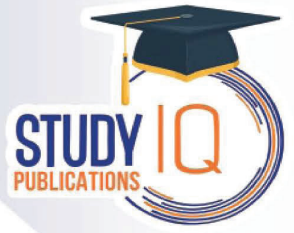


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GEOPOLITICS AT GLANCE

INDIA-MAURITIUS RELATIONS: A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP



HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF INDIA-MAURITIUS RELATIONS

India and Mauritius share a deeply intertwined relationship, built on historical, cultural, and demographic connections. With nearly 70% of Mauritius' 1.2 million population tracing their ancestry to India, ties between the two countries extend beyond diplomacy into civilizational and economic spheres. Since 2005, India has remained one of Mauritius' top trading partners, fostering a dynamic partnership across multiple domains.

COLONIAL ERA & EARLY TIES (PRE-1947)

1. The foundation of India-Mauritius relations was laid with the arrival of Indian indentured laborers under British colonial rule.
2. Mahatma Gandhi's 1901 visit to Mauritius played a crucial role in raising political consciousness among the Indian diaspora.

POST-INDEPENDENCE ENGAGEMENT (1947-1968)

1. India actively supported Mauritius' anti-colonial struggle and continues to back its claim over the Chagos Archipelago.
2. After Mauritius gained independence in 1968, diplomatic relations with India were formally established.

ECONOMIC AND INVESTMENT GROWTH (1970s-2000s)

1. The 1983 Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) positioned Mauritius as a key FDI route into India.

2. India facilitated cultural exchanges through institutions like the Mahatma Gandhi Institute and the Indian Cultural Centre.
3. The signing of the Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPA) further bolstered economic cooperation.

EXPANDING BILATERAL COOPERATION (2000–2010)

1. India supported Mauritius' space and IT advancements and contributed to its maritime security by donating patrol vessels.
2. A defense cooperation agreement was signed, and India assisted in establishing the Mauritius National Coast Guard Headquarters.

STRATEGIC AND ECONOMIC DEEPENING (2011–2020)

1. Amendments to the DTAA curbed tax evasion and round-tripping of funds, while Mauritius joined India's SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) initiative.
2. India provided financial aid for key infrastructure projects, including the Metro Express and Social Housing Scheme in Mauritius.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS (2021-PRESENT)

1. **2021** – India and Mauritius signed the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA), India's first trade pact with an African nation, integrating Mauritius into India's Indo-Pacific vision.
2. **2022** – India assisted Mauritius in launching its first satellite in collaboration with ISRO.
3. **2023** – Strengthened digital partnerships, particularly in cybersecurity and fintech.
4. **2024** – Enhanced cooperation in the Blue Economy. In March 2024, both nations signed a protocol amending the DTAA to incorporate the Principal Purpose Test (PPT), aligning with the OECD's Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) framework.

SIGNIFICANCE OF MAURITIUS FOR INDIA

1. GEO-ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE

- ❑ **FDI Gateway** – Mauritius remains a primary conduit for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into India, channeling \$175 billion since 2000 through the Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (DTAC). Bilateral trade surged from \$206 million (2005) to \$851 million (2023-24).
- ❑ **Bridge to Africa** – With a bilingual (English & French) population and a strong financial sector, Mauritius serves as a key access point for Indian businesses entering Francophone Africa.

2. GEO-POLITICAL RELEVANCE

- ❑ **Regional Partnerships** – Mauritius plays a pivotal role in India's Indo-Pacific framework and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), reinforcing India's engagement in the region.
- ❑ **Backing Mauritius' Sovereignty** – India supports Mauritius' claim over the Chagos Islands, aligning with its broader stance on decolonization and respect for territorial integrity.

3. SECURITY AND STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE

- ❑ **Maritime Security Hub** – Mauritius’ strategic location enhances India’s maritime security initiatives under SAGAR.
- ❑ **Counterbalancing China** – Strengthened defense ties with Mauritius counteract Beijing’s expanding influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).
- ❑ **Surveillance and Intelligence Cooperation** – India has established a coastal radar chain in Mauritius and upgraded Agaléga Island facilities for joint surveillance. Additionally, Mauritius is part of the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) based in Gurugram.
- ❑ **Regional Security Engagement** – Mauritius actively contributes to the Colombo Security Conclave, collaborating with India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Bangladesh on maritime security, counterterrorism, and disaster management.

4. CULTURAL AND DIASPORA LINKAGES

- ❑ **Civilizational Ties** – With 70% of its population of Indian descent, Mauritius maintains strong cultural and historical links with India.
- ❑ **Diaspora Benefits** – The extension of Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) privileges to Mauritians with Indian ancestry (up to the 7th generation) strengthens people-to-people relations and economic ties.
- ❑ **Educational Exchanges** – Initiatives like the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) program, ICCR scholarships, and the Know India Programme (KIP) bolster educational and cultural collaboration.

AREAS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN INDIA AND MAURITIUS

1. Economic Collaboration

- **Trade and Investments:** India remains a major trading partner of Mauritius, exporting products such as petroleum, pharmaceuticals, textiles, and food.
- **DTAA & CECPA:** The 2016 revision of the DTAA addressed tax evasion concerns, aligning with the BEPS framework, while the 2021 CECPA enhanced bilateral trade and investment transparency.
- **Financial and Business Ties:** Mauritius’ advanced banking infrastructure makes it a prime financial hub for Indian firms. Additionally, the adoption of India’s UPI in Mauritius is facilitating seamless digital transactions.
- **Role of Indian PSUs:** Key Indian firms and PSUs contribute to banking, construction, telecom, and energy sectors in Mauritius.

2. Infrastructure and Development Initiatives

- India has committed a **\$353 million Special Economic Package** for vital projects, including the Metro Express, alongside a **\$500 million Line of Credit** supporting ten priority initiatives, such as the Mauritius Police Academy, National Archives, and the first international Jan Aushadhi Kendra.

3. Defense and Security Cooperation

- **Maritime Security:** India provides Mauritius with patrol vessels like **CGS Barracuda** and **CGS Victory**, safeguarding its **Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)**. The two nations also participate in **VARUNA & MILAN naval exercises**. Hydrographic surveys via **INS Sarvekshak** have mapped **25,000 sq. km** of Mauritius’ oceanic territory.

- **Regional Stability & Anti-Piracy Measures:** Surveillance and intelligence-sharing through **coastal radar networks** and **Agaléga Island** monitoring have bolstered maritime security.
4. **Humanitarian Aid & Disaster Relief**
- **COVID-19 Support:** India supplied **100,000 free Covishield vaccines** in 2021, along with 13 tonnes of medicines and an Indian medical team in 2020.
 - **Wakashio Oil Spill (2020):** India provided **30 tonnes of technical equipment**, a **10-member emergency team**, and deployed **INS Nireekshak** for salvage operations.

CHALLENGES IN INDIA-MAURITIUS RELATIONS

1. Declining FDI from Mauritius

- The **2016 DTAA amendment** reduced Mauritius' appeal as an FDI route, leading to a drop in FDI inflows from **\$15.72 billion (2016-17)** to **\$6.13 billion (2022-23)**. Mauritius is now India's third-largest FDI source after Singapore and the USA.

2. Trade Disparities & Limited Diversification

- Mauritius' exports to India are significantly lower than India's exports to Mauritius. In **2023-24**, **Indian exports totaled \$778 million**, while **Mauritius' exports stood at only \$73 million**, leading to a substantial trade imbalance.

3. China's Expanding Influence

- China's rising investments in Mauritius, such as constructing the **Mauritius Supreme Court** and providing infrastructure loans, have raised concerns over India's regional influence.

4. Security Concerns: Maritime & Drug Trafficking

- The **Indian Ocean Region (IOR)** faces increasing security threats, including drug trafficking and illegal fishing. Mauritius has emerged as a **transit hub for narcotics**, posing security risks to India.

5. Delays in Infrastructure Execution

- India-funded projects have faced implementation bottlenecks. For instance, the **Metro Express Project**, part of India's **\$500 million Line of Credit**, encountered initial delays due to bureaucratic issues.

6. Chagos Archipelago Dispute

- India initially adopted a cautious stance on Mauritius' **Chagos Archipelago** sovereignty claim, balancing ties with the **UK and US**. Mauritius expected stronger Indian backing at the **International Court of Justice (ICJ)**, leading to minor diplomatic tensions.

WAY FORWARD

1. Strengthening Maritime & Strategic Ties

- Expanding **coastal radar networks**, conducting joint naval exercises, and bolstering intelligence sharing. A **White Shipping Agreement** similar to India-France cooperation could enhance security.

2. Enhancing Economic & Trade Relations

- Revising the **DTAA** to boost FDI, broadening **CECPA** to cover IT, fintech, and renewable energy, akin to the **India-Singapore CECA model**. Leveraging Mauritius' ties with **SADC, COMESA, and AfCFTA** to improve access to African markets.

3. Cultural and Diaspora Engagement

- Strengthening institutions like the **Mahatma Gandhi Institute** and **World Hindi Secretariat**, modeled after cultural initiatives in **Fiji & Trinidad**. Facilitating diaspora engagement through business networks and events similar to **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas**.

4. Countering Chinese Influence via Diplomacy

- Using **grants, technology collaborations, and soft power diplomacy**, following India's successful **Maldives engagement strategy**. Institutionalizing an **India-Mauritius Annual Summit** akin to **India-Japan Summits**.

5. Innovation and Skill Development

- Expanding **youth skill-building programs** through **education and tech-based initiatives**, modeled after the **India-UAE Skill Development MoU**. Promoting **fintech collaborations** and **digital payment systems**, inspired by India's **UPI expansion into global markets**.

6. Long-term Strategic Vision

- Formulating a **25-year roadmap for a "New India-Mauritius Partnership"**, similar to the **India-UAE Vision 2030**. Implementing smart city projects inspired by the **India-Singapore urban development model** to support Mauritius' modernization goals.

EFFECTS OF AI ON THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL



INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the simulation of human intelligence processes by machines, particularly computer systems. AI encompasses various techniques and methodologies aimed at enabling machines to

perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as problem-solving, learning, reasoning, perception, and language understanding.

Generative AI is a specific subset of artificial intelligence technology that focuses on creating new content, including text, images, and audio, based on certain input parameters. Generative AI models are designed to generate new data rather than simply analyzing existing data or making predictions based on patterns. These models can be trained on large datasets to learn patterns and generate new content that is realistic and coherent. For example, a generative AI model could be used to create lifelike facial images by providing parameters such as facial features, hair color, and skin tone. Generative AI has wide-ranging social, political, and ethical implications, as it has the potential to revolutionize various industries, including art, entertainment, and content creation, while also raising concerns about misinformation, privacy, and authenticity.

POSITIVE POLITICAL IMPACTS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

- ❑ **Innovative Policy Development:** AI facilitates innovative policy development, such as AI-drafted bills in the US Congress, streamlining legislative processes.
- ❑ **Enhanced Political Messaging:** AI enables the crafting of resonant political messages through advanced analytics, revolutionizing campaign strategies and voter engagement.
- ❑ **New Political Platforms:** AI serves as a platform for political engagement and ideological development, exemplified by Denmark's Synthetic Party using AI Chatbox for shaping political ideology.
- ❑ **Economic Contributions:** AI-driven fundraising and business ventures contribute to political finance dynamics, enabling efficient resource allocation in campaigns.
- ❑ **Campaign Strategies:** Generative AI enhances campaign strategies, facilitating tasks like live translation of election speeches into multiple languages, broadening outreach.

NEGATIVE POLITICAL IMPACTS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

- ❑ **Promotion of 'Liar's Dividend' through Deepfakes:** Deepfake technology fosters the dissemination of false information, eroding trust in political discourse as authentic content is questioned.
- ❑ **Erosion of Trust in Democratic Processes:** Deepfakes and manipulated content undermine trust in democratic processes like elections, leading to a democratic deficit and social instability.
- ❑ **Manipulation Risks:** AI poses risks of election manipulation and public opinion sway through the proliferation of false political narratives, distorting democratic decision-making.
- ❑ **Ethical and Legal Challenges:** Acceptance of AI-generated political contributions raises complex ethical and legal questions, necessitating frameworks to ensure transparency and accountability in democratic processes.

POSITIVE SOCIAL IMPACTS

- ❑ **Advancements in Healthcare:** AI has the potential to transform healthcare by enhancing diagnostic accuracy, such as converting medical images for more precise diagnoses.
- ❑ **Agricultural Improvements:** AI enables precision farming, increasing crop yields through accurate data on farming conditions and weather patterns.
- ❑ **Empathy for Conflict Zones:** Initiatives like the Deep Empathy Project create AI-generated images to raise awareness and empathy for war-torn regions like Syria.

- ❑ **Voice Restoration:** AI technology aids in restoring the voices of patients with conditions like amyotrophic lateral sclerosis through voice cloning initiatives.
- ❑ **Creative Applications:** AI, including deepfake technology, can enhance entertainment by improving dubbing in films and bringing historical figures to life.

NEGATIVE SOCIAL IMPACTS

- ❑ **Misuse in Crimes:** Deepfake technology is exploited to create non-consensual pornographic content, violating individuals' dignity and privacy.
- ❑ **Amplifying Radicalization:** Terrorist groups utilize fake videos to incite violence and spread propaganda, fueling anti-state sentiments.
- ❑ **Job Displacement:** AI implementation in various industries raises concerns about job losses due to automation and efficiency improvements.
- ❑ **Privacy Concerns:** AI's data analysis capabilities pose risks to privacy and cybersecurity, as large amounts of personal data are processed.
- ❑ **Environmental Impact:** The energy-intensive nature of AI systems contributes to carbon emissions and environmental degradation, especially during model training processes.

REGULATION OF AI: STATUS IN INDIA AND GLOBALLY

INDIA

- Development of Digital India Framework:** India is formulating a comprehensive Digital India Framework to regulate AI, aimed at safeguarding digital citizens and ensuring the safe and trustworthy utilization of AI.
- Establishment of National AI Programme:** India has initiated a National AI Programme to encourage the efficient and responsible deployment of AI technologies.
- Implementation of National Data Governance Framework Policy:** India has adopted a National Data Governance Framework Policy to govern the collection, storage, and utilization of data, including data utilized in AI systems, to ensure ethical and responsible data handling within the AI ecosystem.
- Drafting of Digital India Act:** The Ministry of Information Technology and Electronics (MeitY) is in the process of drafting the Digital India Act, which will replace the current IT Act. This new legislation will include a dedicated chapter addressing emerging technologies, particularly AI, and their regulation to protect users from potential harm.

GLOBAL EFFORTS

- European Union:** The European Union is developing the Artificial Intelligence Act (AI Act) to regulate AI comprehensively.
- United States:** The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy has released a non-binding Blueprint for the Development, Use, and Deployment of Automated Systems, outlining principles to mitigate potential AI-related harms.
- Japan:** Japan's regulation of AI is guided by the Society 5.0 project, which aims to tackle societal issues through innovative means.

- d. **China:** China has implemented the “Next Generation Artificial Intelligence Development Plan” and issued ethical guidelines for AI. Specific laws governing AI applications, such as algorithmic recommendation management, have also been introduced.

WAY FORWARD

- ❑ **Bias Mitigation:** Efforts should be made to ensure fairness in AI training data to prevent the perpetuation or amplification of social biases, including gender and racial biases.
- ❑ **Transparency:** Users must be provided with transparent information regarding the limitations and risks associated with AI.
- ❑ **Privacy Protection:** Stringent implementation of data protection laws is essential to safeguard user data and confidentiality.
- ❑ **Ethical AI Use:** AI should be utilized exclusively for beneficial purposes, with a push for universal adoption of ethical principles like those outlined in the Bletchley Declaration.

CONCLUSION

AI has the potential to offer valuable insights in addressing major global challenges such as climate change and pandemics. Responsible AI usage can contribute to longer, healthier, and more fulfilling lives worldwide.

INDIA-QATAR RELATIONS: A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP



INTRODUCTION

India and Qatar share a historically strong and evolving bilateral relationship, underpinned by trade, energy cooperation, and strategic collaboration. The recent visit of Qatar’s Emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani,

to India in February 2025 has reinforced this partnership, leading to significant agreements aimed at doubling bilateral trade to \$28 billion and Qatar’s commitment to investing \$10 billion in India.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE RECENT INDIA-QATAR BILATERAL ENGAGEMENT

1. Trade Expansion

India and Qatar have set an ambitious target to double bilateral trade from \$14 billion to \$28 billion by 2030.

Both nations are exploring a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) to deepen economic integration.

2. Financial & Economic Collaboration

A Revised Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement has been signed to prevent fiscal evasion and boost investment flows.

India’s Unified Payments Interface (UPI) will be operationalized in Qatar National Bank (QNB) Points of Sale, facilitating seamless digital transactions.

3. Investment Commitments

Qatar has pledged \$10 billion in investments in key sectors, including: Infrastructure, Technology, Manufacturing, Food Security, Logistics, Hospitality

4. Security & Counter-Terrorism Cooperation

Both countries have unequivocally condemned terrorism, including cross-border terrorism.

Enhanced cooperation on intelligence sharing, law enforcement collaboration, and cybersecurity measures will be pursued.

5. Regional & Global Cooperation

India and Qatar have pledged to work together on UN reforms, particularly in restructuring the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

Qatar will facilitate India-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) strategic dialogue, strengthening India’s engagement in the Gulf region.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF INDIA-QATAR DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS

| Year | Event |
|------|---|
| 1971 | India was among the first countries to recognize Qatar’s independence. |
| 1973 | Full diplomatic relations between India and Qatar were established. 2023 marked 50 years of diplomatic ties. |
| 2008 | Prime Minister Manmohan Singh’s visit to Qatar marked a turning point in bilateral relations. |
| 2015 | The Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani, visited India, reinforcing ties. |
| 2016 | PM Narendra Modi visited Qatar, further strengthening strategic and economic cooperation. |
| 2025 | Qatar’s Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani visited India, leading to major trade and investment agreements. |

SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIA-QATAR RELATIONS

POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Qatar's role in the **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** holds strategic importance for India, particularly concerning issues such as **Kashmir**. Additionally, India seeks Qatar's backing for **permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC)**.

ENERGY SECURITY

Qatar remains **India's largest supplier of liquefied natural gas (LNG)**, accounting for approximately **50% of India's total LNG imports**.

STRONG ECONOMIC AND TRADE RELATIONS

India ranks among Qatar's **top four export destinations**, receiving **LNG, LPG, chemicals, petrochemicals, fertilizers, and plastics**. Simultaneously, India is among Qatar's **top three import sources**, exporting **cereals, copper products, iron and steel items, vegetables, and fruits**.

SIGNIFICANT PRESENCE OF INDIAN COMPANIES

Major Indian corporations such as **L&T, Wipro, TCS, and TechMahindra** have a robust business presence in Qatar.

LARGE INDIAN EXPATRIATE COMMUNITY & REMITTANCES

With nearly **800,000 Indian expatriates** residing in Qatar, ensuring their **welfare and security** remains a priority. The **\$750 million in annual remittances** further highlights Qatar's economic significance for India.

DEFENCE AND STRATEGIC COOPERATION

India and Qatar have strengthened their security collaboration through a **Defence Cooperation Agreement**. Additionally, **Exercise Zair-Al-Bahr** enhances maritime cooperation between the two nations.

CULTURAL EXCHANGES

Cultural programs organized by **Indian Cultural Centre (ICC)** foster people-to-people ties. Qatar also co-sponsored India's **UN resolution to declare June 21 as International Yoga Day**.

CHALLENGES IN INDIA-QATAR RELATIONS

TRADE IMBALANCE

India faces a **significant trade deficit** with Qatar due to the dominance of Qatari exports in the trade relationship.

ENERGY SECURITY DEPENDENCE

India's **reliance on Qatar for over 40% of its LNG needs** makes it vulnerable to disruptions caused by **geopolitical instability, price fluctuations, and policy changes**.

REGIONAL GEOPOLITICAL DYNAMICS

Conflicts such as the **Israel-Hamas war and US-Gulf tensions** pose diplomatic challenges for India's balanced foreign policy approach.

DIASPORA-RELATED ISSUES

Concerns regarding **labor rights violations** and sporadic **anti-India narratives in Qatari media**, such as those linked to the **Kafala system**, require continuous diplomatic engagement.

ANTI-INDIA NARRATIVES

Certain **Qatari media outlets and social media influencers** have occasionally propagated **critical perspectives on India's domestic policies**, especially in relation to **religious and human rights issues**.

WAY FORWARD

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Strengthening **long-term collaboration** in **energy, technology, and infrastructure** is essential for deepening bilateral ties.

REGIONAL STABILITY & DIPLOMACY

India can leverage **Qatar's role as a mediator** to navigate complex geopolitical conflicts in **West Asia and Afghanistan**.

ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

Reducing over-reliance on LNG by expanding cooperation in **technology, fintech, and advanced manufacturing** can enhance trade balance.

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS

Setting up **joint business forums and investment treaties** will streamline economic cooperation and encourage investment.

CONCLUSION

The **India-Qatar strategic partnership** plays a crucial role in India's **West Asia policy**, offering significant opportunities in **economic growth, energy security, and geopolitical influence**. By **tackling challenges like trade deficits and expatriate welfare** while leveraging **Qatar's mediation role in regional diplomacy**, India can further strengthen its standing in **West Asia**. Rooted in **mutual trust and shared strategic interests**, this partnership is set to shape the region's future while advancing **India's global aspirations**.

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JAL JEEVAN MISSION



JAL JEEVAN MISSION

INTRODUCTION

Launched in **August 2019**, the **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)** is a flagship initiative aimed at providing **Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTCs)** to every **rural household** by ensuring at least **55 litres per capita per day (lpcd)** of potable water. Initially set to be completed by **2024**, the timeline was **extended to 2028** in the **Union Budget 2023-24**.

KEY FEATURES OF JJM

| Parameter | Details |
|-------------------------|--|
| Coverage | Primarily rural households; later extended to urban areas via AMRUT 2.0 . |
| Service Delivery | Focus on quantity, quality, regularity, and sustainability of tap water. |
| Community Participation | Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSCs) , Gram Panchayats, and local user groups are empowered for planning and monitoring . |
| Decentralized Planning | Village Action Plans (VAPs) are formulated with local participation. |

| Parameter | Details |
|--------------------------|---|
| Water Quality Monitoring | Establishment of 6,000 water testing laboratories , emphasis on NABL accreditation . |
| Convergence | Works in tandem with MGNREGA, Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), PMKSY, NRDWP , etc., for source sustainability. |
| Technology Integration | Use of IoT, SCADA, GIS mapping, and real-time dashboards for better monitoring and efficiency. |

ACHIEVEMENTS OF JAL JEEVAN MISSION

1. Expansion of Tap Water Coverage

- **2019:** Only **16.8%** of rural households had tap water connections (**3.23 crore households**).
- **February 2025:** Coverage has increased to **79.74%** (**15.44 crore households**).
- **Progress:** **~13 crore households** have been connected out of **~19.4 crore** total rural households (~67% coverage).

2. Significant Budgetary Commitment

- **Union Budget 2024–25:** Allocated **₹67,000 crore** to JJM.
- **Cumulative Expenditure:** Over **₹3.6 lakh crore** since its inception.

3. State-Wise Success Stories

- **8 States & 3 UTs** have achieved **100% FHTC coverage**.
- **Gujarat and Haryana** serve as models for **effective implementation strategies**.
- **Karnataka (38.3%) and Maharashtra (46.6%)** have shown **impressive rural tap water expansion**.

4. Transparency & Real-Time Monitoring

- The **JJM Dashboard** enables **real-time tracking** of tap water coverage.
- **3 lakh+ villages** have achieved **100% functional tap water coverage**.
- **Gram Sabhas** play a vital role in **verifying water supply connections**.

5. Ensuring Safe Drinking Water

- Water quality standards are aligned with **BIS:10500** guidelines.
- Establishment of **NABL-accredited laboratories** for water quality testing.
- **Community Water Purification Plants (CWPPs)** in areas affected by **arsenic and fluoride contamination**.

6. Focus on Source Sustainability

- Mandatory measures include **rainwater harvesting, aquifer recharge, and greywater reuse**.
- **Kerala's approach:** Despite **low FHTC coverage**, it leverages **private traditional wells**, showcasing **regional adaptability**.

7. Employment Generation & Rural Economy

- **Direct Employment:** **~60 lakh jobs** created during the **capital expenditure phase**.
- **Indirect Employment:** **~2.2 crore jobs** generated in rural areas.
- **O&M Phase:** Expected to create **13.3 lakh jobs** in **operation & maintenance** sectors.

8. Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- **SDG-6:** Clean Water & Sanitation.
- **SDG-3:** Improved health outcomes due to access to safe drinking water.
- **SDG-5:** Reduces the **burden on women and girls** who traditionally fetched water.

IMPACTS OF JAL JEEVAN MISSION

HEALTH & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

- ❑ Research by **Nobel laureate Prof. Michael Kremer** indicates that safe water access can **reduce under-5 child mortality by nearly 30%**, potentially saving **1.36 lakh lives annually**.
- ❑ JJM helps prevent **waterborne diseases** like **diarrhea and cholera**, reducing **Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALYs)** and improving **public health and nutrition**.

GENDER EMPOWERMENT & EASE OF LIVING

- ❑ By reducing the time spent on **fetching water**, JJM **empowers women and girls**, allowing them to **pursue education and employment**.
- ❑ The **2024 Jal Shakti Abhiyan**, themed **“Nari Shakti se Jal Shakti”**, underscores this commitment, as seen in **Dhantari’s Jal Jagar campaign**, which mobilized **80,000+ women**.

COMMUNITY-LED GOVERNANCE

- ❑ JJM follows a **Jan Andolan (people’s movement) approach**, enhancing **local ownership and accountability**.
- ❑ Nearly **50% of Gram Panchayats** have formulated **Village Action Plans (VAPs)**, with active participation from **Village Water & Sanitation Committees (VWSCs)**.

ECOLOGICAL & SCIENTIFIC WATER MANAGEMENT

- ❑ **National Aquifer Mapping (NAQUIM)** has mapped **25 lakh sq. km of aquifers**, aiding **groundwater conservation**.
- ❑ The **Bhu-Neer Portal (2024)** enables **real-time groundwater monitoring**.
- ❑ The **FloodWatch India App 2.0** provides **flood and reservoir data from 592 stations**, enhancing **climate resilience**.

LOCALIZED INNOVATIONS

- ❑ **Gujarat’s Jal Sanchay** has established **24,800+ rainwater harvesting structures**.
- ❑ **Meghalaya’s Mawrah Project** rejuvenates **springs and degraded land**.
- ❑ **Varanasi’s India-Denmark Smart Lab** integrates **scientific research and community action** for river conservation.

EMPLOYMENT GENERATION

- ❑ JJM has created significant job opportunities in **plumbing, masonry, water testing, and monitoring**.
- ❑ Employment is generated in both the **infrastructure development** and **Operation & Maintenance (O&M) phases**.

BEHAVIORAL CHANGE & WATER LITERACY

- Increased community awareness has led to **better water conservation practices** and **greywater reuse**.
- The mission has instilled **water literacy** through grassroots campaigns.

WATER AS A RIGHT & SDG ENABLER

- JJM transforms access to water from a **luxury to a fundamental right**.
- It directly supports **SDG-6 (Clean Water & Sanitation)** and contributes to **SDG-3 (Health), SDG-5 (Gender Equality), and SDG-1 (Poverty Reduction)**.

CHALLENGES FACING JAL JEEVAN MISSION

SLOWING PROGRESS & DELAYS

- While JJM saw **rapid initial expansion**, the **pace of FHTC coverage has slowed** due to **logistical, infrastructural, and terrain-related hurdles** in difficult areas.

REGIONAL DISPARITIES

- States like **Assam (3.7%) and Kerala (20%)** lag far behind the national average, highlighting **inequities in infrastructure development and implementation capacity**.

SUSTAINABILITY & OVER-EXTRACTION CONCERNS

- Over-reliance on groundwater** threatens **long-term water availability** in several regions.
- Recharge efforts** are insufficient in **water-stressed areas**, leading to depletion.

WATER QUALITY CHALLENGES

- Despite improvements, contamination from **fluoride, arsenic, and iron** persists in **several rural pockets**.
- Monitoring remains weak**, and many areas **lack NABL-accredited water testing laboratories**.

NEGLECT OF TRADITIONAL WATER SOURCES

- The focus on **pipled water supply** may **marginalize traditional water sources** like **dug wells, springs, and rainwater harvesting systems**.
- In **Kerala**, traditional **private wells** continue to serve as **effective and sustainable water sources**.

INFRASTRUCTURE & O&M DEFICITS

- Hilly and tribal areas face **severe logistical and technical challenges** in setting up **pipelines and storage infrastructure**.
- Weak **Operation & Maintenance (O&M) mechanisms** risk **system failures** and **service breakdowns**.

DATA DISCREPANCIES & MONITORING ISSUES

- Varying metrics across **JJM, Census, NFHS, and NSS** result in **data mismatches**, making evaluation difficult.
- Ground reports** indicate inconsistencies between **official FHTC figures and actual on-ground availability**.

THE WAY FORWARD FOR JJM

STRENGTHEN OPERATION & MAINTENANCE (O&M)

- ❑ Train **local youth and women** under **community-driven models** like Kerala's Kudumbashree.
- ❑ **Example:** The **Swajal Scheme**, which empowers **community-led water management**.

PROMOTE WATER-SECURE VILLAGES

- ❑ Scale up **water budgeting and source sustainability** using MGNREGS and Atal Bhujal Yojana.
- ❑ **Example:** Israel's **integrated water resource management** and wastewater reuse model.

EXPAND SMART MONITORING & AI-BASED LEAK DETECTION

- ❑ Enhance **real-time monitoring** using **IoT and AI** for **leak detection and quality control**.
- ❑ **Example:** Singapore's **Smart Water Grid**, which integrates **sensors and predictive analytics**.

LEVERAGE TRADITIONAL WATER WISDOM

- ❑ Integrate **traditional techniques** like **Johads in Rajasthan** and **Zabo in Nagaland** with **modern technology**.
- ❑ **Example:** Rajasthan's **Mukhya Mantri Jal Swavlamban Abhiyan**, which improved groundwater levels through **decentralized efforts**.

ENHANCE GREYwater MANAGEMENT

- ❑ Promote **decentralized greywater reuse** for **irrigation and groundwater recharge**.
- ❑ **Example:** Germany's **Decentralized Wastewater Treatment Systems (DEWATS)**, adapted for rural India.

INSTITUTIONALIZE BEHAVIORAL CHANGE & WATER LITERACY

- ❑ Establish **village-level water literacy campaigns** and **school-based water clubs**.
- ❑ **Example:** Australia's **Waterwise Schools Program**, which promotes **early-stage conservation awareness**.

CONCLUSION

The **Jal Jeevan Mission** has significantly improved **rural water access**, transforming it into a **fundamental right** rather than a **privilege**. However, challenges such as **regional disparities, sustainability concerns, and weak O&M frameworks** need **urgent attention**.

By **integrating water conservation efforts, enhancing data accuracy, and strengthening community participation**, JJM can **fulfill its goal of 'Har Ghar Jal'** while ensuring the **long-term sustainability of India's water resources**.



CUSTODIAL VIOLENCE IN INDIA

INTRODUCTION

Custodial violence refers to **inhumane treatment inflicted by law enforcement officials on individuals under their custody**. It involves the **use of force, coercion, and abuse of authority** to extract information, intimidate, or punish detainees. This practice **violates fundamental human rights**, undermining the principles of justice and fairness.

The issue of custodial violence has **international ramifications**, particularly in **extradition cases**. Recent legal battles, such as the **Sanjay Bhandari extradition case in the UK** and **Tahawwur Rana's appeal in the US**, underscore how India's **failure to curb custodial violence** weakens its global credibility as a **human rights-compliant nation**.

TYPES OF CUSTODIAL VIOLENCE

Custodial violence manifests in **various forms**, depending on the intent of law enforcement authorities and the circumstances of the detention.

PHYSICAL CUSTODIAL VIOLENCE

- Use of excessive force**, leading to **bodily harm** and **exhaustion** of the detainee.
- Beatings, electric shocks, burning, and stress positions** are common tactics.
- Example:** The **Jayraj-Bennix custodial deaths case (Tamil Nadu, 2020)** highlighted **severe police brutality** in India.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CUSTODIAL VIOLENCE

- Involves **mental torture**, inducing **fear, humiliation, and emotional distress**.

- ❑ Tactics include **sleep deprivation, forced isolation, denial of food, and verbal threats.**
- ❑ **Example:** The **Kashmir conflict** has witnessed **allegations of psychological coercion**, affecting both **detainees and their families.**

SEXUAL CUSTODIAL VIOLENCE

- ❑ Involves **rape, molestation, sodomy, and sexual humiliation**, often **targeting women, children, and marginalized groups.**
- ❑ **Example:** The **Mathura rape case (1972)** led to widespread public outrage and the **enactment of stricter rape laws in India.**

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS AGAINST CUSTODIAL VIOLENCE

The Indian Constitution provides **fundamental safeguards** to prevent custodial violence:

1. **Article 21:** Guarantees the **right to life and personal liberty**, prohibiting **torture and inhuman treatment.**
2. **Article 20(3):** Ensures **protection against self-incrimination**, preventing coercive interrogation.
3. **Article 22:** Provides safeguards against **arbitrary arrest and detention**, including the right to be informed of reasons for arrest and the right to legal counsel.
4. **Article 39A:** Mandates **free legal aid**, ensuring that justice is not denied due to financial constraints.

LEGAL PROVISIONS PREVENTING CUSTODIAL VIOLENCE

INDIAN PENAL CODE (IPC)

- ❑ **Section 330:** Punishes voluntarily causing hurt to **extort a confession.**
- ❑ **Section 348:** Penalizes **wrongful confinement** to extort information or confession.

CODE OF CRIMINAL PROCEDURE (CrPC)

- ❑ **Section 176:** Mandates **judicial inquiry** into **custodial deaths.**

PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ACT, 1993

- ❑ Established the **National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)** and **State Human Rights Commissions (SHRCs)** to **investigate cases of custodial torture** and recommend action.

BHARATIYA NYAYA SANHITA (BNS) PROVISIONS (REPLACING IPC IN 2024)

- ❑ **Section 176:** Punishes **causing hurt by a public servant.**
- ❑ **Section 177:** Addresses **grievous hurt caused by a public servant.**
- ❑ **Section 178:** Penalizes **wrongful confinement** by a public servant.

CAUSES OF CUSTODIAL VIOLENCE

LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND IMPUNITY

- ❑ Weak oversight mechanisms and reluctance to prosecute **perpetrators of custodial violence** create a culture of **impunity.**
- ❑ **Example:** The **Jayaraj-Bennix custodial death case (Tamil Nadu, 2020)** highlighted police brutality and lack of accountability.

SYSTEMIC FAILURES IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

- ❑ Issues such as **overcrowded jails, understaffing, lack of training, and hierarchical pressure** contribute to custodial abuse.
- ❑ **Example:** NHRC reports regularly highlight **overcrowding and staff shortages** in Indian prisons.

SOCIETAL FACTORS AND DISCRIMINATION

- ❑ **Caste-based discrimination, social inequalities, and media reinforcement of violent policing** normalize custodial violence.
- ❑ **Example:** Marginalized groups, such as Dalits and minorities, often face **disproportionate brutality** in police custody.

PROCEDURAL GAPS AND LEGAL VULNERABILITIES

- ❑ **Arbitrary arrests, poor documentation of detainees, and denial of access to legal aid** increase the risk of custodial abuse.

WORK PRESSURE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

- ❑ Police personnel face **long working hours, stress, and burnout**, leading to **impulsive or sadistic behavior**.
- ❑ **Example:** According to the **2019 Status of Policing in India Report (SPIR)**, 80% of police officers work **more than 8 hours daily**, with many exceeding **14 hours per day**.

ABSENCE OF A SPECIFIC ANTI-TORTURE LAW

- ❑ Despite signing the **UN Convention Against Torture (UNCAT) in 1997**, India **has not enacted a specific anti-torture law**, allowing custodial violence to persist.

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT OF THIRD-DEGREE METHODS

- ❑ Use of **third-degree torture** for extracting confessions or solving cases is often **rewarded**, making it a preferred tool in law enforcement.

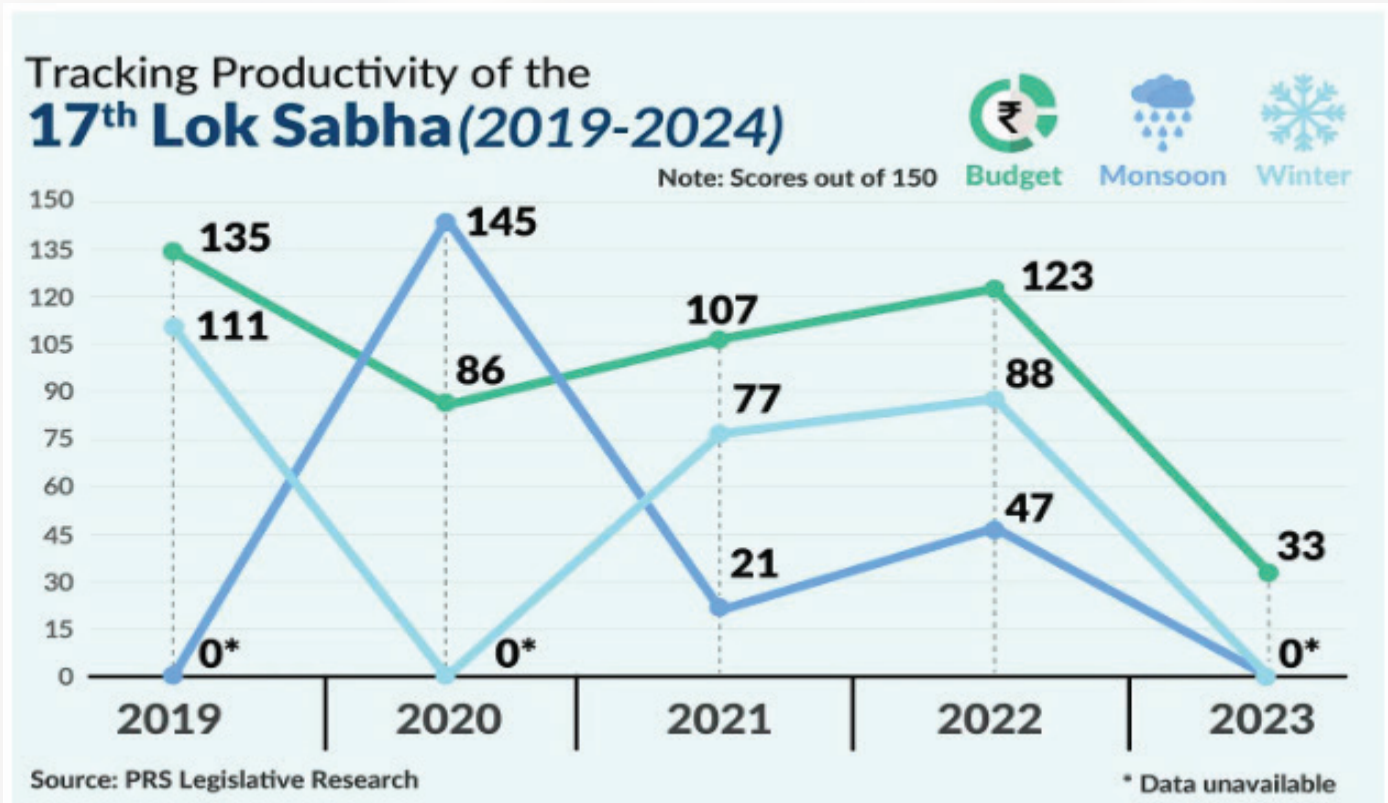
CONCLUSION

While India has **constitutional and legal safeguards** against custodial violence, **systemic failures, impunity, and procedural lapses** continue to enable this practice. The **absence of a dedicated anti-torture law**, coupled with **workplace stress and societal biases**, exacerbates the issue. To **curb custodial violence**, India must **strengthen oversight mechanisms, improve training, and institutionalize strict legal accountability**.

DECLINE OF INDIAN PARLIAMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Indian Parliament, commonly known as the temple of democracy, serves as the nation's highest legislative authority, representing the democratic aspirations of its citizens. It plays a pivotal role in law-making (Articles 79 to 122), ensuring executive accountability, and voicing diverse perspectives. As the foundation of India's democratic framework, its proper functioning remains essential for effective governance and representation.



Source: PRS

- Decline in Productivity:** The 17th Lok Sabha (2019–2024) recorded only 47% productivity, one of the lowest in recent years, as per PRS Legislative Research. The 2023 monsoon session saw just 18% productivity in the Lok Sabha and 28% in the Rajya Sabha, with a significant portion of time lost due to disruptions.
- Decline in Debates and Discussions:** PRS data for 2023 reveals that the Budget session featured only 12 hours of debate, in contrast to 123 hours in 1990. Key legislation is often passed with minimal deliberation—42% of bills in the 17th Lok Sabha were cleared within 30 minutes. For instance, the Farm Laws (2020) were approved in just 7 minutes in the Rajya Sabha without proper voting procedures.
- Reduced Sitting Days:** Over the last decade, Parliament convened an average of 70 days per year, whereas in the 1950s, it met for 120–140 days annually. In comparison, the British Parliament sits for 150–170 days per year, while the U.S. Congress meets for approximately 260 days.
- Increased Use of Ordinances:** Since 1950, more than 750 ordinances have been issued, with 76 promulgated between 2014 and 2023 alone. A notable example is the Farm Ordinances (2020), which bypassed pre-legislative scrutiny.
- Erosion of Budget Scrutiny:** In 2023, over 75% of Demand for Grants were passed without discussion, with only 11% of budgetary expenditures undergoing detailed examination.
- Marginalization of the Opposition:** The suspension of 146 opposition MPs in a single session (2023) for demanding discussions on security breaches underscores the increasing marginalization of dissenting voices.

REASONS FOR THE DECLINE OF THE INDIAN PARLIAMENT

- 1. Frequent Disruptions:** Disruptions have become commonplace, with the **17th Lok Sabha losing 40% of its time to protests and adjournments**. During the **2023 monsoon session, 55% of Lok Sabha and 60% of Rajya Sabha time was wasted** due to repeated interruptions over issues such as the **Pegasus spyware scandal and farmers' protests**. This tactic is employed by both opposition and ruling parties.
- 2. Lack of Bipartisanship:** Increasing **political polarization has hindered consensus-building and constructive debate**. The **GST Bill (2016)** remains a rare example of bipartisan cooperation, but such instances are now scarce.
- 3. Decline of Parliamentary Committees:** Currently, **only about 25% of bills undergo committee scrutiny**, compared to **60–70% in the 1990s**. Important legislation, like the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act (2019)**, **bypassed committee review**. Parliamentary bodies, such as the **PAC (Public Accounts Committee)** and **DSC (Departmental Standing Committees)**, **lack sufficient resources and authority**. The **PAC's 2022 report** highlighted the government's failure to implement its recommendations.
- 4. Hollowing Out of Parliament:** Contentious laws, including the **Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act and Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA)**, were enacted with minimal debate.
- 5. Executive Overreach:** The increasing dominance of the **executive in legislative affairs** has reduced Parliament to a mere **rubber stamp**. This is evident in the frequent use of the **ordinance route**, misuse of the **Money Bill provision** (as questioned in **Rojer Mathew v. South Indian Bank, 2019**, concerning the **Aadhaar Act, 2016**), and weak enforcement of the **anti-defection law**, which curbs dissent. The **Speaker's position has grown increasingly partisan**, as seen in delayed disqualification decisions (**Keisham Meghachandra v. Speaker, Manipur, 2020**).
- 6. Criminalization of Politics:** As per the **ADR report (2024)**, **46% of candidates have criminal cases against them**, while an overwhelming **93% are crorepatis**. This erodes the **credibility and moral authority** of the House.
- 7. Lack of Research Support:** Unlike the **U.S. Congressional Research Service and the U.K. Parliamentary Research Service**, Indian MPs **lack access to independent research and policy analysis**. The **absence of a Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO)** further weakens MPs' ability to scrutinize fiscal policies.
- 8. Judicial Activism Filling Legislative Vacuum:** The **Supreme Court, in Kalpana Mehta v. Union of India (2018)**, **stressed the need for greater parliamentary oversight of bills**. However, judicial interventions sometimes overshadow Parliament, as seen in the **NJAC case (2015)**.
- 9. Low Quality of Debates:** Parliamentary discussions are increasingly dominated by **personal attacks, walkouts, and sloganeering**, leading to a decline in intellectual discourse.
- 10. Lack of Institutional Reforms:** The **absence of structural reforms has contributed to Parliament's weakening**. The **M.N. Venkatachaliah Committee (2002)** proposed reforms such as **limiting the number of ministers**, but these remain unimplemented. Similarly, the **2nd ARC (Administrative Reforms Commission)** emphasized the need to **strengthen parliamentary oversight**, yet its recommendations have been ignored.

CONSEQUENCES OF THIS DECLINE

- 1. Democratic Deterioration:** A weakened parliamentary oversight has diminished essential checks and balances, jeopardizing democratic integrity. The **CAG's 2021 report on the PM-CARES Fund** pointed out **the absence of legislative scrutiny** over crucial financial matters.
Less oversight → Unrestrained executive → Policy missteps (e.g., Demonetization was not debated in Parliament).
- 2. Rushed and Ineffective Legislation:** Hastily enacted laws often suffer from **ambiguity and flawed implementation**, as seen in the **Farm Laws and the GNCTD (Amendment) Act, 2021**. Policy reversals occur without proper legislative deliberation, evident in the **repeal of the Farm Laws**.
- 3. Erosion of Public Trust:** A **Lokniti-CSDS (2021) survey** revealed that only **27% of people fully trust Parliament**, a sharp decline from **49% in 2005**. The **ADR (2023) report** found that **68% believe MPs fail to represent citizens' interests effectively**.
- 4. Judicial Overreach and Legislative Stagnation:** The judiciary increasingly assumes a **policy-making role due to parliamentary inaction**. This trend is reflected in landmark cases such as the **Vishaka Guidelines (1997)**, the **Right to Privacy verdict**, and **Passive Euthanasia rulings**.
- 5. Federal Tensions:** Ignoring regional concerns has intensified **Centre-State frictions** (e.g., **Tamil Nadu's resistance to NEET and debates over Hindi imposition**). The **Rajya Sabha's weakened influence** has diluted the federal framework, while the **GST Council** faces criticism for **centralizing fiscal authority**.
- 6. Governance Challenges:** The **lack of thorough scrutiny** has led to governance failures, such as the **2016 Demonetization**, which was implemented **without parliamentary discussion**.

MEASURES FOR PARLIAMENTARY REVIVAL

- 1. Increase Parliamentary Sessions:** Parliament should convene for **at least 100 days annually**, as recommended by the **NCRWC (2002)**. The **Rajya Sabha Committee (2008)** advocated for a **fixed calendar and a minimum number of sittings**.
- 2. Enhance Parliamentary Committees:** All bills should undergo **detailed examination by parliamentary committees**, as suggested by the **Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, and Law (2018)**. Committees require **better resources and research support**.
- 3. Establish a Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO):** Modeled after the **U.S. Congressional Budget Office**, a PBO would provide independent fiscal analysis, strengthening Parliament's **budgetary oversight**.
- 4. Amend the Anti-Defection Law:** As recommended in the **Law Commission's 170th Report**, restrictions on defection should apply only to **confidence and money bills**, allowing MPs greater freedom to **express dissent**.
- 5. Prevent Misuse of the Money Bill Provision:** Implement **Supreme Court rulings** from the **Rojer Mathew and Puttaswamy cases** to ensure **proper legislative scrutiny**.
- 6. Encourage Bipartisanship and Ethical Conduct:** Establish **all-party committees**, empower the **Speaker to facilitate cross-party dialogue**, and enforce a **code of conduct**, as advised by the **V. Ramaswami Committee (2001)**. Private Members' Bills, such as **Shashi Tharoor's (2017) proposal for penalizing unruly MPs**, should be supported.

7. **Boost Public Engagement:** Digital platforms should promote **public consultations** on key legislation. Expanding the **MyGov portal** could enhance access to **parliamentary debates and discussions**.
8. **Strengthen Legislators' Capacities:** Organizing **National Legislators' Conferences** and training programs can improve MPs' effectiveness. Enforcing a **code of conduct for MPs**, as recommended by the **V. Ramaswami Committee (2001)**, would enhance decorum.
9. **Maintain Judicial Restraint and Legislative Primacy:** While judicial interventions remain necessary, the **Supreme Court should refrain from excessive encroachment** on legislative functions, as emphasized in the **NJAC case**. The **SC's ruling in Rojer Mathew v. South Indian Bank (2019)** called for **greater respect for the Rajya Sabha's role**. Establishing an **Independent Speaker Tribunal** could ensure **impartial anti-defection rulings**.

CONCLUSION

Once revered as the **temple of democracy**, the Indian Parliament is increasingly viewed as a **rubber stamp**. The foundational principles of **deliberation, accountability, and representation** are under threat. Reversing this decline demands **institutional reforms, political commitment, public pressure, and constitutional safeguards**. A **robust Parliament is indispensable** for upholding democracy and realizing **constitutional ideals**.

UNDERSTANDING TRIBUNALS



TRIBUNALS

INTRODUCTION

A tribunal is a specialized quasi-judicial body established to resolve specific disputes, such as administrative and tax-related matters. It adjudicates disputes, determines rights, and reviews administrative decisions. With over

4.5 crore cases pending in India (National Judicial Data Grid, 2024), an efficient tribunal system is crucial. The Tribunals Reforms Act, 2021, aimed at enhancing efficiency by merging and rationalizing multiple tribunals.

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL PROVISIONS RELATED TO TRIBUNALS IN INDIA

The original Constitution lacked provisions on tribunals. The 42nd Amendment Act of 1976 introduced **Part XIV-A** under the title “**Tribunals**”, incorporating:

- ❑ **Article 323A** – Covers administrative tribunals.
- ❑ **Article 323B** – Enables tribunals for various other matters.

PROVISIONS AND THEIR DESCRIPTIONS

- ❑ **Article 323A** – Empowers Parliament to establish administrative tribunals for disputes concerning recruitment and service conditions of employees in the central and state governments, public corporations, local bodies, and public authorities.
- ❑ **Article 323B** – Grants Parliament and state legislatures the power to create tribunals for issues like industrial disputes, land reforms, foreign exchange, elections, and tenancy rights.

ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNALS ACT, 1985

To implement **Article 323A**, Parliament passed the **Administrative Tribunals Act, 1985**, authorizing the Central Government to establish:

- ❑ **Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT)** – Handles cases involving central government employees.
- ❑ **State Administrative Tribunals (SATs)** – Deals with disputes related to state government employees.

LANDMARK JUDGMENTS ON TRIBUNALS

- ❑ **S.P. Sampath Kumar v. Union of India (1987)** – Affirmed tribunals as substitutes for High Courts and upheld their constitutional validity.
- ❑ **L. Chandra Kumar v. Union of India (1997)** – Ruled that tribunals cannot replace High Courts and must remain subject to judicial review under **Articles 226 and 227**.
- ❑ **Madras Bar Association v. Union of India (2014)** – Directed that tribunal administrative support should come under the Ministry of Law and Justice.
- ❑ **Rojer Mathew v. South Indian Bank Ltd. (2019)** – Stressed the need for judicial impact assessment before merging tribunals.
- ❑ **Madras Bar Association v. Union of India (2020)** – Recommended forming a **National Tribunals Commission** to oversee tribunal appointments, operations, and administration.
- ❑ **Madras Bar Association v. Union of India (2021)** – Invalidated provisions of the **Tribunal Reforms Act, 2021**, citing concerns over judicial independence.

EVOLUTION OF THE INDIAN TRIBUNAL SYSTEM

PRE-INDEPENDENCE ERA (BEFORE 1947)

- ❑ **Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT)** – India’s first tribunal, created to reduce tax-related litigation.

POST-INDEPENDENCE ERA (1947–1980)

- ❑ **1950** – The **Industrial Disputes (Appellate Tribunal) Act** established appellate tribunals for industrial disputes.
- ❑ **1969** – The **First Administrative Reforms Commission** recommended Civil Services Tribunals at national and state levels.
- ❑ **1974** – The **Sixth Law Commission** suggested high-powered tribunals to reduce High Court backlogs.
- ❑ **1976** – The **Swaran Singh Committee** proposed:
 - Administrative Tribunals (National & State) for service-related cases.
 - An All-India Appellate Tribunal for labor disputes.
 - Sector-specific tribunals for land reforms, revenue, and essential commodities.
 - Supreme Court’s oversight over tribunal decisions.

GOLDEN ERA OF TRIBUNALIZATION (1980–2000)

Several key tribunals were established:

- ❑ **Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT)** – Handles government service disputes.
- ❑ **Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT)** – Resolves financial sector issues.
- ❑ **Film Certification Appellate Tribunal** – Addresses film censorship disputes.
- ❑ **Appellate Tribunal for Electricity** – Deals with electricity tariff-related cases.

EXPANSION OF TRIBUNALS (2000–2016)

- ❑ **2000** – **Debt Recovery Tribunal (DRT)** – Resolves disputes between banks and borrowers.
- ❑ **2002** – **Competition Commission of India (CCI) & Competition Appellate Tribunal (COMPAT)** – Regulates market competition.
- ❑ **2010** – **National Green Tribunal (NGT)** – Handles environmental disputes.
- ❑ **2016** – **National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) & National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT)** – Deals with corporate and insolvency cases.

2017 – TRIBUNAL RATIONALIZATION

The **Finance Act, 2017**, reduced the number of tribunals from **26 to 19**, consolidating similar functions. It also transferred the power to determine tribunal qualifications, appointments, and service conditions to the central government.

TRIBUNAL REFORMS ACT, 2021

This Act sought to streamline the tribunal system by **abolishing nine tribunals**, transferring their functions to **High Courts and existing judicial bodies**, enhancing efficiency in dispute resolution.

IMPORTANCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF TRIBUNALS

1. **Expedited Justice** – Tribunals facilitate quicker dispute resolution than conventional courts. **Example:** Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions settle cases within 3–6 months, while NCLT accelerates debt recovery under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), 2016.

2. **Expert Decision-Making** – These bodies handle complex, domain-specific disputes requiring specialized knowledge. **Example:** Appellate Tribunal for Electricity (APTEL) for power sector disputes, Income Tax Appellate Tribunal (ITAT) for taxation, and National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) for corporate cases.
3. **Easing Judicial Workload** – By dealing with niche cases, tribunals alleviate the burden on higher courts. **Example:** The Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) has substantially reduced litigation concerning service-related matters.
4. **Strengthening Economic Governance** – Tribunals like NCLT and Debt Recovery Tribunal (DRT) enhance financial stability and promote business efficiency. **Example:** Under the IBC, 2016, creditors recovered ₹3.55 lakh crore by resolving 1,068 insolvency cases as of September 2024.
5. **Environmental and Rights Protection** – The National Green Tribunal (NGT) plays a key role in ecological conservation. **Example:** The NGT's intervention in the Vizag Gas Leak (2020), Yamuna pollution, and illegal mining in the Aravalli Hills demonstrates its significance.
6. **Enhancing Access to Justice** – Tribunals provide a cost-effective, accessible platform, especially benefiting marginalized communities.
7. **Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)** – They serve as non-adversarial mechanisms promoting amicable settlements.

CHALLENGES FACED BY TRIBUNALS IN INDIA

1. **Rising Case Backlogs** – **Example:** As of 2023, the Debt Recovery Tribunal (DRT) had over 2.15 lakh pending cases, with an asset recovery rate of just 9.2% in 2022–23.
2. **Institutional Mergers and Abolitions** – The consolidation of tribunals, such as COMPAT into NCLAT, has overburdened benches, diminishing specialization.
3. **Vacancies and Infrastructure Deficits** – Chronic shortages in judicial appointments hinder efficiency. **Example:** In 2023, NCLT functioned at only 50% capacity, delaying critical insolvency resolutions.
4. **Judicial Overreach** – Supreme Court interventions, such as in the AGR dispute ruling on the Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal (TDSAT), have raised concerns over tribunals' authority.
5. **Appointments and Autonomy Issues** – Excessive executive influence in selecting tribunal members undermines independence. **Example:** The Law Ministry's control over appointments and budgets affects impartiality.
6. **Lack of Procedural Uniformity** – Different tribunals follow inconsistent rules. **Example:** Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT) and CAT apply varying evidence submission protocols.
7. **Delays in Implementation** – The slow, opaque selection process for tribunal members leads to extended vacancies. **Example:** Despite the Law Commission's 272nd Report (2017) recommending a central oversight body, no action has been taken.
8. **Economic Consequences of Delays** – **Example:** Unresolved tax disputes worth ₹12 lakh crore remain pending before various tribunals, negatively impacting revenue collection and investor confidence.

WAY FORWARD

1. **Independent Tribunal Oversight** – Establish a Tribunal Commission to manage appointments, administration, and funding. **Example:** The Law Commission's 162nd Report proposed a National Administrative Appellate Tribunal above High Courts, an idea worth revisiting.

2. **Enhanced Tribunal Management** – Introduce a Central Tribunal Division within the Law Ministry, integrating case management technology and AI-driven analytics.
3. **Double-Shift Tribunal Operations** – Implement two-shift working schedules to expedite case disposal, a measure considered in 2011 but never enforced.
4. **Strengthening Specialization and Autonomy** – Instead of appointing retired bureaucrats, tribunals should have expert panels ensuring subject-specific competence. Strengthen independence through legal reforms.
5. **Digitization of Tribunal Procedures** – Establish an **e-Tribunal** system for real-time case tracking and incorporate online dispute resolution (ODR) mechanisms. **Example:** The UK's HM Courts & Tribunals Service serves as a successful model.
6. **Reducing Executive Control** – As recommended in **Roger Mathew v. Union of India (2019)**, tribunal independence must be reinforced.
7. **Greater Judicial Autonomy** – Tribunals should function with minimal higher court intervention, as emphasized in **L. Chandra Kumar v. Union of India (1997)**.

WOMEN REPRESENTATIVES IN PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS



INTRODUCTION

The **73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992** was a landmark reform in India's democratic decentralization, institutionalizing **Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)**. It introduced a **33% reservation** for women in Gram Panchayats, Block Samitis, and Zilla Parishads, which several states later increased to **50%**.

Despite this legal empowerment, the “Pradhan Pati” (Proxy Sarpanch) phenomenon persists, where male relatives—husbands, fathers, or brothers—exercise actual authority, sidelining elected female representatives. This practice weakens grassroots women’s empowerment and hinders true political participation.

CURRENT STATUS OF WOMEN’S REPRESENTATION IN PRIs

1. Women in PRIs:

- As of 2025, India has over **1.45 million elected women representatives (EWRs)** in **2.5 lakh Panchayats**, comprising **46%** of total elected officials.
- The **73rd Amendment** mandates **33-50% reservation**, enabling increased women’s participation.

2. States with 50% Women’s Reservation:

- **Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Odisha, Maharashtra, and Kerala** have implemented **50% reservation** for women in PRIs.

3. Global Gender Gap Report 2024:

- For the first time, the **report considered women’s local governance participation** as a key metric.
- Only **18 out of 146 countries** have surpassed **40% female representation** in local governance.
- **India ranks among the highest**, with over **44%** of elected members in PRIs being women.

WHY ELIMINATING PROXY LEADERSHIP IN PRIs MATTERS

1. **Empowering Women** – Genuine authority for female sarpanches fulfills the **objective of reservations** and fosters real empowerment.
2. **Inclusive Development** – Women leaders emphasize **issues concerning women, children, and marginalized communities**, driving comprehensive rural progress.
3. **Strengthening Democracy** – Ensuring elected women leaders wield actual power enhances **grassroots democracy** and improves public confidence in governance.
4. **Boosting Economic Growth** – Greater women’s involvement in governance leads to **inclusive policies** and economic advancements.
5. **Better Policy Outcomes for Women & Children** – Research shows villages governed by female sarpanches focus more on **maternal healthcare, education, and nutrition programs**.
6. **Greater Transparency & Accountability** – A study by IRMA (Institute of Rural Management Anand) found that panchayats led by women exhibit **lower corruption** and improved **fund allocation efficiency**.

CHALLENGES IN ERADICATING PROXY LEADERSHIP IN PRIs

1. **Patriarchal Attitudes** – Women are often **treated as figureheads**, while **male relatives make key decisions**.
2. **Low Literacy & Awareness** – Many elected women representatives **lack formal education** and training in governance.
3. **Male Influence in Policy-Making** – Even in reserved seats, **men dominate decision-making**, limiting women’s agency.
4. **Weak Political Commitment** – There are **few institutional safeguards** to prevent **proxy governance**.

5. **Limited Financial & Digital Access** – Many women sarpanches lack smartphones, transport, and administrative support, restricting their effectiveness.
6. **Bureaucratic Complexity** – Digital illiteracy prevents many from engaging with official documentation and administrative duties.
7. **Gender-Based Threats & Intimidation** – Women leaders often face coercion or threats. Reports from Bihar, Rajasthan, and UP cite cases where female sarpanches were pressured to resign due to local power dynamics.
8. **Poor Honorarium** – Low salaries (e.g., ₹4,500/month in Rajasthan) discourage women from taking leadership seriously.
9. **Misuse of Whistleblower Systems** – Weak reporting mechanisms allow false allegations, used by political rivals to undermine women leaders.

GOVERNMENT AND OTHER INITIATIVES TO ENHANCE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN PRIs

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

- The **73rd Amendment** ensures **one-third reservation** for women in PRIs, with several states extending it to **50%**.

CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMS

- The **Ministry of Panchayati Raj** provides governance training under the **Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA)**.
- Sashakt Panchayat-Netri Abhiyan**: A specialized training initiative for women representatives in PRIs.
- States are encouraged to organize **Mahila Sabhas and Ward Sabhas** to enhance women's participation.

DIGITAL LITERACY INITIATIVES

- Digital India and e-Panchayat** programs equip women leaders with essential digital governance tools.

NGO INTERVENTIONS

- Organizations like **PRIA (Participatory Research in Asia)** and **UN Women** offer training, mentorship, and networking support for women sarpanches.

STATE-LEVEL INNOVATIONS

- Kerala and Rajasthan** have introduced gender-sensitive policies and institutional support frameworks for women leaders.

COMMITTEE ON PROXY REPRESENTATION (2023)

- Formed by the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj** to address proxy leadership cases.
- Exemplary Penalties**: Recommended for verified cases of proxy governance (specific penalties yet to be defined).
- Multi-Pronged Strategy**: Policy reforms, technological monitoring, peer support programs, and punitive measures suggested.

- ❑ **Gender-Exclusive Quotas & Public Swearing-In:** Inspired by Kerala’s model, the committee proposed **exclusive women’s quotas** in Panchayat subject committees and **mandatory public oath ceremonies** for elected women leaders.

WAY FORWARD

LEGAL REFORMS & INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

- ❑ Enforce **strict implementation** of the **73rd Amendment** with better monitoring mechanisms.
- ❑ Introduce **legal penalties** for **“Pradhan Pati” (proxy leadership) cases**.
- ❑ Set up **Women’s Help Desks** at Block & District levels.
- ❑ Recognize anti-proxy efforts through awards like **“Anti-Pradhan Pati Champions.”**

CAPACITY BUILDING & EDUCATION

- ❑ Strengthen **digital literacy and governance training** for women sarpanches.
- ❑ Implement **gender sensitization programs** to challenge societal biases.
- ❑ Consider a **minimum educational qualification (e.g., 12th grade)** for sarpanches to enhance independent decision-making.

FINANCIAL & ADMINISTRATIVE EMPOWERMENT

- ❑ Enable **direct fund transfers** to women leaders for financial autonomy.
- ❑ **Simplify documentation and administrative processes** for improved governance.

POLITICAL & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

- ❑ Encourage **mentorship by senior women leaders** for new representatives.
- ❑ Strengthen **Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Mahila Panchayats** to create local support systems.

SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLES OF WOMEN LEADERSHIP

- ❑ **Chhavi Rajawat (Rajasthan)** – India’s first MBA sarpanch, who introduced **rainwater harvesting and digital literacy initiatives**.
- ❑ **Minati Barik (Odisha)** – Spearheaded improvements in **sanitation, healthcare, and women’s safety** in her Panchayat.

CONCLUSION

Eradicating **proxy leadership** in PRIs is essential for **genuine empowerment and democratic strengthening**. Addressing institutional weaknesses, enhancing policy frameworks, and fostering **capacity-building programs** will ensure women sarpanches exercise real authority. While government initiatives have laid a strong foundation, **transforming symbolic representation into real empowerment requires sustained efforts to dismantle deep-rooted biases and create an enabling governance environment.**

MULTI-STATE COOPERATIVE SOCIETY



INTRODUCTION

According to the **Economic Survey 2022-23**, India has over **8.5 lakh cooperative societies**, comprising nearly **30 crore members**, with **PACS (Primary Agricultural Credit Societies)** forming the **backbone of rural credit**. More than **65,000 PACS** are actively functioning nationwide. The government aims to set up **two lakh PACS** and has undertaken multiple initiatives toward this objective.

GOVERNMENT MEASURES

- 1. New Model Bylaws** – The government has introduced **new model bylaws**, allowing **PACS expansion beyond their traditional scope**, facilitating **modernization and diversification**.
- 2. Phased Implementation of PACS** – The government is rolling out PACS in **two phases**:
 - **Phase 1**: Establishing **32,750 agricultural cooperatives** (in collaboration with NABARD), **46,000 dairy cooperatives** (with NDDDB), and **5,500 fishery cooperatives** (with NFDB).
 - **Phase 2**: Extending coverage to **15,000 additional villages**.
- 3. Dissolution of Defunct PACS** – Standard operating procedures (SOPs) have been framed to **replace non-functional PACS**, enabling cooperative expansion in **15,000 new villages**.
- 4. Enhancing Inclusivity** – A **special emphasis on participation from women, Dalits, and tribal communities** is being pursued to **promote social and economic equity**.

5. **Integration with Global Supply Chains** – PACS are being leveraged to **enhance forward and backward linkages**, addressing **historical challenges related to market accessibility and competitiveness**.
6. **Digital Modernization** – The introduction of **micro-ATMs and RuPay Kisan Credit Cards** aims to **digitize PACS operations**. Institutions like **NABARD, NDDB, and NFDB** play a significant role in **cooperative establishment across different sectors**.
7. **Alignment with Budget 2023-24** – A provision of **₹900 crore** has been allocated under the **Cooperative Development Fund** to **strengthen PACS**.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COOPERATIVE SECTOR IN INDIA

1. **Empowering Grassroots Communities** – By **democratizing credit access**, PACS help **empower rural populations** and reduce **dependency on intermediaries**.
2. **Catalyst for Rural Development** – Integration into **global supply chains** improves **market competitiveness** and enhances **farmer incomes**.
3. **Financial Inclusion** – PACS serve as the **primary credit source** for **small and marginal farmers**. PACS contribute to **41% of Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loans nationwide**, with **95% of these loans benefiting small and marginal farmers**.
4. **Fostering Social Equity** – Measures to **enhance inclusivity** promote **economic empowerment** for marginalized communities, fostering **social harmony**.
5. **Boosting Agricultural Productivity** – Improved **credit accessibility and value-added services** help **enhance productivity** in the agricultural sector.

CHALLENGES IN THE COOPERATIVE SECTOR

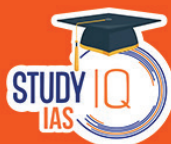
1. **Political Interference** – Many **cooperatives have turned into vote banks**, controlled by **local elites**, sidelining **small farmers and laborers**.
2. **Weak Management Practices** – **Poor governance structures** have led to **financial mismanagement and operational inefficiencies**.
3. **Lack of Financial Viability** – Heavy dependence on **government subsidies** has rendered many cooperatives **financially weak and uncompetitive**. PACS struggle with **high NPAs** due to **poor loan recovery mechanisms and inefficient risk management**.
4. **Operational Inefficiencies** – Slow **technological adoption**, particularly in **digital platforms for loan processing and record-keeping**, hampers **productivity**.
5. **Limited Inclusivity** – Historically, **women, Dalits, and tribal communities** have been **excluded from leadership roles** in cooperative societies.
6. **Fragmented Structure** – Most cooperatives **operate in silos**, failing to **integrate into value chains**, reducing **overall market efficiency**.

WAY FORWARD

1. **Data-Driven Decision-Making** – Conduct **comprehensive surveys** to **identify underserved areas**, ensuring **optimal resource allocation**.

2. **Strengthening Grassroots Participation** – Encouraging **local community involvement** in decision-making can enhance **accountability and transparency**.
3. **Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)** – Collaborating with **private entities** can provide **access to modern technology** and **global market linkages**.
4. **Ensuring Policy Uniformity** – Harmonizing **state and central policies** can ensure **consistent implementation** across regions.
5. **Emphasis on Value Addition** – Expanding PACS activities into **food processing, cold storage, and export facilitation** can enhance **economic viability**.
6. **Professionalizing Management** – Conducting **capacity-building programs** to instill **financial literacy and modern management skills** can enhance **efficiency and sustainability**.

DELIMITATION EXERCISE



DELIMITATION COMMISSION



INTRODUCTION

The recent spat between the Centre and Tamil Nadu over delimitation has again opened up one of the most crucial debates of democracy- the question of representation. The last delimitation happened in 1975, after which Indira Gandhi put a freeze until 2000. A year later, Parliament again froze the number of members of the Lok Sabha and state assemblies till 2026. The delimitation of constituencies for the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies is to be carried out on the basis of the first Census after 2026. Due to this inordinate delay, several issues related to democracy, demography and federalism await the fifth delimitation exercise.

DELIMITATION COMMISSION

A statutory body formed under the **Delimitation Act, 2002**, tasked with setting constituency boundaries. Governed by **Articles 82 and 170** of the Constitution, it ensures **equal representation** while upholding the **one person, one vote** principle.

IMPORTANCE OF DELIMITATION IN INDIA

1. **Fair Political Representation** – Guarantees **balanced seat distribution** in Parliament and state assemblies. Example: The **2002 Delimitation Commission** improved the voter-per-MP ratio, preventing **malapportionment**.
2. **Strengthening Democracy** – Curbs **gerrymandering**, ensuring fair elections. Example: In **Kuldip Nayar v. Union of India (2006)**, the Supreme Court reaffirmed delimitation's role in sustaining democracy.
3. **Enhancing Socio-Economic Equity** – Ensures **better representation** for **marginalized groups**. Example: The **J&K Delimitation Commission** allocated additional seats to Jammu to correct past imbalances.
4. **Federal Balance** – Maintains **regional representation** by preventing states with lower population growth from losing seats. Example: The **42nd Amendment's population freeze** protected **southern states** from underrepresentation.
5. **Administrative Efficiency** – Creates a **manageable voter-representative ratio**, aiding governance. Example: **Mumbai and Bengaluru** saw improved electoral administration after **2002 delimitation**.
6. **Electoral Integrity** – Updates representation to align with **demographic shifts**, similar to models used by the **UK Boundary Commission**.

CONCERNS ASSOCIATED WITH DELIMITATION IN INDIA

1. **Population vs. Development**
 - Southern states fear being **penalized for successful family planning** and **economic progress** if representation is based solely on population.
 - E.g., Tamil Nadu's fertility rate is **1.6**, while Bihar's is **3.0**, yet both states would have different political impacts under delimitation.
2. **Threat to Federalism**
 - Delimitation could lead to a **North-South divide**, with **states that controlled population losing political influence** to more populous states.
 - The **Sarkaria Commission (1983)** warned that excessive **centralization of power** could weaken **cooperative federalism**.
3. **Political Manipulation & Gerrymandering**
 - Political parties may **redraw boundaries to favor their electoral prospects**.
 - E.g., The **J&K Delimitation Process (2022)** faced allegations of bias in seat allocation.
4. **Delays & Political Resistance**
 - Many parties **resist delimitation** as it could alter their **vote banks and representation**.
 - E.g., The **Justice Kuldip Singh-led Delimitation Commission (2002)** faced opposition from parties unwilling to lose seats.

5. Economic Disparities

- Southern states argue that **higher revenue generation (GST collections, per capita income)** should be considered in representation, rather than just **population size**.

WAY FORWARD: BALANCING REPRESENTATION & FEDERALISM

1. Implement Expert Recommendations

- **Sarkaria Commission (1983)**: Advocated **balancing federalism and national unity** in delimitation.
- **Punchhi Commission (2010)**: Suggested **equal weightage to population, governance quality, and economic contribution**.

2. Strengthen Transparency & Independent Oversight

- Empower the **Election Commission** and **Delimitation Commission** to function **free from political interference**.
- **Judicial Precedents**:
 - ✓ **Kuldip Nayar v. Union of India (2006)**: Supreme Court upheld the **importance of fair representation** while maintaining federal balance.
 - ✓ **T.N. Seshan v. Union of India (1995)**: Highlighted the **need for an independent delimitation body**.

3. Constitutional & Legislative Reforms

- Amend **Articles 81 and 82** to ensure **balanced regional representation**.
- Introduce **proportional representation models**, like those used in **Germany and Canada**.

4. Policy Proposals

- **Weighted Representation Model**: A **hybrid approach**, combining **population, economic output, and governance efficiency** to determine seat allocation.
- **Independent Delimitation Commission**: Ensure an **autonomous, non-political body** to conduct delimitation.
- **Phased Implementation**: Implement delimitation **gradually** to prevent **political instability and regional discontent**.

Delimitation must uphold **democratic equality without jeopardizing federal balance**. The **Election Commission and Supreme Court** must ensure **fairness, transparency, and constitutional integrity**, making **delimitation a tool for representation rather than political dominance**.

MAINS PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Q. Comment on: “The Constituent Assembly was a one party body in an essentially one party country. The Assembly was the Congress and the Congress was India.” (Granville Austin). (2010, 15 marks)

Granville Austin’s assertion that the Constituent Assembly was a “one-party body” in a “one-party country,” with the Congress as the central force, reflects both the political dominance of the Indian National Congress and the socio-political context of the time.

The Congress, being the preeminent force in the Indian independence movement, had deep roots in mass mobilization across the country, making it the most representative and powerful political entity during the formation of the Indian Constitution.

However, it is essential to recognize that while the Congress had an overwhelming presence, the Constituent Assembly was not exclusively composed of Congress members. The Assembly included representatives from various regions, communities, and political groups, such as the Muslim League, Sikhs, Scheduled Castes, and princely states, reflecting India’s diverse fabric. Yet, following the partition and the withdrawal of the Muslim League, Congress’s influence became even more pronounced.

Austin’s comment can also be viewed through the lens of the **Congress’s ideological spectrum**. The party housed a wide variety of views, ranging from **right-wing conservatism to socialist leanings**. Thus, although the Congress was dominant, it allowed for considerable debate and discussion on constitutional matters, reflecting diverse views within the Assembly.

Critics argue that this dominance stifled alternative political voices, particularly those from the left and right of the political spectrum. Yet, the Congress’s leadership, particularly through figures like **Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, and Sardar Patel**, played a crucial role in ensuring that the Constitution was crafted through democratic deliberation, representing broader Indian aspirations.

While Austin’s characterization highlights the Congress’s dominance, the Constituent Assembly’s work reflected democratic ideals, producing a Constitution that balanced the diverse needs of a newly independent nation.

Q. “Men being by nature all free, equal and independent, no one can be put out of his estate and subjected to the political power of another without his own consent.” (Locke). Elucidate. (20 Marks)

Demand- Basically explain Locke’s conception of limited state in detail (As the keyword is ‘Elucidate’)

Structure:

- Introduction with book, school of thought and basic idea of Lockean state.**
- Body- Give background and elaborate on his ideas with emphasis on consent**
- Conclude with contemporary linkage/relevance/significance etc.**

John Locke, widely known as the “Father of liberalism,” emphasized the supremacy of natural rights over state authority in his work, the ‘Second Treatise of Government.’ He viewed the state as a social construct and advocated for its limitations based on the rights inherently bestowed upon individuals by nature.

Locke’s optimistic outlook on human nature stemmed from the peaceful transition from absolute monarchy to parliamentary democracy during the Glorious Revolution. He believed that reason should prevail over base desires, rejecting the concept of absolute state authority.

In contrast to Hobbes' depiction of the state of nature as a chaotic "war of all against all," where appetite dominates reason, Locke envisioned it as a state of peace, cooperation, and goodwill. In this natural state, people enjoyed fundamental rights such as life, liberty, and property, protected by the guiding force of natural law. According to Locke, reason serves as the law that governs individuals in the state of nature.

Locke considered government not as a necessity but as a practical arrangement. The political sovereign is seen as a participant in the social contract. Locke placed great importance on the primary purpose of establishing a state or commonwealth, which is to safeguard the natural rights of citizens—life, liberty, and property—which they possessed in the state of nature. He referred to these rights as inalienable, meaning they cannot be violated by the state. The state is prohibited from enacting laws that infringe upon these rights since individuals have not consented to transfer them to the state in the social contract.

Consequently, the state is bound to act in accordance with the will of the people. Locke envisioned the state as a trust, with the people serving as trustees. The trust must act in alignment with the wishes of the trustees. Should the state act contrary to the consent of the people, they retain the right to revolt. However, Locke expressed hope for peaceful revolutions due to the rationality of citizens and their entitlement to freedom of speech and expression under the social contract.

Thus, Locke emerges as a proponent of the theory of consent. In contrast to Filmer, who attributed the right of rulers as a divine gift from God (the theory of divine rights of the state), Locke argued that political authority only becomes legitimate when based on consent. The significance of Locke's ideas can be observed in their influence on neo-liberal scholars like Nozick. His conception of a limited state has become the prevailing discourse, not only in political theory but also in international forums such as the UNHRC.

Q. How can India effectively balance its relations with the United States and China amidst the ongoing superpower rivalry?

India finds itself strategically nestled between the two titans of the 21st century - the United States and China. Balancing relations with these competing superpowers necessitates a nuanced approach, guided by pragmatism, national interests, and a strategic autonomy that preserves India's independence.

The competing pulls:

The United States- Shared Democratic Values and Security Partnership: a natural alliance against China's assertiveness, providing access to sophisticated defence technology, economic partnerships, and a shared commitment to democratic principles.

China- Economic Interdependence and Trade Ties: China is India's largest trading partner, presenting immense opportunities for economic cooperation and infrastructure development.

Balancing Strategies: Maneuvering the Tightrope:

Strategic Autonomy: As C Raja Mohan advocates in "India's Grand Strategy," maintaining self-reliance in critical sectors like defence technology, energy, and pharmaceuticals remains crucial for long-term sustainability and avoiding dependence on either superpower.

Multi-alignment and Global Partnerships: Engaging with diverse players like the European Union, ASEAN, and other regional groupings, as suggested by Harsh V. Pant in "Modi's Foreign Policy: New Perspectives," allows India to leverage multipolarity, secure its interests, and avoid getting ensnared in the US-China binary.

Economic Diversification: Reducing dependence on China by fostering trade ties with the US, Africa, and other emerging markets like Latin America and Oceania.

Defense Cooperation and Soft Power Prowess: Balancing security cooperation with the US and maintaining an open dialogue with China on border issues, as suggested by Ashley Tellis, can help deter conflict and maintain regional stability. Concurrently, leveraging India's rich cultural heritage, democratic values, and development expertise to build soft power globally.

India's future lies in charting a course that transcends the US-China binary. By prioritizing strategic autonomy, diversifying partnerships, and utilizing its inherent strengths, India can emerge as a powerful, independent player on the global stage, shaping its destiny amidst the ongoing superpower rivalry.



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ROBERT GILPIN



Robert Gilpin was a prominent American political scientist known for his significant contributions to the field of international relations, particularly in the study of political economy and global politics. Born on October 2, 1930, Gilpin's academic career spanned several decades, during which he produced influential works that continue to shape scholarly debates and understanding of international relations theory.

One of Gilpin's most notable contributions to the field was his concept of the "hegemonic stability theory." This theory, outlined in his seminal work "War and Change in World Politics," posits that the stability of the international system is often maintained by a dominant hegemon—a powerful state that provides leadership, stability, and order to the global economy. According to Gilpin, hegemonic stability is essential for ensuring economic openness, trade liberalization, and overall stability in the international system. He argued that periods of hegemonic decline or transition are often characterized by increased competition, protectionism, and geopolitical tensions.

Gilpin's analysis of hegemonic stability has been instrumental in shaping debates about the role of great powers in the international system and the dynamics of global economic governance. His work has influenced scholars, policymakers, and practitioners alike, providing valuable insights into the relationship between economic power, political influence, and international order.

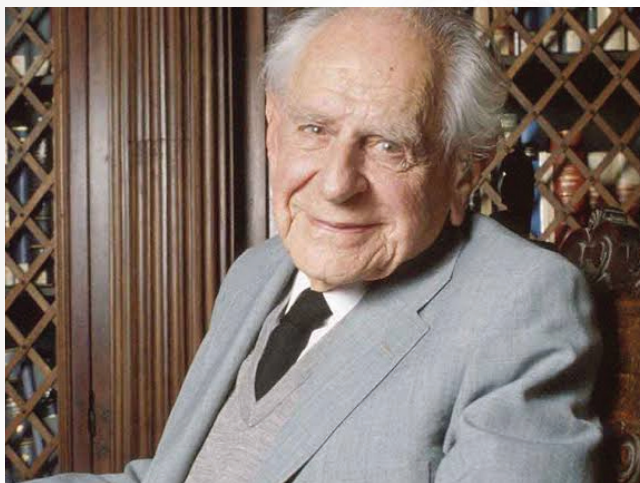
In addition to his contributions to hegemonic stability theory, Gilpin also made significant contributions to the study of international political economy. His book "The Political Economy of International Relations" is considered a seminal work in the field, offering a comprehensive analysis of the complex interplay between economics and politics in the international arena. In this work, Gilpin explores how states and non-state actors navigate economic issues, such as trade, finance, and development, within the broader context of global power dynamics and geopolitical competition.

Gilpin's interdisciplinary approach to the study of international relations, drawing on insights from political science, economics, and history, has been praised for its analytical rigor and theoretical sophistication. His work continues to inspire scholars to explore the multifaceted nature of global politics and the complex interactions between states, markets, and societies in an interconnected world.

Beyond his academic contributions, Gilpin was also a respected educator and mentor, influencing generations of students and scholars through his teaching and mentorship. He held various academic positions throughout his career, including professorships at Princeton University and the University of Denver, where he made significant contributions to the development of international relations as a discipline.

Robert Gilpin's legacy as a pioneering scholar in the field of international relations continues to endure, with his work serving as a foundation for further research and inquiry into the complexities of global politics and economics. His insights into hegemonic stability, international political economy, and the nature of power in world politics have left an indelible mark on the study of international relations and continue to shape our understanding of the dynamics of the international system.

KARL POPPER: DEFENDER OF THE OPEN SOCIETY



Karl Popper (1902–1994) was a staunch advocate of **liberal democracy, individual freedom, and rationalism**. His political philosophy, primarily expressed in **The Open Society and Its Enemies (1945)**, was a response to the rise of **totalitarian ideologies** in the 20th century, particularly **Marxism, fascism, and nationalism**.

CRITIQUE OF HISTORICISM

Popper's central political argument was against **historicism**, the belief that history follows inevitable laws of progress. He criticized thinkers like **Plato, Hegel, and Marx**, who he believed justified **authoritarian rule** by claiming access to historical truths. He argued that historicism leads to **dogmatism and tyranny**, as rulers use it to impose rigid social structures in the name of an inevitable future.

THE OPEN VS. CLOSED SOCIETY

Popper distinguished between **open and closed societies**:

- A **closed society** is **authoritarian**, valuing tradition and unquestioned obedience.
- An **open society** is based on **democracy, individual rights, and institutional accountability**. It thrives on **critical discourse and adaptability**, allowing societies to improve through **trial and error** rather than revolutionary upheavals.

PIECEMEAL SOCIAL ENGINEERING

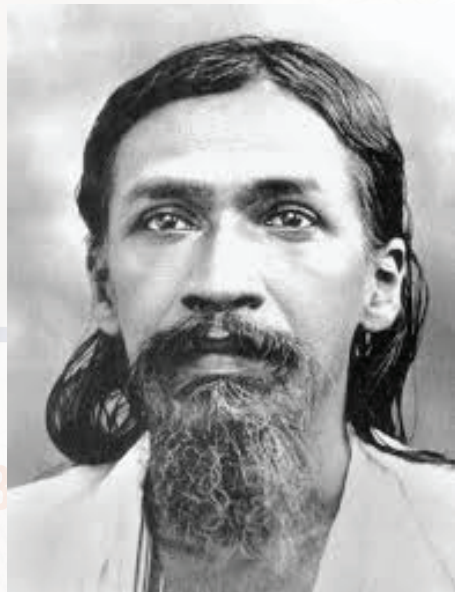
Rejecting **utopian revolutions**, Popper proposed **piecemeal social engineering**—gradual reforms based on **problem-solving and evidence-based policies**. He argued that **social experiments** should be **reversible**, unlike radical ideologies that impose irreversible societal changes.

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND CRITICISM

Popper viewed **democracy not as rule by the people, but as a system where governments can be peacefully replaced**. He emphasized **institutional checks and balances**, arguing that **the ability to remove bad leaders without violence is the true strength of democracy**.

Karl Popper's **political philosophy** remains influential in defending **democratic governance, individual liberty, and rational policymaking**. His critique of totalitarianism and advocacy for **open societies** continue to shape modern political thought.

AUROBINDO GHOSH: POLITICAL THOUGHT AND CONTRIBUTIONS



INTRODUCTION

Aurobindo Ghosh (1872–1950) was a freedom fighter, nationalist thinker, and spiritual philosopher who played a key role in India's independence movement before turning to spiritual pursuits. His political thought combined nationalism, cultural revivalism, and spiritual idealism, making him a unique figure in India's intellectual history.

KEY POLITICAL IDEAS:

Militant Nationalism – Aurobindo initially supported radical and revolutionary methods to achieve independence, advocating for complete Swaraj (self-rule) rather than mere reforms under British rule. He promoted passive resistance, boycott of British goods, and national education.

Spiritual Nationalism – He believed that India's freedom struggle was not just political but also spiritual. He viewed the nation as a living spiritual entity (Bharat Mata) and saw independence as essential for India's spiritual resurgence.

Critique of Moderate Politics – He rejected the moderate approach of the Indian National Congress, arguing that petitions and negotiations with the British were ineffective. Instead, he encouraged self-reliance, unity, and defiance.

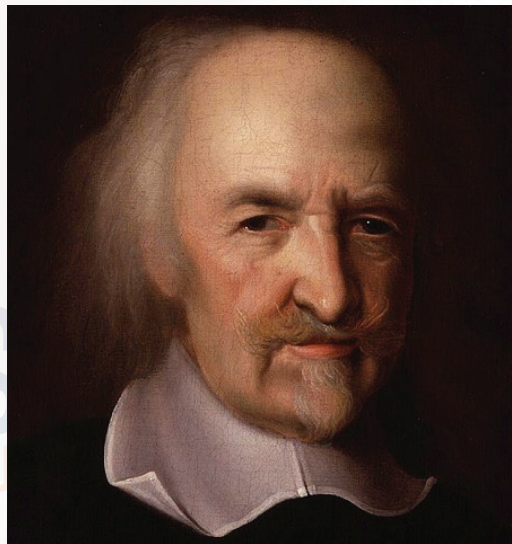
Emphasis on Cultural Revival – Aurobindo saw Indian culture, philosophy, and spirituality as the foundation of national strength. He believed that political freedom must be accompanied by cultural and spiritual awakening.

Later Political Withdrawal – In 1910, he withdrew from active politics and settled in Pondicherry, where he developed his Integral Yoga philosophy, focusing on the spiritual evolution of humanity.

LEGACY:

Aurobindo's political ideas influenced later nationalist movements, and his concept of spiritual nationalism inspired leaders like Subhas Chandra Bose. His blend of political radicalism and spiritual philosophy remains significant in Indian political thought.

THOMAS HOBBES



He was an English political philosopher who lived in the 17th century. He is best known for his work "Leviathan," which laid the groundwork for modern political theory. Hobbes believed that humans are naturally selfish and violent, and that a strong, centralized government was necessary to keep society from descending into chaos.

State of Nature: Hobbes believed that the natural state of humans is one of war and chaos. In the absence of government, individuals are in a constant state of competition and conflict, where life is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." This state of nature is characterised by a "war of all against all," where individuals are constantly at risk of being harmed or killed by others. According to Hobbes, this makes life in the state of nature "nasty, brutish, and short."

SOCIAL CONTRACT

To escape the state of nature, Hobbes argued that individuals must enter into a social contract with each other. In this contract, individuals agree to give up some of their natural rights in exchange for protection from the government. The government, in turn, is responsible for maintaining law and order, and ensuring the safety and security of its citizens. Hobbes believed that the social contract was necessary to prevent society from descending into chaos and violence.

ABSOLUTE SOVEREIGNTY

Hobbes believed that the best form of government was an absolute monarchy, where the ruler has unlimited power and authority. According to Hobbes, the sovereign should have complete control over all aspects of society, including religion and the economy. He believed that this was necessary to maintain order and prevent dissent. In Hobbes' view, the ruler's power was absolute and could not be challenged by the people.

RELEVANCE TO MODERN POLITICS

Hobbes' political philosophy has been influential in modern political theory, particularly in the areas of political sovereignty and social contract theory. His ideas about the need for a strong government to maintain order and prevent chaos have been echoed by many modern political thinkers. However, his view of absolute monarchy has been criticized as undemocratic and authoritarian.

CONCLUSION

Thomas Hobbes was a pioneering political philosopher whose work laid the foundation for modern political theory. His belief in the need for a strong, centralized government to prevent society from descending into chaos and violence remains relevant today. However, his view of absolute monarchy has been met with criticism and has been replaced by more democratic forms of government. Nonetheless, his contributions to the field of political philosophy have been significant and continue to be studied and debated by scholars today.

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ENRICH YOUR ANSWER

Q. Examine communitarian critique of Rawls theory of Justice.

Introduction:

→ start with key tenets of Rawlsian theory:

- i) Individualism
- ii) Original position
- iii) Justice as fairness
- iv) Veil of ignorance

→ Mention Rawls book - "A theory of Justice"

→ Communitarian critique of key tenets

→ use Michael Sandel

↳ book - Liberalism & the limits of justice "

→ Michael Walzer

↳ book → "spheres of justice"

Conclusion

→ Rawls accepted reasonable pluralism

as pre-condition in book 'Political Liberalism'

→ gave concept of overlapping consensus.

Q) How does the government's philosophy of maximum governance and minimum government coincide with the idea of competitive and cooperative federalism? Give reasons.

Q: How the government's philosophy of 'maximum governance and minimum government' coincide with the idea of competitive and cooperative federalism? Give reasons?

Ans

Approach

Intro

→ Define 'maximum governance and minimum government'.

Body

→ Elaborate on idea of competitive and cooperative federalism.

→ Give steps taken by Government based on this principle

eg * NITI Aayog replaced Planning Comm.

* Enhanced financial devolution to states

* Rationalisation of centrally sponsored schemes.

Conclusion: give some suggestions.

eg Reform 7th schedule list in the direction of empowerment of states

Q) Compare Ambedkar and Gandhi's views on social justice.

Q1) Compare Ambedkar and Gandhi's views on Social Justice.

Intro: Start answer by defining social justice.
Also give general introduction about Gandhi & Ambedkar

Body

A) Mention the differences between views of Gandhi & Ambedkar

- ① Ambedkar was critic of Manusmriti (Manuvad) while Gandhi believed in Varna system.
- ② Ambedkar held Vedas and Manusmriti responsible for social injustice while Gandhi didn't believe in it.
- ③ To achieve social justice
 - ↳ Ambedkar emphasised on Affirmative Actions
 - ↳ Gandhi emphasised on social reforms (raising the conscience of people)
- ④ Ambedkar preconditioned social justice to Nationalism while Gandhi believed that freedom struggle will result into social justice.

B) Mention similarities

- ① Both believed in social justice and eradication of poverty
- ② Both have vision of egalitarian society.
Ambedkar → a society free of contradictions
Gandhi → Ramrajya.

Conclusion

Can mention that both Gandhian and Ambedkar's ideas on social justice found place in Indian Constitution

Q) Discuss the features of asymmetrical federalism.

Q: Discuss the features of asymmetrical federalism

Approach

(Intro): Define federalism and Asymmetrical federalism.

(Body) Give features of Asymmetrical federalism

→ Article 371 to 371J in Part XXI of Constitution contain special provisions for eleven states.

→ Special responsibility of Governor for the development of certain areas of particular states.

→ Presence of Union Territories in India.

→ Unequal representation of states in Rajya Sabha (eg UP 31 seats, Goa-1 seat)

→ Presence of 5th and 6th schedule to accommodate scheduled and tribal areas.

(Conclusion): Give justification of Asymmetrical federalism.

eg: to protect diversity without sacrificing unity or imposing uniformity.

PRELIMS PRACTICE QUESTIONS

- 1. Which of the following initiatives has been undertaken by India to promote the international use of the Indian Rupee (INR)?**
 - (a) Establishment of the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC).
 - (b) Adoption of a fixed exchange rate regime for the INR.
 - (c) Imposing strict capital controls to limit INR flows across borders.
 - (d) Encouraging the use of foreign currencies for trade transactions.
- 2. The Cauvery River dispute primarily involves which Indian states, each vying for a fair share of its waters?**
 - (a) Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka
 - (b) Karnataka and Tamil Nadu
 - (c) Tamil Nadu and Kerala
 - (d) Kerala and Karnataka
- 3. The Election Commission of India consists of how many members, including the Chief Election Commissioner?**
 - (a) One
 - (b) Two
 - (c) Three
 - (d) Four
- 4. Which article of the Indian Constitution outlines the provisions for the Election Commission of India?**
 - (a) Article 320
 - (b) Article 340
 - (c) Article 324
 - (d) Article 330

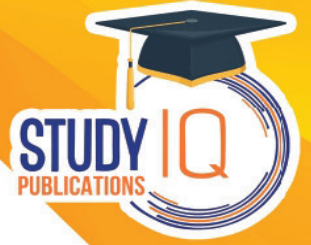
Answers

- 1. (a)** Establishment of the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC)
- 2. (b)** Karnataka and Tamil Nadu
- 3. (c)** Three
- 4. (c)** Article 324

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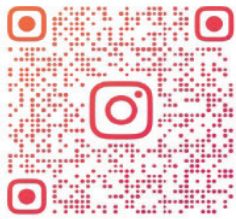
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