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Topic : The Waqf Amendment Bill 2025 (UMEED Bill)

Relevance : GS Paper 2 Polity and Governance

Source : The Hindu

Context :

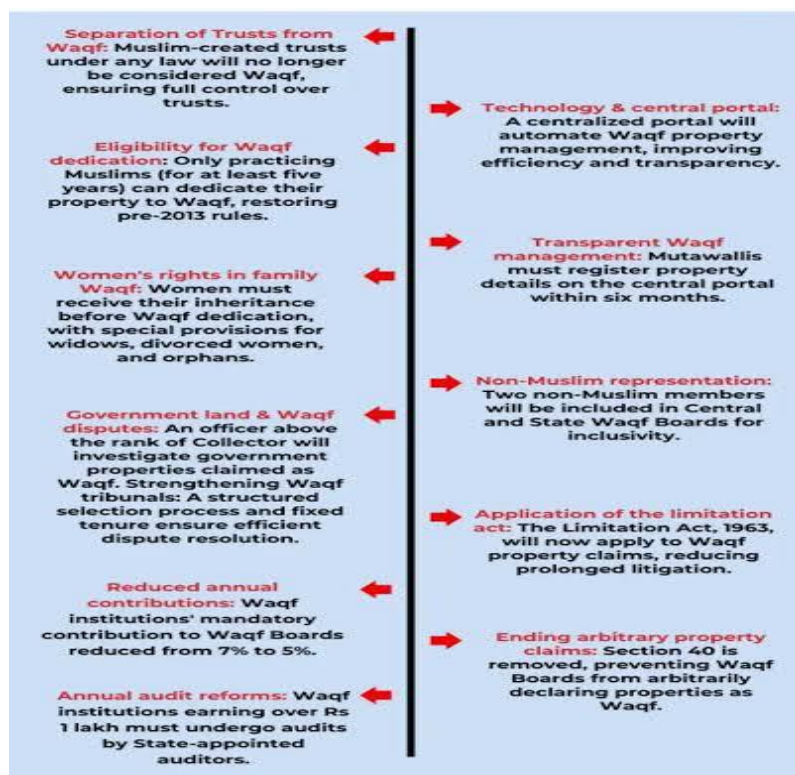
A **Waqf** is a legal arrangement in Islamic law where a property is dedicated permanently for religious, charitable, or social purposes. The ownership of the waqf property is considered to belong to God, while its benefits are directed towards specified uses, such as:

- **Religious** – Mosques, madrassas, burial grounds.
- **Charitable** – Hospitals, schools, orphanages.
- **Community Welfare** – Public utilities, guesthouses, drinking water facilities.

Key Characteristics of Waqf Properties:

1. **Irrevocability** – Once a property is declared as waqf, it cannot be sold, inherited, or transferred.
2. **Permanence** – It must serve its dedicated purpose indefinitely.
3. **Legal Protection** – Waqf properties in India are managed by **State Waqf Boards** and the **Central Waqf Council** under statutory provisions.

Key reforms in Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2024



Key differences between old and new law

S.No.	Old law of the Waqf Board	Waqf Board's new proposed bill
1.	Section 40 of the Waqf Act, 1995, empowers the Waqf Board to claim any property and the claimant of that land can only appeal to the Tribunal.	The proposed Waqf (Amendment) Bill allows claimants to appeal in Revenue Court, Civil Court, or High Court, in addition to the Tribunal.
2.	The decision of the Waqf Tribunal is deemed final and cannot be challenged in any other court.	The amendment allows an appeal in the High Court against the Waqf Tribunal's decision.
3.	If any land has a mosque on it or is used for Islamic religious purposes, it is automatically considered Waqf property.	The amendment states that land will not be considered Waqf property unless it has been donated to Waqf.
4.	Women and people of other religions are not allowed to become members of the Waqf Board.	The new amendment provides for the inclusion of two women and two members from other religions in the Waqf Board.

Extent of Waqf Properties in India

- India has around **8.7 lakh waqf properties** spanning approximately **9.4 lakh acres** of land.
- The total estimated value of waqf assets is around **₹1.2 lakh crore**.
- **Waqf Boards** are the **third-largest landowners** in India after the **Armed Forces** and the **Indian Railways**.

History of Waqf in India

Medieval Period: Delhi Sultanate & Mughal Rule

- The concept of **waqf** was introduced in India during the **Delhi Sultanate (12th century)**.
- Sultan **Muizuddin Sam Ghaor** dedicated villages for religious purposes, appointing a **Shaikh-ul-Islam** as administrator.
- During **Mughal rule**, waqf endowments expanded significantly, with large land grants for mosques, Sufi shrines, and charitable institutions.

British Colonial Rule and Legal Challenges

- The **Privy Council (19th century)** called waqf a “perpetuity of the worst kind” and tried to restrict its growth.
- **Mussalman Waqf Validating Act, 1913** – This law legally recognized **waqf-al-aulad**, which allowed properties to be dedicated as waqf while keeping benefits for descendants.

Post-Independence Era: Regulation of Waqf

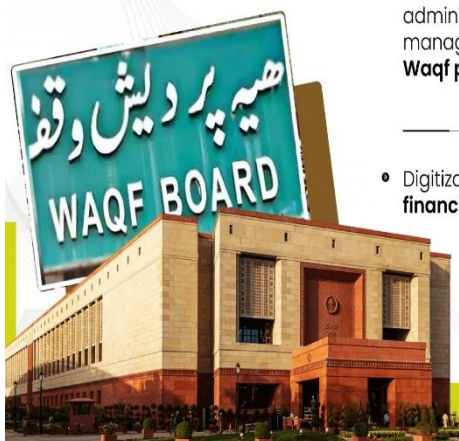
- **Waqf Act, 1954** – Established the **Central Waqf Council** and **State Waqf Boards** to manage properties and prevent misuse.
- **Waqf Act, 1995** – Strengthened protections, granted overriding powers to waqf laws, and established **Waqf Tribunals** to resolve disputes.



Benefits of the Waqf (Amendment) Bill (2025)

Modernizing Waqf Administration

- Amends the **Waqf Act, 1995**
- Aims to ensure **uniformity, transparency, and accountability** in the administration and management of **Waqf properties**
- Digitization to **prevent financial leakages**



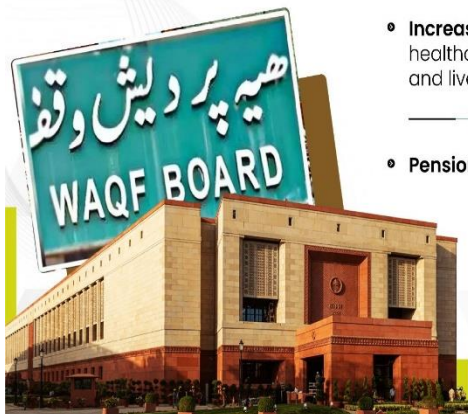
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Benefits of the Waqf (Amendment) Bill (2025)

Uplifting the Poor

- Digitisation and curbing misuse and illegal occupation**, will likely boost Waqf Board revenue, expanding welfare initiatives
- Increased revenue** for healthcare, education, housing, and livelihood support
- Pension schemes** for widows



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The Waqf Amendment Bill 2025 (UMEED Bill)

Despite previous waqf laws, mismanagement, encroachments, and legal ambiguities have persisted. The **Waqf Amendment Bill 2025** aims to **modernize governance**, enhance **transparency**, and address **long-standing legal issues**.

Key Provisions of the Waqf Amendment Bill 2025

1. Renaming and Inclusivity Measures

- Renamed as the "UMEED" Bill** – Stands for **Unified Management, Empowerment, Efficiency, and Development**.
- Inclusion of Non-Muslims** – Non-Muslim representatives will be included in **Central and State Waqf Boards** to promote diversity and accountability.

2. Changes in Waqf Property Recognition

- Removal of "Waqf by User" Concept** – Properties can no longer be declared waqf based solely on long-term religious use.
- Exemption of Previously Registered Waqf Properties** – All properties designated under “waqf by user” before the bill’s enactment will retain their status, except those under **government dispute**.
- Abolition of Section 40** – Previously, the Waqf Board could declare any property as waqf, even against the owner's wishes. This power is now **removed**.



Benefits of the Waqf (Amendment) Bill (2025)

Empowering Muslim Women

- Legal aid for **inheritance, family disputes and domestic violence** cases
- **Protection of women's inheritance rights** in Waqf-Alal-Aulad, female heirs are guaranteed their rightful share in family waqf
- **Women's representation in Waqf governance**, retains two Muslim women members in State Waqf Boards (Section 14) and the Central Waqf Council (Section 9)

- **Scholarships and skill development** programs
- **Microfinance support** for women entrepreneurs

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Benefits of the Waqf (Amendment) Bill (2025)

Empowerment of Backward Classes & Other Sects of Muslim Communities

- **Bohra & Aghakhani Representation:** One member each in State/UT Waqf Boards if they have functional Auqaf
- **Backward Class Inclusion:** Board to include Muslims from backward classes apart from Shia and Sunni members
- **Local Governance Strengthening:** Two or more elected members from municipalities or Panchayats to be included
- **Diverse Representation:** Board/CWC to include two non-Muslim members (excluding ex-officio members)

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3. Separation of Trusts from Waqf

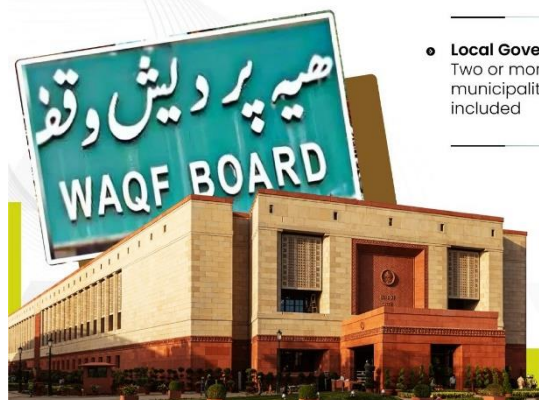
- **Muslim-run trusts** (charitable trusts, education funds, etc.) will no longer fall under Waqf Board jurisdiction **if they are already regulated under other laws.**

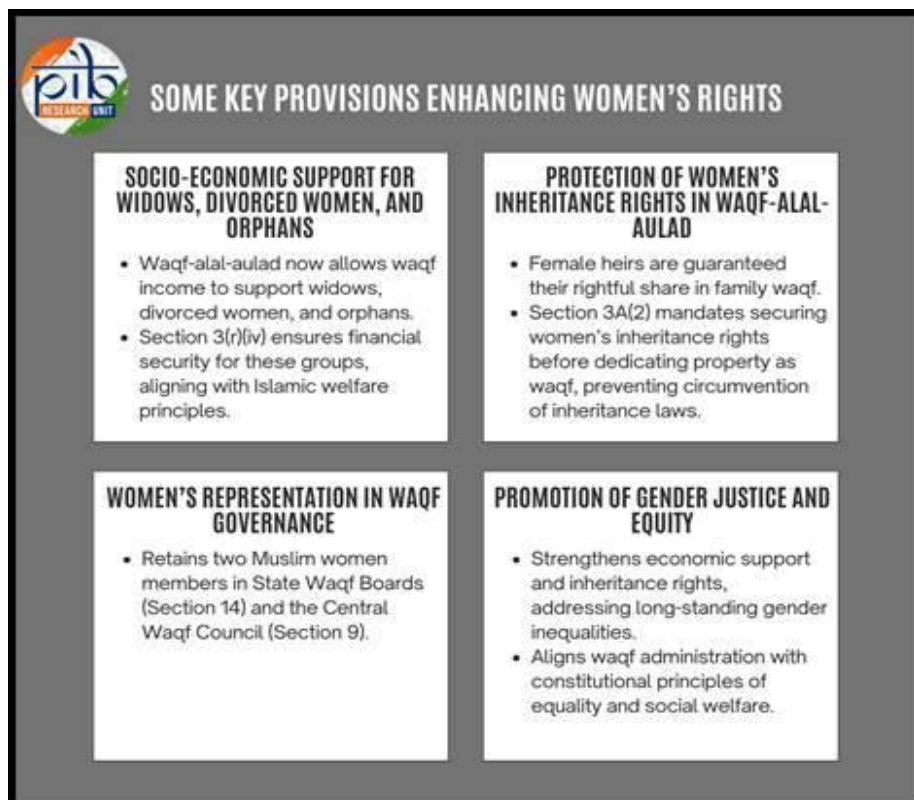
4. Legal & Administrative Reforms

- **Limitation Act, 1963** will now apply to waqf cases to **reduce prolonged legal battles** over disputed properties.
- **Tribal Land Protections** – Waqf can no longer be established on land under **Schedule V & VI** of the Constitution (protected tribal lands).
- **New Appeal Mechanism** – Waqf Tribunal decisions can now be challenged in **High Courts**, which was previously restricted.

5. Financial & Governance Reforms

- **Reduced Contributions** – Waqf institutions must now contribute **5% (instead of 7%)** of their income to State Waqf Boards, leaving more funds for **charitable causes.**
- **Mandatory Financial Audits** – Institutions earning over **₹1 lakh annually** must undergo **government audits** to ensure transparency.
- **Online Centralized Database** – All waqf properties must be **registered on a national online portal within six months** to track ownership and prevent misuse.





SOME KEY PROVISIONS ENHANCING WOMEN'S RIGHTS

SOCIO-ECONOMIC SUPPORT FOR WIDOWS, DIVORCED WOMEN, AND ORPHANS

- Waqf-alal-aulad now allows waqf income to support widows, divorced women, and orphans.
- Section 3(r)(iv) ensures financial security for these groups, aligning with Islamic welfare principles.

PROTECTION OF WOMEN'S INHERITANCE RIGHTS IN WAQF-ALAL-AULAD

- Female heirs are guaranteed their rightful share in family waqf.
- Section 3A(2) mandates securing women's inheritance rights before dedicating property as waqf, preventing circumvention of inheritance laws.

WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN WAQF GOVERNANCE

- Retains two Muslim women members in State Waqf Boards (Section 14) and the Central Waqf Council (Section 9).

PROMOTION OF GENDER JUSTICE AND EQUITY

- Strengthens economic support and inheritance rights, addressing long-standing gender inequalities.
- Aligns waqf administration with constitutional principles of equality and social welfare.

6. Resolution of Disputes

- **Property Ownership Disputes** – Will now be decided by a **senior government official** instead of the Waqf Tribunal.
- **Investigation of Government Property Claims** – If a government land is claimed as waqf, an **officer higher than a district collector** must investigate and make the final decision.

Significance of the Waqf Amendment Bill 2025

1. Enhanced Transparency and Governance

- Eliminates legal loopholes used to claim **unauthorized properties** as waqf.
- Online record-keeping ensures **accountability** and reduces land disputes.

2. Protection of Community Rights and Public Interest

- Ensures **Muslim women and children receive inheritance rights** before property is declared as waqf.
- Protects **tribal lands** from being encroached upon by Waqf Boards.

3. Streamlining Legal and Financial Processes

- **High Court appeal provision** strengthens legal checks and balances.
- **Financial audits** ensure waqf revenues are used for **genuine community welfare**.

4. Reducing Political and Bureaucratic Interference

- Limits the power of Waqf Boards to declare properties as waqf **without due process**.
- Prevents misuse of the "**waqf by user**" principle to claim disputed lands.

Criticisms of the Waqf Amendment Bill 2025

1. Allegations of Government Overreach

- Critics argue the bill **reduces Muslim community autonomy** in managing its religious institutions.
- Inclusion of **non-Muslims on Waqf Boards** is seen as an **unnecessary government intervention**.

2. Legal and Bureaucratic Challenges

- **Transfer of waqf disputes to district collectors** may **politicize** decision-making.
- **Ambiguity in legal definitions** could lead to **more litigation** over property rights.

3. Concerns Over Minority Rights

- Some believe the bill contradicts **Articles 25 & 26** of the Constitution, which protect religious freedom and the autonomy of religious institutions.

The **Waqf Amendment Bill 2025 (UMEED Bill)** is a **landmark reform** aimed at modernizing the governance of waqf properties, ensuring **greater transparency, legal clarity, and financial accountability**. While it introduces **significant legal protections** and **removes outdated provisions**, the bill has also sparked **debates over government interference and minority rights**.

The ultimate success of the bill will depend on **how effectively it balances** community autonomy with state oversight, ensuring that **waqf properties serve their intended charitable and religious purposes without political or legal exploitation**.



Global Comparison of Waqf Laws
India vs Other Countries

India is among the few nations ensuring **representation of socially disadvantaged or backward-class Muslims** in Waqf bodies

Unlike many countries, India **includes non-Muslims in Waqf governance**

Women's representation is mandated in Indian Waqf boards, absent in most other countries

India enforces **stricter annual audits**, similar to Qatar and Turkey

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Prelims Practice Question**Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Waqf Amendment Bill 2025:**

1. The bill removes the provision of 'Waqf by user,' which previously allowed properties to be designated as Waqf based on long-term religious use.
2. It mandates the inclusion of non-Muslim members in both central and state Waqf Boards.
3. The bill abolishes the Waqf Tribunal and transfers dispute resolution authority to a senior government official.
4. It increases the mandatory financial contribution of Waqf institutions to Waqf Boards from 5% to 7%.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer:

- (B) 1, 2, and 3 only

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** The Waqf Amendment Bill 2025 eliminates the 'Waqf by user' provision, meaning properties cannot be designated as Waqf based on their long-term religious use. However, already registered properties under this provision will retain their status unless involved in government disputes.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The bill mandates the inclusion of non-Muslim members in Waqf Boards to promote inclusivity.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** The bill removes the Waqf Tribunal's authority and transfers property dispute resolution to senior government officials.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** The bill **reduces** the mandatory contribution of Waqf institutions from 7% to 5% to allow more funds to be directed toward charitable activities.

Mains Model Question:

Q. "The Waqf Amendment Bill 2025 seeks to enhance transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the management of Waqf properties in India. However, it has also sparked debates regarding its implications on religious autonomy and governance. Critically analyze the key provisions of the bill and their potential impact on the socio-legal framework of India."

The Waqf Amendment Bill 2025, renamed as the UMEED Bill, introduces significant changes to the governance of Waqf properties in India. It aims to modernize management by ensuring greater transparency, inclusivity, and legal clarity. A key provision is the removal of the "Waqf by user" clause, which previously allowed properties to be declared as Waqf based on long-term religious use. This move is intended to prevent legal ambiguities but has raised concerns about the potential loss of historically recognized Waqf lands.

Waqf Act, 1995	Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025	Waqf Act, 1995	Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025	Waqf Act, 1995	Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decisions of the Tribunal are final & appeals against its decisions in Courts are prohibited The High Court can consider matters on its own accord, on an application by the Board, or an aggrieved party 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Omits provisions deeming finality to Tribunal's decisions Tribunal's orders may be appealed in the High Court within 90 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Government may get the accounts of waqfs audited at any point 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empowers Central Government to make rules regarding registration, publication of accounts of waqf & publication of proceedings of waqf boards Empowers Central Government to get these audited by CAG or a designated officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separate waqf boards for Sunni & Shia sects if Shia waqf constitutes more than 15% of all waqf properties or waqf income in the State 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separate waqf boards allowed for Bohra & Agakhani sects, along with Shia & Sunni sects

The inclusion of non-Muslim members in Waqf Boards is another significant change, aimed at fostering diversity and accountability. However, critics argue that this interferes with the autonomy of the Muslim community in managing its religious endowments. The bill also abolishes Section 40, which previously empowered Waqf Boards to declare any property as Waqf land, thereby addressing concerns over arbitrary land acquisitions.

Another major reform is the transfer of dispute resolution from Waqf Tribunals to senior government officials, raising questions about judicial independence and bureaucratic interference. The application of the Limitation Act, 1963, to Waqf disputes seeks to prevent prolonged legal battles, but it may also limit rightful claims. Financially, the reduction of mandatory contributions to Waqf Boards from 7% to 5% is seen as a step toward empowering local Waqf institutions.

While the bill introduces much-needed structural reforms, concerns remain about government overreach and the erosion of religious autonomy. Balancing transparency with community rights will be crucial to ensuring that the bill achieves its intended objectives without undermining constitutional freedoms.

Topic : Semicon India Programme**Relevance :** GS Paper 3 Science and Technology**Source :** Indian Express**Context :**

The **Semicon India Programme** is a strategic initiative launched by the **Government of India** with a total outlay of **₹76,000 crore** to establish a **semiconductor and display manufacturing ecosystem** in the country. This programme aims to **reduce dependence on imports, strengthen domestic capabilities**, and make India a **global hub** for semiconductor manufacturing.

**Key Components of Semicon India Programme**

- Fiscal Support for Semiconductor and Display Fabs:** The programme provides **50% fiscal support** of the project cost on a **pari-passu basis** for setting up semiconductor fabrication plants (**Fabs**) and display manufacturing units.
- Support for Compound Semiconductor and ATMP/OSAT Facilities:** It offers **50% capital expenditure support** for setting up **Compound**

Semiconductors, Silicon Photonics, Sensors (including MEMS), Discrete Semiconductor Fabs, and Semiconductor Assembly, Testing, Marking, and Packaging (ATMP) / Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test (OSAT) facilities.

- Product Design Linked Incentive (DLI):** This scheme provides **up to 50% of eligible expenditure** with a ceiling of **₹15 crore per application**, along with a **Deployment Linked Incentive** of **6% to 4%** of net sales turnover over **five years**, capped at **₹30 crore per application**, to incentivize semiconductor and chip design startups in India.
- Modernization of Semi-Conductor Laboratory (SCL), Mohali:** **This initiative enhances efficiency and reduces cycle time, enabling SCL to contribute significantly to India's semiconductor research and manufacturing ecosystem.**

Approved Semiconductor Manufacturing Projects

The Indian government has approved **five semiconductor projects** under the **Semicon India Programme** with a cumulative investment of **₹1,52,000 crore**. These projects include **one Semiconductor Fabrication facility and four ATMP/OSAT facilities**, which are expected to be completed within **four to six years**.



International Collaborations for Semiconductor Development

To strengthen its semiconductor manufacturing sector, India has signed **Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs)** with key global players:

- **United States**
- **European Union**
- **Japan**
- **Singapore**

These collaborations aim to foster investment, share technological expertise, and build a robust semiconductor ecosystem in India.

Skilled Workforce Development Initiatives

Semiconductor manufacturing is a **highly complex and technology-intensive sector**, requiring a specialized workforce. To address this, the Indian government has launched several initiatives:



1. **New AICTE-Approved Curriculum:**
 - **B.Tech in Electronics Engineering (VLSI Design and Technology)**
 - **Diploma in Integrated Circuit (IC) Manufacturing**
 - **Minor Degree in Electronics Engineering (VLSI Design and Technology)**
2. **Chips to Startup (C2S) Programme:**
 - Aims to train **85,000 industry-ready engineers** across **113 institutions** in **VLSI and Embedded System Design**.
 - **43,000+ students** have already been onboarded under this programme.

3. Skilled Manpower Advanced Research and Training (SMART) Lab:

- Set up at **NIELIT Calicut in 2022** with a goal to train **1 lakh engineers** nationwide within five years.
- **42,000 engineers** have already been trained in **VLSI and Embedded System Design**.

CABINET DECISION 29TH FEBRUARY, 2024

Giant leap for India Semiconductor Mission

Cabinet approves three more semiconductor units

❖ Semiconductor ATMP unit in Assam

- › Tata Semiconductor Assembly and Test Pvt Ltd will set up a semiconductor unit in Morigaon, Assam
- › Investment: Rs.27,000 crore
- › Technology: TSAT semiconductor is developing indigenous advanced semiconductor packaging technologies including flip chip and ISIP (integrated system in package) technologies
- › Capacity: 48 million per day
- › Segments covered: Automotive, electric vehicles, consumer electronics, telecom, mobile phones, etc

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MoUs to Enhance Semiconductor Research and Skill Development

1. ISM and IISc + Lam Research:

- Train **60,000 engineers** in **10 years** using **Lam Research's Semiverse platform**.

2. ISM and IBM:

- Facilitate **Indian students/professionals** in gaining access to laboratories, research centers, and internship opportunities in semiconductor research.

3. ISM and Purdue University:

- Promote **cutting-edge research, investment opportunities, and talent development** in the semiconductor sector.

CABINET DECISION 29TH FEBRUARY, 2024

Giant leap for India Semiconductor Mission

Cabinet approves three more semiconductor units

❖ Semiconductor Fab with 50,000 wfsm capacity in Dholera, Gujarat

- › Tata Electronics Private Limited will set up a semiconductor fab in partnership with Powerchip Semiconductor Manufacturing Corp, Taiwan
- › Investment: Rs.91,000 crore
- › Capacity: 50,000 wafer starts per month
- › Segments covered: electric vehicles, telecom, defence, automotive, consumer electronics, display, power electronics, etc

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Government's R&D Support for Semiconductor Innovation

To build a **self-reliant semiconductor industry**, the **Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY)** supports research and development (R&D) in:

- **Nanotechnology**
- **Semiconductor materials and processes**
- **Chip design and semiconductor IP cores**
- **Advanced semiconductor manufacturing techniques**

The **Semicon India Programme** is a **landmark initiative** aimed at making India **self-sufficient in semiconductor manufacturing**. By offering **substantial financial support**, fostering **global partnerships**, and focusing on **workforce development**, India is positioning itself as a **major player in the global semiconductor supply chain**. The combination of **government initiatives, industry participation, and international collaboration** will be crucial in achieving India's goal of becoming a **global semiconductor hub** in the coming years.

Prelims Practice Question

Consider the following statements regarding the Semicon India Programme:

1. It provides fiscal support of up to 50% of the project cost for setting up semiconductor fabs in India.
2. The programme includes a Product Design Linked Incentive with a maximum ceiling of ₹50 crore per application.
3. India has signed MoUs with the USA, European Union, Japan, and Singapore to develop its semiconductor ecosystem.
4. The Chips to Startup (C2S) programme aims to train around 1 lakh engineers in semiconductor and embedded systems.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- (a) 1 and 3 only
- (b) 1, 3, and 4 only
- (c) 2 and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, 3, and 4

Answer:

Correct Option: (b) 1, 3, and 4 only

Explanation:

- Statement 1 is correct: The Semicon India Programme provides **50% fiscal support** on a **pari-passu** basis for semiconductor fabs, display fabs, and related infrastructure.
- Statement 2 is incorrect: The **Product Design Linked Incentive** has a ceiling of **₹15 crore per application**, not ₹50 crore.
- Statement 3 is correct: India has signed **MoUs with the USA, EU, Japan, and Singapore** to strengthen its semiconductor ecosystem.
- Statement 4 is correct: The **Chips to Startup (C2S) programme** aims to train **85,000 industry-ready workforce** in semiconductor and embedded systems, which is close to **1 lakh engineers**.

Mains Model Question

Q. Discuss the significance of the Semicon India Programme in boosting India's semiconductor manufacturing capabilities. What other initiatives has the government undertaken to strengthen the semiconductor ecosystem?

The Semicon India Programme is a transformative initiative aimed at establishing a robust semiconductor manufacturing ecosystem in India. With a total outlay of ₹76,000 crore, the programme provides fiscal incentives of up to 50% of the project cost for setting up semiconductor and display fabs, as well as support for compound semiconductors, silicon photonics, and chip assembly, testing, marking, and packaging (ATMP/OSAT) facilities. This initiative is crucial as semiconductors form the backbone of modern technology, driving advancements in telecommunications, artificial intelligence, and defense.

Incentive	Project Implementing Agency (PIA)	Anchor Units	Tenure of the Scheme
Financial incentives of up to 50% of project cost will be awarded, subject to a ceiling of INR 70 crore for every 100 acres of land.	Applications under the scheme can be made by State Governments, State Implementing Agencies, Central Public Sector Units (CPSU), State Public Sector Units (SPSU), Industrial Corridor Development Corporation (ICDC), etc.	Electronics Manufacturing companies with a commitment to purchase/lease a minimum of 20% of the land area and invest a minimum of INR 300 crore.	EMC 2.0 will be open for applications for 3 years. A further period of 5 years will be available for disbursement of funds.

BARGAINING CHIP

- MeitY to explore possibility for venture between SCL and commercial fab partner to modernise brownfield fab facility
- Govt to set up "India Semiconductor Mission"; to be nodal agency for implementation of the scheme

50% of project cost as max support to be offered to semiconductor and display fab units. Govt expects two of each to come up.	30% of capex as max support to compound semiconductor units and ATMP facilities. Govt expects at least 15 such units	50% of expenditure as max design-linked incentive to homegrown fabless firms; 4%-6% product deployment-linked incentive on net sales for five years
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To further strengthen India's semiconductor ecosystem, the government has signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with key global players, including the USA, European Union, Japan, and Singapore. These collaborations aim to enhance research, manufacturing capabilities, and supply chain resilience. Recognizing that semiconductor manufacturing is highly technology-intensive, the government has launched skill development programs such as the Chips to Startup (C2S) initiative, which aims to train 85,000 industry-ready professionals. Additionally, the establishment of a Skilled Manpower Advanced Research and Training (SMART) Lab in NIELIT Calicut is expected to train one lakh engineers in VLSI and embedded system design.

The government is also modernizing the Semi-Conductor Laboratory (SCL) in Mohali and fostering R&D in semiconductor design, nanotechnology, and chip fabrication. Further, collaborations with institutions like IISc, Purdue University, and companies like IBM and Lam Research are facilitating research, training, and industry partnerships.

With these efforts, India is positioning itself as a global semiconductor hub, reducing import dependence and boosting domestic manufacturing under the Atmanirbhar Bharat vision. The successful execution of these initiatives will play a pivotal role in strengthening India's position in the global semiconductor value chain.

Topic : Poshan and Anganwadi Services: Strengthening Nutrition, Early Childhood Care, and Women's Development in India

Relevance : GS Paper 2 Polity and Governance

Source : PIB

Context :

Poshan and Anganwadi services are the cornerstone of India's approach to improving maternal and child health, reducing malnutrition, and enhancing early childhood education. These initiatives not only address nutritional deficiencies but also integrate education and healthcare to ensure holistic development for children and women. The government has launched multiple programs to reinforce the role of Anganwadi centers, empower Anganwadi workers, and improve service delivery using technology and structured training.

Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi (PBPB) Program

Launched on May 10, 2023, the **Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi (PBPB) program** aims to improve early childhood education within Anganwadi centers while maintaining a strong focus on nutrition. It integrates learning and nutrition by training **13.9 lakh Anganwadi Workers (AWWs)** through a **Two-Tier Training Model**. This model ensures high-quality education and nutrition for children aged **0-6 years**.

#POSHANAbhiyaan

POSHAN Abhiyaan
PM's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nourishment
सही पोषण - देश रोशन

POSHAN Abhiyaan
will promote positive behaviour change towards infant & young child feeding practices.

- Early initiation of breastfeeding within an hour after birth
- Exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months
- Complementary feeding from 6 months, along with breastfeeding up to 2 years

Government of India
Ministry of Women and Child Development

wcd.nic.in | f /PMOIndia | f /MinistryWCD | @Manekagandhibjp | f /ManekaGandhiOfficial

The **curriculum and pedagogical approach** are based on two frameworks:

- **Aadharshila:** A national curriculum for early childhood education for children aged **3-6 years**.
- **Navchetana:** A framework designed for **early childhood stimulation** for children under **three years**

By March 2025, over **4.2 lakh AWWs** had received structured training under the program, with **Maharashtra alone training 35,174 workers**. The initiative ensures play-based and activity-based learning, growth monitoring, parental engagement, and inclusive education, even for children with disabilities.

Digital Integration: Poshan Tracker App

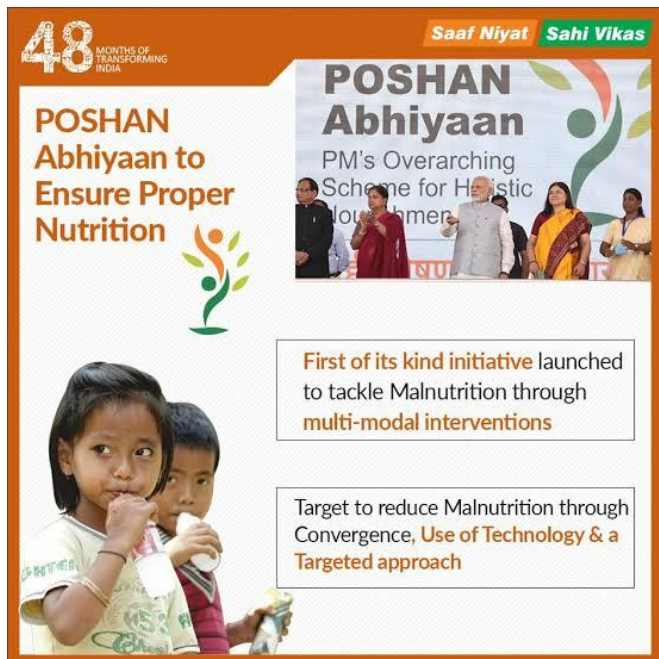
A key component of PBPB is the **Poshan Tracker App**, which provides continuous digital support to Anganwadi workers.

DEL-HYD-B'LORE-PUNE-TPT

<https://pragnyaiascoachinghyderabad.com>

+91 9880486671

This app delivers daily learning prompts, voice notes, and educational videos in multiple languages. It follows a **structured 44-week curriculum**, consisting of **36 weeks of active learning and 8 weeks of reinforcement**. The digital intervention ensures that Anganwadi workers remain well-equipped to offer high-quality early childhood education and nutrition services.



Poshan Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission)

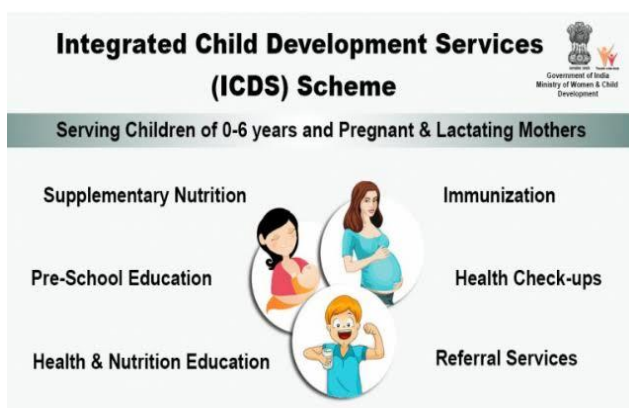
Launched in **2018**, Poshan Abhiyaan focuses on reducing malnutrition among **women, adolescent girls, and children**. It promotes:

- **Maternal nutrition and breastfeeding awareness**
- **Monitoring and tracking nutritional indicators**
- **Community participation for nutrition awareness**
- **Direct Benefit Transfers (DBT) to ensure efficient food distribution**

The program also incorporates the **Jan Andolan (People's Movement)** approach, involving community participation in improving nutritional outcomes.

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)

The **ICDS scheme**, implemented through **Anganwadi centers**, plays a crucial role in addressing malnutrition and child development. It provides **supplementary nutrition, preschool education, and healthcare services** to children under six years, along with pregnant and lactating mothers. The **Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP)** under ICDS ensures the availability of fortified food to malnourished children and women.



Anaemia Mukt Bharat Initiative

This initiative targets **iron-deficiency anemia** among women, children, and adolescents. It promotes:

- **Iron and folic acid supplementation**
- **Regular health check-ups for anemia detection**
- **Fortification of staple foods with essential micronutrients**

- Public awareness campaigns on nutrition



Maternal and Child Healthcare Initiatives

1. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY):

- Provides **financial assistance** of ₹5,000 to pregnant and lactating mothers for their first childbirth.
- Encourages **institutional deliveries** and **postnatal care**.

2. LaQshya (Labour Room Quality Improvement Initiative):

- Focuses on **improving labor room and maternity ward facilities** in public hospitals.
- Ensures **safe and respectful childbirth experiences** for mothers.

3. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP):

- Promotes **girl child education and empowerment**.
- Aims to address **gender-based discrimination and declining child sex ratios**.

#AatmaNirbharBharatKaBudget

MISSION POSHAN 2.0 & SAKSHAM ANGANWADI

- 2 lakh Anganwadis to be upgraded as 'Saksham Anganwadis'
- Nutritional norms and standards to be improved
- Quality and testing of Take-home Ration to be strengthened
- Traditional community food habits to be promoted
- Delivery of food under the Supplementary Nutrition Program to be optimised

Rashtriya Poshan Maah
1-30 September, 2024

Focus Themes of 7th Poshan Maah

- Anaemia
- Growth Monitoring
- Complementary Feeding
- Poshan Dhi Padhar Bhi
- Ek Pad Maa Ke Naam
- Technology for better Governance

Let's promote nutrition and combat malnutrition

Women's Economic Development and Empowerment Initiatives**1. Mission Shakti:**

- Strengthens **women's safety, security, and empowerment**.
- Provides **skill training, self-help group (SHG) support, and financial inclusion programs**.

2. Mahila Shakti Kendra (MSK):

- Offers **community-level support** for women's development.
- Implements **capacity-building programs and awareness campaigns**.

Recent Developments in Poshan and Anganwadi Services

The government has recently enhanced the **Poshan Tracker app** with real-time **monitoring and data analytics** to improve service delivery at Anganwadi centers. Additionally, new partnerships between ministries have been established to create a **multi-sectoral approach** toward tackling malnutrition and early childhood development.

India's commitment to **nutrition, early childhood education, and women's development** is evident through a combination of policy-driven programs, digital tools, and community participation. By integrating education, nutrition, healthcare, and technological advancements, these initiatives lay a strong foundation for the holistic well-being of women and children, fostering a healthier and more developed society.

Prelims Practice Question:

Consider the following statements regarding Poshan and Anganwadi initiatives in India:

1. Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi (PBPB) integrates early childhood education with nutrition services at Anganwadi centers.
2. The Poshan Tracker application provides real-time data on child growth and Anganwadi service delivery.
3. The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) program focuses exclusively on nutrition and does not include preschool education.
4. Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) provides financial assistance to all pregnant women for their first two childbirths.

Which of the above statements are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1, 2, and 4 only
- (d) 1, 2, and 3 only

Answer:

- (a) 1 and 2 only**

Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct:** Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi (PBPB) integrates early childhood education with nutrition services at Anganwadi centers to improve learning outcomes and nutritional well-being.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** The Poshan Tracker application is a digital tool that helps monitor child nutrition and Anganwadi service delivery in real time.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect:** ICDS includes both nutrition and preschool education, making it a comprehensive scheme for early childhood care and development.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** PMMVY provides financial assistance only for the first childbirth and not for the second.

Mains Model Question

Q. "Discuss the role of Poshan and Anganwadi initiatives in improving maternal and child health in India. How have government schemes such as Poshan Abhiyaan, Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi, and ICDS contributed to early childhood care and development?"

The Poshan and Anganwadi initiatives play a critical role in addressing malnutrition, promoting maternal health, and ensuring early childhood care in India. Anganwadi centers, under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), provide essential services such as supplementary nutrition, health check-ups, immunization, and preschool education. These centers serve as the foundation for the government's fight against child malnutrition and developmental delays.

STRENGTHENING CHILDCARE SYSTEM	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Training aligns with revamped national curriculum for early childhood care ➤ 2,758 Child Development Project Officers and Supervisors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> trained as Master Trainers to lead sessions ➤ Focus on play-based learning, cognitive development, and comprehensive child growth

Poshan Abhiyaan, launched in 2018, aims to reduce stunting, undernutrition, and anemia among children and women. It promotes the use of technology, behavioral change campaigns, and better monitoring of nutritional outcomes. The scheme encourages inter-sectoral convergence between health, education, and nutrition to provide a holistic approach to child and maternal well-being.

The Poshan Bhi Padhai Bhi (PBPB) initiative, introduced in 2023, integrates early childhood education with nutrition services at Anganwadi centers. It focuses on training Anganwadi Workers (AWWs) to deliver structured play-based learning while ensuring proper nutritional care for children. The use of the Poshan Tracker application enhances real-time monitoring and digital learning support, improving the effectiveness of Anganwadi services.

Additionally, schemes like the Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana (PMMVY) provide financial assistance to pregnant women, ensuring better maternal health. The Anaemia Mukh Bharat initiative focuses on reducing anemia through iron and folic acid supplementation. These efforts, combined with initiatives like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao and Mission Shakti, strengthen women's overall development and well-being.

By integrating nutrition, healthcare, and education, these initiatives collectively aim to improve early childhood development and maternal health, contributing to a healthier future for India.

Topic : Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED)

Relevance : GS Paper 2 Polity and Governance

Source : Indian Express

Context :

The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) is a national-level organization under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, established in 1987. Its primary objective is to promote tribal products, facilitate sustainable livelihoods, and provide economic support to tribal communities across the country. TRIFED plays a crucial role in empowering tribal artisans, entrepreneurs, and producers by ensuring fair trade practices, skill development, and enhanced market access.

TRIFED's Role in Tribal Development

TRIFED serves as a marketing platform that connects tribal artisans and producers to mainstream markets through its flagship initiative, **TRIBES India**. It operates through various channels, including physical retail stores, exhibitions, and e-commerce platforms. TRIFED's efforts focus on improving product designs, integrating technology, and expanding the market reach of tribal products. The organization also prioritizes partnerships with institutions to enhance skill development and capacity building among tribal communities.

Recent Initiatives and Collaborations

In February 2025, TRIFED entered into Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with organizations such as the **National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT)** and **Himachal Pradesh Marketing Corporation (HPMC)**. These collaborations aim to:

- **Improve product designs** to make tribal crafts more competitive in domestic and international markets.

TRIFED

What is TRIFED?

- The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) is a national-level cooperative body established in 1987 under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.
- It operates with the core objective of empowering tribals through market development and sustainable practices.

Objectives:

- **Promote socio-economic development of tribal communities** through marketable development of their products, primarily Minor Forest Produce (MFP) and Surplus Agricultural Produce (SAP).
- **Facilitate and strengthen tribal cooperatives** and collectives for sustainable livelihood generation.
- **Ensure fair market access and remunerative prices** for tribal products.
- Promote traditional tribal arts, crafts, and culture through marketing and branding initiatives.

Key Functions:

- **Procurement and Marketing:** TRIFED acts as a market intermediary, procuring MFP and SAP directly from tribal communities at fair prices and marketing them through its retail chain "Tribes India" and other outlets.
- **Value Addition and Product Development:** It supports value addition and product development initiatives to enhance the marketability and competitiveness of tribal products.
- **Capacity Building and Skill Development:** TRIFED provides training and skill development programs to tribal communities in entrepreneurship, marketing, product design, and value addition.
- **Financial Assistance:** It offers various financial schemes and subsidies to support tribal cooperatives, collectives, and individual entrepreneurs.
- **Policy Advocacy:** TRIFED advocates for policy changes and initiatives that benefit tribal communities and their economic development.



- **Infuse modern technology** into traditional craftsmanship, thereby increasing production efficiency.
- **Enhance market access** through online and offline platforms, ensuring tribal artisans receive fair pricing and wider visibility.

Through such initiatives, TRIFED ensures that tribal products, including textiles, handicrafts, organic food products, and minor forest produce, gain prominence in national and global markets.

Market Access and Economic Empowerment

TRIFED operates through **TRIBES India Outlets**, which showcase a wide range of indigenous products. Additionally, the organization has facilitated the onboarding of over **13,000 tribal products** on various e-commerce platforms. It actively participates in national and international exhibitions, enabling tribal artisans to directly interact with buyers and expand their market presence. This approach helps in promoting the unique cultural heritage of India's tribal communities while providing them with sustainable income opportunities.

UNPRECEDENTED TRIBAL EMPOWERMENT

Making Tribals Aatmanirbhar

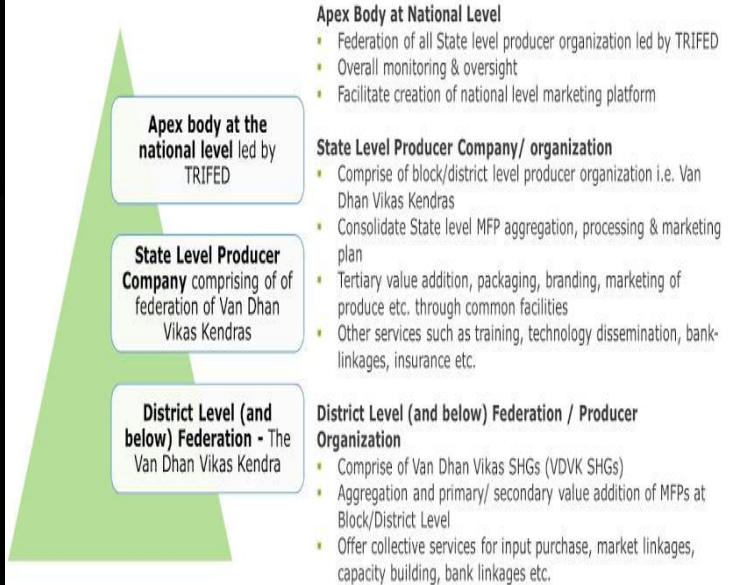
- TRIFED* has established 141 outlets including franchise across the nation to market tribal products
- Established its own e-commerce portal www.tribesindia.com during COVID-19
- Over ₹1,000 crore loans sanctioned to tribal entrepreneurs under the Stand Up India scheme

*Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited

Impact on Tribal Population

The impact of TRIFED’s initiatives on India's tribal population is multifaceted:

- Economic Growth:** By providing direct market access, TRIFED ensures that tribal artisans receive fair wages and recognition for their work.
- Skill Development:** Training programs and capacity-building workshops empower tribal communities with modern skills while preserving traditional art forms.
- Preservation of Cultural Heritage:** Through initiatives like GI tagging of tribal products, TRIFED promotes indigenous crafts, ensuring their continuity for future generations.
- Women Empowerment:** A significant number of tribal artisans are women. TRIFED's programs support their economic independence and participation in entrepreneurship.



Future Prospects and Expansion

TRIFED continues to explore new avenues to enhance the visibility and marketability of tribal products. The government is keen on expanding partnerships with more organizations to further scale up these efforts. The focus remains on:

- Strengthening e-commerce infrastructure to enable global reach.
- Establishing new production clusters to improve tribal product output.
- Encouraging sustainable and eco-friendly production techniques.
- Facilitating financial inclusion and self-reliance among tribal entrepreneurs.

Prelims Practice Question:

With reference to the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED), consider the following statements:

1. TRIFED is a national-level organization under the Ministry of Rural Development.
2. It primarily focuses on promoting and marketing tribal products through the TRIBES India brand.
3. TRIFED collaborates with institutions like NIFT and HPMC to enhance tribal entrepreneurship and market access.

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:

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** TRIFED is under the **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**, not the Ministry of Rural Development.
- **Statement 2 is correct:** TRIFED promotes tribal products through the **TRIBES India brand** in retail stores and online platforms.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** TRIFED collaborates with institutions like **NIFT and HPMC** to improve product design, technology infusion, and market access for tribal artisans.

Mains Model Question:

Q. Discuss the role of TRIFED in promoting tribal entrepreneurship and livelihood in India. How has its collaboration with various organizations enhanced the market access and economic sustainability of tribal artisans?

The Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) plays a crucial role in empowering tribal communities by promoting their products, enhancing their skills, and ensuring sustainable livelihoods. Established in 1987 under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, TRIFED operates through the TRIBES India brand, providing a platform for tribal artisans to sell their handicrafts, textiles, and organic products. It facilitates retail marketing through dedicated outlets, e-commerce platforms, and exhibitions, ensuring better prices and wider recognition for tribal goods.

Van Dhan Scheme
Empowering Tribal Communities Through Value Addition

Features of the Scheme:

- 10 SHGs* of 30 tribal gatherers is constituted
- To be trained and provided with working capital
- SHGs will market their products within and across states
- To form clusters to aggregate their stock and link with facility of primary processing in Van Dhan Vikas Kendras
- Involvement of big corporates under PPP** model

*Self Help Groups **Public Private Partnership

One of TRIFED's key contributions is its collaboration with institutions like the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) and Himachal Pradesh Horticultural Produce Marketing and Processing Corporation (HPMC). These partnerships focus on improving product design, integrating modern technology, and expanding market access for tribal artisans. By incorporating contemporary trends into traditional craftsmanship, TRIFED helps artisans create products that appeal to national and international consumers. The impact of TRIFED extends beyond marketing; it actively promotes tribal entrepreneurship by providing training in skill development, financial literacy, and sustainable production techniques.

Additionally, it has facilitated the onboarding of over 13,000 tribal products on e-commerce platforms, thereby reducing intermediaries and ensuring fair pricing for artisans. Initiatives like Van Dhan Vikas Yojana further strengthen TRIFED's outreach by supporting self-help groups engaged in value-added forest product processing. Through these initiatives, TRIFED not only preserves India's rich tribal heritage but also uplifts indigenous communities by integrating them into mainstream economic activities. By continuously evolving and forming strategic partnerships, it has transformed tribal livelihoods, ensuring financial independence and long-term sustainability for artisans across the country.

Topic : Impact of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) on Indian Exports

Relevance : GS Paper 3 Trade and Economy

Source : PIB

Context :

India has been actively engaging in Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) to expand its export market, enhance competitiveness, and integrate with global value chains. As of 2025, India has signed 14 FTAs and 6 PTAs with various trading partners, significantly impacting sectors like textiles, agriculture, and manufacturing.

MAJOR TRADE AGREEMENTS OF INDIA

Free Trade Agreement (FTA) With Neighbouring Countries

- India-Sri Lanka FTA
- India-Nepal Treaty of Trade
- India-Bhutan Agreement on Trade, Commerce, and Transit

Regional FTA's of India

- India ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (11): 10 ASEAN countries + India
- South Asia Free Trade Agreement (7): India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, and the Maldives
- Global System of Trade Preferences (41 countries + India)

India's CECA's and CEPAs

CECA/CEPA is broader than FTAs, addressing regulatory, trade, and economic aspects comprehensively, with CEPA having the widest scope including services, investment, etc while CECA mainly focuses on tariff and TQR rates negotiation.

- CEPA with UAE, South Korea, Japan
- CECA with Singapore, Malaysia

A free trade agreement is a comprehensive deal between countries, offering preferential trade terms and tariff concessions, with a negative list excluding specific products and services.

Others:

- India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA)
- India-Thailand Early Harvest Scheme (EHS)
- India-Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA)

An EHS precedes an FTA/CECA/CEPA, where negotiating countries select products for tariff liberalisation, paving way for broader trade agreements and fostering confidence.

Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs)

Partners in a PTA grant preferential access to specific products by lowering duties on agreed tariff lines, maintaining a positive list of products eligible for reduced or zero tariffs.

- Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA): Bangladesh, China, India, S. Korea, Lao PDR, Sri Lanka, and Mongolia
- SAARC Preferential Trading Agreement (SAPTA): Same as SAFTA
- India-MERCOSUR PTA: Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and India
- India's PTA with Chile, Afghanistan

Drishti IAS

Understanding FTAs and PTAs

- FTAs (Free Trade Agreements):** These are treaties between two or more countries to facilitate trade by reducing or eliminating tariffs, quotas, and trade barriers. FTAs aim to promote seamless trade by offering mutual benefits to the signatory nations.

- **PTAs (Preferential Trade Agreements):** Unlike FTAs, PTAs provide tariff concessions only on selected goods, making them a more limited form of trade agreement. PTAs allow partial access to markets rather than complete tariff elimination.



- EFTA: European Free Trade Association
- TEPA: Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement
- ECTA: Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement
- CEPA: Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement
- CECPA: Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Partnership Agreement
- FTA: Free Trade Agreement
- PTA: Preferential Trade Agreement

Impact on the Textile Sector

The textile industry is one of the most significant beneficiaries of FTAs and PTAs due to its labor-intensive nature and high export potential. India's export data for the past three years shows fluctuations in different textile segments, reflecting both global demand trends and the influence of trade agreements.

1. Boost in Market Access

FTAs and PTAs have helped Indian textile exports by providing preferential tariff rates in partner countries. Agreements with

ASEAN, UAE, and Japan have facilitated increased trade volumes in cotton, silk, and synthetic textiles. For example, India's textile exports to Australia saw a rise after the India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA), which eliminated duties on many textile products.

2. Competitive Advantage for Indian Manufacturers

By reducing trade barriers, FTAs allow Indian textile manufacturers to compete with global exporters like Bangladesh and Vietnam. The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, combined with trade agreements, has made Indian textile products more cost-effective and attractive to international buyers.

3. Increase in Technical Textile Exports

India's technical textile exports have shown resilience, growing from ₹20,095.52 crores in FY 2022-23 to ₹21,407.38 crores in FY 2023-24. This increase is largely due to incentives under the National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM) and the benefits of trade agreements that reduce tariff burdens in foreign markets.

4. Strengthening of the Apparel Sector

The **PM Mega Integrated Textile Regions and Apparel (PM MITRA) Parks Scheme** has contributed to large-scale manufacturing, helping the apparel sector take advantage of FTAs. India's apparel exports, particularly to the EU and UK, benefit from agreements that reduce tariffs and increase duty-free access.



The **PM Mega Integrated Textile Regions and Apparel (PM MITRA) Parks Scheme** has contributed to large-scale manufacturing, helping the apparel sector take advantage of FTAs. India's apparel exports, particularly to the EU and UK, benefit from agreements that reduce tariffs and increase duty-free access.

Challenges in Export Growth Despite FTAs and PTAs

- 1. Rules of Origin Restrictions:** Some agreements impose strict conditions on the origin of raw materials, limiting India's ability to benefit from duty exemptions.
- 2. Competition from Other Nations:** Countries like Vietnam and Bangladesh enjoy stronger trade agreements with major markets like the EU and the US, challenging India's competitive edge.
- 3. Non-Tariff Barriers:** Despite FTAs, issues like quality standards, certification requirements, and environmental regulations in foreign markets sometimes act as trade barriers.
- 4. Limited Utilization of FTAs:** Many exporters do not fully utilize FTAs due to a lack of awareness or bureaucratic hurdles in availing tariff benefits.

Government Initiatives to Maximize Export Benefits

- **RoSCTL (Rebate of State and Central Taxes and Levies) and RoDTEP (Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products):** These schemes ensure that Indian textile products remain competitive by refunding state and central taxes.
- **Export Promotion through Trade Fairs and Digital Platforms:** The government provides financial assistance to exporters through the **Market Access Initiative Scheme**, enabling participation in global trade fairs. Platforms like **Indiahandmade.com** and onboarding artisans on the **GeM portal** further enhance the reach of Indian textiles.
- **GI Tagging for Handloom and Handicrafts:** Over 214 handicrafts and 104 handloom products have received **Geographical Indication (GI) certification**, strengthening India's branding in the global market.

India signed **10 FTAs** between **1972 & 2011** ▶ Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Nepal, Thailand, other SAARC nations, Singapore, South Korea, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Japan and Malaysia

Trade agreements signed in 2021 and 2022

<p>India-Mauritius</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) signed on February 22, 2021 <p>Bilateral trade in 2019-20 \$ 690 MILLION</p>	<p>India-UAE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) signed on February 18, 2022 	<p>Bilateral trade in 2021-22 \$ 72.8 BILLION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trade in services to \$ 15B 	<p>Govt expects CEPA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To increase trade in goods to \$ 100 B in 5 years To create 10 LAKH jobs for Indians 	<p>India-Australia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) signed on April 2, 2022 <p>Bilateral trade in 2021 \$ 27.5 B</p> <p>Govt expects ECTA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To boost trade to \$ 100 B by 2030 To create 10 LAKH jobs in 4-5 years
<h4>Agreements for which negotiations launched in 2022</h4>				
<p>India-UK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiations for Free Trade Agreement launched on January 13, 2022 Target set for signing agreement: October 24, 2022 	<p>Bilateral trade in 2021-22 \$ 16 B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Govt expects FTA To boost trade to \$ 32 BILLION by 2030 	<p>India-EU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiations for FTA relaunched on June 18, 2022 in Brussels after 9 years 	<p>First round of negotiation to start in New Delhi on June 27, 2022</p> <p>Deadline set for signing: late 2023 or early 2024</p>	<p>Trade in 2021-22 \$ 116B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FTA expected to double trade within 5 years after signing



The other expected trade deals

- India-Canada
- India-Israel
- India-GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council)
- India-Oman
- India-Saudi Arabia

Advantages of FTAs

- Reduction in customs duty on goods between signatory countries
- Access to new markets
- Expansion of product basket
- Innovation & competition
- Technology transfer



Why has India not benefited much by earlier FTAs?

Economic Survey of 2016-17 pointed out.

- India has undergone **larger tariff reduction** as compared to the FTA partners.
- Non-tariff barriers, re-routing** of commodities to avail FTA benefit.
- Lack of transparency** in rules of origin certification process.
- Rise in **protectionism** in **developed countries**.

FTAs and PTAs have played a pivotal role in shaping India's textile exports by enhancing market access, reducing tariffs, and increasing competitiveness. However, challenges such as non-tariff barriers, competition from other nations, and the underutilization of trade agreements need to be addressed. By leveraging strategic policy interventions, promoting innovation, and enhancing trade awareness, India can maximize the benefits of its trade agreements and solidify its position as a leading global textile exporter.

Prelims Practice Question

Q. With reference to India's Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs), consider the following statements:

- FTAs eliminate all tariffs and trade barriers between participating countries, whereas PTAs provide only selective tariff concessions.
- India's textile sector has benefited from FTAs due to increased market access and reduced tariff burdens.
- The RoDTEP and RoSCTL schemes aim to promote domestic textile consumption rather than exports.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1 and 3 only
- 1, 2, and 3

Answer: Correct Option: (a) 1 and 2 only

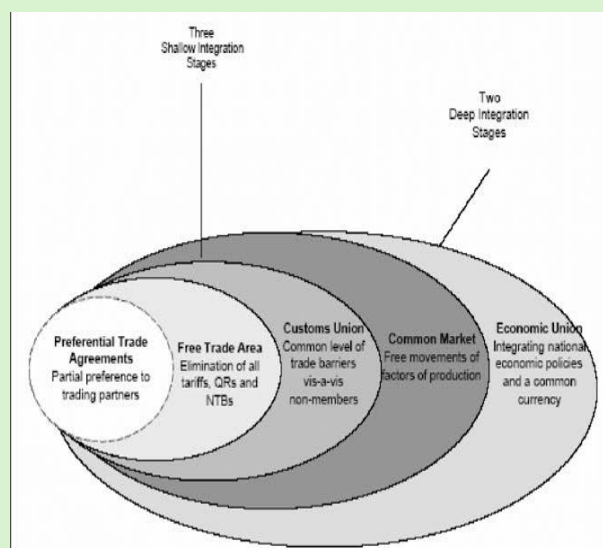
Explanation:

- **Statement 1 is correct.** FTAs aim to eliminate or significantly reduce tariffs and trade barriers between participating countries, whereas PTAs offer preferential tariff rates only on selected products.
- **Statement 2 is correct.** India's textile sector has gained from FTAs due to improved market access and tariff reductions, allowing Indian products to compete better globally.
- **Statement 3 is incorrect.** The **RoDTEP (Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products)** and **RoSCTL (Rebate of State and Central Taxes and Levies)** schemes are designed to **enhance the competitiveness of Indian exports**, not promote domestic consumption. They provide refunds on taxes and duties to reduce costs for exporters.

Mains Model Question

Q. Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) play a crucial role in shaping India's export performance. Discuss their impact on the Indian textile sector and evaluate the government's initiatives to enhance its global competitiveness.

India has actively pursued Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) to expand its trade network and boost exports. While FTAs eliminate or reduce tariffs on a wide range of goods between member nations, PTAs provide selective tariff concessions. The Indian textile industry, a major contributor to employment and exports, has benefited significantly from these agreements. By reducing trade barriers, FTAs have allowed Indian textile products to access key markets such as Japan, South Korea, and Australia, leading to increased export volumes and competitiveness. However, challenges persist. Some FTAs have led to an influx of cheaper textile imports, particularly from Southeast Asian nations, affecting domestic producers.



Moreover, stringent quality and compliance standards in partner countries sometimes pose hurdles for Indian exporters. To counter these challenges, the government has implemented several initiatives, including the **PM Mega Integrated Textile Regions and Apparel (PM MITRA) Parks Scheme**, which focuses on creating world-class textile infrastructure. The **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme** promotes large-scale manufacturing in synthetic and technical textiles. The **National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM)** encourages innovation and research in high-value textile segments.

CABINET DECISION

06 OCTOBER, 2021

Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Parks (1/2)

- > Cabinet approves setting up of **7 PM MITRA parks**
- > Total outlay of **Rs. 4,445 crore over 5 years**
- > Inspired by 5F vision of PM Modi - **Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign**
- > To be developed by a Special Purpose Vehicle owned by **State Government and Government of India** in PPP mode
- > **MITRA parks will have**
 - Core Infrastructure - incubation Centre & Plug & Play facility, Developed Factory Sites, Roads, Power, Water and Waste Water system etc
 - Support Infrastructure - workers' hostels and housing, logistics park, warehousing, medical, training & skill development facilities



To enhance export competitiveness, the **Rebate of State and Central Taxes and Levies (RoSCTL)** and **Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP)** schemes ensure tax refunds on exported goods, reducing overall costs. Additionally, digital platforms like **Indiahandmade.com** and e-commerce integration facilitate market expansion.

While FTAs and PTAs have significantly contributed to India's textile exports, sustained government support through infrastructure, financial incentives, and market access initiatives is essential to ensure long-term global competitiveness. A balanced approach that safeguards domestic industries while capitalizing on trade liberalization will be crucial for India's textile sector growth.