

POLITY

NHRC Stressed on Implementation of Idate Commission Report

Why in News?

- The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has stressed on the need to implement the Idate Commission report for welfare of NTs, SNTs, and DNTs.

Nomadic, Semi Nomadic, and Denotified Tribes (NTs, SNTs, and DNTs)

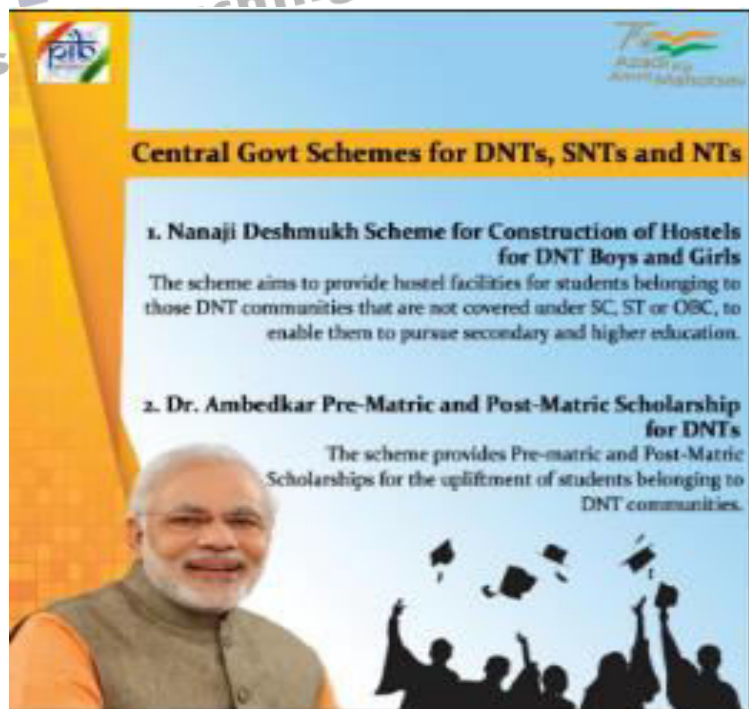
- Nomadic and semi-nomadic communities are defined as those who move from one place to another rather than living at one place all the time.
- Denotified tribes (DNTs) are communities that were 'notified' as being 'born criminal' during the British regime under a series of laws starting with the Criminal Tribes Act of 1871.
- These are communities who are the most vulnerable and deprived.

Challenges faced by NTs, SNTs, and DNTs

- **Lack of Recognition and Documentation:** Denotified communities lacking citizenship documents, which makes their identity invisible and causes hindrances in obtaining government benefits, constitutional, and citizenship rights.
- **Limited Political Representation:** Inadequate representation for these communities making it challenging for them to voice their concerns and advocate for their rights.
- **Social Stigma and Discrimination:** NTs, SNTs, and DNTs often face discrimination and social stigma, both due to their historical denotified status and their distinct way of life.
- **Economic Marginalization:** Lack of access to resources, markets, and employment opportunities results in economic marginalization of these communities.
- **Educational Deprivation:** Educational opportunities for these tribes are limited, leading to high illiteracy rates.

Idate Commission

- In 2014, a National Commission for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi Nomadic Tribes was constituted under the Chairmanship of Bhiku Ramji Idate for a period of three years.
- The commission has given the following recommendations;
 - There is a need to identify challenges faced by the NTs, SNTs, and DNTs owing to the stigma imposed by the enactment of the Criminal Tribes Act, 1871 and later by the Habitual Offenders Act, 1952 and figure out a way to modify discriminatory provisions of the latter.
 - It also suggested the non-inclusion of DNTs/NTs/SNTs under the SC/ST/OBC and formulation of specific policies for the former, among many others.
 - Setting up a permanent commission for Nomadic, Semi Nomadic, and Denotified Tribes (NTs, SNTs, and DNTs) in India.
 - It stressed on taking measures to discern hurdles endured by the communities in availing basic facilities such as education, employment, health care, and legal documents, among others.



Steps Taken by Government

- Based on the recommendations of the Idate Commission the Government of India constituted the Development and Welfare Board for DNTs, SNTs & NTs (DWBDNCs) in 2019.

- A committee has also been set up by the NITI Aayog to complete the process of identification of the De-Notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Communities (DNCs).
- Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNTs (SEED): The scheme was launched in 2022 for the welfare of Denotified, Nomadic and Semi Nomadic Communities.
- Budget: The Ministry has been allocated Rs. 200 crore for this scheme to be spent over five financial years from 2021-22 to 2025-26.
- Components: The four components of the Scheme for Economic Empowerment of DNTs are;
 - To provide good quality coaching for DNT candidates to enable them to appear in competitive examinations;
 - To provide Health Insurance to them;
 - To facilitate livelihood initiative at community level; and
 - To provide financial assistance for construction of houses for members of these communities.

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of India

- The NHRC is a statutory public body constituted in 1993.
- It is responsible for the protection and promotion of human rights, defined by the act as “Rights Relating to Life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the constitution or embodied in the international covenants and enforceable by courts in India.

Way Forward

- The colonial mindset about the Denotified Tribes having “criminal tendencies” needs to change to ensure their human rights are not violated.
- Proper documentation of their identities needs to be speeded up so that they get the benefits of welfare schemes and the basic needs are provided to them.
- The NHRC has suggested that there is a need to ensure representation of Denotified tribes in parliament, government institutions and higher education to mitigate the challenges faced by them.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Labour rules for workers abroad

Why in news?

- With assistance from the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), the governments of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana are hiring around 10,000 workers to go to Israel, mainly for construction work.

National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC)

- About
 - It is a not-for-profit public limited company that was established in July 2008.
 - The Ministry of Finance established NSDC as a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model.
 - The Government of India, through the MSDE (Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship), holds 49% of the NSDC's share capital, while the private sector holds the remaining 51%.
 - Currently, the NSDC is under the MSDE.
- Goal
 - To improve the skills of people in India. It does this by encouraging private sector initiatives in skill development programs and providing funding.
 - To promote skill development by catalysing the creation of large, quality, and for-profit vocational institutions.

Employment in Israel

- Indian citizens working in Israel
 - There are about 18,000 Indian citizens in Israel, primarily caregivers employed by Israeli elders to take care of them, diamond traders, IT professionals and students.
 - According to a 2017 report prepared by the ILO, international migration has grown significantly in the last two decades.
 - The number of migrants from Asia to the Arab states has more than tripled, from 5.7 million in 1990 to 19 million in 2015.
- How safe is Israel right now?
 - Recently, the Israel Defense Forces spokesman had told media that there is not a place in Israel that is safe now due to Hamas.

- According to some estimates, about 100 people who died in Gaza are migrant workers from Asian and African countries.
- Stand of Indian govt on employment in Israel
 - The MEA had said that India is satisfied with Israel's labour standards.
 - Labour laws in Israel are very strict, robust.
 - It is an OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) country. Hence, labour laws are such that it provides for protection of migrant rights, labour rights.

News Summary: Labour rules for workers abroad

- The Uttar Pradesh and Haryana governments have started the process of recruiting about 10,000 workers to go to Israel, primarily for construction activities.
- There are 2,000 openings for plastering workers, 2,000 for ceramic tile workers, and 3,000 each for iron bending and frame workers with monthly salaries of about ₹1.37 lakh (6,100 Israeli shekels).

Prescribed rules

- Registration on e-migrate portal
 - Workers going to conflict zones or places without sufficient labour protections are required to register with the Ministry of External Affairs' 'e-migrate' portal.
 - The e-Migrate Project was launched in 2014.
 - The portal is a digital platform that aims to streamline the emigration process for Indian workers.
 - It allows workers to create profiles, register employment contracts, and obtain emigration clearance.
- Emigration Check Required (ECR) scheme
 - ECR scheme is a passport category for Indian nationals who want to work abroad.
 - ECR passports are issued to people who have not passed the 10th grade or higher education pass certificate.
 - To work in ECR countries, ECR passport holders must obtain an Emigration Clearance (EC) from the Protector of Emigrants (POE).
 - POEs are responsible for granting emigration clearance to intending emigrants.
 - The POEs perform functions assigned to them under the Emigration Act, 1983.
 - Currently, passports issued under the ECR scheme cover workers travelling to 18 countries.
 - Israel is not on this list and hence the e-migrate system will not be used for those going to Israel despite continuing violence due to Israel's bombing of Gaza.
- Collection of service charges from workers
 - The Rules say that no recruiting agent shall collect from the worker service charges more than a maximum of ₹30,000.
 - These service charges shall include costs of domestic travel or lodging and boarding for conducting of interviews by the recruiting agent.

International practices

- The international practices for protection of migrant workers are governed by two conventions of the International Labour Organisation:
 - the Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 and
 - Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975.
- While India has not ratified both conventions, Israel had ratified the 1949 convention in 1953.

Way forward

- ILO's World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends 2024 report
 - As per this report, global unemployment rate is set to increase in 2024 while growing social inequalities remain a concern.
 - It asked the countries to design sensible migration policies and skilling initiatives to support and develop local labour markets with growing populations.
 - To make this happen, they need to better predict the types of jobs needed in different countries and improve education and training in places where there are more people looking for jobs.
- 2019 report of the Parliament Standing Committee on External Affairs
 - The report had asked the Centre to draft a migration policy.

- The panel said, it is concerned to note that the existing institutional arrangements for the protection, safety and welfare of Indian emigrants are based on inadequate data infrastructure.

PRELIM FACTS**1. Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)**

- Recently, the 19th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) summit was held in Kampala, the capital of Uganda on 19 and 20 January.

About NAM Summit:

- The 19th NAM Summit was held under Uganda's leadership in Kampala. Uganda has taken over as chair from Azerbaijan, to run until 2027.
- Theme: 'Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Affluence.'
- Key discussions at the summit:
 - Israel-Hamas war
 - India's "Vishwa Mitra" initiative
 - A call for multipolar world

About Non-Aligned Movement:

- The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) is an alliance of developing nations that refuses to identify with any major superpower.
- It was established in 1961 at the height of the Cold War. Whereas it started with the Bandung Conference held in Indonesia in 1955.
- Current members:
 - 120 countries: 53 from Africa, 39 from Asia, 26 from Latin America and the Caribbean and two from Europe.
 - It also includes the non-UN member state of Palestine, 17 other observer countries, and 10 observer organizations.
 - India is one of the founding members.
- After the United Nations, NAM is the second-largest grouping of nations.
- NAM does not have a permanent secretariat or a formal founding charter, act, or treaty
- The summit usually takes place every three years.

2. Global Alliance for Global Good – Gender Equity and Equality

- India successfully established a "Global Alliance for Global Good - Gender Equity and Equality" to promote women's empowerment and gender equality.

About Global Alliance for Global Good - Gender Equity and Equality:

- It is a new alliance for global good, gender equity, and equality established by India on the sidelines of the 54th annual World Economic Forum (WEF) meeting in Davos.
- The alliance will bring together worldwide best practices, knowledge sharing, and investment opportunities in women's education, health, and enterprise.
- This initiative marks a significant stride toward achieving multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), 4 (Quality Education), 5 (Gender Equality and Empowerment), 17 (Global Partnership for Development) and more.
- It has garnered support from industry leaders such as MasterCard, Uber, Tata, TVS, Bayer, Godrej, the Serum Institute of India, IMD Laussane, and over 10,000 partners from industry through the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).
- Supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the alliance will be housed and anchored by the CII Centre for Women Leadership.
- The WEF has come on board as a 'Network Partner' and Invest India as an 'Institutional Partner'.

Key Facts about World Economic Forum (WEF):

- It is an international organization headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, that brings together individuals and political and business leaders each year to discuss significant issues that impact the global economy.
- These include, but are not limited to political, economic, social, and environmental concerns.
- The WEF is best known for its annual WEF Meeting at Davos, the Swiss ski resort.
 - The event regularly draws business and political leaders from around the world for a series of discussions about global issues.

- The WEF has no independent decision-making power but seeks to influence people to make decisions that benefit the global community.
- WEF meetings introduce new issues, trends, and organizations to members and the public for discussion and are commonly believed to influence corporate and public sector decision-making.
- The organization is funded through its membership, which includes many prominent business and political figures.

3. Lamprey Fish

- A recent study has uncovered two potential new species of lamprey fish in California waters.

About Lamprey Fish:

- Lampreys are boneless, jawless fish with eel-like bodies that date back over 350 million years.
- They belong to a relic (primitive) group of jawless fish called Agnathans.
- They live in coastal and fresh waters and are found in temperate regions around the world, except Africa.
- Features:
 - They range from about 15 to 100 centimetres (6 to 40 inches) long.
 - Unlike "bony" fish like trout, cod, and herring, lampreys lack scales, fins, and gill covers.
 - They breathe through a distinctive row of seven pairs of tiny gill openings located behind their mouths and eyes.
 - Like sharks, their skeletons are made of cartilage.
 - Lamprey's jawless mouth is a circular, fleshy sucker filled with hundreds of small teeth and a rasping tongue.
 - They are migratory fish, moving between fresh and saltwater to complete their lifecycle.
 - They spend most of their lives at sea and only move into freshwater to spawn and for their juvenile life stage.
 - They attach themselves to large animals like fish and whales using their sucker mouth. They feed as parasites, rasping into the host's flesh with their sharp teeth and sucking out blood.

4. Nagara Style of Temple Architecture

- The Ram temple in Ayodhya was inaugurated on January 22. The complex is in the Nagara style of temple architecture, designed by 81-year-old Chandrakant Sompura and his 51-year-old son Ashish.

About the Nagara style:

- Nagara architecture is a classical architecture of temple design in northern India, contrasted with Dravida architecture in southern India.
- Nagara temples have a shikhara (mountain peak) over the garbha griha (sanctum sanctorum), a circumambulatory passage around it, and one or more mandapas (halls).
- Shikhara is a symbolic representation of the cosmic order and the divine presence.
- There are five modes of shikhara design: Valabhi, Phamsana, Latina, Shekhari, and Bhumija.
 - Valabhi and Phamsana are Early Nagara modes, derived from barrel-roofed wooden structures.
 - Latina is a single, slightly curved tower with four equal sides, dominant for three centuries.
 - Shekhari and Bhumija are composite Latinas with attached sub-spires or miniature spires, creating a complex and ornate appearance.
- These modes are scholastic classifications, not rigid categories. There is much variation and innovation within and across these modes.

5. Aravali Range

- The Supreme Court recently opined that if the State of Rajasthan believes that the mining activities in the Aravali Range pose a threat to the environment, it can also prevent mining activities in the Aravalli Range.

About Aravalli Range:

- It is a mountain range located in north-western India.
- It is one of the oldest fold mountains in the world.

- It runs approximately 670 km (430 mi) in a south-west direction, starting near Delhi, passing through southern Haryana and Rajasthan, and ending in Gujarat.
- The range contains a series of ridges and peaks, which have widths between 6 miles and 60 miles, and elevations that vary between 1,000 and 3,000 feet.
- The highest point of the Aravalli range is Guru Shikhar, which stands at an elevation of 5,650 feet on Mount Arbuda.
 - It is 15 km from Mount Abu, which is a popular hill station in the Aravalli Range.
- Rivers: Three major rivers and their tributaries flow from the Aravalli, namely the Banas and Sahibi rivers, which are tributaries of the Yamuna, as well as the Luni River, which flows into the Rann of Kutch.
- The Aravalli acts as the edge which separates the Thar desert from the plains and plateaus of eastern Rajasthan.
- Formation:
 - It is part of the Aravalli-Delhi orogenic belt, which is a large and complex geological structure formed due to the collision of tectonic plates during the Proterozoic era.
 - It is part of the Indian Shield that was formed from a series of cratonic collisions.
 - In ancient times, Aravalli were extremely high, but since have worn down almost completely by millions of years of weathering.
- The range is rich in mineral resources like copper, zinc, lead, and marble.
- It is divided into two sections: the Sambhar-Sirohi ranges, taller and including Guru Shikhar; and the Sambhar-Khetri ranges, consisting of three ridges that are discontinuous.
- There are several national parks and wildlife sanctuaries that fall within the belt of Aravalli Hills. Sariska National Park, Kumbhalgarh Sanctuary, and Mount Abu Sanctuary are among them.

ANSWER WRITING

Q. Discuss the various factors that have contributed to increased inter-state water disputes? Suggest some potential measures to resolve underlying conflicts, and ensure equitable and sustainable water use for all stakeholders.

Answer: Interstate River Water Disputes refer to disputes between two or more states regarding use, distribution and control of rivers flowing through them. In recent years, increasing water scarcity, a rapid rise in urban and rural demands for freshwater, and contentious political dynamics have further exacerbated the problem. Article 262 of the Constitution provides for adjudication of Interstate River Water Disputes. Parliament has passed two laws, the River Boards Act (1956) and the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956.

Factors contributing to increased inter-state water disputes:

- **Conflicting Jurisdiction:** The Indian Constitution grants water management rights to individual states, but inter-state rivers fall under the Centre's purview. This ambiguity creates uncertainty and opportunities for disputes to arise.
- **Mismanaged Demand:** Inefficient practices like water-intensive agriculture in arid regions, neglect of traditional water harvesting methods, and subsidized power for flood irrigation contribute to water scarcity and strained supplies.
- **Seasonal Scarcity:** India's rainfall is heavily dependent on monsoon, changing climate patterns, including irregular rainfall and prolonged droughts, complicates the water management. The recurring water crisis in regions like Marathwada in Maharashtra are prime examples of climate-induced challenges.
- **Ineffective Resolution Mechanisms:** Article 262 limits the judiciary's role in water disputes, while dedicated tribunals have historically proven slow and ineffective, hindering timely and sustainable solutions.
- **Political Exploitation:** Politicians often exploit river disputes for their own gain, using them as rallying points to secure votes and stoking regional rivalries, as seen in the Cauvery dispute.
- **Increased population and urbanization-** Rapid population growth and urbanization place increased stress on water resources. In cities like Chennai, mismanagement, pollution, and over-extraction of groundwater have led to severe water scarcity issues.

Measures to Address Inter-State River Water Disputes:

- **Streamlining Dispute Resolution:** The Lok Sabha in 2017 passed the InterState River Water Disputes (Amendment) Bill. It included a single permanent river-water disputes tribunal and a mediation committee. The implementation mechanism is still to be worked out, which should be done in priority. It will help in faster rulings, and comprehensive data management. This will address outdated limitations of the 1956 Act.
- **Shared Governance:** Consider shifting water to the concurrent list, as recommended by the Mihir Shah report, allowing for a central water authority to manage river basins collaboratively with states.
- **Demand-Side Management:** There is a need for promoting water-saving irrigation practices like drip irrigation. Also, Basin-specific crop choices require less water, which should also be promoted.
- **Supply-Side Augmentation:** Water availability can be increased through mandatory rainwater harvesting, building check dams to boost groundwater, and creating additional reservoirs for efficient monsoon water storage.
- **Urban Planning Integration:** There is a need to integrate urban and water planning to address urbanization's impact on water resources. For example, increased focus on sewage treatment, mandatory rain water harvesting in buildings etc. should be promoted.
- **Leverage Legal Frameworks:** Parliament should actively utilize its powers under Entry 56 of the Union List to establish river boards as outlined in the National Water Policy. The Supreme Court's original jurisdiction for inter-state water disputes should be maintained, as demonstrated in the Cauvery Tribunal ruling.
- **Borrow International Models:** Adoption of France's "water parliament" system can be considered. This model involves non-governmental and environmental organizations in river management decisions.
- **Depoliticize and Collaborate:** There is a need to Shift away from politicizing water disputes and emotional regional arguments. Various federal platforms like the Inter-State Council and Zonal Councils should be utilized effectively, to facilitate dialogue and resolve conflicts.

Conclusion

India, home to 18% of the world's population but blessed with only 4% of its renewable freshwater, stands precariously on the brink of water conflict. The glaring disparity between population size and water availability, coupled with uneven distribution, could ignite a tinderbox of water disputes if left unaddressed. Effective communication and negotiation whilst avoiding any potential political opportunism can quench thirst and prevent future conflicts.

MCQs

- The Free Movement Regime (FMR) Agreement was recently in the news. It is associated with which of the following pair of countries?
 - China-Bhutan
 - India- Myanmar**
 - China -Nepal
 - India-Bangladesh
- Regarding the history of ancient India, which of the following statements is/are correct?
 - Mitakshara law governs the succession of property in Hindu Undivided Family.
 - Mitakshara law holds that a son has the right to family property through birth.
 Select the correct answer using the code given below.
 - 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2**
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- With reference to Gambusia fish, consider the following statements:
 - It is recognised as a non-invasive species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature.
 - These have been introduced in water bodies for mosquito control.
 - Gambusia fish display aggressive behaviour of fin nipping.
 How many of the statements given above are correct?
 - Only one
 - Only two**
 - All three
 - None
- With reference to the Himalayan Wolf, consider following statements:
 - It is the only carnivore in its ecosystem.
 - They are categorized 'Vulnerable' in the IUCN Red Data List.

3. Himalayan wolves are smaller and more compact than other subspecies, characterized by shorter legs and snouts.
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
5. Consider the following statements regarding Hydrographic survey.
1. A hydrographic survey is a scientific process that involves mapping of physical features of underwater terrain.
2. However it cannot study the depth and topography of the seabed and water bodies.
3. India had a bilateral agreement with Maldives that allowed collaboration in the hydrographic survey of Maldivian territorial waters.
How many of the above statements is/are correct?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None
6. Identify the personality on the basis of the given description.
1. He was involved in Delhi Conspiracy case (bomb attack on Viceroy Lord Hardinge), 1912.
2. He founded the Indian independence League (1942) in Tokyo.
3. He played key role in Gadar Movement and in formation Azad hind fauj (Indian National Army).
Select the correct answer.
(a) Subash Chandra Bose
(b) Batukeshwar Dutt
(c) Bagha Jatin
(d) Rash Behari Bose
7. Consider the following statements.
1. The Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) is a global partnership of countries most at risk from climate impacts.
2. Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) represents countries that are disproportionately vulnerable to climate effects, particularly sea level rise and coastal erosion.
3. Umbrella Group includes Africa's U.N. members that push for additional climate financing.
How many of the above statements are correct?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None
8. Consider the following statements regarding the Aravalli range:
1. Banas and Luni river originates from the Aravalli range.
2. It is stretched from Delhi to Gujarat.
3. It is rich in metallic minerals.
How many of the above statements are correct?
(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None
9. Adi Shankaracharya is associated with the establishment of four mathas (monastic centers) in different parts of India. Which one of the following is the collective name for these mathas?
(a) Panchayatan
(b) Dashanami
(c) Shuddhadvaita
(d) Vishnuswami
10. Project BHISM is associated with which of the following sector?
(a) Health
(b) Defence
(c) Start-up
(d) Banking