

**DAILY
CURRENT
AFFAIRS
ANALYSIS**



LAKSHYA ACADEMY®

05 FEBRUARY 2024

1 – Caste based issues in Indian Prisons:

GS I

Social issues

- **Context:**
- In response to a public interest lawsuit (PIL) alleging caste-based discrimination and prisoner segregation, the Supreme Court (SC) of India has served notice to the federal government and eleven state governments. The PIL also requested a directive to remove state prison manual provisions that require these practices.
- **Which Cases of Caste-Based Discrimination Has the PIL Drawn Attention To?**
- **Examples of Prejudicial Treatment:**
- The PIL reveals incidents from jails in Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, and Tamil Nadu where dominant castes are assigned to cook, and "specific lower castes" are given menial tasks like sweeping and toilet cleaning.
- It is claimed that the Indian prison system upholds discriminatory practices, such as the segregation of barracks based on caste and the distribution of labour according to caste rank.
- Caste-based labour distribution is seen as a vestige of colonial India and is harmful and dehumanising, infringing on the convicts' right to a dignified life.
- **Manual Sanctions for State Prisons:**
- According to the appeal, forced labour and discrimination based on caste are approved by prison guidelines in several states.
- **1951 Rajasthan Prison Rules:**
- Caste is used to assign Mehtars to latrines and Brahmins to kitchens.
- **Tamil Nadu's Palayamkottai Central Jail:**
- The petition draws attention to the caste-based division of prisoners at Tamil Nadu's Palayamkottai Central Jail, citing the division of Thevars, Nadars, and Pallars into distinct divisions.

- **West Bengal Prison Code:**

- assigns convicts from the Mether or Hari caste, Chandal, and other castes to perform menial chores like sweeping.

- **Guidelines for the 2003 Model Prison Manual:**

- The 2003 Model Prison Manual, which emphasises classification criteria based on security, discipline, and institutionalised programmes, is cited in the appeal.
- It makes the case against any kind of categorization based on caste, class, or socioeconomic standing.

- **Essential Rights:**

- Citing the Supreme Court's ruling on the fundamental rights of prisoners in the Sunil Batra v. Delhi Administration (1978) case, the petition contends that a person does not forfeit their fundamental rights or the equality code just for being incarcerated.

- **Demand the Removal of Discriminatory Clauses:**

- In order to safeguard inmates' fundamental rights and equality within the prison system, the petition highlights the necessity of removing discriminatory sections from state prison manuals.
- What observations about caste discrimination in prisons has the Supreme Court made?
- A three-judge panel led by the Chief Justice of India concludes that forced labour and discrimination based on caste are encouraged in jail guidelines from more than ten states.
- Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana, Punjab, Odisha, Jharkhand, Kerala, West Bengal, and Tamil Nadu are among the states.
- The SC regards as a "very important issue" the discrimination against and segregation of denotified tribes and their punishment as "habitual offenders" in prisons based on caste.
- SC underlined how urgently and thoroughly any claimed discriminatory practices must be addressed.
- The SC sent a notice and requested a response to the petition from the States and the Union within four weeks.

- **In what ways do Indian laws permit caste discrimination within prisons?**

- **Colonial Policies' Aftereffects:**

- Because of its colonial past, India's criminal justice system places more emphasis on punishment than on reformation or rehabilitation.
- The 'Prisons Act of 1894,' which is nearly 130 years old, illustrates how antiquated the legal system is.
- There are no provisions in the Act for prisoner reform or rehabilitation.

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) examined "The Prisons Act, 1894," "The Prisoners Act, 1900," and "The Transfer of Prisoners Act, 1950" after realising the shortcomings in the current legislation.
- As a result of this evaluation, pertinent measures were incorporated into the "Model Prisons Act, 2023," which looks forward.
- It is anticipated that the Model Prisons Act, 2023, which was approved by the MHA in May 2023, will be implemented effectively, protecting the prisoners' human rights and dignity while also improving prison administration and circumstances.

- **Prison Guidebooks:**

- State-level jail manuals, which haven't really changed since the contemporary prison system was established, nonetheless hold onto caste and colonial ideologies.
- Prison manuals that are now in use uphold the fundamental ideas of the caste system by highlighting concepts of impurity and purity.
- Caste-based prejudice is perpetuated by state prison regulations that require members of particular castes to perform tasks like cleaning and sweeping.
- Penal guidelines, like the one in West Bengal outlined in Section 741, protect the exclusive right of "savarna Hindus" to prepare and transport meals for all inmates.
- Caste-based regulations continue to be used in jail management in spite of laws and constitutional prohibitions against untouchability.

- **The MS Act of 2013 (the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act):**

- Even though the 2013 Act made manual scavenging illegal, prison administration is not specifically covered by it, therefore prison manuals that permit caste discrimination and manual scavenging in jails do not violate the Act.
- The process of manually clearing human excreta and other debris from open drains, sewers, and dry latrines is known as "manual scavenging."

- **Way Ahead:**

- Based on the 2015 Nelson Mandela Rules, the states ought to implement the Model Prison Manual of 2016, which was published by the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- The Nelson Mandela Rules, which place a strong emphasis on respect and nondiscrimination for all prisoners, were adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015.
- In order to guarantee the protection of fundamental rights and advance equality within the prison system, courts ought to take into consideration intervening in court to invalidate discriminatory laws.
- Provide thorough monitoring systems to track the implementation of reforms and hold authorities responsible for building a more just prison system.

- *Source → The Hindu*

2 – Tripartite Peace Agreement with United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA):

GS III

Internal Security

- **Context:**
- The United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), which is pro-talks, has inked a tripartite peace agreement with the Centre and the Assam administration.
- **What are the main points of the ULFA peace treaty?**
- **Historical Background & Context:**
- **Background:** Due to an influx of migrants attracted by Assam's growing coal, oil, and tea industries, the state's rich culture began to confront difficulties in the 19th century.
- The Partition and subsequent exodus of refugees from East Pakistan, combined with this influx, increased uneasiness among the native populace.
- A six-year popular movement spurred by resource competition resulted in the 1985 Assam Accord, which sought to resolve the issue of foreigners in the state.
- **ULFA's founding:** ULFA was established in 1979 with the goal of using armed conflict to achieve Assam's independence from the Indian government.
- In order to create an independent Assam, ULFA spent more than ten years recruiting and training members in Pakistan, China, and Myanmar. They also used kidnappings and executions.
- Many ULFA rebels were apprehended as a result of the government's Operation Bajrang in 1990. After Assam was classified as a "disturbed area," the President's rule was imposed and the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) was used.
- **Extended Peace Talks:** In 2011, discussions between the Assam state government, the Indian government, and ULFA commenced.
- **The Most Current Peace Agreement:**
- **ULFA to:**
- Give up using violence and dissolve their group.
- Participate in the democratic process.

- Give up your weapons and camps.
- **The government to:**
 - Respond to the issues raised by ULFA about Assamese identity, culture, and land rights.
 - An investment of ₹1.5 lakh crore for the comprehensive development of Assam
 - Future delimitation operations in Assam would adhere to the guidelines used for the delimitation exercise in 2023.
 - Legal Safeguards: The agreement attempts to exempt some portions of the Citizenship Act of 1955 and limits the representation of non-indigenous communities in the Assam Assembly.
- **What More Factors Should Be Taken Into Account to Strengthen the Most Recent Peace Agreement?**
 - Accountability and Transparency: Creating procedures for the transparent application of the agreement's terms and making the responsible parties answerable for their pledges.
 - Interaction with Anti-Talks faction: ULFA's anti-talks faction should be strategically engaged in order to promote a consensus settlement and broader ratification of the peace agreement.
 - Legal safeguards: Making sure that new laws or reforms uphold constitutional values, defend the rights of all citizens, and prohibit discrimination on the basis of race or national origin.
 - International cooperation: working together with neighbours to stop transnational insurgencies and preserve peace in the area.
 - Long-Term Development Plans: Formulating comprehensive and long-term strategies for development that go beyond short-term investments to promote regional development as a whole.
- There is a great chance for Assamese peace and growth thanks to the new peace agreement with ULFA. However, a long-lasting peace in the area can only be established by resolving underlying issues, promoting economic development, and guaranteeing social integration.
- **Source → The Hindu**

3 – About Psychoanalysis:

GS II

Judiciary related issues

- **Context:**
- The Delhi Police recently disclosed that psychoanalysis was performed on six of the accused in the Parliament break event in order to ascertain their motivations.
- **Psychoanalysis: What Is It?**
- **About:** A collection of beliefs and therapeutic methods used to treat mental illnesses is known as psychoanalysis.
- Its goal is to cure a variety of mental health conditions by examining how the conscious and unconscious aspects of psychological experience interact.
- Sigmund Freud, a psychiatrist from Vienna, invented it in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.[®]
- **Important Psychoanalytic Factors:**
- **Unconscious Mind:** Freud postulated that a great deal of human conduct is shaped by unconscious fears, conflicts, memories, and desires that frequently originate from early life events.
- Psychoanalysis examines how the unconscious mind influences perceptions, actions, feelings, and personality.
- **Id, Ego, Superego:** Freud presented a structural model of the mind that included the ego, which mediates between the id and reality, the superego, which internalises society rules and values, and the id, which is motivated by instincts and pleasure.
- This model aids in the comprehension of mental problems.
- In psychoanalytic therapy, the patient and therapist converse verbally with the goal of examining unconscious conflicts and gaining understanding of one's feelings and actions.
- **What Elements of Ethics Are Included in Psychoanalysis?**
- **Informed Consent:** Prior to starting treatment, the patient needs to be thoroughly informed about the nature of psychoanalysis, as well as any possible dangers, advantages, and alternatives.
- This is important because the procedure frequently entails discussing delicate and private subjects.
- Aside from that, getting informed permission protects against any violations of Article 21, as the 2010 Selvi v. State of Karnataka & Anr Case made clear.

- **Confidentiality:** In treatment, it is crucial to protect patients' privacy. Therapists, however, occasionally have to make moral decisions, such as when a patient endangers herself or others.
- It might be difficult to strike a balance between the need to protect or warn and secrecy.
- **Transference and Countertransference:** Because of unresolved issues or past experiences, both the therapist and the patient may respond strongly to one another.
- It's critical to ethically control these feelings to prevent them from obstructing care or professional boundaries.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** In order to guarantee that they give proper care and respect different viewpoints, therapists must be aware of their prejudices and culturally competent.
- **How Can Psychoanalysis Aid in the Rehabilitation of Criminals?**
- **Developing Empathy:** By assisting people in realising how their behaviours affect other people, psychoanalysis can promote empathy.
- Offenders can become more empathetic by increasing their understanding of the implications of their actions through self-reflection and the information they receive in therapy.
- **Impulse Control:** Psychoanalysis can help people who have a history of aggressive or impulsive behaviour recognise and control these impulses.
- People can learn to better control their emotions and impulses and lower their risk of reoffending by addressing ingrained feelings and unresolved issues.
- **Preventing Recidivism:** People are better able to break free from harmful patterns and meaningfully reintegrate into society when the underlying motivations are addressed.
- *Source → The Hindu*

4 - Sustainable agriculture:

GS III

Indian Agriculture:

- **Context:**
- The Indigenous Seed Festival that took place recently in West Bengal demonstrated the incredible work that farmers are doing to preserve indigenous seed varieties and share traditional knowledge, which is a major step in the direction of Sustainable Agriculture Practices.
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- The festival supports farmer dialogue on climate change, organic farming, and indigenous seed access as part of ActionAid's climate justice programme.

- ActionAid's emphasis on sustainable farming practices and climate resilience in 22 Indian states. The NGOs want to set up seed banks at the local level all over West Bengal.

- **Sustainable agriculture: what is it?**

- **About:**

- In order to meet the present need for food and fibre while guaranteeing the long-term viability of agricultural systems and protecting natural resources for future generations, sustainable agriculture refers to a comprehensive approach to farming and food production.
- It includes a range of methods and ideas that emphasise social justice, economic viability, and environmental care, such as crop switching, organic farming, and community-supported agriculture.

- **Advantages:**

- Environmental conservation refers to methods that reduce the negative effects on biodiversity, soil, water, and ecosystems. This entails employing techniques that limit the use of synthetic fertilisers and pesticides, prevent soil erosion, and conserve water.
- To keep soil healthy and fertile, practices including agroforestry, crop rotation, and cover crops are used.
- Economic viability: Making sure that farming methods are financially viable for farmers so they can support their livelihoods and make a fair living.
- This entails tactics that increase output, lower manufacturing costs, and create new markets for products made in a sustainable manner.
- Promoting just and equal interactions between farmers, customers, and other food system stakeholders is known as social equity.
- This entails helping rural communities, guaranteeing decent pay and working conditions for agricultural labourers, and encouraging universal access to wholesome food.
- Building agricultural systems that are resistant to climatic change and fluctuation is known as climate resilience. The goals of sustainable agriculture methods are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to changing weather patterns, and increase climate resilience overall.
- Maintaining genetic diversity in crops and livestock as well as a variety of environments is known as biodiversity preservation. Keeping biodiversity intact is essential for fostering resistance to diseases, pests, and environmental changes. This entails protecting native and heirloom crop types in addition to encouraging diversified landscapes that serve pollinators and wildlife.

- **What are India's Restrictions for Sustainable Agriculture?**

- High Labour Demand: Because sustainable agriculture incorporates techniques like crop rotation, intercropping, organic fertilisation, and pest control, it frequently calls for more manual labour than conventional agriculture.

- This may result in higher production costs and lower farmer profitability.
- Time Consumption: Because sustainable agriculture depends on natural processes and incremental advances, it also takes longer to implement and yield results than conventional agriculture.
- Farmers who encounter uncertainty in the weather, market conditions, and regulatory changes and who require instant results may find this discouraging.
- Limited Production Potential: Because sustainable agriculture typically yields less than conventional agriculture, particularly in the short term, it may not be able to meet India's rising food demand.
- Food security and poverty alleviation may be hampered by this, particularly in a nation with a sizable and growing population.
- The move to organic farming was the impetus behind the current situation in Sri Lanka.
- The major food of Sri Lanka, rice, witnessed an approximate 30% reduction in average yields.
- High Capital Cost: The initial outlay for infrastructure, machinery, and inputs like seeds, organic fertilisers, irrigation systems, and micro-irrigation devices may be substantial in the case of sustainable agriculture.
- For small and marginal farmers without access to loans or subsidies, this may be a challenge.
- Storage and Marketing Issues: Because sustainable agriculture generates a variety of perishable and diverse goods that need to be handled and packaged carefully, storage and marketing issues may arise in India.
- Increased post-harvest losses and decreased marketability of the produce may result from this, particularly if proper certification and labelling mechanisms aren't in place to guarantee quality and traceability.

- **What recent efforts has the government made in the field of sustainable agriculture?**

- The National Sustainable Agriculture Mission
- Krishi Vikas Yojana Paramparagat (PKVY)
- AgroForestry submission (SMAF)
- Yojana Rashtriya Krishi Vikas
- The North Eastern Region's Mission Organic Value Chain Development (MOVCDNER)

- **The Way Ahead:**

- offering farmers financial incentives, such crop insurance, direct payments, and subsidies for organic inputs, to encourage the adoption of sustainable farming practices.
- funding the investigation and creation of environmentally friendly farming methods and technologies.
- bolstering agricultural extension programmes to give farmers knowledge and training on sustainable farming practices.
- enhancing consumer awareness initiatives, marketing assistance, and improved infrastructure to increase market access for food produced sustainably.

- supporting cooperative farming projects and implementing land consolidation programmes to address land fragmentation.
- enforcing and strengthening environmental standards.
- empowering women in agriculture by giving them access to resources and finance, allowing them to own land, and allowing them to participate in decision-making.
- *Source → The Hindu*

5 - Year-End Review 2023 for the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment:

GS II

Government Policies and Interventions

- **Context:**
- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has released the year-end review for the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) for the year 2023.
- **Which initiatives and accomplishments stand out as the most important ones?**
- **Historical Get-Togethers and Celebrations for Inclusion:**
- Involving thousands of Divyangjan and transgender people, the Department organised events including India's First Festival of Inclusion (Purple Fest) in Goa, which broke records and promoted a feeling of community.
- **South Africa and India's collaboration in the disability sector:**
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at fostering collaboration in the disability sector was inked by the Union Cabinet between the governments of South Africa and India.
- **Divya Kala Mela:**
- Held in several places throughout the year, the Divya Kala Mela 2023 is a monument to the Government's commitment to promoting the empowerment and overall development of those with disabilities.

- In keeping with the Prime Minister's Atmanirbhar Bharat agenda, the Government wants to make sure that divyang people contribute equally to India's overall development.
- **Days to Raise Awareness of Disability:**
- In 2023, the DEPwD began a year-long celebration to honour different disability awareness events, such as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3rd and World Braille Day on January 4.
- **Acknowledgment of Success:**
- The government celebrated success in the field of disability, honoured the Indian Deaf Cricket Team and Para Swimmer Shri Satendra Singh Lohia, and felicitated the winners of the Abilympics.
- **Proposals and Changes:**
- The government introduced groundbreaking initiatives such as the inclusion of courses on universal accessibility in architectural programmes, the release of anonymous data via the UDID (Unique Disability ID) portal, and the creation of portals for job opportunities, skill development, and online case monitoring.
- **Using Entrepreneurship to Empower:**
- Through entrepreneurship projects, the government collaborated with institutions to empower and support three thousand people with disabilities, promoting cooperation between the public sector, private sector, and institutions.
- **Technology and Resources That Are Easy to Access:**
- The government ensured accessible literature through SugamyaPustakalaya and introduced ISL (Indian Sign Language) dictionary terms, Video Relay Service, and online courses in Indian Sign Language.
- **High-tech training centres and sports:**
- Inaugurated Divyangjan, the first high-tech sports training facility in India, in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh, named for the late Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The facility emphasises talent development and equal chances in sports.
- **Assistance with Law and Funding:**

- rendered significant rulings, gave divyangjan borrowers interest rate refunds, encouraged financial inclusion with NDFDC loans, and worked with others to create universal design centres for reading.
- DEPwD notifies divyangjan debtors under NDFDC Loan of a 1% interest rate refund.
- Programme for Assistance to Disabled Persons Camp (ADIP):
- The Scheme has achieved exceptional results, benefiting 2.91 lakh beneficiaries with grants-in-aid totaling Rs. 368.05 crore.

- *Source → The Hindu*



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