result, the central bank has predicted that inflation will gradually decline, from 5.6% in the third quarter (October–December) to 5.2% in the fourth (January–March).
- Next year, inflation is predicted to average 4.3% in the second and third quarters, which is the central bank's aim.

RBI's optimism over the rate of GDP growth

- The central bank is nevertheless upbeat about growth, stating that the economy is remarkably resilient.
- The RBI predicts a gradual reversal in rural demand while viewing urban demand as resilient notwithstanding ongoing concerns about private consumption.
- It observes that government expenditure continues to support investment activity and projects that when exports recover, the drain from external demand would lessen.
- The RBI increased its prediction for the entire year to 7% from 6.5% after the second quarter GDP data exceeded forecasts.
- However, this prediction suggests that growth will decrease, with 7.7% in the first half and 6.5% in the second.

Conclusion:

The committee's decision to start lowering policy rates will depend on how this growth-inflation trajectory develops and if it follows the central bank's projections.

PRELIM FACTS

1. River Cities Alliance

Context: Recently, the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) on behalf of River Cities Alliance (RCA), has signed a Memorandum of Common Purpose (MoCP) with the Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative (MRCTI), representing 124 cities/towns situated along the banks of the Mississippi River, USA.

It was launched in 2021.

- It is a first-of-its-kind Alliance in the world, symbolising the successful partnership of the two Ministries i.e., the Ministry of Jal Shakti and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
Objective: To provide the member cities with a platform to discuss and exchange information on aspects that are vital for sustainable management of urban rivers, sharing best practices and supporting innovation
The Alliance is open to all river cities of India. Any river city can join the Alliance at any time.
- The Secretariat of the Alliance is set up at the National Institute for Urban Affairs (NIUA).
The alliance has been launched initially with 30 cities namely Dehradun, Rishikesh, Haridwar, Srinagar, Varanasi, Kanpur, Prayagraj and others
It focuses on three broad themes- Networking, Capacity Building and Technical Support.

2. Goldilocks :

Context: The RBI's growth and inflation forecasts indicate a Goldilocks Effect on the economy by the second quarter of the next fiscal year.

- The idea behind the Goldilocks Effect, also known as the Goldilocks Principle, is that individuals have a tendency to look for "just the right" amount of anything. People like things that suit their unique needs and preferences and are neither too extreme nor too moderate.
- The idea originated from the children's tale of Goldilocks and the Three Bears, in which Goldilocks favored the bed, chair, and porridge that were just the right amount of big and small, neither too hot nor too cold.

Goldilocks Price:

This is among the more well-known uses of the effect. This psychological pricing technique is based on the ideas of

- 1- Product unique selling points
- 2- Fair and equitable prices
- 3- Bracketing

- The process of setting some items apart from others is known as product differentiation.
- Companies are limited in their ability to use the Goldilocks Effect by the inability to distinguish their own products from one another.
- This must then be coupled with a practice known as competitive pricing, in which companies concurrently offer several product iterations at different price points, each with a different quality level.
- In the end, it provides guidance for three possibilities in a comparative pricing strategy. Most people have three preferences: one that is just right, one that is too high, and one that is too low.
- When implemented correctly, the strategy enables a company to appeal to several segments of the market, including bargain hunters, average customers, and luxury buyers.

3. The Green rising initiative

Context: At the COP28 in Dubai, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)'s Generation Unlimited recently presented the "Green Rising" program in partnership with the Indian Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change

Concerning the Green Rising Initiative:

- This program aims to mobilize young people for grassroots, significant environmental initiatives that are in line with the international effort to mitigate the dire consequences of climate change.
- The "Green Rising India Alliance" and the global "Green Rising" program are the result of a partnership between UNICEF, Generation Unlimited, and a wide range of youth, public, and business partners.
- The primary objective is to inspire millions of youth across the globe to actively engage in green activities that address and mitigate the devastating effects of climate change on their local communities.
- The goal of the YuWaah campaign in India is to inspire young people to lead grassroots, environmentally conscious initiatives.

Important details regarding UNICEF

- Originally known as the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Children's Fund was established.
- On December 11, 1946, the UN General Assembly established it with the goal of giving mothers and children in nations devastated by World War II emergency food and medical care.
- It is a premier resource for knowledge about children's conditions worldwide.
- It is totally dependent on grants from public and private sources.

- The Economic and Social Council elected the 36 Member States to three-year terms on the Executive Board. The regions allocated to the Executive Board are as follows: Africa (8 seats), Asia (7), Eastern Europe (4), Latin America and the Caribbean (5), and Western Europe and Others (12).
- Headquarters: New York City.

1. Scheme for Technology Development Fund (TDF)

Context: The Lok Sabha was recently notified by Union Raksha Rajya Mantri that sixteen defense innovations had been produced or realized successfully through the Technology Development Fund (TDF) scheme.

Concerning the Technology Development Fund (TDF) program:

- It is a flagship effort of the Ministry of Defence, carried out under the "Make in India" campaign by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

The scheme's primary goals are to:

- Provide grants in aid for the development of defense and dual-use technologies that are not currently offered by the Indian defense industry to academic and scientific institutions, as well as MSMEs and start-ups in the Indian industry.
- To interact with the private sector, in particular MSMEs and startups, in order to introduce the concept of military technology design and development and to provide grant-in-aid support for them.
- To concentrate on the design, development, and research of niche technologies that are being created for the first time in the nation.
- To establish a link between private sector organizations and the armed forces, university, research groups, and certifying/qualifying bodies.
- In order to facilitate the development of futuristic technology from a Proof of Concept into prototype

Financial Assistance:

- The industry will receive support in the form of grants.
- Up to INR 10 Cr in project costs will be funded, with funding up to 90% of the total project cost being considered.
- Industry and academia or research institutions may cooperate.
- Academic work participation cannot account for more than 40% of the project's overall cost.

Project Duration: A maximum of two years will be allotted for development.

2. VINBAX-2023:

Context:

In order to participate in the fourth Joint Military Exercise VINBAX-2023, the Indian Armed Forces team recently traveled to Hanoi, Vietnam.

Background:

- 39 members of an engineer regiment from the Bengal Engineer Group and 6 members of the Army Medical Corps make up the Indian contingent.
- Forty-five people will also be representing the Vietnam People's Army contingent.

ABOUT VINBAX-2023:

- Date: December 11, 2023–December 21, 2023.
- Venue: Vietnam's Hanoi.
- The 2018 exercise VINBAX was launched.
- The initial iteration took place in Madhya Pradesh's Jabalpur.
- Every year, there is a training session held alternately in Vietnam and India. (Field Operations)
- August 2022 saw the completion of the most recent edition at Chandimandir Military Station.
- The goal is to share best practices, encourage cooperative partnerships, and advance interoperability between the two parties in accordance with Chapter VII of the UN Charter on Peacekeeping Operations.
- Both contingents will practice tactics, techniques, and procedures together as part of the combined exercise, which will promote idea sharing.
- Modern construction techniques for roads, culverts, helipads, ammo bunkers, and observation posts in operational areas will be discussed and ideas exchanged.
- Additionally, exercises including combat engineering and combat medical responsibilities will be practiced.
- Each side will carry out tactical military operations in line with plans similar to the global deployment of UN contingents.
- The combined training will improve mutual comprehension and interoperability between the two contingents and fortify friendly forces' defense cooperation.

ANSWER WRITING

Q. Analyse the factors driving the nation's internal migration. Talk about its numerous socioeconomic effects as well.

A shift of residence from the place of origin, or site of departure, to the place of destination, or place of arrival, characterizes migration as a type of spatial or geographical mobility between two geographical units. Internal migrants are those who relocate within the borders of their own nation. There were 450 million internal migrants in India in 2011, according to the census.

The following factors are thought to be in charge of internal migration:

- **Economic Factors:** Economic factors account for the majority of voluntary migration. Underemployment, low agricultural income, and agricultural unemployment are the main causes driving migration to places with more employment prospects. Two additional categories can be applied to economic variables.
- **Push variables:** One factor contributing to migration has been the collapse of institutions like the jajmani system. In addition, the per capita amount of arable land available has decreased as a result of the population's rapid growth, and the number of jobless and underemployed individuals in rural areas has sharply increased. As a result, people from rural areas are being forced to migrate to metropolitan areas.
- **Pull factors:** Individuals may relocate in quest of more favorable employment conditions. People from Bihar, for instance, move to Delhi, West Bengal, or Uttar Pradesh to work as laborers on construction projects or during the harvest season. Businesses and enterprises may migrate due to the existence of social and physical infrastructure, such as industrial zones and Special Economic Zones (SEZs).
- **Socio-cultural factors:** Marriage has a significant role in the social dynamics of migration, particularly for women moving from rural to urban areas. Family disputes might sometimes be the reason for moving. Migration is also encouraged by enhanced communication channels, such as transportation, the effects of urban education, and the ensuing shift in views and values.
- **Political factors:** Internal migration can also be caused by political unrest and ethnic strife. For instance, migration from other states has been impacted by the state governments' adoption of the Sons of the Soil policy.
- **Environmental factors:** People are also forced to relocate due to natural disasters and the steady worsening of shifting environmental circumstances.

The effects of internal migration on society and economy:

Favorable results

- By sending money home, migrants contribute to the expansion of the local economy. Cash is consistently leaving Indian cities and towns for rural areas as a result of the country's rural-to-urban migration wave.
- When workers migrate from a location with a labor surplus, labor-saving gadgets and/or increased job engagement by the remaining family workers are encouraged, which raises the average productivity of labor in that region.
- People moving from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar led to the green revolution in Punjab and Haryana.
- Through the introduction of contemporary societal principles like equality, family planning, objectivity, reason, and women's empowerment, circular migration can aid in the dismantling of parochialism.

Adverse consequences:

- One of the main negative repercussions of migration, which has other unfavorable side effects, is overcrowding in India's metropolitan areas. For instance, the growth of slums in urban areas.
- Underdevelopment of rural areas as a result of a regional economy and shortage of skilled labour.
- An intricate web of intermediaries and contractors mediates migration flows. For the most part, these networks work in the unofficial economy. Due to their entire reliance on middlemen for information, migrants frequently work in low-paying, hazardous physical labour and are exploited with little to no chance of legal remedy.
- Urban crimes include drug smuggling, child trafficking, gender-based crimes, and juvenile delinquency have increased in response to migration.

Conclusion

The process of internal migration opens up a host of new opportunities and challenges at the same time for a migrant. The vulnerable situation of inter-state migrants in India got exposed during COVID-19. However, the overall benefits of migration cannot be ignored. The need of the hour is proactive policy measures to overcome the problems. Bringing a migrant policy into force could be a positive first step in the right direction.

MCQs

1. Consider the following statements about River Cities Alliance
 1. This unique alliance represents the fruitful collaboration between the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and the Ministry of Jal Shakti.
 2. The Department of Water Resources and River Development is home to the Alliance Secretariat.
 3. Its three main topics are technical support, capacity building, and networking.
 How many of the statements given above are correct?

- a) Only one **b) Only two**
c) All three d) None of the above
2. Consider the following statements about Adopt a Heritage 2.0 Program
1. The Archaeological Survey of India, the Ministry of Culture, and the Ministry of Tourism are all involved in this endeavor.
 2. The project's goal is to persuade public and private organizations to take on the role of "Monument Mitras" and expand and improve the site's essential facilities.
 3. Funds allocated for corporate social responsibility (CSR) cannot be used by the corporate sector to maintain the website
- How many of the statements given above are not correct?
- a) **Only one** b) Only two
c) All three d) None of the above
3. Consider the following statements about Green Voyage 2050 Project
1. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the Government of Norway are partners in this project.
 2. The primary goal of the Initial IMO GHG Strategy is to cut yearly GHG emissions overall by at least 50% by 2050 when compared to 2008.
- Select the appropriate statements:
- a) 1 only b) 2 only
c) **Both 1 and 2** d) Neither 1 nor 2
4. Which nation is home to Girsu, the ancient megacity where archaeologists recently found two temples, one buried atop the other?
- a) Egypt b) Peru
c) **Iraq** d) Cambodia
5. Consider the following statements with respect to Goldilocks Effect
- Statement 1: The idea is that individuals tend to look for "just the right" quantity of certain things.
Statement 2: It's a psychological pricing strategy based on the ideas of comparative pricing and product differentiation.
- Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?
- a) **Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement II is the correct explanation for Statement-I**
b) Both Statement-I and Statement-II are correct and Statement II is not the correct explanation for Statement-I
c) Statement-I is correct but statement II is incorrect
d) Statement -I is incorrect but Statement -II is correct
6. Consider following statements regarding 'Green Rising Initiative'

1. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) introduces the idea during COP28.
 2. This program aims to mobilize young people for grassroots, significant environmental initiatives that are in line with the international effort to mitigate the dire consequences of climate change.
 3. The goal of the YuWaah campaign in India is to inspire young people to lead grassroots, environmentally conscious initiatives.
- How many of the above-mentioned statements are correct?
- a) Only one **b) Only two**
c) All three d) None of the above
7. Which of the following definitions of "Electroporation" is more accurate?
- a) A more general phrase for any technique used to transfer foreign genetic material into a cell.
 - b) A technique for inactivating enzymes or killing bacteria that is applied in food processing and other settings.
 - c) A minimally invasive cancer therapy that stops cell division with low-intensity electric fields.
 - d) It makes transient holes in the cell membrane by applying an electric field.**
8. Consider the following statements regarding 'Technology Development Fund (TDF) scheme'
1. It comes under the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and executed by the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI).
 2. The project cost of up to INR 10 Cr will be considered for funding, subject to a maximum of 90% of the total project cost.
 3. There will be no limit to the maximum development period for the projects under this scheme.
- How many of the above-mentioned statements are correct?
- a) Only one b) None of these
c) All three **d) Only two**
9. Often seen in news, the Consumer Confidence Survey is released by:
- a) NITI AAYOG
 - b) Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**
 - c) Ministry of Finance
 - d) Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution
10. In relation to the Child Welfare Committees (CWC), consider the following statements:
1. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 requires each district to have a minimum of one CWC.
 2. To safeguard and assist children in need, the Union government forms Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) in each district or set of districts.
- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
- a) **Only one** b) None of these
c) All three d) Only two