



AFSPA Extended in Nagaland

For Prelims: Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act of 1958, Konyak Tribe, Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)

For Mains: Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act of 1958 and its need, Challenges to internal security of India

Why in News

The Konyak Civil Society Organizations, the guardian umbrella of organizations of the Konyaks, has slammed the extension of the [Armed Forces \(Special Powers\) Act of 1958 \(AFSPA\)](#).

- The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act of 1958 has been extended in Nagaland for six months from 30th December 2021.

Konyak

▪ About:

- The Konyak are the **largest tribe**, followed by Ao, Tangkhul, Sema, and Angami **in Nagaland**.
- Other Naga tribes include Lotha, Sangtam, Phom, Chang, Khiemnungam, Yimchungre, Zeliang, Chakhesang (Chokri), and Rengma.
- The term 'Konyak' is believed to have been **derived from the words 'Whao' meaning 'head' and 'Nyak' meaning 'black'** translating to 'men with black hair'.
- They can be grouped into **two groups, namely 'Thendu'**, which means the 'Tattooed Face' **and 'Thentho'**, meaning the 'White face'.

▪ Habitat:

- Reside mostly in the Mon district also known as '**The Land of The Anghs**', they are also found in some districts of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Myanmar.
- In **Arunachal Pradesh, they are known as the Wanchos** ('Wancho' is a synonymous term for 'Konyak').
 - Ethnically, culturally, and linguistically the Noctes and Tangsa of the same neighbouring state of Arunachal Pradesh, are also closely related to the Konyaks.

▪ Festivals Celebrated:

- The three most significant festivals were **Aolingmonyu, Aonyimo and Laoun-ongmo**.
 - **Aolingmonyu is celebrated in the first week of April** after sowing of seeds, and this marks the beginning of a new year. Its religious significance is to appease God for a prosperous harvest.
 - The **Aonyimo is celebrated in July or August** after the harvest of the first crops such as maize and vegetables.
 - The **Laoun-ongmo is a thanks-giving festival** and is celebrated after all agricultural activities are completed.

Key Points

▪ **Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958:**

◦ **Background:**

- A reincarnation of the British-era legislation that was enacted to quell the protests during the [Quit India movement](#), the AFSPA was issued by way of four ordinances in 1947.
- The ordinances were **replaced by an Act in 1948** and the present law effective in the Northeast was introduced in Parliament in 1958 by the then Home Minister, G.B. Pant.
- It was known initially as the **Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act, 1958**.
- After the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland came into being, the Act was adapted to apply to these States as well.

▪ **About:**

- The ASFPA gives **unfettered powers to the armed forces and the Central armed police forces** deployed in “disturbed areas” to kill anyone acting in contravention of law and arrest and search any premises without a warrant and with protection from prosecution and legal suits.
- The law first came into **effect in 1958 to deal with the uprising in the Naga Hills**, followed by the insurgency in Assam.

▪ **Disturbed Areas:**

- The Act was **amended in 1972** and the **powers to declare an area as “disturbed”** were conferred concurrently upon the Central government along with the States.
- Currently, the **Union Home Ministry issues periodic “disturbed area”** notification to extend AFSPA only for Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh.
- The notification for **Manipur and Assam is issued by the State governments**.
- Tripura revoked the Act in 2015 and Meghalaya was under AFSPA for 27 years, until it was revoked by the MHA from 1st April 2018.
- The Act was implemented in a 20-km area along the border with Assam.
- Jammu and Kashmir has a separate **J&K Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1990**.

▪ **Controversy Around the Act:**

◦ **Human Rights Violations:**

- The law **empowers security personnel, down to non-commissioned officers**, to use force and shoot “even to the causing of death” if they are convinced that it is necessary to do so for the “maintenance of public order”.
- It also **grants soldiers executive powers** to enter premises, search, and arrest without a warrant.
- The exercise of these extraordinary powers by armed forces has **often led to allegations of fake encounters and other [human rights violations](#)** by security forces in disturbed areas while questioning the indefinite imposition of AFSPA in certain states, such as Nagaland and J&K.

◦ **Recommendations of Jeevan Reddy Committee:**

- In November 2004, the Central government appointed a five-member committee headed by Justice B P Jeevan Reddy to review the provisions of the act in the northeastern states.
- The committee recommended that:
 - **AFSPA should be repealed** and appropriate provisions should be inserted in the [Unlawful Activities \(Prevention\) Act, 1967](#)
 - The Unlawful Activities Act should be modified to clearly specify the powers of the armed forces and paramilitary forces and Grievance cells should be set up in each district where the armed forces are deployed.

- **Second ARC Recommendation:** The 5th report of the Second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) on public order has also **recommended the repeal of the AFSPA**. However, these recommendations **have not been implemented**.

▪ **Supreme Court Views on the Act:**

- The Supreme Court has **upheld the constitutionality of AFSPA in a 1998 judgment** (*Naga People's Movement of Human Rights v. Union of India*).
- In this judgment, the Supreme Court held that

- a suo-motu declaration can be made by the Central government, however, it is desirable that the state government should be consulted by the central government before making the declaration.
- the declaration has to be for a limited duration and there should be a periodic review of the declaration 6 months have expired.
- while exercising the powers conferred upon him by AFSPA, the authorized officer should use minimal force necessary for effective action.

Way Forward

- The **status quo of the act is no longer the acceptable solution** due to numerous human rights violation incidents that have occurred over the years. The AFSPA has become a symbol of oppression in the areas it has been enacted. Hence the **government needs to address the affected people and reassure them of favourable action.**
- The government should **consider the imposition and lifting of AFSPA on a case-by-case basis and limit its application** only to a few disturbing districts instead of applying it for the whole state.
- The government and the security forces **should also abide by the guidelines set out by the [Supreme Court](#), Jeevan Reddy Commission, and the [National Human Rights Commission \(NHRC\).](#)**

[Source:TH](#)

India & Free Trade Agreements

For Prelims: Free Trade Agreement (FTA), countries with which India has FTAs, Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), CECPA, SAFTA, APTA.

For Mains: Issues with the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and opportunities for India, Various trade agreements of India and its role in the economic growth, India-Israel Relations, India's Foreign Trade Policy.

Why in News

Recently, the Commerce and Industry Ministry said that India is in dialogue with Israel for concluding a [Free Trade Agreement \(FTA\).](#)

- The announcement coincides with the **30th anniversary** of the establishment of **diplomatic ties between the two countries.**

Key Points

- **Free Trade Agreement (FTA):**
 - It is a **pact between two or more nations to reduce barriers to imports and exports** among them.
 - Under a free trade policy, **goods and services can be bought and sold** across international borders with **little or no government tariffs, quotas, subsidies, or prohibitions** to inhibit their exchange.
 - The concept of free trade is the opposite of trade protectionism or economic isolationism.
- **India and FTAs:**

- After India opted out of the [Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership \(RCEP\)](#) in November 2019, the 15-member FTA grouping that includes Japan, China and Australia, FTAs went into cold storage for India.
- But in May 2021 came the announcement that [India-European Union](#) talks, which had stalled in 2013, would be resumed.
 - Both sides are **now engaged in internal preparations** to take these various strands of work forward.
- **Bilateral free trade agreements** of India are being negotiated with the **United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada.**
- The agreement with the **UAE was 'close to finalisation'** while the FTA with Australia was at a 'very advanced stage.'
- **Other Important Trade Agreements of India:**
 - [Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement \(CECPA\)](#) between India and Mauritius.
 - **South Asia Preferential Trading Agreement (SAPTA):** It is for promoting trade amongst the member countries came into effect in 1995.
 - [South Asian Free Trade Area \(SAFTA\):](#) A Free Trade Agreement confined to goods, but excluding all services like information technology. Agreement was signed to reduce customs duties of all traded goods to zero by the year 2016.
 - [Asia Pacific Trade Agreement \(APTA\):](#)
 - Previously the Bangkok Agreement, it's a **preferential tariff arrangement** that aimed at promoting intra-regional trade through the exchange of mutually agreed concessions by member countries.
- **Issues in India's Foreign Trade Policy:**
 - **Poor Manufacturing Sector:** In the recent period, manufacturing holds a share of 14% in India's [Gross Domestic Product \(GDP\)](#).
 - For **advanced and developed nations** like Germany, the US, South Korea and Japan, the comparable figures are 19%, 11%, 25% and 21%, respectively.
 - For **emerging and developing countries** like China, Turkey, Indonesia, Russia, Brazil, the corresponding figures are 27%, 19%, 20%, 13%, 9%, respectively, and for low income countries the share is 8%.
 - **Unfavourable FTA's:** In the past decade, India signed FTAs with the [Association of Southeast Asian Nations \(ASEAN\)](#), the Republic of Korea, Japan, and Malaysia.
 - However, it is largely believed that India's trade partners have gained more from these agreements than India.
 - **Protectionism:** The [Atmanirbhar Bharat campaign](#) has exacerbated the view that India is increasingly becoming a protectionist closed market economy.

Indo-Israel Relations

- **Historical Ties:**
 - The [strategic cooperation](#) between the two countries began during the [Sino-India War of 1962](#).
 - In 1965, Israel supplied M-58 160-mm mortar ammunition to India in the [war against Pakistan](#).
 - It was one of the few countries that chose not to condemn [India's Pokhran nuclear tests](#) in 1998.
- **Economic:**
 - India is **Israel's third-largest trade partner in Asia** and seventh largest globally.
 - Both countries currently have USD 4.14 billion of trade (April 2020 - February 2021), a figure that doesn't include the **defence trade which has been increasing**.
 - Israeli companies have invested in **India in energy, [renewable energy](#), telecom, real estate, water technologies**, and are focusing on setting up Research & Development centres or production units in India.
 - The first recipients of grants from the Israel-India Industrial R&D and [Technological Innovation Fund \(I4F\)](#) were announced in July 2018, including companies working to better the lives of Indians and Israelis through efficient water use, improving communications infrastructure, [solar energy](#) use, and life-changing surgeries.
 - The fund aims to help Israeli entrepreneurs enter the Indian market.

▪ **Defence:**

- Israel has been **among the top four arms suppliers to India** for almost two decades now, notching military sales worth around USD 1 billion every year.
- The Indian armed forces have inducted a wide array of Israeli weapon systems over the years, which range from [Phalcon AWACS](#) (airborne warning and control systems) and Heron, [Searcher-II and Harop drones](#) to [Barak anti-missile](#) defence systems and Spyder quick-reaction anti-aircraft missile systems.
- The acquisitions also include a host of Israeli missiles and precision-guided munitions, from Python and Derby air-to-air missiles to Crystal Maze and Spice-2000 bombs.
- At the **15th Joint Working Group (JWG) meeting** on Bilateral Defence Cooperation between India and Israel, both countries agreed to form a Task Force to formulate a comprehensive Ten-Year Roadmap to identify new areas of cooperation.

▪ **Agriculture:**

- India and Israel have signed [“a three-year work program agreement”](#) for development in agriculture cooperation.

▪ **Covid-19 Response:**

- In 2020, an Israeli team arrived in India with a multi-pronged mission, codenamed [Operation Breathing Space](#) to work with Indian authorities on the Covid-19 response.

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Way Forward

- Given that India is not party to any mega-trade deals, this would be an important part of a positive trade policy agenda.
- India's trade policy framework **must be supported by economic reforms** that result in an open, competitive, and technologically innovative Indian economy.
- Nationalism, populism, nativism, and protectionism exploit people's sense of being left behind and excluded from the system.
- That is why we **need to focus on ensuring universal inclusion in the economic networks** that allow individuals and families to achieve financial security and pursue opportunities for

betterment.

[Source: TH](#)

Pledge to Stop Nuclear Proliferation: Permanent Five of UNSC

For Prelims: United Nations Security Council, Non-Proliferation Treaty, Cold War, IAEA, JCPOA, New START, Nuclear Weapon.

For Mains: Non-Proliferation Treaty its significance and what changes are needed to make it better, India's Stand on NPT, Cold War, IAEA, JCPOA, New START.

Why in News

Recently, the Five permanent [United Nations Security Council](#) members (China, France, Russia, the U.K. and US) pledged to prevent atomic weapons spreading and to avoid nuclear conflict.

- The pledge was made in a rare joint statement ahead of a review of the Non-[Proliferation Treaty \(NPT\) 1970](#).
- The statement comes as **tensions between Russia and the US** have reached heights rarely seen since the [Cold War](#) over a troop [build-up by Russia](#) close to the Ukrainian border.
- The statement also comes as the **world powers seek to reach agreement with Iran** on reviving the [Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action \(JCPOA\) 2015](#) over its controversial nuclear drive, which was rendered dying by the US walking out of the accord in 2018.

Key Points

- **The Pledge:**
 - The further **spread of such weapons must be prevented**. A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.
 - The avoidance of war between nuclear-weapon states and the **reduction of strategic risks as our foremost responsibilities**.
 - Nuclear weapons — for as long as they continue to exist — **should serve defensive purposes, deter aggression, and prevent war**.
 - They intend to maintain and further strengthen their national measures to prevent unauthorised or unintended use of nuclear weapons.
- **China's Stand:**
 - It **raised concerns that tensions with the US could lead to conflict**, notably over the island of Taiwan.
 - China considers Taiwan part of its territory and has vowed to one day seize it, by force if necessary.
- **Russia's Stand:**
 - Russia welcomed the declaration by the atomic powers and expressed hope it would reduce global tensions.

Non-Proliferation Treaty

- **About:**
 - The NPT is an **international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of**

nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to foster the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and to further the goal of disarmament.

- The treaty was **signed in 1968 and entered into force in 1970**. Presently, it has 190 member states.
 - India is not a member.
- It **requires countries to give up any present or future plans to build nuclear weapons** in return for access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
- It represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States.
- **Nuclear-weapon states parties** under the NPT are defined as those that manufactured and exploded a nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive devices before 1st January, 1967.

▪ **India's Stand:**

- India is **one of the only five countries that either did not sign the NPT or signed but withdrew later**, thus becoming part of a list that includes **Pakistan, Israel, North Korea, and South Sudan**.
- India always considered the NPT as **discriminatory** and had refused to sign it.
- India has **opposed the international treaties** aimed at non-proliferation since they were selectively applicable to the non-nuclear powers and legitimised the monopoly of the five nuclear weapons powers.

▪ **Issues Related to NPT:**

◦ **Failure of Disarmament Process:**

- The NPT is largely seen as a Cold War era instrument that has **failed to fulfil the objective of creating a pathway towards a credible disarmament process**.
- Treaty proposes **no tangible disarmament roadmap**, no reference to test ban or to the freezing of production of either fissile materials or nuclear weapons, and omitted provisions for reductions and elimination.
- It **instead allowed sustenance and expansion of arsenals** by stipulating January, 1967 as the cut-off date to determine the NWS.

◦ **System of Nuclear 'Haves' and 'Have-Nots':**

- **Non-Nuclear Weapon states (NNWS)** criticize the treaty to be discriminatory as it focuses on preventing only **horizontal proliferation** while there is no limit for vertical proliferation.
 - **Vertical proliferation** can be defined as the advancement or modernization of a nation-state's nuclear arsenal, whereas **horizontal proliferation** is the direct or indirect transfer of technologies from one nation-state to another, which ultimately leads to the more advanced development and proliferation of nuclear weapons.
 - As there is **no explicit obligation on part of NWS to reduce their arsenal**, NWS have continued to expand their respective arsenals without any constraints.
- In this context, NNWS groupings demand that the Nuclear-Weapon States (NWS) should renounce their arsenals and further production in return for commitment of NNWS not to produce them.
- Due to this tussle, most of the quadrennial **Review Conferences (RevCon)**, the forum that reviews the health and functioning of the treaty, has remained largely inconclusive since 1995.

◦ **Post-Cold War Challenges:**

- The treaty's existential challenges began in the post-Cold War setting when the **attempts by a few State Parties to break-out or gain nuclear latency led to numerous instances** of non-compliance, violations and defiance.
 - For example, the US alleges Iran of building nuclear Weapons of Mass Destruction.
- The **NPT's indefinite extension in 1995**, while invoking its irreplaceability, also underlined the inability of states to formulate a stand-alone instrument towards the objective of disarmament, as enshrined in the NPT.
- The **emergence of non-state actors** with declared intent to access weapons of mass destruction and the detection of a global nuclear black-market, has raised concerns on the limitations of the treaty to address the challenges thrown up by the

new strategic milieu.

Way Forward

- Rising energy demands have led to a growing number of countries pursuing nuclear energy, and many countries wish to be energy-independent, in order to ensure a sustainable and dependable domestic energy supply. As clean energy, development, and peaceful coexistence are essential for every country.
- Thus, **the challenge for the international community will be to reconcile states' desire for energy independence with their desire to both reduce the intrusiveness of [International Atomic Energy Agency \(IAEA\)](#) safeguards and diminish the possibility of proliferation.**
- Also, NNWS welcomes **New START** and other initiatives, but is anxious to see more concrete actions on reducing the role of nuclear weapons in national security doctrines, reducing alert levels, increasing transparency, and other steps.
- **More regions** in the world (preferably comprising NWS) **should enter into an arrangement of establishing Nuclear-weapon-free zones.**
- Further, the **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is a step in the right direction** for nuclear disarmament.

[Source: TH](#)

China Builds Bridge across Pangong Lake

For Prelims: India-China Standoff, Pangong Tso Lake, Line of Actual Control, Kailash Range.

For Mains: China's Building Bridge across Pangong Lake, its implication for India, Background of India-China Standoff.

Why in News

Recently, it was found that China is building **a new bridge on [Pangong Tso](#)** which will provide an additional axis to deploy troops faster between the north and south banks of the lake, and closer to the **[LAC \(Line of Actual Control\)](#)**.

- Earlier, **[China's new law on land borders](#)** came into effect from 1st January, 2022, at a time when border standoff in eastern Ladakh remains unresolved and several places in Arunachal Pradesh have been renamed recently by China as part of its claim on the Indian state.
- India too has been **improving its infrastructure in the border areas**. In 2021, the Border Roads Organisation completed more than 100 projects in border areas, the majority of which were close to the border with China.

Key Points

- **Background:**
 - Since the **[military standoff began in May 2020](#)**, India and China have not only worked to improve existing infrastructure, but have also built several new roads, bridges, landing strips along the entire frontier.
 - Towards the end of August 2020, India outmanoeuvred China to capture the previously **unoccupied heights of the [Kailash Range](#) on the south bank** of Pangong Tso lake.

- Indian **troops positioned themselves on the peaks there, including Magar Hill, Gurung Hill, Rezang La, Rechin La, and this allowed them to dominate the strategic Spanggur Gap** — it can be used for launching an offensive, as China had done in 1962 — and also gave them a view of the PLA garrison at Moldo.
- Indian troops had also positioned themselves **above the Chinese troops in the Fingers area on the north bank**. During this scramble for the heights, shots had been fired by both sides, a first in over four decades.
- Troops from the two countries remained on these heights through the harsh winter months. **The significance of these positions was one of the main factors that compelled China to negotiate a pullback.**
- Both countries agreed to a pullback from the north bank of the lake, and positions on the Kailash Range in the Chushul sub-sector south of Pangong Tso.

▪ **About:**

- The bridge is being constructed **more than 20 km east of Finger 8 on the lake's north bank** - India says Finger 8 denotes the LAC.
 - The Lake is overlooked by the Finger Area - a set of eight cliffs extending out of the Sirijap range (on the northern bank of Lake).
- Pangong Tso, an endorheic lake, **is 135 km long, of which more than two-thirds is under Chinese control.**



- The north and south banks of the lake were among the several friction points that surfaced after the start of the standoff. Before India and China pulled back troops from the north and south banks in February 2021, the area had seen massive mobilisation and the two sides even deployed tanks, barely a few hundred metres apart in some locations.
- The bridge site is just **east of Khurnak Fort** in Rutog county where the **PLA (People's Liberation Army)** has frontier bases.
 - Historically a part of India, **Khurnak Fort has been under Chinese control since 1958.**
- From Khurnak Fort, the LAC is considerably west, **with India claiming it at Finger 8 and China claiming it at Finger 4.**

▪ **Significance for China:**

- The bridge will cut a 180-kilometer loop from Khurnak to the south banks through Rudok reducing the distance between Khurnak and Rudok to 40-50 kilometres, rather than approximately 200 kilometres as previously stated.
- The building of the bridge **will allow it to mobilise its troops faster in this area**, hoping to prevent a repeat of what happened in August 2020.

▪ **Implication for India:**

- The bridge is in their territory, and the Indian Army will have to factor this in its operational plans.

- The widening of roads, building of new roads and bridges, new bases, airstrips, advance landing bases, etc are not restricted to the eastern Ladakh region, **but are happening across the three sectors of the India-China boundary** (Eastern, Middle and Western).

[Source: TH](#)

Open Source Software Platform

For Prelims: Computer Emergency Response System (Cert-In), open-source software, GitHub, GovTech 3.0.

For Mains: Government Policy on open-source software, Open source softwares there advantages and disadvantages.

Why in News

Recently, the Github, an **open-source software** repository service was used to create and share an offensively named app that [sexually harassed a women in India](#).

- The app used pictures of the women stolen from their social media handles and invited “users” to bid for them.
- GitHub has blocked the user, and the Indian [Computer Emergency Response System \(Cert-In\)](#), has been asked to form “a high-level committee.

GitHub:

- GitHub is the **world’s largest open-source developer community platform** where users upload their projects and code for others to view, edit, and tweak.
- The platform uses the **software Git**, which was created in 2005 by **Linus Trovalds**, the developer of the **open-source operating system Linux**, to track changes in a set of files and for coordination in software.

Key Points

- **Meaning of Open-Source:** The term open source refers to something people can modify and share because its design is publicly accessible.
 - **Underlying Principles:** Open source projects, products, or initiatives embrace and celebrate principles of
 - Open exchange,
 - Collaborative participation,
 - Rapid prototyping,
 - Transparency,
 - Meritocracy, and
 - Community-oriented development.
- **Open Source Software:** Open source software (OSS) is **software that is distributed with its source code**, making it available for use, modification, and distribution with its original rights.
 - **Source code** is the part of software that most computer users don’t ever see.

- It's the code computer programmers **manipulate to control** how a program or application behaves.
- OSS typically **includes a licence** that allows programmers to modify the software to best fit their needs and control how the software can be distributed.
- The idea of making source code freely available originated in 1983 from an ideological movement informally founded by **Richard Stallman**, a programmer at MIT.
- Examples of **Linux, Mozilla Firefox, VLC media player, SugarCRM, etc.**
- **Closed Source or Proprietary Software:** Closed source software is software that holds the source code safe and encrypted.
 - Meaning, the user can't copy, modify, or delete parts of the code without some type of consequence.

Note:

- While the operating system of **Apple's iPhones (iOS) is closed source**, meaning it cannot be legally modified or reverse engineered, **Google's Android operating system is open-source**, and therefore it is possible by smartphone manufacturers such as Samsung, Xiaomi, OnePlus, etc to modify it for their hardware.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Each Model

Open Source Advantages	Proprietary Software Advantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source code available, modifiable • Redistribute solutions • Use software in any way • Eliminates single point of failure • Democratic forum for action • No vendor lock-in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predictable releases • Entity to hold responsible for bugs, errors, and updates • Consistent feature development • More stable framework • More consistent training options • Easier access to support
Open Source Disadvantages	Proprietary Software Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No guarantee development will continue • Intellectual property (algorithms) • Support consistency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher start-up costs • Single company releasing patches • Vendor owns software

- **Government Policy on OSS:**
 - The Government of India had issued a **Policy on Adoption of Open Source Software** in 2015.
 - **Free and Open Source Software for Education (FOSSEE) Project:** It is a project promoting the use of open source software in educational institutions.
 - It does that through instructional material, such as spoken tutorials, documentation, such as textbook companions, awareness programmes, such as conferences, training workshops, and internships.
 - The government has also made the android version of the **Aarogya Setu app** open source.
 - Promoting OSS is a part of **GovTech 3.0**.
 - GovTech 3.0 is focussed on **Open Digital Ecosystems (ODEs)**, the underlying philosophy suggests that the government should focus on creating the “digital commons”.

Way Forward

- The government must take **urgent, exemplary action against the perpetrators**. Simply taking down the app, without imposing costs on such criminal behaviour, will lead to encouragement of impunity.

[Source: IE](#)

Unemployment in India

Relevance for Prelims: Types of Unemployment in India, Support for Marginalised Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise (SMILE), PM-DAKSH (Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY), Start Up India Scheme

Relevance for Mains: Types of Unemployment in India, Causes and solutions of unemployment in India.

Why in News

According to data from the **Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE)**, India's unemployment rate touched a four-month high of **7.9% in December 2021**.

- With **Covid-19** cases on the rise amid the threat posed by the **Omicron variant** and many states imposing fresh curbs, economic activity and consumption levels have been affected.
- This could adversely affect **economic recovery further going ahead**.

Key Points

- **About Unemployment:**
 - Unemployment occurs when a person who is **actively searching for employment is unable to find work**.
 - Unemployment is often **used as a measure of the health of the economy**.
 - The most frequent measure of unemployment is the **unemployment rate**, which is the number of unemployed people divided by the number of people in the labour force.
 - **National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO)** defines employment and unemployment on the following activity statuses of an individual:
 - Working (engaged in an economic activity) i.e. 'Employed'.
 - Seeking or available for work i.e. 'Unemployed'.
 - Neither seeking nor available for work.
 - The first two constitute the labour force and unemployment rate is the percent of the labour force that is without work.
 - **Unemployment rate = (Unemployed Workers / Total labour force) × 100**
- **Types of Unemployment in India:**
 - **Disguised Unemployment:** It is a phenomenon wherein more people are employed than actually needed.
 - It is primarily traced in the agricultural and the **unorganised sectors of India**.
 - **Seasonal Unemployment:** It is an unemployment that occurs during **certain seasons of the year**.
 - **Agricultural labourers in India** rarely have work throughout the year.
 - **Structural Unemployment:** It is a category of unemployment arising from the **mismatch**

between the jobs available in the market and the skills of the available workers in the market.

- Many people in India do not get jobs due to lack of requisite skills and due to poor education level, it becomes difficult to train them.
- **Cyclical Unemployment:** It is a result of the business cycle, where **unemployment rises during recessions and declines with economic growth.**
 - Cyclical unemployment figures in India are negligible. It is a phenomenon that is mostly found in capitalist economies.
- **Technological Unemployment:** It is the loss of jobs due to **changes in technology.**
 - In 2016, [World Bank](#) data predicted that the proportion of jobs threatened by automation in India is 69% year-on-year.
- **Frictional Unemployment:** The Frictional Unemployment also called as **Search Unemployment**, refers to the **time lag between the jobs when an individual** is searching for a new job or is switching between the jobs.
 - In other words, an employee requires time for searching a new job or shifting from the existing to a new job, this inevitable time delay causes frictional unemployment.
 - It is often considered as **voluntary unemployment** because it is not caused due to the shortage of job, but in fact, the workers themselves quit their jobs in search of better opportunities.
- **Vulnerable Employment:** This means, people working informally, without proper job contracts and thus sans any legal protection.
 - These persons are deemed 'unemployed' since records of their work are never maintained.
 - It is one of the main types of unemployment in India.
- **Causes of Unemployment in India:**
 - **Social Factors:** In India the caste system is prevalent. The work is **prohibited for specific castes** in some areas.
 - In **big joint families** having big business, many such persons will be available who do not do any work and depend on the joint income of the family.
 - **Rapid Growth of Population:** Constant increase in population has been a big problem in India.
 - It is one of the **main causes of unemployment.**
 - **Dominance of Agriculture:** Still in India nearly half of the workforce is dependent on Agriculture.
 - However, Agriculture is underdeveloped in India.
 - Also, it provides seasonal employment.
 - **Fall of Cottage and Small industries:** The industrial development had adverse effects on cottage and small industries.
 - The production of cottage industries began to fall and many artisans became unemployed.
 - **Immobility of Labour:** Mobility of labour in India is low. Due to attachment to the family, people do not go to far off areas for jobs.
 - Factors like language, religion, and climate are also responsible for low mobility.
 - **Defects in Education System:** Jobs in the capitalist world have become highly specialised but India's education system does not provide the right training and specialisation needed for these jobs.
 - Thus many people who are willing to work become unemployed due to lack of skills.

Recent Initiatives by Government

- [Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise \(SMILE\)](#)
- [PM-DAKSH \(Pradhan Mantri Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi\)](#)
- [Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act \(MGNREGA\)](#)
- [Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana \(PMKVY\)](#)
- [Start Up India Scheme](#)

Way Forward

- **Promoting Labour Intensive Industries:** There are a number of labour intensive manufacturing sectors in India such as **food processing, leather and footwear, wood manufacturers and furniture, textiles and apparel** and garments.
 - Special packages, individually designed for each industry are needed to create jobs.
- **Decentralisation of Industries:** Decentralisation of Industrial activities is necessary so that people of **every region get employment**.
 - Development of the **rural areas will help mitigate the migration** of the rural people to the urban areas thus decreasing the pressure on the urban area jobs.
- **Drafting National Employment Policy:** There is a need for a **National Employment Policy (NEP)** that would encompass a set of **multidimensional interventions covering a whole range of social and economic issues** affecting many policy spheres and not just the areas of labour and employment.
 - The underlying principles for the National Employment Policy may include:
 - Enhancing **human capital through skill development**.
 - Creating **sufficient number of decent quality jobs for all citizens in the formal and informal sectors** to absorb those who are available and willing to work.
 - Strengthening **social cohesion and equity** in the labour market.
 - **Coherence and convergence** in various initiatives taken by the government.
 - Supporting the **private sector to become the major investor** in productive enterprises.
 - Supporting **self-employed persons** by strengthening their capabilities to improve their earnings.

[Source: IE](#)

IRDAI Proposes a Separate Regulator for Healthcare Segment

For Prelims: IRDAI, Health Insurance in India, Ayushman Bharat

For Mains: Issues associated with varying tariff structures across hospitals and the suggestions to address this.

Why in News

With a view to make a common tariff structure for hospitals, the [Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India \(IRDAI\)](#) has proposed a separate regulator for the healthcare segment or it must be allowed to regulate hospitals.

- It has been noticed that the **rate of inflation of hospital charges at present is around 10-15%** and **tariffs are being changed on a regular basis**.

Key Points

- **About (Issues Related to Present Tariff Structure of Hospitals):**
 - **Varying Tariffs:**
 - Hospitals keep changing tariffs on a regular basis. There is no body to regulate them on tariff structure and grading.

- When Covid hit the country last year, patients were charged excessively by some hospitals.
- **Cost to Health Insurance Businesses:**
 - If insurers continue to pay whatever the hospitals are demanding, the health insurance business will be in poor health in the long run. Already, the industry is experiencing a high number of claims.
- **Individual Hospital Empanelment Process:**
 - At present, health care schemes and private insurance have individual hospital empanelment processes, which replicates various activities and contributes to inefficiency and duplication of processes.
- **No Infrastructure to Regulate Hospitals:**
 - IRDAI currently doesn't have the infrastructure to regulate hospitals. As healthcare is a state subject, it's going to be a tough proposition for IRDAI to regulate the hospitals.
 - Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), is a statutory body formed under an Act of Parliament, i.e., Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999 (IRDAI Act 1999) for overall supervision and development of the Insurance sector in India.
- **Suggestions:**
 - Even with increasing penetration, there will be a need to factor general and medical inflation and given that medical inflation operates significantly higher than [CPI \(Consumer Price Index\) inflation](#), a correction cycle from a pricing standpoint will be needed.
 - IRDAI has proposed **a unique common hospital registry, empanelment process, grading of hospitals and package cost harmonisation** to promote the standardisation and effective utilisation of health care infrastructure under the **insurance programme**.
 - It is recommended to have **a common empanelment portal which can be utilised by all the schemes/insurance companies** with standardised empanelment criteria (and) will be hugely beneficial with special focus on standard safety and quality parameters.

Health Insurance

- **About Healthcare:**
 - Healthcare has become **one of the largest sectors in India in terms of revenue and employment**. Booming population, rising income levels, growth in infrastructure, increased awareness, insurance policies and India's emergence as a hub of medical tourism and clinical trials have contributed to the development of the health care sector in India.
 - Since the needs of this sector are increasing, to provide up to date medical facilities is vital. Government funded health insurance enables the poor in India to benefit from timely care without the burden of **out of pocket expenditure**.
- **Significance of Health Insurance:**
 - It is a mechanism of **pooling the high level of Out of Pocket expenditure (OOPE)** in India to provide greater financial protection against health shocks.
 - Pre-payment through health insurance emerges as an important tool for **risk-pooling and safeguarding against catastrophic (and often impoverishing) expenditure** from health shocks.
 - Moreover, **pre-paid pooled funds can also improve the efficiency** of healthcare provision.
- **Issues related to Health Insurance:**
 - **Life Status is unevenly Distributed:**
 - There has been a significant increase in life expectancy of people **from 35 years to 65 years** since Independence. But the status of life is **unevenly distributed in different parts of the country**. The health problems in India are still a cause of great concern.
 - **Low Government expenditure :**
 - Low Government expenditure on health has constrained the capacity and quality of healthcare services in the public sector.
 - It diverts the majority of individuals - about two-thirds - to seek treatment in the costlier private sector.

- **Significant Population is missed:**
 - At least 30% of the population, or 40 crore individuals are devoid of any financial protection for health.
- **Related Government Schemes:**
 - **[Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana \(AB-PMJAY\)](#):** It offers a sum insured of Rs. 5 lakh per family for secondary care (which doesn't involve a super specialist) as well as tertiary care (which involves a super specialist).

[Source: IE](#)

Defence Research and Development Organisation

For Prelims: DRDO and its Programmes.

For Mains: Significance of DRDO for Indian Defence, Various Programmes and issues related with DRDO.

Why in News

Recently, [Defence Research and Development Organisation \(DRDO\)](#) has celebrated the **64th Foundation Day on 1st January, 2022.**

Key Points

- **About:**
 - DRDO is the **R&D (Research and Development) wing of the Ministry of Defence** with a vision **to empower India with cutting-edge defence technologies.**
 - Its **pursuit of self-reliance** and successful indigenous development and production of strategic systems and platforms such as **[Agni and Prithvi series of missiles](#), [Light Combat Aircraft](#), [Tejas](#), multi-barrel rocket launcher, [Pinaka](#), [air defence system](#), [Akash](#), [a wide range of radars and electronic warfare systems](#), etc. have given quantum jump to **India's military might**, generating effective deterrence and providing crucial leverage.**
- **Formation:**
 - It was **formed in 1958** from the amalgamation of the Technical Development Establishment (TDEs) of the Indian Army and the Directorate of Technical Development & Production (DTDP) with the Defence Science Organisation (DSO).
 - DRDO is **a network of more than 50 laboratories** which are deeply engaged in developing defence technologies covering various disciplines, like aeronautics, armaments, electronics, combat vehicles, engineering systems etc.
- **Various Programmes of DRDO:**
 - **Integrated Guided-Missile Development Programme (IGMDP):**
 - It was one of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam's major works to make Indian defence forces **self-sufficient in the field of missile technology.**
 - The **missiles developed under IGMDP are:** Prithvi, Agni, Trishul, Akash, Nag.
 - **Mobile Autonomous Robot System:**
 - MARS is a smart robust robot to handle land mines and Inert Explosive Devices (IEDs) which helps the Indian Armed Forces **to disarm them from far distances despite hostile surroundings.**
 - With some add-ons, this system can even be used to dig the ground for the object and defuse the Improvised Explosive Device by various methods.
 - **Highest Terrestrial Centre in Ladakh**

- DRDO's centre in Ladakh is at 17,600 feet above sea level at Changla near Pangong lake which is intended to serve **as a natural cold storage unit for the preservation of natural and medicinal plants.**

▪ **Issues with DRDO:**

◦ **Inadequate Budgetary Support:**

- The Standing Committee on Defence during 2016-17, expressed concerns over the inadequate budgetary support for the ongoing projects of DRDO.
- The committee noted that out of the total defence budget, the share of **DRDO was 5.79 % in 2011-12**, which reduced to 5.34 % in 2013-14.

◦ **Inadequate Manpower:**

- The DRDO also suffers **from inadequate manpower in critical areas** to the lack of proper synergy with the armed forces.
- Cost escalation and long delays have damaged the reputation of DRDO.

◦ **Big on Promise and Small on Delivery:**

- DRDO is big on promise and small on delivery. There is no accountability. Nobody is taken to task for time and cost overruns.
- In 2011, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) put a serious question mark on DRDO's capabilities, citing the organisation has a **history of its projects suffering endemic time and cost overruns.**

◦ **Obsolete equipments:**

- DRDO is just tinkering with **World War II equipment** instead of working on cutting-edge technology.

▪ **Recent Developments:**

- [Extreme Cold Weather Clothing System \(ECWCS\)](#)
- ['Pralay'](#).
- [Controlled Aerial Delivery System.](#)
- [Pinaka Extended Range \(Pinaka-ER\) Multiple Launch Rocket System \(MLRS\).](#)
- [Supersonic Missile Assisted Torpedo System \(SMART\).](#)
- [Advanced Chaff Technology.](#)
- [Akash-NG & MPATGM.](#)

Way Forward

- DRDO should be restructured in a leaner organisation **as suggested by the committee chaired by P. Rama Rao** for external review of the agency in February 2007.
 - The committee recommended **setting up a commercial arm of the organisation to make it a profitable entity**, besides cutting back on delays in completing projects.
- DRDO former chief V.K. Saraswat has called for the **setting up of a Defence Technology Commission** as well as a bigger role for DRDO in picking production partners for products developed by the agency.
- DRDO **should be able to select a capable partner company** from the outset, from the private sector if necessary.
- In Its document "DRDO in 2021: HR Perspectives", DRDO has envisaged a **HR policy which emphasized on free, fair, and fearless Knowledge Sharing, Open book management style and Participative Management.** This is a step in the right direction.

[Source: PIB](#)

Ayush Aahaar

Why in News

Recently, the Ministry of Ayush made a new beginning by making '**Ayush Aahaar**' available at its canteen at Ayush Bhawan (Delhi).

- It aims to **promote a nutritional diet and a healthy living.**

Key Points

- **Meaning of 'Ayush':**
 - Traditional & Non-Conventional Systems of Health Care and Healing which Include Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, Sowa-Rigpa and Homoeopathy etc.
 - The positive features of the Indian systems of medicine namely their diversity and flexibility; accessibility; affordability, a broad acceptance by a large section of the general public; comparatively lesser cost and growing economic value, have great potential to make them providers of healthcare that the large sections of our people need.
- **Some Initiatives of the Ayush Ministry:**
 - **National Ayush Mission:**
 - Government is implementing the **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** of Mission through States/UTs for development and promotion of Ayush system of medicine.
 - The government has decided to continue till 2026.
 - **Aahaar Kranti Mission:**
 - The mission is dedicated to spreading awareness about nutrition.
 - **New Portals on Ayush Sector:**
 - **Five new portals on Ayush Sector** have been launched - CTRI (Clinical Trial Registry of India), RMIS (Research Management Information System), SAHI (Showcase of Ayurveda Historical Imprints), AMAR (Ayush Manuscripts Advanced Repository), and e-Medha (electronic Medical Heritage Accession).
 - **ACCR Portal and Ayush Sanjivani App:**
 - **Ayush Clinical Case Repository Portal:** To portray the strengths of Ayush systems for treatment of various disease conditions.
 - **AYUSH Sanjivani App Third Version:** It will **facilitate a significant study and documentation** regarding the efficacy of selected Ayush interventions, including Ayush 64 and Kabasura Kudineer medicines in the management of asymptomatic and mild to moderate **Covid-19** patients.

Source: PIB

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/current-affairs-news-analysis-editorials/news-analysis/04-01-2022/print>