

Prelims Exam Topics

POLICE IDENTIFICATION DURING PROTESTS

Context

The use of **plainclothes police personnel** during the "Sansad Chalo" protest in New Delhi has raised concerns over **police identification, accountability, and crowd-control powers**.

About Police Identification During Crowd Control

- **Legal Framework:** Public order and unlawful assemblies are governed by **Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023**.
- **Identification:** The BNSS does **not expressly require** police personnel to display **nameplates or uniforms** during crowd-control operations.
- **Judicial Position:** In **D.K. Basu v. State of West Bengal (1997)**, the Supreme Court held that **arresting officers should be clearly identifiable**, though **no law specifically requires visible identification during protest policing**.

INTERNET SHUTDOWNS

Context

Mobile internet services were temporarily suspended in parts of **Central Delhi** during the "Chalo Sansad" protest.

About Internet Shutdowns

- **Definition:** An **intentional disruption of internet or electronic communication services** to make them inaccessible or unusable in a specific area or for a particular population.
- **Legal Framework:** Governed by **Section 20 of the Telecommunications Act, 2023** and the **Telecommunications (Temporary Suspension of Services) Rules, 2024**.
- **Grounds:** Under Section 20(2)(b) of the Telecommunications Act, 2023, telecommunication services may be suspended only on the occurrence of a public emergency or in the interest of public safety, on the grounds specified in that provision, and for reasons recorded in writing.
- **Time Limit:** Under the **Telecommunications (Temporary Suspension of Services) Rules, 2024**, a suspension order **cannot remain in force for more than 15 days**.

- **Judicial Review:** Shutdown orders may be challenged before the **High Courts (Article 226)** or the **Supreme Court (Article 32)**.
- **Anuradha Bhasin v. Union of India (2020):** The Supreme Court held that **internet shutdowns must be lawful, necessary, proportionate, time-bound, and the least restrictive measure**, with orders being **published and subject to periodic review**.

SAMUDRA PRADAKSHINA

Context

The **Raksha Mantri** flagged in **Samudra Pradakshina**.

About Samudra Pradakshina

- **Nature:** India's **first Tri-service all-women global sailing expedition**, bringing together women officers from the **Army, Navy, and Air Force**.
- **Voyage:** Undertaken aboard the **Indian Army Sailing Vessel (IASV) Triveni**.

KARLAPAT BAUXITE BLOCK

Context

Karlapat Bauxite Block has attracted interest from several major Indian mining and metal companies for commercial development.

About Karlapat Bauxite Block

- **Location:** A **greenfield bauxite mining block** located in **Kalahandi district, Odisha**, with no prior commercial mining.
- **Industrial Use:** **Bauxite is the only commercial ore of aluminium**, which is widely used in **transport, construction, power, chemicals, and manufacturing**.

SAL BORER

Context

The **Madhya Pradesh Forest Department** has sought approval to fell **nearly 1.5 lakh sal trees** in **Dindori district** following a severe **sal borer infestation**.

About Sal Borer

- **Classification:** A **beetle** belonging to the **order Coleoptera** and **family Cerambycidae**.

- **Nature:** The most destructive insect pest affecting sal forests in India.
- **Sal Tree:** Sal is a major deciduous timber species native to Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh (Terai), Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and West Bengal, thriving in warm, humid climates with well-drained loamy soils.

KAWAL TIGER RESERVE

Context

The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) has identified **Kawal Tiger Reserve** in Telangana as a **priority recipient site** for tiger recovery.

About Kawal Tiger Reserve

- **Location:** Situated in Telangana, along the **Godavari River** (with important tributaries including **Peddavagu** and **Kadam**).
- **Landscape:** Lies at the southernmost tip of the **Central Indian Tiger Landscape**, with ecological linkages to **Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve (Maharashtra)** and **Indravati Tiger Reserve (Chhattisgarh)**.
- **Flora:** Predominantly **Southern Tropical Dry Deciduous Forests** comprising **teak** and **bamboo**.
- **Fauna:** Supports **tiger, leopard, wild dog, wolf, jackal, jungle cat, nilgai, chousingha, chinkara, blackbuck, sambar, and spotted deer**, representing the typical wildlife of the **Deccan Plateau**.

BOROPHENE

Context

Indian scientists have demonstrated the use of **borophene** as a **high-performance lubricant additive** in **castor oil**.

About Borophene

- **Nature:** An **allotrope of boron** consisting of a **single-atom-thick, two-dimensional (2D) sheet** of boron atoms.
- **Structure:** Unlike **graphene**, borophene is **highly polymorphic**, with its atomic arrangement varying according to synthesis conditions.

- **Properties:** Ultra-lightweight, flexible, and mechanically strong, with high electrical and thermal conductivity, metallic behaviour, high capacitance, and direction-dependent (anisotropic) properties.
- **Applications:** Used in thin-film electronics, optoelectronics, capacitors, biosensors, catalysis, energy storage, and sensor technologies due to its high reactivity and tunable characteristics.
- **Lubrication:** Adding 0.1% borophene to castor oil reduced friction by ~42%, improved wear resistance and load-bearing capacity, and formed a protective **tribofilm** that minimizes surface wear.
 - **Tribofilm:** A protective layer formed on contacting surfaces during friction, reducing wear and energy loss.

MISSION VATSALYA

Context

The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) has launched an integrated Mission Vatsalya Portal by merging the TrackChild portal, Khoya-Paya application, and GHAR (Go Home and Re-Unite) portal to strengthen the tracking, rehabilitation, and reintegration of missing and vulnerable children.

About Mission Vatsalya

- **Nature:** A Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented by States and Union Territories for Children in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP) and Children in Conflict with Law (CCL).
- **Objective:** Ensures the care, protection, rehabilitation, and reintegration of children in difficult circumstances, including missing and vulnerable children.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD).
- **Legal Framework:** Implemented under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, providing both institutional and non-institutional care.
- **Monitoring:** Section 55 of the JJ Act, 2015 empowers the Central Government, State Governments, or District Magistrates to periodically evaluate the functioning of Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs), Child Welfare Committees (CWCs), Special Juvenile Police Units (SJPU), registered institutions, and recognised fit facilities/persons.

NATIONAL CHAMBAL SANCTUARY

Context

The **Supreme Court** directed that **preventive detention laws** be invoked against those facilitating **illegal sand mining** in and around the **National Chambal Sanctuary**.

About National Chambal Sanctuary

- **Nature:** A **tri-state protected riverine sanctuary** along the **Chambal River**, also known as the **National Chambal Gharial Wildlife Sanctuary**.
- **Location:** Situated at the **tri-junction of Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan**.
- **Objective:** Established to conserve the **Critically Endangered gharial, Red-crowned Roof Turtle, and Endangered Ganges River Dolphin**.
- **Biodiversity:** Supports the **world's largest wild population of gharials** and is recognised as an **Important Bird Area (IBA)**.
- **Fauna:** Home to **mugger crocodile, smooth-coated otter, striped hyena, Indian wolf, Indian narrow-headed softshell turtle, three-striped roof turtle, crowned river turtle, sambar, nilgai, Indian gazelle, rhesus macaque, and Hanuman langur**.

PM-YASASVI SCHEME

Context:

The **Government of India** has reaffirmed its commitment to expanding educational opportunities through the **PM-YASASVI (Prime Minister Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India)** umbrella scheme.

About PM-YASASVI Scheme

- **Nature:** An **umbrella scholarship scheme** for students belonging to **Other Backward Classes (OBC), Economically Backward Classes (EBC), and Denotified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (DNTs)**.
- **Objective:** To **reduce financial barriers** and promote **inclusive, equitable, and quality education** for eligible students.
- **Implementing Agency:** **Department of Social Justice and Empowerment**, under the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**.

- **Eligibility:** Available to **OBC, EBC, and DNT students** with an **annual family income of up to ₹2.5 lakh**.
- **Scholarship Components:** Comprises four schemes—**Pre-Matric Scholarship, Post-Matric Scholarship, Top Class Education in Schools, and Top Class Education in Colleges**.
- **Coverage:** Provides **financial assistance from school education to higher education**, enabling continued access to quality education.

METHANE

Context

A study published in **Nature Food** has identified **India's rice fields** among the **world's largest methane emission hotspots**.

About Methane

- **Nature:** The simplest hydrocarbon (**CH₄**) and the **primary constituent of natural gas**.
- **Properties:** A colourless, odourless, and **highly flammable** greenhouse gas.
- **Climate Impact:** The **second-largest contributor to anthropogenic global warming after carbon dioxide**, classified as a **Short-Lived Climate Pollutant (SLCP)**.
- **Global Warming Potential:** Around **84 times more potent than carbon dioxide over a 20-year period**.
- **Atmospheric Lifetime:** Remains in the atmosphere for **about 12 years** before breaking down.
- **India's Status:** **India is the world's third-largest methane emitter**, with major emissions from agriculture (especially paddy cultivation), livestock, waste, and the energy sector.

Mains Exam Topics

RETHINKING EDUCATIONAL INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN INDIA

Context:

The UDISE+ 2025–26 report reveals that only about **22% of children with disabilities** are enrolled in schools, with enrolment remaining stagnant despite inclusive education initiatives, highlighting major gaps in educational inclusion and retention.

Why Welfare-Oriented Disability Policies Failed to Transform Mainstream Schools into Inclusive Institutions?

- **Charity framing over rights framing:** Early disability policies viewed education as a welfare benefit rather than a rights entitlement. Consequently, policy success was measured by **enrolment**, encouraging schools to prioritise physical access over meaningful participation and learning.
 - E.g., While the **RTE Act, 2009** expanded school access, stronger rights to reasonable accommodation were established only under the **RPwD Act, 2016**.
- **Infrastructure without pedagogy:** Because policy emphasised visible compliance, investments flowed towards ramps, toilets, and transport rather than inclusive pedagogy, assistive technologies, or accessible learning materials. As a result, schools became physically accessible without transforming classroom practices.
 - E.g., A **2021 CAG audit** found substantial spending on ramps and accessible toilets under **SSA/Samagra Shiksha**, but limited investment in disability-friendly teaching-learning resources.
- **Ambition without capacity:** With little investment in inclusive pedagogy, the system also failed to build the teacher workforce required to deliver it. Shortages of trained teachers and special educators meant inclusive education remained a policy aspiration rather than a classroom reality.
 - E.g., Government data shows **one special educator typically serves multiple schools**, making individualized instructional support difficult.
- **Uniform systems over diverse learners:** Without adequately trained teachers to adapt instruction, mainstream schools continued to rely on standardized curricula, assessments, and classroom practices designed for a uniform learner. Consequently, children with disabilities were expected to adjust to the system rather than the system adapting to them.

- **E.g.,** Board examinations largely retain common question papers and performance standards despite concessions such as extra time or scribes.
- **Weak accountability perpetuated exclusion:** As inclusion was viewed as enrollment rather than learning, schools rarely monitored participation, retention, learning outcomes, or classroom experiences of children with disabilities. Combined with persistent stigma and limited disability-disaggregated outcome data, institutional failures remained invisible and successive reforms repeated the same input-focused approach.
 - **E.g., UDISE+** captures enrolment of children with disabilities but has limited disability-specific tracking of learning outcomes and retention.

Why Should Disability Inclusion Be Viewed as Human Capital Formation Rather Than Social Welfare?

- **Capability expansion:** Social welfare primarily secures a minimum standard of living, whereas human capital investment expands people's capabilities, agency, and opportunities. Disability inclusion therefore shifts policy from sustaining lives to enabling individuals to realise their full potential.
 - **E.g., Amartya Sen's Capability Approach** defines development as expanding people's freedoms, not merely providing income support.
- **Capability floor:** Since disability imposes additional costs of healthcare, caregiving, mobility, and assistive devices, social security remains the foundation for capability building. However, welfare generates lasting returns only when it is complemented by investments in education, health, and skills.
 - **E.g.,** Disability pensions under **NSAP** provide income security but are rarely integrated with inclusive education or skilling programmes.
- **Human capital formation:** Because welfare alone cannot create employability, its developmental returns depend on inclusive education, accessible technology, and skill development that convert capabilities into productive human capital.
 - **E.g.,** The low proportion of persons with disabilities completing higher education reflects underinvestment in inclusive capability formation rather than inability.
- **Accessible opportunity:** Even when inclusive education produces skilled individuals, returns remain unrealised unless labour markets provide reasonable accommodation and barrier-free workplaces. Human capital therefore creates value only when opportunities are equally accessible.

- **E.g.,** Although the **RPwD Act, 2016** mandates **reasonable accommodation**, labour-force participation among persons with disabilities remains significantly below the national average.
- **National dividend:** When capability formation and accessible employment reinforce each other, disability inclusion expands labour-force participation, innovation, and productivity, transforming welfare expenditure into long-term economic and social returns.
 - **E.g.,** **ILO** and **World Bank** estimates indicate that exclusion of persons with disabilities costs economies several percentage points of GDP annually.

How Disability Reshapes Gender Inequality in Education in India?

- **Intersectional exclusion:** Gender and disability reinforce each other, while poverty, rurality, and caste often deepen these disadvantages. Consequently, girls with disabilities face the greatest barriers to entering and remaining in school.
 - **E.g.,** **UNCRPD Article 6** recognises that women and girls with disabilities experience multiple forms of discrimination.
- **Policy convergence deficit:** Because gender and disability policies largely operate in silos, the intersecting needs of girls with disabilities remain inadequately addressed. This institutional fragmentation allows barriers to access, safety, and inclusion to persist across the education system.
 - **E.g.,** Gender-focused schemes often assume able-bodied girls, while disability programmes rarely incorporate gender-specific needs such as menstrual hygiene or safety.
- **Institutional vulnerability:** Since no single policy framework addresses their intersecting needs, girls with disabilities face greater risks related to unsafe travel, violence, inaccessible grievance mechanisms, and inadequate caregiving support. Consequently, families are more likely to delay enrolment or withdraw them from school.
 - **E.g.,** Studies consistently identify safety, mobility, and lack of institutional support as greater barriers for girls with disabilities than for boys.
- **Infrastructure without dignity:** Even when enrolled, inaccessible WASH facilities, poor menstrual hygiene support, and inadequate physical accessibility reduce attendance and increase dropout during adolescence. Thus, puberty becomes a decisive point of educational exclusion.
 - **E.g.,** **Samagra Shiksha** audits continue to report gaps in accessible WASH infrastructure affecting adolescent girls with disabilities.

- **Cumulative capability loss:** Interrupted schooling weakens higher education participation, skill formation, and formal employment opportunities, transforming educational disadvantage into lifelong socio-economic exclusion.
 - **E.g., PLFS** consistently reports significantly lower labour-force participation among women with disabilities than among men with disabilities.

Why Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka Achieve Better Educational Inclusion of Children with Disabilities Than Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand?

- **Developmental state capacity:** Southern states have historically combined stronger fiscal commitment, administrative continuity, and social-sector prioritisation to build robust public institutions. This long-term state capacity created the foundation for disability inclusion beyond basic schooling.
 - **E.g.,** Kerala consistently records higher public investment in education and human development than Bihar.
- **Early intervention ecosystem:** Because developmental state capacity prioritised preventive healthcare and early childhood services, southern states built stronger **PHC–Anganwadi–DEIC** networks that identify developmental delays before school entry. Early diagnosis, therapy, and assistive support improve school readiness and reduce later educational exclusion.
 - **E.g.,** **RBSK-supported District Early Intervention Centres (DEICs)** in Kerala and Tamil Nadu enable early management of developmental delays.
- **Decentralised implementation:** Since early identification creates continuous support needs, empowered Panchayats, local bodies, and community institutions coordinate transport, assistive devices, family outreach, and school support. This strengthens last-mile delivery of inclusive education services.
 - **E.g.,** Kerala's **Local Self-Governments (LSGs)** play an active role in supporting inclusive education through decentralised service delivery.
- **Reliable identification systems:** Because decentralised implementation improves local service delivery, disability certification, **UDID** enrolment, and school-level tracking become more comprehensive. Consequently, children with disabilities are identified early and linked to educational support, while weaker systems often produce statistical invisibility rather than lower disability prevalence.
 - **E.g.,** Higher **UDID** penetration and more complete **UDISE+** disability mapping improve planning in southern states.

- **Sustained educational inclusion:** When early intervention, decentralised implementation, and reliable identification reinforce one another, children with disabilities are more likely to remain in school, complete secondary education, and transition to higher education and employment. Thus, initial differences in state capacity widen into long-term educational outcomes.
 - **E.g., NSSO/Census** estimates show substantially higher educational attainment among persons with disabilities in Kerala and Tamil Nadu than in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

