

## Today's Prelims Topics

### Matrilineal Khasi Lineage Act

#### Context

The Meghalaya High Court is reviewing a petition challenging a law that denies ST certificates to Khasi individuals who use their father's or husband's surname, questioning its validity in the matrilineal Khasi society.

#### Matrilineal Khasi Lineage Act

- **Enacted by:** Khasi Hills Autonomous District Council
- **Objective:** To protect and preserve the matrilineal social custom of the Khasi tribe and prevent misuse of tribal status for benefits.
- **Jurisdiction:** Applicable in the Khasi Hills Autonomous District of Meghalaya.

#### Core Principle: Matrilineality

- **Lineage is traced through the mother**, not the father.
- A person is considered Khasi **only if they follow the matrilineal system**, inheritance, and Khasi customs.
- Children take the **mother's clan (Kur/Jait)** name.

#### Who is a Khasi?

- Both parents Khasi → child is Khasi (mother's clan).
- Mother Khasi + Father non-Khasi → child Khasi *only if*:
  - They speak Khasi.
  - Follow Khasi inheritance & kinship customs.
  - Have not adopted the father's personal law or surname.
- Father Khasi + Mother non-Khasi → child Khasi *only if* "Tang Jait" ceremony is performed (customary clan adoption).
- **Tang Jait & Rapiing**
  - **Tang Jait:** Ceremony to adopt non-Khasi individuals of Khasi fathers into the Khasi clan.
  - **Rapiing:** Adoption of a female member into a Khasi family when female lineage dies out.
- **Loss of Khasi Status**
  - Occurs if a person:
    - Renounces matrilineal customs.
    - Uses father's surname or personal law.
    - Adopts customs incompatible with Khasi traditions.
  - Consequences: Loss of property rights, ST benefits, and clan identity.
- **Change of Surname Rules**
  - Surname/clan name can't be changed freely.
  - Requires official petition, public notification, and verification.
  - Clan or Kur name must conform to matrilineal tradition.

Source: [TheHindu](#)

## CETA Agreement

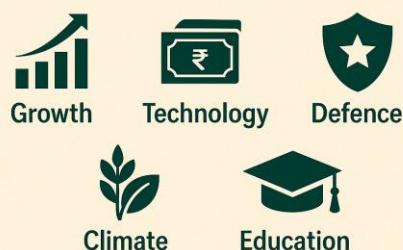
### Context

**India and the U.K. signed a landmark CETA** and unveiled the **India–U.K. Vision 2035** to deepen strategic cooperation across trade, defence, technology, climate, and education, aiming for shared growth, clean energy, and global leadership rooted in democratic values.

### India–UK Free Trade Agreement 2025

- **Market Access & Tariff Reductions**
  - **99% of Indian exports** to the UK will now be **duty-free**.
  - The UK will reduce tariffs on **90% of its tariff lines**, with **85% becoming zero-duty within 10 years**.
  - Major gains for **labour-intensive sectors**: marine, textiles, chemicals, processed foods, and base metals.
  - Processed food tariffs cut from **70% to 0%**.
- **Agriculture & Rural Economy**
  - **Over 95% of agricultural items** gain zero-duty access.
  - Boost for exports of: **fruits, vegetables, pulses, spices, millets, jackfruit, organic herbs**.
  - Projected **20% growth in agri-exports** over 3 years.
  - **Sensitive items** like dairy, apples, oats, and edible oils are **excluded** from the deal.
- **Marine Sector Opportunities**
  - **Zero tariffs** on key products: shrimp, tuna, fishmeal.
  - India's current UK share is just **2.25%** — strong growth expected.
  - Significant boost for India's **coastal economies**.
- **Textiles & Apparel**
  - **1,143 textile categories** get **full duty-free access**.
  - Competitive edge gained over **Bangladesh and Cambodia**.
  - Focus on: **ready-made garments, carpets, handicrafts, home textiles**.
  - Potential **5% increase in UK market share**.
- **Engineering & Industrial Goods**
  - India's engineering exports to UK may **double to \$7.5B by 2030**.
  - Tariffs up to **18% eliminated**.
  - Currently, India exports \$4.28B; UK imports \$193.5B globally — large scope.
- **Pharmaceuticals & Medical Devices**
  - Tariff-free access for **generic drugs and devices**.
  - UK pharma imports: **\$30B**, but India only supplies \$1B.
  - Target products: **X-ray machines, ECGs, surgical instruments**.
- **Chemicals & Plastics**
  - Chemical exports expected to grow **30–40%** to **\$650–750M** in FY26.
  - Plastics (films, kitchenware) to see **15% export growth**.
  - Competitive pricing boost.
- **Toys, Sports Goods, Gems & Jewellery**
  - **Toys and sports goods** gain edge over China and Vietnam.
  - Jewellery exports may **double in 2–3 years**, targeting the UK's **\$3B market**.

### Five Pillars of India-UK Vision 2035



- **Leather & Footwear**
  - **16% tariff removed** on leather goods and shoes.
  - Export target: **\$900M+**, benefitting **MSME hubs** like Agra, Kanpur, Kolhapur, Chennai.
- **Services & Labour Mobility**
  - **75,000 Indian workers** exempted from UK social security for 3 years.
  - **36 service sectors** opened with **no Economic Needs Test (ENT)**.
  - Indian professionals can work in **35 UK sectors for 2 years**.
  - **1,800 chefs, yoga trainers, and artists** to be allowed annually.

### Impact & Strategic Gains

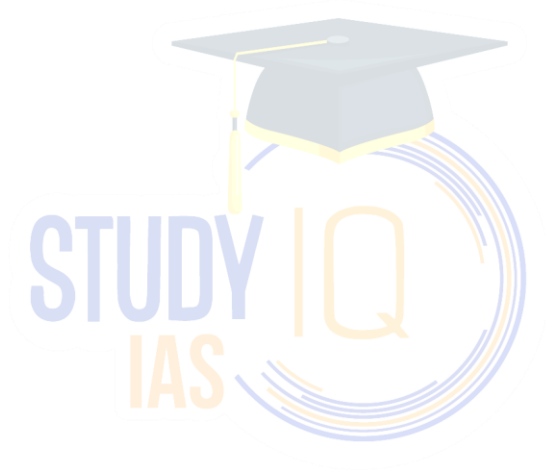
- **Sectoral Benefits**
  - Boost for India's key exports: **agriculture, processed food, textiles, seafood, gems, jewellery, engineering**.
  - UK exporters gain easier access to Indian markets for **whisky, automobiles, electricals**.
- **Trade Growth Projections**
  - UK exports to India may rise **60%**, adding **£15.7B** by 2040.
  - Total bilateral trade to grow **39%**, adding **£25.5B annually**.
- **Strategic Reorientation Post-RCEP**
  - After exiting RCEP (2019), India shifted focus to **Western economies**.
  - This deal shows India's readiness for **high-standard trade partnerships**.

### India's FTA With Other Countries

FTA Partner	Year Signed	Key Highlights
<b>UAE (CEPA)</b>	2022	90% exports duty-free, boost to gems, textiles, pharma, \$85B+ trade
<b>Australia (ECTA)</b>	2022	96% exports duty-free, benefits textiles, leather, strategic Indo-Pacific link
<b>South Korea (CEPA)</b>	2010	Tariff cuts on 85% exports, focus on electronics, auto, pharma, under review
<b>Japan (CEPA)</b>	2011	94% traded items duty-free, gains in robotics, IT, rare earths
<b>ASEAN FTA</b>	2009 (goods), 2014 (services)	Covers trade & services, trade deficit concern, under review
<b>Mauritius (CECPA)</b>	2021	First African FTA, 615 items duty-free, includes services like IT, banking
<b>Chile (PTA)</b>	2017 (expanded)	Concessions on 1,000+ items, early step in Latin American engagement
<b>UK (FTA)</b>	2025	99% exports duty-free, major boost to agri, marine, pharma, services, mobility
<b>FTAs Under Negotiation</b>	Ongoing	<b>EU, GCC, Canada, Israel</b> – focus on services, sustainability, labour mobility

RCEP (Exited)	Exited in 2019	India withdrew over Chinese import concerns; pivot to Western bilateral FTAs
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Source: [TheHindu](#)



## Right to Recall

### Context

Thousands gathered in Taipei for a **pro-recall rally** where **two dozen Taiwanese opposition lawmakers and a mayor** face recall elections.

### What is a Recall Election?

- A **recall election** allows voters to remove an elected official from office before the end of their term through a **direct vote**.
- It is initiated when a required number of voters **sign a petition** demanding recall.
- Has historical roots in **ancient Athenian democracy**.
- **Modern usage**: Found in several democracies including **Canada** (since 1995 in British Columbia) and **multiple U.S. states** (on grounds like misconduct).

### Recall in Indian Context

- **Not new to Indian philosophy** — the idea of **Rajdharma** during the Vedic era emphasized removing ineffective rulers.
- **M.N. Roy (1944)** advocated for decentralized governance with provisions for **election and recall** of representatives.
- **Representation of the People Act (ROPA), 1951** allows vacation of office only in cases of certain offences, not general incompetence or public dissatisfaction.
- **Somnath Chatterjee**, former Lok Sabha Speaker, once proposed the introduction of Right to Recall for greater accountability.
- **Currently in place** at the **local government level** in states like **Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, and Chhattisgarh**.
- No provision exists at the **state or national level** for citizens to recall MPs or MLAs.

Source: [TheHindu](#)

## Places in News

### Bitra island



**News?** The Lakshadweep administration is exploring the possibility of acquiring **Bitra Island**, one of the inhabited islands in the archipelago, for **strategic defence-related purposes**.

#### About it

- **Location:** Situated in the **northern part of Lakshadweep**.
- **Status:** It is the **smallest inhabited island** in the Lakshadweep archipelago.
- **Religious Site:** Hosts a **shrine dedicated to Malik Mulla**, an Arab saint believed to be buried on the island, making it a **site of pilgrimage**.
- **Ecological Significance:** Once served as a **breeding ground for various seabird species**.
- **Strategic Importance**
  - The **Lakshadweep administration** is considering Bitra for **defence acquisition**.
  - If approved, Bitra would become the **third island** in Lakshadweep with a **defence establishment**.
  - Existing naval bases:
    - **INS Dweep prakshak** – located in **Kavaratti** (UT capital).
    - **INS Jatayu** – located in **Minicoy Island**.

Source: [TheHindu](https://www.thehindu.com)

## Editorial Summary

### Why ICJ ruling on climate change is significant

#### Context

The **International Court of Justice (ICJ)** has delivered a **historic advisory opinion** stating that nations have a **legal obligation under international law** to cut greenhouse gas emissions, reinforcing global climate accountability and supporting future climate litigation.

#### Background: Vanuatu's Climate Justice Campaign

- In **September 2021**, **Vanuatu**, a small Pacific island nation, initiated a campaign urging the **International Court of Justice (ICJ)** to issue a legal opinion on climate responsibilities of nations.
- The move aimed to highlight the **existential threat** of climate change to vulnerable island nations due to rising sea levels.

#### UN Resolution and ICJ Involvement

- In **March 2023**, the **UN General Assembly**, after lobbying by Vanuatu, passed a resolution requesting the ICJ's opinion on two key questions:
  1. What are nations' legal obligations under international law to protect the environment?
  2. What are the consequences for violating these obligations and causing environmental harm?
- Under the **UN Charter**, such advisory opinions—though non-binding—carry **strong legal and moral weight** and help shape global law.

#### ICJ's Landmark Ruling: Climate Action is a Legal Duty

- The ICJ declared that **climate action is a binding legal obligation**, not a policy choice.
- Citing major agreements like the **UNFCCC**, **Kyoto Protocol**, **Paris Agreement**, **UNCLOS**, and **Montreal Protocol**, the court ruled that:
  - **All countries** must cut greenhouse gas emissions.
  - **Developed nations** (Annex I) must lead in emissions reduction and support developing nations with **technology and finance**.
- Failure to act constitutes an **internationally wrongful act**, potentially requiring **compensation** to impacted nations.
- Countries can also be held responsible for **private companies' emissions** if they fail to enforce effective regulations.

#### Significance of the ICJ Opinion

- It marks a **moral and legal turning point** in climate accountability.
- While not legally enforceable, the opinion is the **most authoritative interpretation** of international law on climate.
- Likely to be **cited in future legal battles** against governments and corporations for inadequate climate measures.

#### Reinforcing Global Climate Responsibility

- Comes at a time of global backsliding on climate goals, especially in the developed world.
- Reasserts that climate targets are **legal obligations**, not just voluntary pledges.
- **Strengthens the voices of developing and vulnerable nations** demanding climate justice.

#### Loss & Damage: Legal Recognition

- The ICJ validated the principle of **"Loss and Damage"**.

- Recognizes that affected countries, termed **“injured states,”** have the right to **reparations and full compensation** from major polluters.
- Opens new legal pathways for lawsuits against **historically high-emitting countries and industries.**

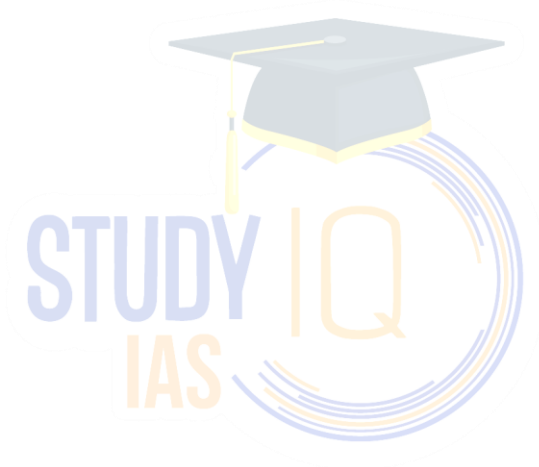
#### Challenges and Legal Dilemmas

- The court noted that **mere action is not enough**—its **effectiveness and sufficiency can be challenged.**
- However, the **Paris Agreement allows self-determined targets**, creating ambiguity about judging adequacy.
- May lead to legal disputes or resistance—even from developing countries.

#### Conclusion: A Powerful Precedent

- Though the ruling does not impose immediate legal duties, it sets a **strong global precedent.**
- Its **true influence** will unfold as:
  - **National courts** begin citing it in lawsuits.
  - **Governments and international bodies** respond to its interpretation of **climate accountability under international law.**

Source: [IndianExpress](https://www.indianexpress.com)





## As climate change events spike, key focus should be drowning prevention

### Context

As July 25 marks World Drowning Prevention Day, it highlights how climate change–driven floods and heavy rains turn even small water bodies into deadly hazards, making drowning prevention more urgent than ever.

### Why Drowning Prevention is Urgently Needed in India

- **High and Underreported Mortality:** Drowning is a major but often underreported cause of unintentional deaths in India. A significant proportion — nearly one-third — of drowning deaths occur in the 0–14 age group.
- **Misconception of Risk:** People typically associate drowning with large water bodies, ignoring everyday hazards like uncovered water tanks, pits, buckets, drains, and roadside channels — especially in urban spaces.
- **Urbanisation and Climate Impact:** With rising climate change-related events like urban floods, even shallow, stagnant water in poorly maintained infrastructure becomes fatal. The WHO estimates that **75% of flood-related fatalities** are due to drowning.
- **Vulnerability of Children and Marginalised Groups:** Children, especially in slums or low-income urban neighbourhoods, face risks due to the absence of supervision, lack of swimming skills, and unsafe infrastructure.
- **Neglect in Policy Frameworks:** National disaster strategies rarely specify **drowning as a priority**, and even urban renewal missions like the Smart Cities Mission or JNNURM **lack focus on flood resilience and drowning risk**.

### Key Challenges in Preventing Drowning

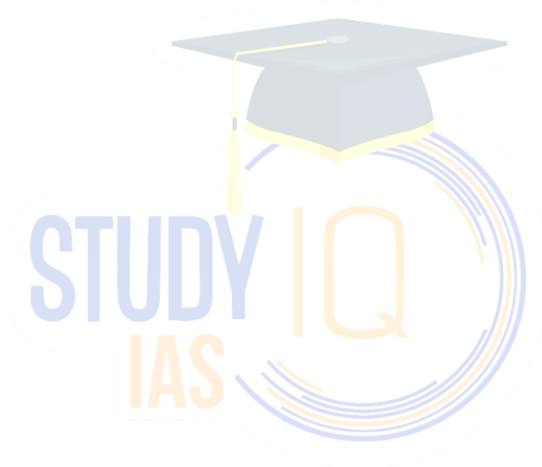
- **Poor Urban Design and Maintenance:** Unfenced pools, uncovered tanks, open drains, and unmarked canals are common. Even where infrastructure is present, **lack of upkeep and repair** increases the danger.
- **Inadequate Funding and Planning:** Urban local bodies struggle with finances for **regular maintenance**, leading to hazardous environments even after infrastructure is built.
- **Lack of Awareness and Community Engagement:** There is low public awareness about how easily drowning can occur — even in one inch of water — and **safety norms are often not followed** in schools, homes, or public places.
- **Absence of Strong Regulations:** There are **no binding regulations mandating fencing, covering of tanks, or mandatory safety audits** in most Indian cities.
- **No Dedicated National-Level Strategy:** Although the NDMA has guidelines on urban flooding, drowning prevention is **not integrated into national disaster or injury-prevention policies**.

### How Drowning Prevention Can Be Achieved

- **Infrastructure and Design Reform:** Mandate **design safety features** like fencing around water bodies, covers on tanks, grates on drains, and visible warning signs.
  - Integrate **flood resilience** into urban planning under Smart Cities and AMRUT missions.
  - Prioritise **child-safe environments** in schools, parks, and residential colonies.
- **Policy and Governance:** Include **drowning as a distinct category** in the National Strategy for Unintentional Injury Prevention and disaster management plans.
  - Allocate **dedicated funding** for urban flood mitigation and infrastructure maintenance.
- **Community and Private Sector Participation:** Encourage **community ownership** of safety — such as local audits of hazards, self-help groups for monitoring, and complaint mechanisms.
  - Hold **private developers accountable** for safety measures in their construction projects.

- **Capacity Building and Training:** Train **first responders**, police, and school staff in drowning rescue techniques.
  - Introduce **basic swimming lessons** and water safety education in school curriculums.
- **Data and Monitoring:** Establish a **robust drowning surveillance system** to track causes, locations, and vulnerable demographics.
  - Use data to guide **targeted interventions** — like focusing on slums, flood-prone urban pockets, and schools.

Source: [The Hindu](#)



## Migration Of Health Workers

### Context

Countries like **India, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka** are major exporters of healthcare workers to developed nations in the Global North (e.g., UK, US, Canada, Australia).

### Current Trends in Migration of Medical Professionals

- **Rising Numbers of Foreign-Trained Professionals in OECD Countries:** Between 2009 and 2019, **25–32% of doctors** in major OECD countries were medical graduates from South Asia and Africa.
- **India's Significant Contribution:** Around **75,000 Indian-trained doctors** and
  - **640,000 Indian nurses** are working abroad (Philippines has over **193,000 nurses** working overseas).
- **Formalised Migration Policies:** Countries like India and the Philippines have **institutionalised the export of health workers** for remittance gains, despite having local shortages themselves.

### Key Pull Factors Driving Migration

- **Higher Wages and Better Working Conditions:** Developed countries offer **significantly better salaries, facilities, and career prospects**.
- **Aging Populations in Developed Nations:** The **declining birth rates and aging demographics** in countries like Japan, Germany, and the UK are creating **chronic shortages of health workers**, increasing demand for foreign professionals.
- **Favourable Immigration and Recruitment Policies:** Trade agreements, bilateral arrangements, and active **international recruitment programs** attract health workers.
- **Professional Growth Opportunities:** Availability of **advanced training, specialisations, and research opportunities** abroad serves as a strong pull.
- **Health Crises and Pandemics:** Events like **COVID-19** heightened the urgency for trained medical professionals, particularly in countries with overstretched health systems.

### Impact on India

- **Domestic Workforce Shortages:** Despite high outmigration, **India faces a significant shortage** of doctors, nurses, and allied health staff in rural and underserved areas.
- **Brain Drain:** The continuous outflow of trained personnel limits India's **ability to strengthen its public health system**, particularly during emergencies.
- **Loss of Public Investment:** The **training of medical professionals is heavily subsidised** by the government, and their migration abroad represents a **net resource loss**.
- **Economic Gains through Remittances:** Migration **contributes to remittances**, which benefit the economy. However, this does not offset the healthcare gaps created at home.
- **Rise in Medical Diplomacy:** India is increasingly **leveraging its health professionals** to strengthen international ties and influence, especially in Africa and neighboring regions.

### What Needs to Be Done

- **Strengthen Domestic Health Workforce Capacity:** Expand health education infrastructure to increase the number of trained professionals.
  - Provide **financial incentives, career growth, and better working conditions** to retain talent, especially in underserved areas.
  - Encourage **circular migration** — where professionals return after gaining experience.
- **Develop Strategic International Agreements:** Negotiate **bilateral agreements** with destination countries that ensure:
  - **Compensation mechanisms** for source countries
  - **Technology transfer**, investment in training institutes, or return-of-service obligations

- **Institutional Reforms:** Set up a **centralised agency** to manage health workforce mobility, grievances, and reintegration (modeled on Kerala or the Philippines).
  - Implement **digital healthcare platforms** that allow remote global engagement of Indian professionals without physical migration.
- **Promote Regional Collaboration:** Develop **joint mechanisms in South Asia** for training, sharing, and deploying health professionals.
  - **Amplify regional voices** to negotiate fairer terms with the Global North.
- **Ensure Accountability and Equity:** Align migration with the **WHO Global Code of Practice on International Recruitment of Health Personnel**.
  - Ensure that **diplomatic and economic interests do not override national health needs**.

Source: [Indian Express](#)

### Correction on 23rd July CAP

- **Artemis Accord:** Current number of **signatory of the accord is 56 (Including Senegal)**.

