

PRAGNYA BHARATHI: Detailed News Analysis (DNA)

Topic : India-New Zealand Trade Relations

Relevance : GS Paper 2 International Relations

Source : Indian Express

Context :

India, New Zealand resume trade deal talks after decade

The FTA negotiations aim to achieve balanced outcomes that enhance supply chain integration and improve market access, says Commerce Ministry after a meeting between Goyal and McClay

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

After a gap of about 10 years, India and New Zealand on Sunday announced resumption of negotiations for a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) to boost economic ties.

India and New Zealand began negotiating the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) in April 2010 to boost trade in goods, services, and investment. However, after 10 rounds of discussions, the talks stalled in February 2015.

"The two nations are pleased to announce the launch of negotiations for a comprehensive and mutually beneficial India-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations," the Commerce Ministry said.

The announcement was made after a meeting of Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and Todd McClay, New Zealand's Minister for Trade and Investment.

Prime Minister of New Zealand Christopher Luxon is here on a four-day visit from Sunday.

"The India-New Zealand FTA negotiations aim to achieve balanced outcomes that enhance supply chain integration and improve market access," it said. "With bilateral trade continuing to grow steadily, surpassing USD 1 billion during April-January 2025, the FTA negotiations aim to unlock new avenues for businesses and consumers, fostering mutual growth and prosperity of our nations," Mr. Goyal said in a post on X.

According to think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), a major challenge in the renewed talks will be the disparity in tariff structures.

Common ground
New Zealand's average import tariff is only 2.3%, with over half of its tariff lines already duty-free, meaning Indian goods already have substantial access to its market.

In contrast, India's average tariff stands at 17.8%, meaning it would have to make significant reductions, making a traditional FTA less attractive for India. "As talks resume, both countries will need to find common ground on these issues to move forward successfully," GTRI founder Ajay Srivastava said.

He said earlier New Zealand was demanding greater access to India's dairy market, which India resisted to protect its domestic dairy industry that supports millions of farmers.

Currently, India's dairy imports from New Zealand are minimal (around \$0.57 million), and while India may consider limited imports of value-added dairy products, it remains firm against allowing raw dairy imports, he said. India was also reluctant to lower tariffs on New Zealand's dairy, meat, and wine exports, while New Zealand pushed for more favourable trade terms.

"Pressure from the U.S. to open India's dairy and agriculture sectors may also influence negotiations," Mr. Srivastava said, adding that another key issue was India's demand for easier movement of its skilled professionals and better access for its IT and services sector.

India and New Zealand have maintained diplomatic relations since 1952, but their economic relationship has remained relatively underdeveloped compared to India's ties with other countries. The two nations have been working towards strengthening trade and economic cooperation over the years. Here's a detailed overview of their trade relations:

Historical Background:

- India and New Zealand began negotiations for a **Comprehensive Economic**

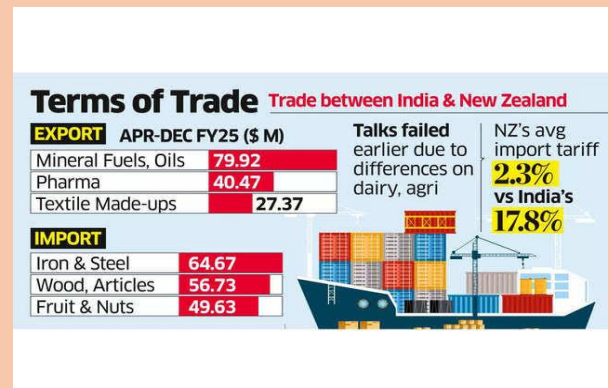
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Cooperation Agreement (CECA) in April 2010.

- The talks aimed to boost trade in **goods, services, and investment.**
- However, after **10 rounds of discussions**, the negotiations stalled in **February 2015** due to differences over tariff structures and market access.
- Recently, in **March 2025**, India and New Zealand announced the **resumption of FTA negotiations** after a decade-long gap, aiming to enhance **supply chain integration and market access.**

Current Trade Scenario:

- Bilateral trade between India and New Zealand has been steadily growing, surpassing **USD 1 billion during April-January 2025.**



- New Zealand's exports to India include:
 - Dairy products
 - Wool
 - Logs and wood
 - Fruits and beverages
- India's exports to New Zealand include:

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- **Pharmaceuticals**
- **Textiles and apparel**
- **Jewelry**
- **Petroleum products**
- **Spices and tea**

d) Movement of Skilled Professionals:

- India demands **easier movement of skilled professionals** and better access for its **IT and services sector**, which New Zealand may find challenging to accommodate.

Challenges in Trade Relations:**a) Tariff Disparities:**

- One of the main challenges is the **difference in average tariff rates**:
 - **New Zealand's average import tariff: 2.3%**
 - **India's average import tariff: 17.8%**
- New Zealand already has substantial access to the Indian market, but India's **higher tariffs on dairy, meat, and wine** remain contentious.

Potential Areas of Cooperation:**a) Supply Chain Integration:**

- Both countries aim to **enhance supply chain integration**, creating **new avenues for businesses and consumers**.

b) Value-Added Dairy Products:

- India may consider limited imports of **value-added dairy products** instead of raw dairy items.

b) Dairy Sector Concerns:

- New Zealand seeks **greater access to India's dairy market**, but India is hesitant to allow this to protect its **domestic dairy industry**, which supports **millions of farmers**.
- India's current dairy imports from New Zealand are minimal (around **\$0.57 million**).

c) Agricultural and Meat Exports:

- India is reluctant to lower tariffs on **New Zealand's meat and wine exports** as well.
- Additionally, **pressure from the U.S.** to open India's **dairy and agriculture sectors** adds complexity to the negotiations.

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c) Services Sector:



- India's **IT and services** sector holds potential for increased collaboration, given New Zealand's demand for **skilled professionals**.

d) Renewable Energy:

- Both nations can work together on **renewable energy projects**, considering India's ambitious **energy transition goals**.

Strategic Importance:

a) Economic and Political Diplomacy:

- The resumption of talks is seen as a step towards **deeper economic integration and political goodwill**.
- It also aligns with India's goal of **diversifying trade partners** and reducing reliance on **traditional partners like the U.S. and China**.

b) Geopolitical Context:

- As India looks to **strengthen ties with Indo-Pacific nations**, a robust FTA with New Zealand will contribute to **India's strategic presence** in the region.

Way Forward:

- For successful FTA negotiations, both nations need to:
 - **Bridge tariff disparities** with balanced concessions.
 - Address concerns regarding the **dairy sector** and **movement of professionals**.
 - Develop frameworks that **foster long-term partnerships** and **economic cooperation**.

India and New Zealand are poised to **revitalize their economic relationship** through renewed FTA negotiations. Both nations must find a **mutually beneficial middle ground** to overcome challenges related to tariffs and market access. By fostering cooperation in **goods, services, investment, and**

PRAGNYA BHARATHI: Detailed News Analysis (DNA)

skilled labor mobility, the two countries can build a comprehensive and lasting economic partnership.

Prelims Practice Question:

Q. Consider the following statements regarding India-New Zealand trade relations:

1. India and New Zealand began negotiating the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) in 2010, but talks stalled in 2015.
2. New Zealand's average import tariff is significantly higher than India's average import tariff.
3. India's dairy imports from New Zealand are substantial and play a major role in bilateral trade.
4. One of the key challenges in the FTA negotiations is India's reluctance to lower tariffs on New Zealand's dairy and meat products.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A) 1 and 4 only
- B) 2 and 3 only
- C) 1, 3, and 4 only
- D) 1, 2, and 4 only

Answer:

Correct Answer: A) 1 and 4 only

Explanation:

1. **Statement 1 is Correct:** India and New Zealand started negotiating the CECA in

2010, and the talks stalled in 2015 after 10 rounds of discussions.

2. **Statement 2 is Incorrect:** New Zealand's average import tariff is 2.3%, while India's average import tariff is 17.8%. Therefore, New Zealand's tariff rate is significantly lower than India's.
3. **Statement 3 is Incorrect:** India's dairy imports from New Zealand are minimal (around \$0.57 million) and do not play a major role in bilateral trade.
4. **Statement 4 is Correct:** One of the major challenges in FTA negotiations is India's reluctance to lower tariffs on dairy and meat products from New Zealand.

Therefore, the correct answer is A) 1 and 4 only.

Mains Model Question:

Q. Discuss the challenges and opportunities associated with the resumption of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations between India and New Zealand. How can both countries address the issues to foster mutual economic growth? (300 words)

The resumption of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations between India and New Zealand after a decade-long hiatus marks a significant step towards strengthening bilateral economic relations. While the renewed dialogue offers potential benefits, several challenges need to be addressed to ensure mutually beneficial outcomes.

One of the primary challenges lies in the disparity between tariff structures. New Zealand's average

PRAGNYA BHARATHI: Detailed News Analysis (DNA)

import tariff is remarkably low at 2.3%, with over half of its tariff lines already duty-free, granting Indian goods substantial access to its market. In contrast, India's average tariff rate stands at 17.8%, making tariff reductions challenging, especially on sensitive products like dairy, meat, and wine. New Zealand has been particularly keen on accessing India's dairy market, but India remains cautious due to the need to protect its domestic dairy industry, which supports millions of farmers. Allowing unrestricted dairy imports could potentially disrupt local livelihoods and affect rural economies.

Furthermore, India has expressed concerns about opening its agricultural and dairy sectors, especially amid external pressures, including from the United States. On the other hand, India seeks greater access for its skilled professionals and IT services in New Zealand, which poses challenges for New Zealand's immigration and labor policies.

Despite these hurdles, the FTA negotiations also present significant opportunities. Both countries aim to enhance supply chain integration and improve market access, fostering bilateral trade growth, which has already surpassed USD 1 billion in recent months. By focusing on non-sensitive areas such as renewable energy collaboration, technology transfer, and services trade, both nations can leverage their strengths while safeguarding domestic interests.

Addressing tariff disparities through phased reductions and promoting value-added dairy products rather than raw imports could be pragmatic approaches. Ensuring reciprocal access to skilled professionals would further balance the agreement.

Through flexible and pragmatic negotiations, India and New Zealand can pave the way for a robust economic partnership that aligns with their respective economic priorities.

Topic : Language and Linguistic Secularism in India

Relevance : GS Paper 2 Polity and Governance

Source : Indian Express

Context :

NEWS ANALYSIS

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The debate over the language formula in the National Education Policy rages, though the Supreme Court had favoured "linguistic secularism", or the acceptance of the legitimate aspirations of the speakers of different languages in India, in a 2014 judgment.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has accused the Centre of imposing Hindi through the National Education Policy at the cost of "totally destroying Tamil Nadu's progress in education".

The court in *U.P. Hindi Sahitya Sammelan vs State of U.P.* in September 2014 had observed that the mode of development or evolution of both law and language in the country was "organic". Indian language laws, the court said, were "not rigid but accommodative – the object being to secure linguistic secularism".

The judgment referred to Constitutional expert

H.M. Seervai's commentary on the conflict which arose in the Constituent Assembly in 1949 over the question of Hindi as a "national language". A compromise proposed in the Munshi-Ayyangar formula led to the inclusion of Article 343 in the Constitution declaring Hindi in the Devanagari script as the official language of the Union.

'Official language'
"Though Hindi was selected as the official language, it could not be described as the national language, for, it was not the language generally spoken in all parts of India, and though spoken by the largest sin-

gle group of people, that group did not constitute the majority of people in India. Besides, there were regional languages such as Bengali in Bengal, Tamil in Madras, and Marathi and Gujarati in the erstwhile State of Bombay which were spoken by large populations and it was claimed for those languages that they were more developed than Hindi. Hindi was therefore described as the official language," the judgment quoted from Mr. Seervai's commentary.

Article 351 however imposes a "duty" on the Union government to promote the spread of the Hindi language. However, the Allahabad High Court, in its 1982 judgment in *Sunil K.R. Sahastrabudhey vs Director, IIT Kanpur*, observed that "although Hindi is the national language of India and Article 351 lays down a duty on the Union to promote the spread of Hindi language to develop it so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India, there is no right conferred on any citizen to compel an institution to impart education in that particular language".

Besides, Article 29(1) of the Constitution recognised that "every section of the society which has a distinct language script or culture of its own" has the fundamental right to conserve the same.

"This is a right which is conferred on both majority and minority," the top court had underscored.

The Supreme court, while responding to whether a parent or a citizen has a right to choose the medium of instruction at primary school level in *State of Karnataka vs Associated Management of Primary & Secondary Schools*, said the fundamental right to speech and expression under Article 19 included the freedom of a primary class student to choose the language of instruction. The court said the state cannot impose control over such a choice.

In this, the court had taken a leaf from the U.S. Supreme Court's conclusion in *Pierce v. Society of Sisters of Holy Names* in 1924 that "a child is not a mere creature of the State".

The debate over the language formula in the National Education Policy (NEP) has once again stirred discussions about linguistic diversity and language rights in India. This debate is not new, and the Supreme Court of India has addressed it in various judgments, advocating for a balanced and

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accommodative approach. The concept of "**linguistic secularism**" is central to this discourse, emphasizing the acceptance of the aspirations of speakers of diverse languages without rigid imposition.

Key Supreme Court Judgment: U.P. Hindi Sahitya Sammelan vs State of U.P. (2014)

In 2014, the Supreme Court delivered a landmark judgment in the case of **U.P. Hindi Sahitya Sammelan vs State of U.P.**, emphasizing that Indian language laws are "**not rigid but accommodative.**" The Court advocated for "**linguistic secularism**" to promote harmonious coexistence among linguistic groups. It highlighted that both **law and language development in India are organic processes** that evolve according to societal needs.

The judgment referred to the **Munshi-Ayyangar formula**, which resolved the contentious issue of selecting a **national language** during the drafting of the Constitution. The compromise resulted in **Article 343**, which declared **Hindi in the Devanagari script as the official language of the Union**, not as the **national language**. The rationale was that Hindi, despite being the language of the largest group, was not universally spoken across the country. Regional languages like **Bengali, Tamil, Marathi, and Gujarati** also held strong cultural and developmental significance. Thus, Hindi was designated as the **official language**, acknowledging India's linguistic diversity.

Why is three-language policy controversial?

Why has the Centre withheld funds to Tamil Nadu under the Samagra Shiksha programme? When did the State adopt a two-language policy? What is its stand on mandatory imposition of Hindi? What is the central government's view? How can the issue be resolved?

D. Suresh Kumar

The story so far: The Union Government has withheld ₹2,122 crore in funds due to Tamil Nadu under the Samagra Shiksha scheme for refusing to join the Prime Minister Schools for Rising India (PMSRI) initiative. While T.N. is eager to participate in the PM SHRI scheme, it staunchly opposes the accompanying mandate to implement the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. One of the State's core objections to the NEP is its insistence on adopting a three-language formula in schools. Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has rejected any concessions, insisting that T.N. must align "with the Constitution". Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, questioning which provision of the Constitution justifies such mandates, has declared that the State will not submit to "backlash" or abandon its historically adopted two-language policy.

What does the NEP 2020 state? The NEP 2020 has retained the three-language formula, a concept first introduced in the NEP of 1968. The key difference, however, is that back then the NEP advocated for Hindi to be a compulsory subject across the nation.

Tamil Nadu, with its long-standing two-language policy, has consistently outperformed many other States in key education metrics. Hindi-speaking States were required to teach Hindi, English, and a modern Indian language – preferably a south Indian language – while non-Hindi speaking States were expected to teach the local regional language, Hindi, and English. In contrast, NEP 2020 offers greater flexibility, technically not imposing any specific language on any State. It states that "the three languages learned by children will be the choices of States, regions, and, of course, the students themselves, so long as at least two of the three languages are native to India." This means, in addition to the State's language, children would be required to learn at least one other Indian language – not necessarily Hindi. The policy also emphasises bilingual teaching, particularly in the home language/other tongue and English. Conspicuously, it places significant emphasis on Sanskrit as an optional choice within the three-language formula.

Why is there opposition to this policy in T.N.?

Tamil Nadu has long resisted the 'imposition of Hindi'. In 1937, when the C. Rajagopalachari (Rajaji) government in Madras proposed making Hindi a compulsory subject in secondary schools, the Justice Party fiercely opposed it. Two young men, Thalamuthu and Natarajan, who participated in the agitation, died and became icons in the anti-Hindi imposition movement. Rajaji eventually resigned, and the British government withdrew the order. In 1965, as the deadline for adopting Hindi as the sole official language across India approached, the State witnessed violent protests that led to the deaths of at least 70 people in police shootings or self-immolations. The agitation resurfaced when Parliament adopted the Official Languages (Amendment) Act, 1967, and the Official Language Resolution, 1968, which mandated the teaching of Hindi as part of the three-language formula. In January 1968, the Madras Assembly, led by the C.N. Annadurai-led first Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) government, adopted a resolution calling for the scrapping of the three-language formula and the elimination of Hindi from the curriculum in T.N. schools. Since then, the State has steadfastly followed its two-language policy teaching Tamil and English.



Not backing down: Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin and his allies protest against NEP's three-language policy in Chennai on February 18, 2020.

Major political parties, including the ruling DMK and the principal opposition All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), have consistently opposed any efforts to alter this policy. In 2019, backlash led the Katturamangan Committee to remove the mandatory Hindi learning clause from the draft NEP.

Why is the three-language policy seen as an attempt to impose Hindi? Political parties and activists in T.N. view the three-language policy as a "smokescreen" and a "backdoor" attempt to impose Hindi. They argue that, in practice, the implementation of a three-language scheme would inevitably lead to the teaching of Hindi, given the limited resources for providing additional language teachers and learning materials. Moreover, the Union Government and prominent BJP leaders have periodically advocated for the promotion of Hindi. In 2019, the Union Budget allocated ₹50 crore to support the appointment of Hindi teachers in non-Hindi speaking States. Critics contend the Centre's actions do not match its rhetoric on promoting regional languages, as evidenced by the lack of efforts to hire adequate regional language teachers in Kendriya Vidyalayas or to ensure south Indian languages are taught in schools above the Vidyarthi.

Mr. Pradhan has defended the withholding of funds to T.N., making it clear that adherence to the three-language policy is non-negotiable. He urged Mr. Stalin to "rise above political differences" and criticised the State for viewing the NEP 2020 with a "myopic vision". In response, Mr. Stalin has accused Mr. Pradhan of attempting to "impose Hindi" under the guise of the NEP's policy. Mr. Stalin has vowed that, as long as the DMK and he are around, Tamil and T.N.'s interests will not be compromised.

What is the way forward? The only viable solution lies in constructive dialogue and a practical compromise between the Centre and the State on an issue like education, which was transferred from the State to the concurrent list during the Emergency. Notably, T.N., with its long-standing two-language policy, has consistently outperformed many other States in key metrics such as Gross Enrolment Ratio and reduced school dropout rates. Disagreements over teaching of third language should not be allowed to deter defending for Samagra Shiksha, a comprehensive programme for education.

Relevant Constitutional Provisions:

- Article 343:**
 - Declares **Hindi in Devanagari script as the official language** of the Union.
 - Recognizes English as an associate official language for official communication.
- Article 351:**
 - Mandates the Union to **promote the spread of Hindi** to develop it as a medium of expression for all elements of India's composite culture.
 - Despite this duty, the provision does not give citizens the right to **impose Hindi** as the medium of instruction or communication.
- Article 29(1):**

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- Guarantees the **right to conserve distinct language, script, or culture** to any section of citizens.
- This right applies to both **majority and minority linguistic groups**, ensuring cultural preservation.

4. Article 19(1)(a):

- Ensures **freedom of speech and expression**, which includes the right to **choose the medium of instruction**.

Allahabad High Court Judgment (1982): Sunil K.R. Sahastrabudhey vs Director, IIT Kanpur

In this case, the Allahabad High Court ruled that **Hindi is not the national language of India**, and no citizen has the right to compel an institution to provide education in Hindi. This judgment emphasized that even though Article 351 promotes Hindi, it does not mandate its imposition as the medium of instruction, preserving the autonomy of educational institutions in language choice.

Supreme Court Judgment (2014): State of Karnataka vs Associated Management of Primary & Secondary Schools

The Supreme Court, while dealing with the issue of **language as a medium of instruction**, held that the **right to freedom of speech and expression under Article 19** includes the **freedom of a primary student to choose the language of instruction**.

The Court stated that the **State cannot control or impose the medium of education**, reinforcing the idea of **linguistic choice and diversity**. The judgment echoed the principle of "**a child is not a**

mere creature of the State" from the U.S.

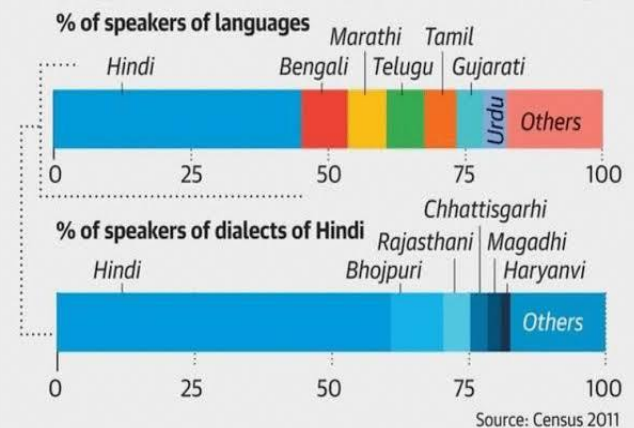
Supreme Court case **Pierce v. Society of Sisters of Holy Names (1924)**.

Contemporary Context: Language Imposition Concerns

Amid these legal principles, **Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin** has expressed concerns about the **imposition of Hindi through the National Education Policy (NEP)**, claiming that it threatens the linguistic identity and educational progress of Tamil Nadu. The **NEP's focus on promoting Hindi** in educational curricula has sparked fears of **linguistic homogenization**, contradicting the constitutional vision of **linguistic pluralism and diversity**.

One language, many dialects

Only 60% of total Hindi-speakers speak the native Hindi dialect. Effectively, only 26% have native Hindi as their mother tongue



The Supreme Court's stance on **linguistic secularism** aligns with the Constitution's spirit of accommodating India's linguistic diversity while preventing the imposition of a single language. The

PRAGNYA BHARATHI: Detailed News Analysis (DNA)

right to linguistic preservation, the freedom of expression through language, and the State's responsibility to promote Hindi without coercion collectively form the legal framework governing language policy. As India continues to evolve as a multilingual nation, the judiciary's balanced approach ensures that **linguistic diversity remains a core component of its cultural fabric.**

Prelims Practice Question:

Q. With reference to linguistic rights and the constitutional provisions in India, consider the following statements:

1. Article 343 of the Indian Constitution declares Hindi as the national language of India.
2. Article 351 mandates the Union government to promote the spread of the Hindi language.
3. Article 29(1) of the Constitution guarantees the right of every section of citizens to conserve their distinct language, script, or culture.
4. The Supreme Court has ruled that a primary school student has the freedom to choose the medium of instruction as part of the right to freedom of speech and expression.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A) 1, 2, and 4 only
- B) 2, 3, and 4 only
- C) 1 and 3 only
- D) 2 and 4 only

Answer:

Correct Answer: B) 2, 3, and 4 only

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Explanation:

1. **Statement 1 is Incorrect:** Article 343 of the Indian Constitution declares **Hindi in the Devanagari script as the official language of the Union**, not the national language.
2. **Statement 2 is Correct:** Article 351 imposes a **duty on the Union government to promote the spread of the Hindi language** and develop it to serve as a medium of expression for all elements of the composite culture of India.
3. **Statement 3 is Correct:** Article 29(1) guarantees the **right of every section of citizens to conserve their distinct language, script, or culture**, protecting linguistic and cultural diversity.
4. **Statement 4 is Correct:** In the case of **State of Karnataka vs Associated Management of Primary & Secondary Schools (2014)**, the Supreme Court held that the **right to freedom of speech and expression (Article 19)** includes the **freedom to choose the medium of instruction** at the primary school level.

Therefore, the correct answer is **B) 2, 3, and 4 only.**

Mains Model Question:

Q. Discuss the constitutional provisions and judicial interpretations related to linguistic rights in India. How has the Supreme Court balanced linguistic diversity with the promotion of Hindi as the official language? (300 words)

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Linguistic diversity in India is a defining feature of its socio-cultural fabric, and the Constitution of India accommodates this diversity through various provisions. Article 343 of the Constitution declares Hindi in the Devanagari script as the official language of the Union, while English continues as an associate official language. However, Hindi is not recognized as the national language, acknowledging the multilingual nature of the country. To promote linguistic inclusivity, Article 351 mandates the Union government to promote the spread of Hindi while also ensuring that it assimilates the composite culture of India.

Despite these constitutional directives, linguistic rights are safeguarded through Article 29(1), which guarantees every section of citizens the right to conserve their distinct language, script, or culture. This fundamental right emphasizes linguistic secularism, ensuring that no single language dominates or marginalizes others.

The Supreme Court has played a vital role in balancing linguistic diversity with the constitutional mandate to promote Hindi. In the landmark judgment of *U.P. Hindi Sahitya Sammelan vs State of U.P.* (2014), the Court emphasized that Indian language laws are not rigid but accommodative, advocating for linguistic secularism. The judgment highlighted that the official language should not be confused with a national language, recognizing the organic development of language laws.

Furthermore, in *State of Karnataka vs Associated Management of Primary & Secondary Schools* (2014), the Supreme Court ruled that the right to freedom of speech and expression under Article 19 includes the right of primary school students to choose their medium of instruction. This judgment reinforced the principle that the state cannot impose a particular language in educational institutions.

Through these interpretations, the Supreme Court has ensured that linguistic diversity is preserved while balancing the constitutional mandate to promote Hindi, fostering an environment of inclusivity and respect for regional languages.

The languages we speak

We need to open up the tired political debate and focus on multilingualism rather than Hindi

DESHKAAL
BY YOGENDRA YADAV

THE STAGE is set for another round of political debate on the three-language formula (TLF). Ironically, our policy makers will debate the merits of three versus two languages just as the country sleepwalks into a de-facto one language policy, an English Only policy that flies in the face of common sense and expert wisdom on education. Worse, this state-sponsored cognitive, cultural and civilisational regress from multilingualism to monolingualism is being celebrated as modernity.

TLF is the official name for a policy that school children should be taught in Hindi, English and a regional language. The 1968 compromise suggested the following: "Hindi, English and modern Indian language (preferably one of the southern languages) in the Hindi speaking states and Hindi, English and the regional language in the non-Hindi speaking States". This compromise was struck at when the chief ministers of the country sat together to work out a language policy in the wake of anti-Hindi protests in the South. Biret mooted by the Kadambur Commission in 1948-49 and accepted by the first education commission, the Kothari Commission, the formula was incorporated in the first and second Education Policy formulated by the Congress governments in the 1950s and 1980s.

Here is the basic crux of the TLF: India is not just plurilingual, but that Indians speak different languages. India is multilingual in that most of the communities and individuals in our country use more than one language. Therefore, our education system must be geared towards survival and promotion of the multilingualism that is a constitutive part of Indian identity. There is considerable evidence now to show that multilingual education helps cognitive flexibility, divergent thinking, scholastic achievement, creativity and social tolerance. TLF is just a convenient way of operationalising multilingualism.

An expert group of linguists and educators — including D. P. Patanjali and Ramakant Agnihotri — concluded that "The three-language formula is not a goal or limiting factor in language acquisition, but rather a convenient launching pad for the exploration of the expanding horizon of knowledge and the emotional integration of the country". "Position paper of the National Focus Group on Teaching of Indian Languages: National Curriculum Framework, 2005 by the NCERT". This group recommended that children can learn, step by step, more than three languages, and learning additional languages actually helps the learning of the first and second language.

What's the debate, then? The Union government has withheld a substantial grant under the Samagra Shiksha Scheme from Tamil Nadu for its non-compliance with the National Education Policy (NEP). The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, M. K. Stalin, has refused to accept this diktat on the ground that his party is opposed to the TLF. The state has always taught two languages — Tamil and English. Insisting on a third language, he says, is a ploy to impose Hindi. Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan says the TN government will have to abide by the Constitution. Stalin has asked Pradhan to cite the relevant provision of the Constitution. Given its emotional overtones and the assembly election in Tamil Nadu next year, this confrontation is likely to be played out when Parliament resumes its Budget Session.

No doubt, the DMK government has good reasons to be offended and suspicious. The Narendra Modi government has repeatedly violated the letter and spirit of federalism. The Tamil Nadu Governor is barely acting on behalf of the BJP. The Modi government has repeatedly encroached upon the powers of state governments in the education sector, the policy of appointment of vice-chancellors being the latest instance. Besides, the Union government cannot use central funds as a stick to force state governments to adopt education policies, that too on sensitive issues like language choice.

Having said that, there are many issues with the NEP but the TLF is not one of them. The fact that the NEP has simply reiterated the TLF, which was an integral part of the first and second education policy documents as well, if anything, the NEP of 2020 actually dilutes the formula by omitting any mention of Hindi. Now the TLF is that children should be taught any three languages chosen by the state provided two of these three languages should be "native Indian" languages. And it allows classical languages like Sanskrit and Tamil to be counted within the two Indian languages. So, if Tamil Nadu wants, it can teach Tamil plus Malayalam or Telugu or Kannada, and English. It could even teach Tamil, classical Tamil and English to meet the requirements of the new TLF. So, Tamil Nadu can now consider TLF without any fear of Hindi.

So, instead of opposing the TLF, the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister could offer to accept it, provided it is uniformly implemented across all states of the Indian union. He could offer to introduce Hindi in Tamil Nadu schools provided all the Hindi-speaking states adopt Tamil or any other South Indian language as the "third language", as was indeed envisaged in the original formula. Or else, the state could introduce Classical Tamil as the third language, besides English and Tamil, just as Hindi-speaking states have introduced Sanskrit as the third language.

Such a move could highlight the simple fact that it is not Tamil Nadu but Hindi states that have sabotaged the TLF. The original consensus was for Hindi-speaking states to teach another modern Indian language, preferably a South Indian language. Initially, there were some plans of teaching Tamil in UP, Telugu in Haryana, etc. But soon the Hindi states found a short-cut: Sanskrit, or rather a rudimentary and mechanical rote-learning of the language, was presented as the "third language", thus bypassing the need to learn any other script or language. So, effectively, the TLF became an unequal bargain: While non-Hindi speakers were required to learn Hindi, Hindi speakers were not required to reciprocate. Hence, the political resentment against the TLF. It is time to call this bluff.

If the central government is serious about TLF and about not imposing Hindi, it should not make TLF a condition for release of central grant. Instead it should call a meeting of chief ministers, on the same lines as in 1968, and evolve a national consensus. And it must not allow Hindi-speaking states to get away with Sanskrit as a substitute for third language. This would be a test of our political class to take on the elephant in the room, the hegemony of English in our education system. It may be easier to resist a repressive and authoritarian state or to stand up to an industry-military complex than to break free of the dense web of power that is the rule of the English language.

Yadav is member, Swarnajyoti, and national convenor of Bharat Jodo Abhiyan

PRAGNYA BHARATHI: Detailed News Analysis (DNA)

Topic : Government Initiatives to Tackle Nutrition Challenges in India

Relevance : GS Paper 3 Health and Nutrition

Source : The Hindu

Context :



India faces a dual burden of malnutrition, where **undernutrition and overnutrition (lifestyle diseases)** coexist. To address this complex problem, the Government of India has implemented several nutrition-focused initiatives. Here's a detailed look at the major schemes and programs:

POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission)

- **Launch Year:** 2018
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)
- **Objective:** To reduce stunting, undernutrition, anemia (among young children, women, and adolescent girls), and low birth weight by 2%, 2%, 3%, and 2% per annum respectively.

DEL – HYD – B'LORE – PUNE – TPT

• Key Features:

- **Convergence of Services:** Integrates with schemes like ICDS, National Health Mission (NHM), and Swachh Bharat Mission for a holistic approach.
- **ICT-Based Real-Time Monitoring:** Uses **technology and mobile applications** to track nutrition levels and service delivery.
- **Jan Andolan (People's Movement):** Emphasizes community involvement to spread awareness and promote behavioral change.
- **Growth Monitoring Devices and Mobile App:** To monitor the nutritional status of beneficiaries in real-time.

Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0



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PRAGNYA BHARATHI: Detailed News Analysis (DNA)

- **Launch Year:** 2021 (Merger and Revamp of Earlier Schemes)
- **Components:**
 1. Anganwadi Services
 2. POSHAN Abhiyaan
 3. Scheme for Adolescent Girls
- **Objectives:**
 - To strengthen **Anganwadi infrastructure**.
 - To ensure **nutrient-dense supplementary nutrition** for children, adolescent girls, pregnant women, and lactating mothers.
 - **Focus Areas:** Aspirational districts and the **North-Eastern Region**.
- **Key Features:**
 - **Take-Home Rations (THR)** and **Hot Cooked Meals (HCM)** for targeted groups.
 - **Tracking and Monitoring of Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM)** and **Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM)** cases.
 - **Capacity Building:** Training of Anganwadi workers to enhance their role in delivering nutritional services.

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)



- **Launch Year:** 1975
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Women and Child Development
- **Objective:** To improve the **nutritional and health status of children (0-6 years)**, adolescent girls, pregnant women, and lactating mothers.
- **Services Provided:**
 - **Supplementary Nutrition:** To bridge the calorie gap between the national recommended and average intake.
 - **Health Check-ups:** Regular monitoring of children's growth and nutrition.
 - **Immunization:** To protect against vaccine-preventable diseases.
 - **Health and Nutrition Education:** For mothers and caregivers.
 - **Referral Services:** Linking beneficiaries to health care when needed.

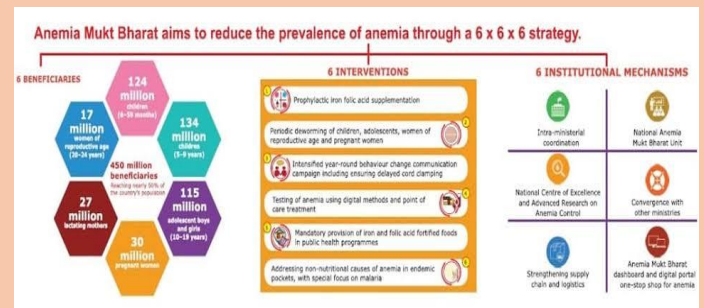
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- **Pre-School Non-Formal Education:** To prepare children for school.

Mid-Day Meal Scheme (PM POSHAN)

- **Launch Year:** 1995 (Revised as PM POSHAN in 2021)
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Education
- **Objective:** To provide **nutritious cooked meals** to school children to enhance **enrollment, retention, and attendance**.
- **Target Group:** Children in **Government and Government-aided schools** from **Classes I to VIII**.
- **Nutritional Standards:**
 - Primary (450 kcal and 12 grams of protein per day)
 - Upper Primary (700 kcal and 20 grams of protein per day)
- **Additional Features (Under PM POSHAN):**
 - Inclusion of **millets and traditional grains** in meals.
 - **Nutrition Gardens:** To encourage students to grow vegetables within the school premises.
 - **Social Audit and Community Participation:** To ensure transparency and efficiency.

Anaemia Mukta Bharat (AMB)



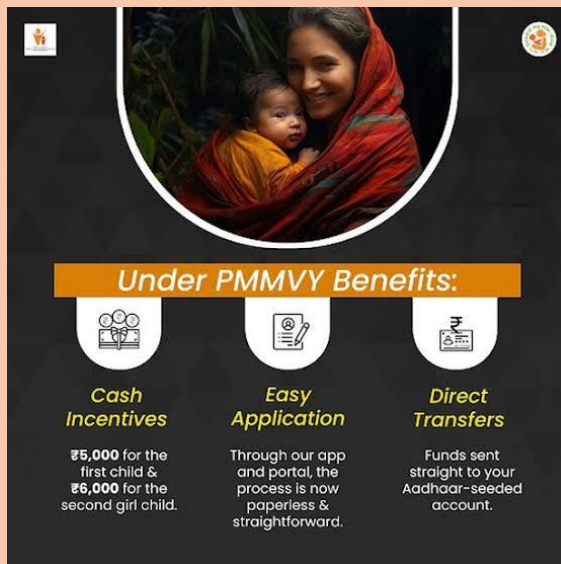
- **Launch Year:** 2018
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- **Objective:** To reduce **anemia prevalence by 3 percentage points per year** among children (6-59 months), adolescent girls, pregnant women, and lactating mothers.
- **Key Components:**
 - **Iron and Folic Acid Supplementation (IFA)**
 - **Deworming Prophylaxis**
 - **Intensified Year-Round Behavior Change Communication (BCC)**
 - **Testing and Treatment of Anemia**
 - **Strengthening Supply Chain Management**

Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY)

- **Launch Year:** 2017
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Women and Child Development
- **Objective:** To provide **cash incentives to pregnant and lactating mothers** for the first live birth.

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- **Incentive Amount:** ₹5,000 in three installments upon fulfillment of certain conditions.
- **Purpose:** To improve maternal and child health by partially compensating for wage loss and encouraging institutional deliveries and postnatal care.



- **Key Provisions:**
 - **5 kg of food grains per person per month** at subsidized prices.
 - Special focus on **pregnant women, lactating mothers, and children.**
 - **Maternity benefit of ₹6,000** to pregnant and lactating women.

Eat Right India Movement

- **Launched by:** Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)
- **Objective:** To promote **safe, healthy, and sustainable diets** through consumer awareness and education.
- **Key Campaigns:**
 - **Eat Right Mela:** To create awareness about healthy eating.
 - **Eat Right Campus:** Certification to workplaces and institutions for providing healthy meals.
 - **Eat Right Toolkit:** Guidelines for food businesses to ensure safety and hygiene.

National Food Security Act (NFSA), 2013

- **Objective:** To provide **subsidized food grains** to approximately **two-thirds of the Indian population.**



Challenges :

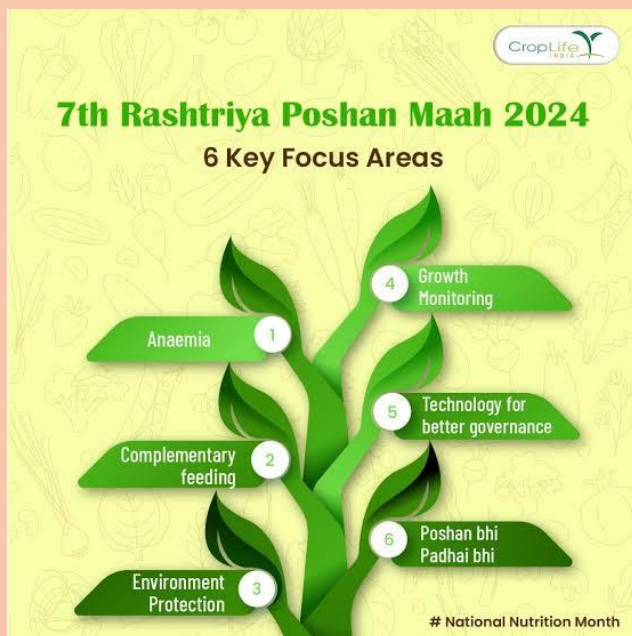
Despite these well-meaning initiatives, the **implementation gaps and lack of coordination** among various stakeholders hinder their effectiveness. Issues like **poor infrastructure in Anganwadi centres, insufficient trained staff, lack of awareness, and social biases** continue to persist.

To improve outcomes, there is a need for:

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1. **Strengthening Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs)** to expand nutritional services.
2. **Community Participation and Ownership:** Engaging **local elites and community leaders** to promote nutrition practices.
3. **Local Food Integration:** Emphasizing **nutrient-dense local food items** rather than relying solely on supplementary nutrition.
4. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Regular auditing and evaluation of programs to ensure accountability and effectiveness.

By adopting a **comprehensive and inclusive nutrition agenda**, India can address its diverse nutritional challenges more holistically, ensuring that no segment of the population is left behind.



Prelims Practice Question

Which of the following statements regarding the Government of India's nutrition initiatives is/are correct?

1. **POSHAN Abhiyaan** aims to reduce stunting, undernutrition, anemia, and low birth weight annually.
2. **Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0** focus only on pregnant women and children below 5 years of age.
3. **Anaemia Mukht Bharat** aims to reduce anemia prevalence by 3 percentage points per year.
4. **Mid-Day Meal Scheme (PM POSHAN)** primarily focuses on providing nutritional meals to primary and upper primary school children.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

- A) 1 and 3 only
- B) 2 and 4 only
- C) 1, 3, and 4 only
- D) 1, 2, 3, and 4

Answer: C) 1, 3, and 4 only

Explanation:

1. **Statement 1 is correct:** POSHAN Abhiyaan aims to reduce **stunting, undernutrition, anemia, and low birth weight** by specific percentages annually.
2. **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0 do not focus solely on pregnant women and children below 5 years. They also address adolescent

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girls and lactating mothers, emphasizing aspirational districts and the North-Eastern region.

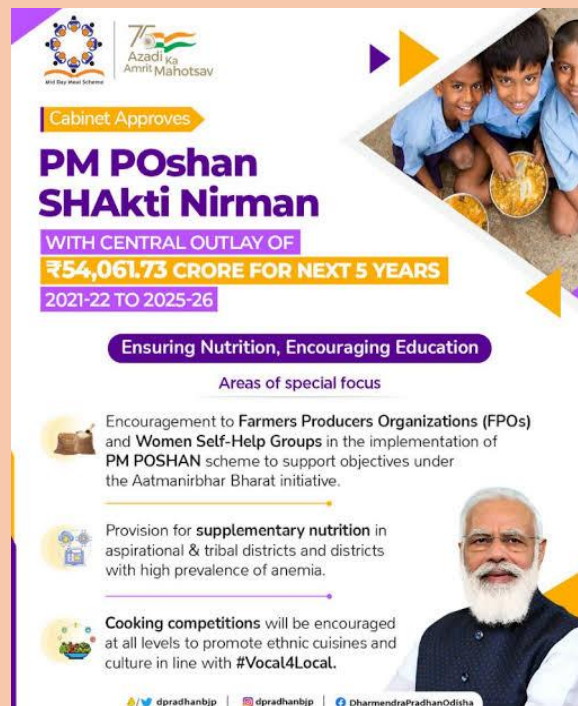
3. **Statement 3 is correct:** Anaemia Mukta Bharat aims to **reduce anemia prevalence by 3 percentage points per year** among vulnerable groups.
4. **Statement 4 is correct:** The **Mid-Day Meal Scheme (PM POSHAN)** targets providing **nutritious cooked meals to primary and upper primary school children** to improve enrollment, retention, and attendance.

Therefore, the correct answer is C) 1, 3, and 4 only.

Mains Model Question:

Discuss the challenges associated with tackling malnutrition in India despite various government initiatives. Suggest measures to address these challenges effectively.

Malnutrition in India remains a persistent challenge despite numerous government interventions aimed at improving nutritional outcomes. Initiatives such as POSHAN Abhiyaan, Saksham Anganwadi, POSHAN 2.0, and the Mid-Day Meal Scheme have been launched to address malnutrition among vulnerable groups, particularly women and children. However, the multifaceted nature of malnutrition and socio-economic disparities hinder substantial progress.



One of the primary challenges is the narrow focus of existing schemes on maternal and child nutrition, often neglecting other vulnerable groups such as adolescents, adult men, the elderly, and those suffering from non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Additionally, cultural practices, dietary habits, and socio-economic factors influence food consumption patterns, leading to unbalanced diets and lifestyle-induced health issues like obesity, diabetes, and hypertension.

Implementation gaps also pose a significant problem. Although schemes like POSHAN 2.0 and Anaemia Mukta Bharat aim to address anemia and malnutrition, the lack of local contextualization and inadequate integration with community practices reduce their effectiveness. Furthermore, health and wellness centers (HWCs), envisioned as crucial for implementing nutrition services, often lack adequate

PRAGNYA BHARATHI: Detailed News Analysis (DNA)

human resources and infrastructure, especially in urban areas.

community-driven solutions, thereby ensuring sustainable improvements in nutritional health across diverse population segments.

Tackling the problem of nutrition



Priyadarshini Singh
Fellow, Centre for Social and Economic Progress. Views are personal.

While health was not a priority for Budget 2025, it seems that nutrition is. In the coming financial year, two Union government schemes will receive higher allocations – Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan 2.0. But will this fix India's nutrition challenge?

Nutrition in India is not just about food insecurity, but also about dietary habits shaped by culture, caste, and gender relations. Only one aspect of the nutrition challenge receives most of the policy focus – malnutrition among women and children. Women outside of the reproductive age, men, and senior citizens rarely figure in national nutrition policy discussions. More importantly, we ignore diabetes, hypertension, and other lifestyle-induced non-communicable diseases which are really another manifestation of under nutrition. One type of nutrition deficiency is because some people just don't have enough to eat and the other type is because people are not eating sufficient nutritionally rich food. The outcomes are damning in unique ways.

India has among the world's highest share of malnourished children and anemic women. According to the National Family Health Survey-5, 36% of children under five are stunted and a meagre 1% who are breastfed between the ages of 6 months and 23 months receive an adequate diet. Fifty-seven percent of women in the 15-49 age group are anemic. There is a rise in the share of those with diabetes, hypertension, and other such lifestyle-diet induced non-communicable diseases (NCDs). 24% of women and 23% men in India are overweight or obese and 14% take medicines for diabetes.

A comprehensive nutrition agenda, not targeted intervention, will address malnutrition



severe and acute malnutrition cases, iron and folic acid tablets etc. With Poshan 2.0, there is additional focus on aspirational districts and the north-eastern region. But these schemes reinforce the idea that malnutrition is a problem only in certain parts of India and only in certain segments of the population. Instead, what we need is a comprehensive nutrition agenda in which nutrition is identified as a public health problem that impacts people across the social strata.

A comprehensive agenda would recognise the nutrition needs of different segments of the society. It must consist of: first, a clear identification of nutrition needs beyond reproductive and child health; second, a broad set of solutions, particularly rooted in the local food systems; and third, a clear identification of locally embedded facilities to deliver nutrition services. We need most work in identifying local institutional linkage for the agenda. Who will implement this in our neighbourhoods every day? The clear answer is the health and wellness centres (HWCs).

At present, we provide supplementary nutrition for pregnant and lactating mothers and young children through take-home rations, iron and folic acid tablets for adolescent girls at Anganwadi centres (AWCs), and mid-day meals for children in schools. We need to systematically expand the nutrition-focused activities to other segments of the population and involve HWCs and AWCs. The mix of nutrients which goes in the take-home ration for poor women is relevant for pregnant women from all strata of society. Food items which use locally available low-cost, nutrient-dense produce need to be emphasised for the middle classes too, which consume sugar-laden, fibre-poor packaged goods.

For HWCs to implement this agenda, they need to be in

To address these challenges, there is a need to broaden the focus of nutrition policies to include all age groups and health conditions, not just maternal and child health. Integrating nutrition awareness with local food systems and community engagement can help promote balanced diets. Strengthening HWCs with trained staff and nutrition-specific infrastructure will ensure consistent and comprehensive service delivery. Additionally, leveraging community leaders and local influencers can facilitate better public ownership and acceptance of nutrition initiatives.

Addressing malnutrition requires a holistic approach that transcends targeted interventions and embraces

Topic : Notifiable Diseases
Relevance : GS Paper 2 Polity and Governance
Source : The Hindu
Context :

Should cancer be a notifiable disease?

An effective approach would be to expand the National Cancer Registry Programme

C. Aravinda

Time and again, there have been calls to designate cancer as a notifiable disease in India. While some argue that this would enhance surveillance and treatment, the Union government has resisted the move, saying the practice is to notify only infectious diseases and that cancer is non-communicable and not infectious.

Recent shifts in disease notification policies raise questions about whether this reasoning still holds. In 2024, the government asked all the States to make snakebites a notifiable disease. This trend is not unique to India. In 1995, the U.S. became the first country to list lead poisoning as a notifiable disease, establishing a precedent for the surveillance of non-communicable diseases. This evolution in public health policy forces a critical examination of whether cancers warrant notification for surveillance in India.

The primary purpose of disease notification is to ensure that contagious diseases are kept under check. Notification of infectious diseases is a legal mandate and compels physicians to report designated diseases to public health authorities, failing which they could face legal consequences. Unlike infectious diseases, cancer does not pose an immediate threat to public health through direct transmission and sudden deaths. It is a diverse group of diseases rather than a single condition, and its detection often requires complex diagnostic procedures. Proponents of making cancer notifiable argue that mandatory reporting could enhance early detection and resource allocation.

However, there are fundamental issues with this approach. First, cancer is not a single-point diagnosis. Argua-

bly, cancers as a disease are more diverse ranging from benign to malignant. Notifiability triggers rapid containment measures, whereas cancer requires long-term management rather than emergency interventions. Legal obligations on physicians could impose a burden that does not translate into improved patient care.

India's National Cancer Registry Programme (since 1982) functions as a data collection mechanism, compiling crucial information on the demographics of cancer patients, cancer identification including type, stage, and morphology, the timing of diagnosis and staging at the time of detection, treatment details such as chemotherapy, radiation, and surgery, and follow-up and survival outcomes. The NCRP includes hospital-based registries, which collect data from cancer-treating hospitals, and population-based registries, which capture cancer incidence in a defined geographic area.

There are 269 hospital-based and 38 population-based registries as of 2022, which is insufficient. Hospital-based registries should be expanded to every cancer-treating hospital, including all district headquarters hospitals. Similarly, population-based registries should be established in every district, ensuring at least one unit per district for comprehensive nationwide cancer surveillance. Rather than legally mandating notification, strengthening existing cancer registries is a more thorough and effective alternative.

Second, making cancer a notifiable disease also raises privacy concerns. Notifiability generally does not account for



privacy because disease notification is meant to preserve public health over individual confidentiality. There is still stigma attached to cancer.

Many State public health acts still contain provisions that give sweeping powers to local authorities during a health emergency. While much of this has been rendered toothless over time, the legal precedent remains. Introducing cancer into such a framework could further deepen the reluctance among patients to come forward for diagnosis and treatment, making it counterproductive and potentially deterring patients from seeking timely treatment due to stigma and discrimination. The World Health Organization advocates mainly cancer registries, which mention notification as an option at the individual level alone.

An effective approach would be to expand the NCRP to ensure comprehensive data collection at all tertiary and district hospitals. Improving cancer screening initiatives would ensure early detection. Strengthening reporting mechanisms without legal mandates would allow oncologists and healthcare providers to contribute accurate data voluntarily rather than reporting under duress. Mandatory notification remains an apt approach suited for single-point, outbreak-prone diseases. For cancer, a well-structured registry system, bolstered by wider hospital participation, including private hospitals and robust follow-up mechanisms, offers a far superior solution to improving cancer surveillance in India.

Dr. C. Aravinda is an occupational and public health physician. Views are personal.

PRAGNYA BHARATHI: Detailed News Analysis (DNA)

- A **notifiable disease** is a disease that, by law, must be reported to government authorities when diagnosed.
- The primary purpose of notification is to enable public health surveillance and initiate measures to control the spread of the disease.
- Typically, notifiable diseases are **infectious or communicable**, meaning they can spread from one person to another.
- Examples include **tuberculosis, cholera, dengue, and COVID-19**.
- The process of notification involves **healthcare providers reporting cases to designated authorities**, who then use the data to monitor disease trends and take preventive actions.

- Notification requires healthcare facilities to **report each case to public health authorities**, which helps in:
 - **Early detection and rapid response**
 - **Epidemiological tracking and surveillance**
 - **Resource allocation and policy formulation**

The Debate on Making Cancer a Notifiable Disease

Cancer fatigue is more challenging than cancer

Managing to survive is the crux of fighting cancer: Experts

KANIZA GARARI | DC
HYDERABAD, FEB. 3

Cancer fatigue is more challenging than fighting the disease as many patients are not aware why they are tired, unable to concentrate attention or lead quality life as they did before. On World Cancer Day on February 4, experts say the crux of fighting cancer is not recovery alone but also 'managing to survive'.

Survival with quality life is important and this means people have to build self-confidence to overcome the mental trauma and also the side-effects of the treatment. Many patients are not aware they are suffering from cancer fatigue. Due to the high costs of treatment, many hide their ailment from family. Cancer not only affects an individual but is also a strain on the full family.

Experts state it is important to diagnose cancer early. It's also crucial to enable recovered patients lead a quality life. There are simple ways to overcome fatigue and the adverse outcomes of treatments.

Dr Ajay Chanakya Vallabhaneni, consultant surgical oncologist and robotic surgeon at KIMS Hospitals, said, "Many factors are linked to cancer fatigue. It is often hard to pinpoint the exact cause. Cancer-related fatigue occurs when cancer spreads to bone marrow and causes anaemia. Anaemia is decrease in red blood cells that carry oxygen to cells. Cancer fatigue is caused also by toxic substances disrupt-

METHODS TO COUNTER CANCER FATIGUE

● Increase physical activity by opting for regular, slow but functional exercises that release endorphins, helping elevate mood and fight tiredness.

● Treatment leads to nausea, vomiting, lack of appetite and loss of a sense of taste, which makes eating difficult. Right nutritional counseling will help provide the required protein and calories to increase energy.

● Behavioural techniques including cognitive therapy, relaxation, counseling, social support are helpful.



PROPER DIET ESSENTIAL TO REDUCE RISK

DC CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, FEB. 3

To reduce the risk of cancer it is important to include items in your diet which give sufficient antioxidants and Omega 3 acids. Nutritionists and oncologists urge people to have a varied diet to reduce the risk of cancer where sufficient fruits and vegetables must be a part. At the same time too much of red meat, raw and undercooked foods must be avoided as it increases the risk of cancer.

Which foods to eat?

● Include fruits like oranges, berries, pineapple, sweet lime.

● Include vegetables like broccoli, cabbage, collard greens, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts.

● While grains like wheat, oats, oatmeal, barley, brown rice, millets, legumes.

● Opt for proteins like whole grains, lean fat, fish, oily fish, egg whites.

● Eat dry fruits like almonds, walnuts, flaxseeds.

Prefer cooking methods of boiling, stewing, grilling, baking and roasting. Avoid too much fried foods.

ing cell functions. Other factors linked to fatigue are pain, depression and anxiety, inactivity, sleep disturbances, poor nutrition and associated health ailments."

Treatment drains the patient's energy. Those who receive chemotherapy, radiotherapy, bone marrow transplants and biologic therapies complain of tiredness.

Dr Revanth Gangasani Reddy, oncologist at Aware Global Hospitals, said, "Nearly 70 to 80 per cent of patients suffering from cancer give up hope during the chemotherapy done post-surgery. The family members are counseled that they must be motivated to fight cancer. We have found that some give up midway others do not have the mental

strength while many others succumb due to multiple factors like social, financial and mental distress."

Cancer drugs not only attack cancer cells but also the fast-growing normal healthy cells. For this reason, there is anaemia and this often leads to fatigue.

Cancers like leukemia, colorectal cancers and lung cancer are found to affect breathing.

Dr Surendra Bathula, oncologist at SLG Hospitals, said, "Every patient suffering from fatigue requires the right dietary and nutritional supply. They require proper therapies and support from family and friends in the recovery process. Only 20 per cent are able to provide that support."

WORLD CANCER DAY TODAY

Notifiable Diseases in India

- In India, **disease notification is governed by laws and public health policies**, and each state can declare diseases as notifiable.
- The **Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897** and the **National Health Mission (NHM)** play crucial roles in guiding disease surveillance.
- Common notifiable diseases in India include:
 1. **Infectious Diseases:** Tuberculosis (TB), Malaria, Dengue, COVID-19, Cholera, Plague, Measles, and Influenza.
 2. **Non-Infectious Diseases:** Recently, **snakebites** were made notifiable in 2024, showing a shift towards including non-communicable conditions.

Arguments in Favor:

1. **Improved Surveillance and Data Collection:**

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- Mandatory reporting could help track the **prevalence, patterns, and outcomes** of various cancers.
 - It would enable the government to **allocate resources efficiently** and develop targeted health policies.
2. **Early Detection and Awareness:**
 - Enhanced data can facilitate **early intervention and screening programs**, particularly in high-incidence areas.
 - This could reduce mortality rates and improve patient outcomes.
 3. **Learning from Global Practices:**
 - Some countries, like the **United States**, have made conditions like **lead poisoning** notifiable, setting a precedent for non-communicable diseases (NCDs).
 - The inclusion of snakebites as a notifiable disease in India in 2024 shows a shift towards considering **non-infectious conditions** for notification.

Arguments Against:

1. **Diversity and Complexity of Cancer:**
 - Cancer is not a single disease but a **heterogeneous group of diseases** (e.g., lung cancer, breast cancer, blood cancer).
 - It requires **long-term management rather than immediate containment**, unlike infectious diseases.
2. **Privacy and Stigma Issues:**
 - Reporting cancer as a notifiable disease could **violate patient confidentiality**.
 - **Social stigma** may deter people from seeking diagnosis and treatment, worsening outcomes.
3. **Burden on Healthcare Providers:**
 - Imposing a legal obligation on healthcare professionals may **overwhelm the system**.
 - Physicians may face **legal consequences for non-reporting**, adding stress without necessarily benefiting public health.
4. **Existing Infrastructure:**
 - India already has the **National Cancer Registry Programme (NCRP)** established in 1982.
 - The NCRP collects comprehensive data through:
 - **Population-Based Cancer Registries (PBCRs):**
Covering specific geographic areas to record cancer incidence and mortality.
 - **Hospital-Based Cancer Registries (HBCRs):**
Recording data from major cancer hospitals.
 - As of 2022, there are **269 HBCRs and 38 PBCRs**, but the **coverage is still insufficient**.

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Strengthening Existing Systems

Classify cancer as notifiable disease, improve access to treatment, say experts

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Highlighting the pressing need for concerted efforts to address the challenges associated with cancer care in India, experts here have urged the government to prioritise the classification of the disease as a notifiable disease and to work towards improving access to comprehensive care and treatment facilities nationwide. This move, they argue, would ensure accurate reporting of incidence and enable effective follow-up measures, the argued.

Indrani Kaushal, Joint Secretary, Union Health Ministry underscored the gravity of the situation, citing projections from a study conducted by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR). According to the study, India is projected to witness 15.33 lakh new cancer cases annually, with an estimated mortality rate of around 8 lakh.

Speaking at the 'Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) Roundtable for the Eastern Region', Kaushal highlighted Odisha as one of the top 12 states contributing significantly to the country's cancer incidence.

The experts also drew attention to the inadequate infrastructure for cancer care in India, noting that 85% of districts in the four Eastern states lack comprehensive cancer care centers.

Only 20% of cancer patients in the country have access to radiotherapy, a crucial treatment modality.

Raj Gore, the co-lead of the

FICCI Task Force on Cancer Care and CEO of Healthcare Global Enterprises Limited (HCG), emphasized the urgent need for more comprehensive cancer care centers across the nation. He noted that less than 30% of districts in India have access to such facilities, highlighting the magnitude of the problem. "Our task is cut out, and the magnitude of the problem is far greater than many realise," stated Gore.

"Our focus should not only be on raising awareness and prevention but also on ensuring better patient outcomes through timely and complete treatment of patients," he added.

Gore stressed the importance of not only raising awareness and prevention efforts but also ensuring better patient outcomes through timely and complete treatment. Additionally, the experts called for enhanced grass-roots-level prevention and awareness programs, along with training initiatives for healthcare workers such as Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs).

The formation of the FICCI Task Force on Cancer Care represents a concerted effort to tackle these challenges head-on.

"Our focus should not only be on raising awareness and prevention but also on ensuring better patient outcomes through timely and complete treatment of patients.

This encompasses improving access to comprehensive cancer care centres and mitigating the additional financial burden on patients and their families," added Gore.

1. Expansion of NCRP:

- Increase the number of hospital-based and population-based registries, ensuring at least one per district.
- Encourage private hospitals to participate actively in data reporting.

2. Strengthening Screening Programs:

- Enhance cancer screening and diagnostic facilities, especially in rural and underserved areas.
- Integrate screening into Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) for better accessibility.

3. Voluntary Reporting:

- Instead of making it legally notifiable, encourage voluntary reporting by healthcare providers to maintain data accuracy without coercion.

4. Data Privacy and Awareness:

- Implement strong data protection measures to maintain patient confidentiality.
- Conduct awareness campaigns to reduce stigma and promote early diagnosis.

Making cancer a notifiable disease in India is a contentious issue. While the objective of improving surveillance is important, the heterogeneous nature of cancer, privacy concerns, and existing data collection mechanisms make mandatory notification impractical. Instead, strengthening the National Cancer Registry Programme (NCRP) and enhancing cancer screening initiatives offer a more sustainable and patient-friendly approach. By

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focusing on **voluntary reporting and comprehensive data collection**, India can achieve robust cancer surveillance without compromising privacy or healthcare efficiency.

Prelims Practice Question

With reference to notifiable diseases in India, consider the following statements:

1. A notifiable disease is one that, by law, must be reported to government authorities to ensure public health surveillance.
2. In India, both communicable and non-communicable diseases can be designated as notifiable.
3. Cancer is currently a notifiable disease in India.
4. The National Cancer Registry Programme (NCRP) is responsible for collecting data on cancer cases across the country.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A. 1 and 4 only
- B. 1, 2 and 4 only
- C. 1, 3 and 4 only
- D. 2 and 3 only

Answer:

B. 1, 2 and 4 only

Explanation:

1. **Statement 1 is correct:** A notifiable disease is one that, by law, must be reported to government authorities to facilitate public health surveillance and control measures.

2. **Statement 2 is correct:** In India, both communicable (like tuberculosis and COVID-19) and non-communicable diseases (like snakebites) can be designated as notifiable.
3. **Statement 3 is incorrect:** Cancer is not currently a notifiable disease in India, although there is ongoing debate about whether it should be made notifiable.
4. **Statement 4 is correct:** The National Cancer Registry Programme (NCRP) collects and compiles data on cancer cases across India to assess the burden and trends of the disease.

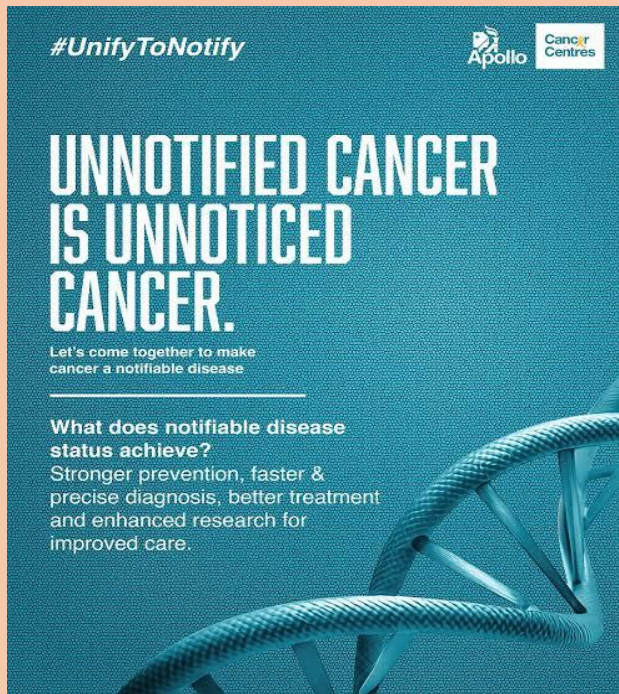
Hence, the correct answer is **B. 1, 2 and 4 only**.

Mains Model Question

Should cancer be made a notifiable disease in India? Critically analyze the merits and challenges associated with making cancer a notifiable disease.

The debate on whether cancer should be made a notifiable disease in India has gained traction recently. A notifiable disease is one that healthcare providers are legally obliged to report to government authorities. Traditionally, notifiable diseases include contagious and infectious conditions to enable rapid public health interventions. However, cancer, being non-communicable and non-infectious, does not fit the conventional category of notifiable diseases.

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Proponents argue that making cancer notifiable would enhance surveillance, early detection, and resource allocation. With improved data, healthcare planning and policy formulation would become more precise. Additionally, mandatory reporting could help track epidemiological trends and patterns, especially in regions where cancer prevalence is high. It would also support the National Cancer Registry Programme (NCRP) by improving data accuracy and comprehensiveness.

However, there are significant challenges associated with this approach. Cancer is not a single-point diagnosis but a diverse group of diseases with varied causes and progressions. Unlike infectious diseases that require immediate intervention, cancer demands long-term management rather than rapid containment. Legal mandates on healthcare providers could create unnecessary administrative

burdens without significantly enhancing patient care.

Privacy concerns are also significant. Disease notification laws often prioritize public health over individual confidentiality. Labeling cancer as notifiable might deter patients from seeking timely diagnosis and treatment due to the associated social stigma. Moreover, given India's vast and diverse healthcare system, implementing mandatory reporting across all states and healthcare institutions would be logistically challenging.

A more balanced approach would be to strengthen the existing NCRP and expand hospital-based and population-based cancer registries. Improving voluntary reporting mechanisms and encouraging private and public hospitals to participate would enhance data collection without compromising patient privacy. Therefore, rather than mandating notification, prioritizing comprehensive data collection through registries and public health awareness is a more pragmatic solution.

Topic : Bodo Peace Accord

Relevance : GS Paper 2 Polity and Governance

Source : Indian Express

Context :

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Bodo Peace Accord proved Cong. wrong: Shah in Assam

Pact brought peace, development in region, says Union Home Minister at annual conference of the All Bodo Students' Union; adds Modi freed Northeast from terrorism, bandhs, and blockades

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Assam on Sunday said the Congress had mocked him after he signed the third Bodo Peace Accord, but it had sustained, proving the party wrong.

Mr. Shah took a swipe at the Congress while addressing the 57th annual conference of the All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) at Dima near Kokrajhar, headquarters of the 8,970-sq.-km. Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), where tribal council elections are due in December.

The BTR is ruled by the United People's Party Liberal (UPPL) in alliance with the BJP. The Congress is likely to be the only mainstream party to challenge them in the elections.

"The Congress made fun of me when the BTR peace agreement was signed. They said there will be no peace in Bodoland and this agreement will turn out to be a joke. Today, the accord has



Amit Shah plays a traditional drum at the 57th annual conference of the All Bodo Students' Union in Kokrajhar, Assam, on Sunday. ANI

brought peace and development in a region where discussions once revolved around conflict and bloodshed," he said.

Lauds ABSU's role

The Minister lauded the ABSU for its big role in the prevailing peace and development in the BTR, which comprises five districts.

"There would have been no peace in Bodoland without the union's involvement," he said, adding that the government had provided ₹1,500 crore for the development of the BTR administered by the

autonomous Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC).

Focus on rehabilitation

Mr. Shah said the Centre had spent the bulk of ₹287 crore in the past three years on the rehabilitation of 4,881 extremists who signed the 2020 peace accord along with the ABSU.

Altogether nine peace accords had been signed in Assam, and more than 10,000 youth were brought to the mainstream under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Minister said. "Modiji freed the entire

Northeast from terrorism, bandhs, and blockades."

Lauding Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma for employing 400 of such Bodo youth in a commando battalion, he commended BTC chief Pramod Boro for several initiatives to strengthen peace and development in the region.

The Home Minister announced that the Centre would name a major road in Delhi after Bodofa (Guardian of the Bodos) Upendranath Brahma, who was born at Dima. "Bodofa's bust will be unveiled there in April in the presence of all your leaders and the Assam Chief Minister," he said.

Anti-drugs drive

Referring to the seizure of methamphetamine tablets worth ₹88 crore, and the arrest of four members of an international drug cartel in Imphal and Guwahati recently, Mr. Shah said the Modi government's crackdown on drugs would continue. "No mercy for drug cartels," he said on X.

- **Objective:** Establishment of the Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC) with limited political and administrative powers.
- **Provisions:**
 - BAC was to be formed under the Assam Legislative Assembly.
 - It aimed to address socio-economic development within Bodo-dominated areas.
 - However, the accord failed to meet expectations, leading to continued demands and violence.

Second Bodo Accord (2003)

- **Parties Involved:** Government of India, Government of Assam, and Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT).
- **Objective:** Formation of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution.
- **Provisions:**
 - Creation of Bodoland Territorial Area District (BTAD) comprising four districts: Kokrajhar, Baksa, Udalguri, and Chirang.
 - BTC was given legislative, administrative, and financial powers over 40 subjects.
 - Special financial assistance from the Central Government to develop the BTAD region.
 - Disbanding of BLT and rehabilitation of its cadres.

The Bodo Peace Accord is a historic agreement aimed at resolving the long-standing conflict involving the Bodo community in Assam. The Bodos, an indigenous ethnic group in Assam, have been demanding greater autonomy and recognition of their identity for decades. The Bodo movement has seen violent phases, including insurgencies led by armed groups like the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB).

The Bodo Peace Accord has been signed in three major phases:

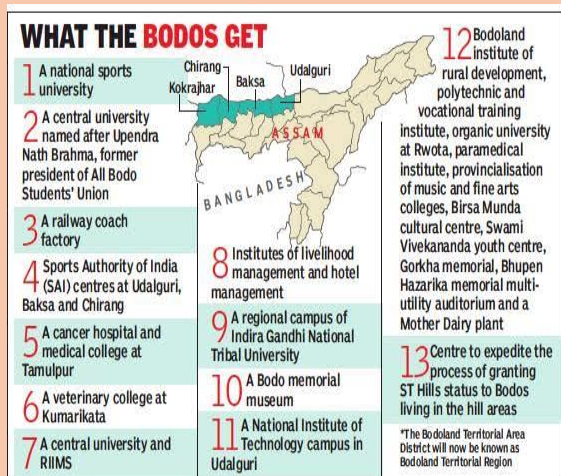
First Bodo Accord (1993)

- **Parties Involved:** Government of India, Government of Assam, and the All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU).

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Third Bodo Accord (2020)

- **Parties Involved:** Government of India, Government of Assam, four factions of the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), and All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU).



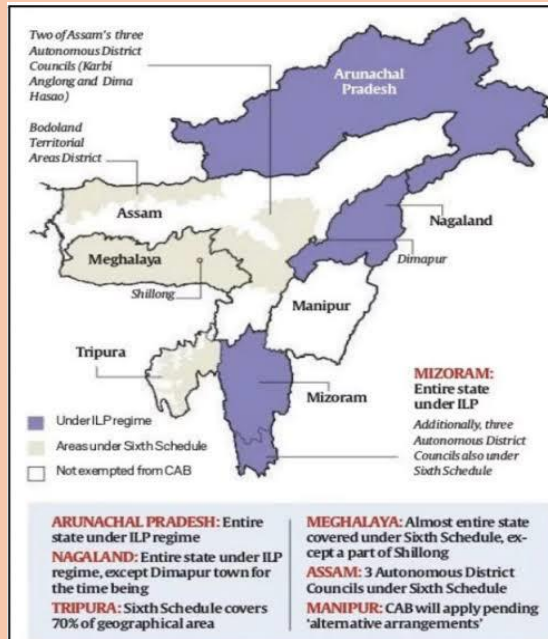
- **Objective:** A comprehensive solution to the Bodo issue while preserving the territorial integrity of Assam.
- **Provisions:**
 - Renaming of BTAD to **Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR)**.
 - More autonomy and legislative powers to the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC).
 - Additional financial package of ₹1,500 crores for development.
 - Increase in the number of BTC seats from 40 to 60.
 - Rehabilitation and socio-economic development of surrendered militants.

- Protection of Bodo language and culture while promoting Assamese identity.
- A special commission to resolve boundary issues between BTR and Assam.
- Setting up of a central university and a national sports complex in the BTR area.
- All NDFB factions agreed to lay down arms, and over 1,500 cadres surrendered.
- Withdrawal of cases against members of NDFB, except those involved in heinous crimes.

Impact of the Third Accord:

- **Peace and Stability:** Led to a significant reduction in violence and insurgency in the Bodo-dominated areas.
- **Development Initiatives:** ₹1,500 crore allocated for socio-economic projects in the region.
- **Political Integration:** The Bodo groups, including NDFB factions, joined the mainstream political process.
- **Empowerment:** Enhanced political and administrative powers to the BTC.

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Legal and Judicial Aspects:

- No major judicial interventions challenging the Bodo Peace Accord have emerged so far.
- However, maintaining law and order and ensuring socio-economic development remains a critical challenge for the BTC and BTR administration.

Significance:

1. **Symbol of Unity:** The accord is seen as a reconciliatory step between Bodo groups and the Indian government.
2. **Economic Development:** Enhanced financial assistance is expected to uplift the socio-economic status of Bodo areas.
3. **Political Stability:** Facilitates the mainstreaming of former insurgents into democratic politics.

Constitutional Provisions and Legal Aspects:

1. Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution:

- Grants special autonomy to tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram.
- BTC operates as an autonomous body under this schedule, with legislative and administrative powers.

2. Article 244 (A):

- Provides for the formation of an autonomous state within Assam.

3. Arms Act, 1959:

- Facilitates the surrender and rehabilitation of armed militants as per the peace accords.

Challenges Ahead:

- **Administrative Efficiency:** Ensuring that the BTC functions effectively with enhanced powers.
- **Socio-economic Development:** Proper utilization of financial packages for long-term development.
- **Inclusive Governance:** Balancing the aspirations of Bodos and other communities in the region.
- **Maintaining Peace:** Preventing the resurgence of violence and ensuring lasting peace.

The Bodo Peace Accord, especially the 2020 agreement, marked a transformative step towards

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stabilizing Assam's socio-political environment. While it has contributed to peace and development, consistent efforts are required to address socio-economic challenges and ensure inclusive governance. The success of the accord will ultimately depend on effective implementation and maintaining harmony among diverse communities.

Prelims Practice Question:

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Bodo Peace Accord:

1. The first Bodo Accord (1993) led to the creation of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC).
2. The second Bodo Accord (2003) established the Bodoland Territorial Area District (BTAD) under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution.
3. The third Bodo Accord (2020) renamed BTAD as Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) and increased the number of BTC seats from 40 to 60.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 and 2 only
- B) 2 and 3 only
- C) 1 and 3 only
- D) 1, 2, and 3

Answer:

B) 2 and 3 only

Explanation:

1. The first Bodo Accord (1993) led to the formation of the **Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC)**, not the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC).
2. The second Bodo Accord (2003) indeed established the **Bodoland Territorial Area District (BTAD)** under the **Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution**.
3. The third Bodo Accord (2020) renamed **BTAD as Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR)** and increased the number of BTC seats from **40 to 60**.

Hence, **statements 2 and 3 are correct**, while **statement 1 is incorrect**.

Mains Model Question:

The Bodo Peace Accords have played a significant role in bringing stability and development to Assam's Bodoland region. Discuss the evolution of the Bodo Peace Accords, their key provisions, and the impact on peace and governance in the region.


The Bodo Peace Accords represent a series of agreements aimed at resolving long-standing conflicts related to Bodo ethnic aspirations in Assam. The first Bodo Accord of 1993 resulted in the creation of the Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC) under the Assam government. However, it failed to meet Bodo aspirations as it lacked constitutional protection and adequate autonomy. The dissatisfaction led to continued insurgency and the rise of militant groups like the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB).

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Historical background- The Bodo movement was inspired by the idea of self-determination and a wish also to protect their distinct lingo-cultural identity. They already had the examples of the hill tribes like the Nagas, the Mizos and the Khasis and Jaintias of Assam who were able to successful. By 1930s Bodo identity had already taken a definite shape. In the conference of Assam Kachari Yuvak Sammilani held at Titabar, Jorhal on 12 August, 1927, the representatives drawn from all parts of Assam and all tribal communities of Bodo family adopted a resolution to recognize themselves as independent from the Hindu community in all respects, political, social and religious. Politics The Central Government's policy of reorganizing state boundaries in North-East also played significant role in shaping the demand for a Bodoland.

Phases of the movement-

- The first phase (1933-1952): the phase of political awakening-The Bodo leadership propagates the idea of Bodoland through the assumption that political autonomy will remove their deprivations



Bodoland by integrating former militants and enhancing administrative mechanisms. It has enabled significant investments in infrastructure and education, fostering a sense of inclusion and representation. Though challenges persist, the accord is widely regarded as a milestone in promoting peace and harmony in Assam.

In 2003, the second Bodo Accord was signed between the Central Government, Assam Government, and the Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT), resulting in the creation of the Bodoland Territorial Area District (BTAD) under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. This accord established the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) with legislative, executive, and financial powers over 40 subjects. Though it brought relative peace, discontent continued due to ethnic tensions and issues related to power-sharing and governance.

The most recent and significant breakthrough came with the third Bodo Accord in 2020, signed among the Central Government, Assam Government, Bodo groups including all factions of NDFB, and the All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU). This accord marked the end of the insurgency and renamed BTAD as Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR), increasing the number of BTC seats from 40 to 60. It also emphasized political, economic, and cultural rights of the Bodo people, promoting rehabilitation and development initiatives.

The 2020 Accord has been instrumental in transforming the socio-political landscape of