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1. Revamped Mission Vatsalya Portal – Key Points

1. What is the Mission Vatsalya Portal?

- The **Revamped Mission Vatsalya Portal** is a **secure, integrated digital platform** launched by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development** on **25th July 2025**.

- It is designed to facilitate **child protection services** and unify earlier portals like **TrackChild** and **Khoya-Paya** into a **single-window platform**.

2. Key Features of the Portal

- Acts as a **single digital interface** for multiple stakeholders:

  - **State-level**: State Child Protection Society (SCPS), State Adoption Resource Agency (SARA)

  - **District-level**: District Child Protection Unit (DCPU), Child Welfare Committee (CWC), Juvenile Justice Board (JJB), Special Juvenile Police Unit (SJPU), Child Care Institutions (CCIs)

- **Avoids duplication of efforts** and promotes **real-time data-sharing**.

- Supports **Monitoring and Implementation** through **Management Information System (MIS) Dashboards**.

- Ensures **better planning and resource optimization**.

3. Emergency Services Integration

- **Child Helpline 1098** (24x7x365) is integrated into the portal.

  - Linked with:

    - **ERSS-112** (Ministry of Home Affairs)

    - **Women Helpline 181**

- The portal maintains digital records of **cases reported** via these helplines.

4. Training and Implementation Mechanism

- The Ministry, along with **Savitribai Phule National Institute of Women and Child Development (SPNIWCD)**, conducted **master trainer training** for effective rollout.

- **Login credentials** have been provided to all relevant stakeholders and NGOs at the State and UT levels.

5. Legal and Constitutional Provisions

- **Article 39(e) and 39(f)** – Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP): Protection of children against abuse and ensuring opportunities for healthy development.

- **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015**: Provides the legal framework for child protection, under which Mission Vatsalya operates.

- **IT Act, 2000** (amended): Facilitates use of digital platforms for secure data handling.

6. Definitions and Terminology

- **Mission Vatsalya**: A flagship child welfare scheme aimed at ensuring comprehensive development, protection, and rehabilitation of children in need of care and protection.

- **Child Care Institutions (CCIs)**: Institutions that provide residential care and support services to vulnerable children.

- **MIS Dashboard**: A digital monitoring system to track performance indicators and data in real time.

Conclusion

The revamped **Mission Vatsalya Portal** is a major step towards **digitizing and integrating child welfare services** in India. It strengthens **inter-agency coordination**, improves **transparency and efficiency**, and ensures **real-time responses** in cases of child distress.

UPSC Relevance

- **GS Paper II – Governance**: Initiatives for vulnerable sections, e-governance, role of NGOs and statutory bodies.

- **GS Paper I – Society**: Issues related to children and vulnerable groups.

- **GS Paper IV – Ethics**: Compassion and empathy towards the weaker sections.

- Can be used as a **case study** in ethics or governance answers.

- Important for **Prelims** under government schemes and portals.

2. Condition of Handloom Cottage Industry in India

1. Magnitude of the Sector:

- As per the **4th All India Handloom Census (2019-20)**:

  - There are **31.45 lakh households** involved in handloom activities.

  - This includes **35.22 lakh handloom weavers and allied workers**.

  - These units are considered part of the **handloom cottage industry**, functioning as decentralized and household-based enterprises.

2. Nature of Employment:

- The **handloom sector is largely unorganized** and not directly employed by the government.

- **Self-employment** is the primary form of livelihood, with skills passed down through generations.

- Weavers engage in **traditional crafts and indigenous textile production**, often without formal job security or structure.

3. Government Support Mechanisms:

- The **Ministry of Textiles** is implementing two major schemes:

- o **National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP)**
  - o **Raw Material Supply Scheme (RMSS)**
- Key components of these schemes:
  - o Financial aid for **raw material procurement**, **loom upgradation**, **solar lighting units**, and **construction of worksheds**.
  - o Support for **design development**, **technical infrastructure**, **marketing**, **skill development**, and **social security**.
  - o Provision of **concessional credit** through the **Weavers' MUDRA Scheme**.

4. Financial Allocation and Implementation (2020–2025):

- Funds Allocated: **₹1,516 crores**
- Funds Disbursed: **₹1,480.71 crores**
- These figures reflect substantial implementation of the schemes over a **five-year period** (2020-21 to 2024-25).

5. Impact Evaluation of Schemes:

- Before formulating or extending schemes, **third-party impact evaluations** are conducted.
- The current phases of NHDP and RMSS (2021–22 to 2025–26) were launched based on such **evaluations of earlier schemes** to ensure efficiency and targeted outreach.

Additional Key Points:

- **Constitutional Provisions:**
  - o **Article 43** of the Indian Constitution (Directive Principles of State Policy) urges the State to promote **cottage industries in rural areas**.
- **Legal Framework:**
  - o The **Handlooms (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, 1985** protects the sector from powerloom competition by reserving certain products for handloom weaving.

Conclusion:

The handloom cottage industry is a vital component of India's rural economy and cultural heritage. Despite being unorganized, it provides self-employment to millions. Through schemes like NHDP and RMSS, the government aims to modernize the sector, provide infrastructural support, and ensure sustainable livelihoods for weavers.

UPSC Relevance:

- **GS Paper I:** Indian Culture – traditional crafts, handlooms.
- **GS Paper II:** Government policies, welfare schemes.
- **GS Paper III:** Employment, inclusive growth, MSME sector.
- **GS Paper IV:** Ethics – preservation of traditional livelihoods.
- **Essay & Interview:** Questions on rural economy, sustainable employment, and cultural preservation.

3. Cruise Bharat Mission

1. Rising Cruise Tourism in India:

- In **FY 2024–25**, India recorded **272 cruise calls** and **4.92 lakh passengers**, up from 253 calls and 4.7 lakh passengers in FY 2023–24.

- Reflects increasing domestic and international interest in India's coastal and inland cruise tourism sector under the *Cruise Bharat Mission*.

2. Major Cruise Ports & New Additions:

- Operational cruise terminals located at:

    o **Mumbai, Mormugao, Kochi, Chennai, New Mangalore, and Visakhapatnam**.

- Additional cruise stops at **Puducherry, Lakshadweep, and Sri Vijayapuram (A&N Islands)**.

- **Puducherry Port** recently added to the cruise circuit; inaugural cruise arrived on **4 July 2025**.

3. Key Regulatory Reforms Introduced:

- **Cruise QR Code system** for faster immigration clearance.

- **Digitized customs processing** for cruise ships (CBIC Advisory 26/2024).

- **RBI Circular (13 June 2025)** revised rules for advance remittance on ship lease payments.

- These reforms promote **ease of doing business** and enhance **investor confidence** in the maritime tourism sector.

4. National Waterways & Cruise Routes:

- **29 National Waterways (NWs)** are operational across **11 states**.

- Of these, **3 NWs are exclusively designated** for cruise operations.

- Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) supports operations with **terminals, navigation aids, pilotage, and fairways**, especially on **NW2 in the Northeast Region (NER)**.

5. Employment Potential & Strategic Vision:

- The Cruise Bharat Mission targets **generation of 4 lakh jobs**, contributing to **blue economy** and **coastal economic development**.

- Although there is no **separate urban water transport policy**, the cruise mission aligns with larger infrastructure and tourism growth strategies.

Additional Key Points:

- **Definition – Blue Economy**: Sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and ocean ecosystem health.

- **Institutional Bodies Involved**:

    o **Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways**

    o **Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI)**

- o **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)**

- o **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**

Constitutional & Legal Framework:

- **Article 47 & 48A (DPSP)**: Encourage environmental conservation, indirectly supporting eco-friendly transport like waterways.

- **Major Port Authorities Act, 2021**: Empowers modernization of port infrastructure.

- **Inland Waterways Authority of India Act, 1985**: Enables development and regulation of inland waterways.

Conclusion:

Cruise Bharat Mission marks a significant step in transforming India into a global cruise hub by leveraging coastal and inland waterways. It emphasizes infrastructure modernization, regulatory simplification, and employment generation in the maritime sector.

UPSC Relevance:

- **GS Paper I**: Urbanization, regional development

- **GS Paper II**: Governance, policy implementation

- **GS Paper III**: Infrastructure, transport, employment, blue economy

- **Essay & Interview**: Topics on sustainable tourism, blue economy, and transport reforms.

4. Inflation Under Control, But RBI's Vigil Continues

1. Inflation Moderated but Vigilance Continues:

- RBI Governor **Sanjay Malhotra** stated that while inflation has been "tamed", the **battle is ongoing** with focus on **price stability**.

- **Retail inflation** (measured by CPI) dropped to **2.1% in June 2025**, the lowest since January 2019.

- RBI's **inflation projection for FY26** stands at **3.7%**, indicating continued monitoring.

2. Policy Tools and Monetary Flexibility:

- The **Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** has adopted a **neutral stance**, allowing flexibility to **pause or reduce rates** as per the growth-inflation balance.

- RBI has reduced the **repo rate** cumulatively by **100 basis points** (Feb–June 2025).

- **Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR)** was also cut from **4% to 3%**, aimed at infusing liquidity.

3. Effective Monetary Transmission:

- RBI highlighted improved **monetary policy transmission—new loan rates fell up to 50 bps** since February 2025.

- **Public sector banks** showed greater rate reductions than private sector banks during the easing cycle.

- Transmission is essential to ensure policy rate cuts lead to lower borrowing costs for businesses and consumers.

4. Favorable Macroeconomic Environment:

- Low inflation is supported by:

    o **Stable food prices**

    o **Soft global oil and commodity prices**

- Crisil Intelligence noted **effective liquidity management** would ensure **faster transmission** of earlier rate cuts.

5. RBI's Dual Mandate – Price Stability and Growth:

- While **price stability** remains the **primary objective** of RBI, Governor clarified it is **not inconsistent with growth**.

- A stable inflation regime is a **prerequisite for sustainable economic growth**.

Additional Key Points & Definitions:

- **Inflation Targeting Framework**: Adopted in 2016 under **RBI Act (Amended 1934)**, mandates RBI to keep CPI inflation at **4% ± 2%**.

- **Repo Rate**: The rate at which RBI lends short-term funds to commercial banks.

- **CRR**: The minimum proportion of deposits that commercial banks must hold with RBI.

- **Monetary Transmission**: The process through which RBI's policy rate changes affect the interest rates in the broader economy.

Conclusion:

Although inflation has eased significantly, RBI continues to remain cautious. With global uncertainties and growth considerations, its **data-driven and balanced approach** ensures macroeconomic stability. The neutral policy stance keeps room open for further adjustments based on real-time economic indicators.

UPSC Relevance:

- **GS Paper III**: Indian Economy – inflation, monetary policy, banking sector

- **GS Paper II**: Role of statutory bodies – RBI

- **Essay & Interview**: Topics related to inflation control, monetary policy, economic growth, financial regulation

5. Government Ramps Up Power Transmission Infrastructure to Meet Green Energy Targets

1. Massive Push to Transmission Infrastructure in 2025:
In the first half of 2025, over **30 new power transmission companies and trusts** were incorporated to strengthen India's electricity grid; **10 of these were established by the government** itself, indicating a focused push toward building modern transmission capabilities.

2. Alignment with Green Energy Commitments:
This expansion is directly linked to India's commitment to **achieve 500 GW of non-fossil fuel-based capacity by 2030** under its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the **Paris Agreement**, and meet its **Net-Zero target by 2070**.

3. Importance of Transmission Infrastructure for RE Integration:
Integration of renewable energy sources such as **solar and wind** requires robust **inter-state transmission networks** to evacuate power from remote generation sites to demand centers. Weak grid infrastructure has historically been a **bottleneck for renewable expansion**.

4. Role of Government and Public Sector Enterprises:
Key PSUs like **Power Grid Corporation of India (PGCIL)** are spearheading investments in **Green Energy Corridors**, while state-run transmission utilities are being restructured or expanded to handle variable renewable generation.

5. Legal and Policy Framework Supporting the Move:
The **Electricity Act, 2003** and **National Electricity Plan** guide long-term transmission planning. The **Green Energy Corridor Project** and the **Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS)** also enable better grid integration and efficiency. Government's budget allocations have progressively increased for transmission-linked infrastructure under energy transition goals.

6. Financial & Institutional Support Mechanisms:
To ensure implementation, **Transmission Service Agreements (TSAs)**, **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)**, and support from agencies like **REC Limited**, **PFC**, and **MNRE** are being leveraged. International funding from multilateral banks like the **World Bank** and **ADB** is also involved in key green transmission projects.

Additional Key Concepts & Definitions:

- **Transmission Infrastructure**: The network of high-voltage cables and substations that transport electricity from power plants to distribution networks.

- **Green Energy Corridor**: A dedicated transmission network for renewable energy evacuation.

- **National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP)**: Includes key power sector transmission projects for economic growth.

Conclusion:
India's rapid establishment of transmission entities in 2025 reflects a clear policy shift to overcome infrastructural barriers in renewable energy integration. This development is critical to meeting international climate goals, domestic energy security, and ensuring a stable power supply.

UPSC Relevance:

- **GS Paper II**: Government Policies and Interventions for Development

- **GS Paper III**: Infrastructure – Energy, Environmental Conservation, Renewable Energy

- **Essay & Interview**: Topics on climate change, energy transition, green infrastructure, India's NDC commitments

6. France to Recognize Palestine as a State
1. France to Officially Recognize Palestine in September 2025:
French President **Emmanuel Macron** announced that **France will recognize the State of Palestine** during

the **UN General Assembly session in September 2025**, marking a significant diplomatic step in the Israel-Palestine conflict.

2. Context: Ongoing War and Humanitarian Crisis in Gaza:
The move comes amid global outrage over the **humanitarian crisis and starvation in Gaza**, with Macron stressing that **ending the war and protecting civilians** is the most urgent priority. Recognition is seen as part of broader efforts to pressure Israel and advocate peace.

3. Israel's Denouncement and Diplomatic Fallout:
Israel has **strongly condemned France's decision**, calling it one-sided. The move is expected to further strain **Israel-Europe relations**, especially as several EU nations begin re-evaluating their stance on the Palestine issue amid growing civilian casualties.

4. Strategic and Legal Implications of Recognition:
Recognition of a state refers to the **formal acceptance of a political entity's sovereignty and legitimacy** under **international law**. France's move could bolster Palestine's claim to **statehood under the 1933 Montevideo Convention**, which defines the legal criteria for state recognition.

5. Broader International Trends and European Positioning:
France joins a list of over **140 UN member states** that have recognized Palestine. The move could trigger similar recognition from **other Western European countries**, altering the diplomatic landscape in the Middle East and potentially pushing for a **two-state solution**.

6. UN and International Law Framework:
Under the **UN Charter and resolutions (especially UNGA Res. 181 & UNSC Res. 242)**, the recognition of Palestine has been debated as a path to lasting peace. France's support gives momentum to multilateralism and **diplomatic conflict resolution**.

Additional Key Concepts & Definitions:

- **State Recognition**: A sovereign act whereby a state acknowledges the existence of another entity as a state in the international system.

- **Two-State Solution**: A proposed solution to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict advocating an independent State of Palestine alongside Israel.

- **UN General Assembly**: A principal organ of the UN where global diplomatic recognitions and statements are often formalized.

Conclusion:
France's decision to recognize Palestine signals a pivotal shift in global diplomacy, especially among Western nations. It reflects increasing urgency to address humanitarian issues in Gaza and reaffirms support for a peaceful, negotiated settlement based on statehood and international law.

UPSC Relevance:

- **GS Paper II**: International Relations – India and Global Affairs, Israel-Palestine issue, UN mechanisms

- **GS Paper I (World History)**: Post-WWII Middle East conflict

- **Essay & Interview**: Topics on global diplomacy, recognition of states, humanitarian interventions, and peace-building efforts

7. Parliamentary Panel Flags Slow Progress in SVAMITVA Scheme

1. SVAMITVA Scheme Facing Implementation Delays:
The **Standing Committee on Rural Development and Panchayati Raj** has expressed concern over the **slow pace of implementation** of the **SVAMITVA scheme**, which aims to provide legal ownership of residential properties in rural India through drone-based mapping.

2. Objective and Scope of SVAMITVA Scheme:
Launched in **April 2020** by the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj**, SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improvised Technology in Village Areas) aims to issue **'Property Cards'** to landowners in rural areas, enabling them to use the property as a **financial asset** for loans and other economic activities.

3. Delay in Village Survey and Target Coverage:
The committee highlighted that **30,000 villages** across various **states and union territories** are yet to be surveyed. This delay puts the goal of achieving **100% coverage by 2025** at risk, affecting the timely issuance of legal documents and the benefits of formal land ownership.

4. Importance of Land Rights and Digital Records:
Legal land ownership in rural areas ensures **secure property rights**, reduces land disputes, enhances **ease of doing business**, and enables **credit access**. SVAMITVA uses advanced **drone technology, GIS mapping, and CORS networks** to create accurate land records and reduce litigation.

5. Legal and Constitutional Provisions Involved:
Land is a **State subject under the Seventh Schedule** of the Constitution, but the **Centre supports states** through digital land reforms and technical assistance. The scheme aligns with **Article 243G** and **243ZD**, which empower Gram Panchayats and District Planning Committees in rural governance.

6. Recommendations by the Parliamentary Panel:
The panel recommended **speeding up the survey process**, addressing **technological and manpower gaps**, ensuring **state-level coordination**, and enhancing **awareness among rural populations** to participate in the property validation process.

Additional Key Definitions and Concepts:

- **Property Card**: A legal document conferring ownership rights over residential land in a rural area.

- **CORS (Continuously Operating Reference Stations)**: Used for high-accuracy geospatial data collection in land mapping.

- **GIS (Geographic Information System)**: A system used for capturing, storing, and analyzing spatial and geographic data.

Conclusion:
The SVAMITVA scheme is a transformative step towards formalizing rural land ownership, empowering villagers, and integrating rural areas into formal economic structures. However, timely execution is essential to realize its full benefits and reduce rural land-related challenges.

UPSC Relevance:

- **GS Paper II**: Government schemes and implementation, role of Panchayati Raj institutions

- **GS Paper III**: Infrastructure, Land Reforms, Digital Governance

- **Essay & Interview**: Rural development, land rights, legal empowerment, technology in governance

8. Kargil, Pahalgam and a Revamp of India's Security Strategy

1. Evolution from Kargil (1999) to Pahalgam (2025):
The **Kargil War** (May-July 1999) marked a major shift in India's **conventional military doctrine**, fought under the nuclear shadow and broadcast live for the first time. India reclaimed its territory from Pakistani intruders. In contrast, the **Pahalgam terror attack** (April 2025), which killed 26 civilians, led to **Operation Sindoor** — India's most aggressive counter-strike, destroying nine terror bases and 11 Pakistani military airbases within 96 hours, showcasing a doctrinal shift from restraint to swift retaliation.

2. Strategic and Institutional Reforms Post-Kargil:
Kargil exposed **critical intelligence failures** and lack of preparedness in high-altitude warfare. This led to the creation of several key institutions such as the **Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA)**, **National Technical Research Organisation (NTRO)**, and a revamp of the **National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS)**. The **Kargil Review Committee** recommended coordinated intelligence sharing and structural reforms, resulting in the **permanent role of the National Security Adviser (NSA)**.

3. Modernisation of Armed Forces and Cold Start Doctrine:
In response to Kargil's operational gaps, India pursued **military modernisation**, developing indigenous capabilities (e.g., BrahMos, Pinaka, Dhanush artillery), procuring high-end platforms (Rafale, Apache, S-400), and **formulating the Cold Start Doctrine**—a strategy for quick, limited strikes below the nuclear threshold. The establishment of the **Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)** and push for **integrated theatre commands** aim to enhance joint force capability.

4. Shifting Counter-Terror Strategy – From Defensive to Offensive:
India's early response to terror, including IC-814 hijacking (1999), **Parliament attack** (2001), and **26/11 Mumbai attacks** (2008), was marked by strategic restraint. A shift began post-**Uri attack (2016)** with **surgical strikes**, and further consolidated after **Pulwama (2019)** with **Balakot airstrikes**. **Pahalgam (2025)** has set a new precedent — with not just terror camps but **military assets of Pakistan** being targeted, including a suspected nuclear site.

5. Constitutional & Legal Backing for National Security Measures:
Under **Article 355**, the Centre has the duty to protect states against external aggression and internal disturbance. The **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA)** and **National Investigation Agency (NIA) Act** provide a legal framework for counter-terrorism. India's **nuclear doctrine**, revised post-Kargil, emphasizes **'No First Use'** but retains massive retaliation as a deterrent posture.

6. Self-Reliance in Defence and Strategic Clarity:
The **'Make in India'** initiative is aiding strategic autonomy, with increased production of indigenous platforms. India's posture post-Pahalgam signals a **new doctrine of deterrence through disproportionate response**, reducing space for proxy warfare. With improved **ISR (Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance)**, India is focusing on preemptive capabilities and real-time decision-making.

Definitions of Key Terms:

- **Cold Start Doctrine**: An Indian military strategy for swift, limited conventional war under nuclear overhang.

- **Surgical Strike**: A military attack intended to cause damage to a specific target with minimal collateral damage.

- **National Security Council (NSC)**: Apex body for national security and strategic coordination, headed by the PM.

Conclusion:

From the lessons of Kargil to the assertiveness seen after Pahalgam, India has undergone a comprehensive transformation in its military, intelligence, and counter-terror doctrines. The evolution reflects a more confident, capable, and assertive India that emphasizes **preparedness, strategic clarity, and retaliatory strength**.

UPSC Relevance:

- **GS Paper II**: National Security, Government Policies, Role of Institutions (NSA, NSC)

- **GS Paper III**: Defence Preparedness, Internal Security, Terrorism, Border Management

- **Essay & Interview**: India-Pakistan Relations, Evolution of Security Strategy, Counter-terror Policy, Indigenous Defence Manufacturing

9. Mangrove Ecosystems and M.S. Swaminathan's Legacy in Conservation

● **Redefinition of Mangroves and Their Ecological Role**

Mangroves were traditionally valued only by coastal communities for fisheries and livelihoods. Over time, their role in **disaster risk reduction**, **carbon sequestration**, and **biodiversity conservation** has made them central to climate adaptation strategies. They serve as breeding grounds for marine species, buffer against cyclones, and protect coastal erosion.

● **Pioneering Advocacy by M.S. Swaminathan**

At the 1989 Tokyo Conference on Climate Change, M.S. Swaminathan emphasized **mangroves' role in combating sea-level rise**, saltwater intrusion, and cyclonic disasters. He proposed the **use of mangrove genes to develop salinity-tolerant crops**, advocating for a tripartite approach based on **ecology, economics, and equity**.

● **Institutional Framework for Global Conservation**

Swaminathan facilitated the founding of the **International Society for Mangrove Ecosystems (ISME)** in 1990. He contributed to the **World Charter for Nature (1992)**, which formalized mangrove conservation efforts globally. ISME led research, training, publication of manuals and atlases, and created the **World Mangrove Atlas**.

● **Innovations in Restoration and Participatory Management**

M.S. Swaminathan's team identified that **clear-felling**, not local communities, caused mangrove degradation. Based on participatory research, they developed the **'Fishbone Canal Method'** of hydro-ecological restoration, later adopted under the **Joint Mangrove Management Programme** and scaled across Tamil Nadu, Odisha, West Bengal, and Andhra Pradesh.

● **Constitutional & Legal Provisions and Government Initiatives**

Under **Article 48A** (Directive Principles of State Policy), the State must protect the environment. The **Indian Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980**, was a turning point in mangrove protection. Post-2000, the

Ministry of Environment and Forests mainstreamed **mangrove conservation under CAMPA and CRZ regulations**, promoting state and central investments.

● **National Gains and Recognition**

According to the **India State of Forest Report (ISFR) 2023**, India has **4,991.68 sq. km** of mangrove cover (0.15% of total area), with a growth of **16.68 sq. km** since ISFR 2019. Mangroves proved vital during the **1999 Odisha cyclone** and **2004 tsunami**, cementing their disaster-resilience value.

Key Terms:
● *Mangroves:* Coastal vegetation adapted to saline, tidal environments, rich in biodiversity.
● *Fishbone Canal Method:* Restoration technique involving water channels to revive hydrology.
● *Carbon Sequestration:* Process of capturing atmospheric CO_2, aiding climate mitigation.

Conclusion:

M.S. Swaminathan transformed mangrove conservation into a **scientifically grounded, participatory, and policy-integrated** movement. His vision shifted global and Indian approaches from viewing mangroves as wastelands to **strategic natural assets** vital for **coastal resilience and sustainable development**.

UPSC Relevance:

Highly important for **GS Paper 3** (Environment, Disaster Management, Climate Change); **GS Paper 2** (Governance, Policies); and **Essay** paper. Also relevant for Prelims under **Ecology-Biodiversity** and current affairs like **World Mangrove Day (July 26)** and climate adaptation policies.

10. Vice-Presidential Election Process and Constitutional Framework

● **Initiation of Election Process and Key Appointments**

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has begun the process for electing the new Vice-President by appointing the **Secretary-General of Rajya Sabha, P.C. Mody**, as the **Returning Officer**. Two officials—Garima Jain and Vijay Kumar—have been appointed as **Assistant Returning Officers** to oversee the process.

● **Cause of the Mid-Term Vacancy**

A **rare mid-term vacancy** in the office of the Vice-President has occurred due to the **sudden resignation of Jagdeep Dhankhar**, prompting the need for fresh elections to the second-highest constitutional post in India. Such vacancies are unusual and are filled in accordance with established legal procedures.

Articles Related to Vice-President at a Glance	
Article No.	**Subject-matter**
63.	The Vice-President of India
64.	The Vice-President to be ex-officio Chairman of the Council of States
65.	The Vice-President to act as President or to discharge his functions during casual vacancies in the office, or during the absence, of President
66.	Election of Vice-President
67.	Term of office of Vice-President
68.	Time of holding election to fill vacancy in the office of Vice-President and the term of office of person elected to fill casual vacancy
69.	Oath or affirmation by the Vice-President
70.	Discharge of President's functions in other contingencies
71.	Matters relating to, or connected with, the election of Vice-President

● **Legal and Constitutional Provisions**

The election of the Vice-President is conducted as per **The Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Act, 1952**, and the **Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Rules, 1974**. The **Vice-President of India is the ex-officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha**, as provided under **Article 64** of the Constitution. The election is carried out under the **superintendence of the Election Commission**, in line with **Article 324**.

● **Electoral College and Voting Procedure**

The **Electoral College** for the Vice-Presidential election consists of members of **both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha**, including **nominated members**. Unlike the Presidential election, **State Legislative Assemblies are not part of this process**. Voting is done via a **secret ballot** using the **single transferable vote (STV) system**, ensuring proportional representation.

● **Nomination Requirements and Process**

As per the rules, a valid nomination requires a candidate to be proposed by **at least 20 electors** and seconded by **at least 20 more**. The nomination paper must be submitted to the Returning Officer **between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.** on notified days. Scrutiny and withdrawal of nominations follow prescribed timelines.

Key Terms
● *Electoral College:* A body of elected/nominated legislators who elect the Vice-President.
● *Returning Officer:* An official appointed to conduct elections and ensure compliance with legal norms.
● *Single Transferable Vote (STV):* A system of proportional representation where voters rank candidates in order of preference.

Conclusion

The Vice-Presidential election is a constitutionally mandated process that ensures a smooth democratic transition even in the case of unexpected vacancies. The legal and procedural safeguards ensure fairness, transparency, and continuity in the functioning of constitutional offices.

UPSC Relevance

Highly relevant for **GS Paper 2** (Indian Constitution, Polity, Constitutional Posts), **Prelims** (Statutory and non-statutory bodies, Electoral procedures), and **Mains** questions on electoral reforms, functioning of constitutional offices, and democratic institutions.

11. Supreme Court Ruling on Delimitation and Constitutional Constraints

● **Delimitation in J&K Not a Benchmark for States**

The Supreme Court ruled that **States like Andhra Pradesh and Telangana cannot demand delimitation** citing the example of **Jammu & Kashmir**, as both operate under **distinct constitutional frameworks**. The delimitation in J&K, a Union Territory, was based on the **2011 Census** and does not apply to States bound by the constitutional freeze.

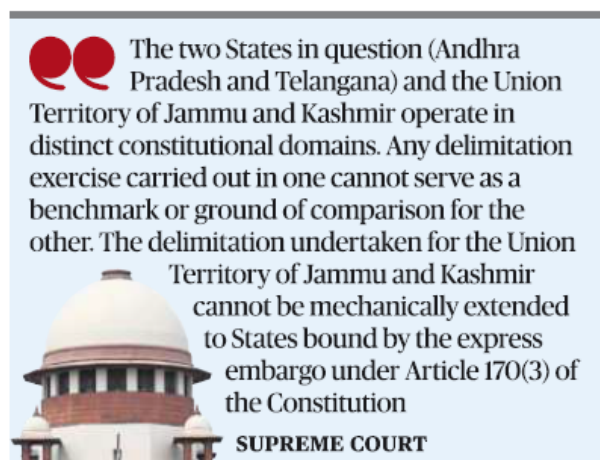● **Constitutional Embargo under Article 170**

The Court clarified that **Article 170(3)** of the Constitution imposes a **constitutional embargo** on the delimitation of **State Legislative Assemblies** until after the first Census post-2026. This freeze was introduced by the **84th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2001**, and extended by the **87th Amendment Act, 2003**, to ensure uniformity and avoid political misuse.

● **Union Territory vs State: Distinct Constitutional Domains**

The SC emphasized that **Jammu & Kashmir**, being a **Union Territory**, is **excluded from Article 170's embargo**, and its delimitation is governed by **specific statutory provisions** post its reorganization under the **Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019**. Thus, **treating UTs and States as equals would be unconstitutional**.

> The two States in question (Andhra Pradesh and Telangana) and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir operate in distinct constitutional domains. Any delimitation exercise carried out in one cannot serve as a benchmark or ground of comparison for the other. The delimitation undertaken for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir cannot be mechanically extended to States bound by the express embargo under Article 170(3) of the Constitution
>
> **SUPREME COURT**

● **Judicial Intervention May Destabilize Electoral Uniformity**

The Court rejected the petitioner's plea for delimitation in AP and Telangana through judicial direction, stating that such action would create **discontent among other States**, especially the **North-Eastern States** which were excluded from delimitation through a **2021 Central notification**. This would risk undermining **electoral parity and federal balance**.

● **Delimitation: Legal Framework and Definition**
Delimitation refers to the **act of redrawing boundaries of electoral constituencies** to reflect population changes. It is governed by **Delimitation Commission Acts** and is constitutionally regulated through **Articles 82 and 170** for Parliament and State Assemblies respectively. For Union Territories, **special laws and presidential orders** apply.

Key Terms
● *Delimitation:* Redrawing of electoral boundaries to reflect population changes
● *Article 170(3):* Bars state assembly delimitation until after the Census post-2026
● *Union Territory:* An administrative unit governed directly by the Central Government with distinct legislative powers

Conclusion
The SC verdict reinforces that **constitutional mandates take precedence over political parity claims**. By upholding the distinction between States and Union Territories in electoral matters, the Court has **protected the sanctity of the federal electoral framework** and prevented selective interventions that could lead to unequal treatment.

UPSC Relevance
Important for **GS Paper 2** (Polity, Constitution, Federalism, Electoral Processes), **Prelims** (Articles 170, 82, Constitutional Amendments, Delimitation), and **Essay** topics on democratic reforms. Also useful for understanding **Centre-State relations**, **judicial review**, and **constitutional governance in electoral matters**.

12. PM Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PM-VBRY): Employment-Linked Incentive Scheme

● **Objective and Launch Timeline**
The **PM Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana (PM-VBRY)**, an upgraded form of the **Employment Linked Incentive (ELI) Scheme**, will come into effect from **1st August 2025**. With an outlay of **Rs 99,446 crore**, it aims to generate **over 3.5 crore jobs** across India in a span of **two years (Aug 2025–July 2027)**, aligning with the broader vision of **Viksit Bharat** (Developed India).

● **Dual Structure: Focus on Employees and Employers**
The scheme has **two parts**:
Part A – Incentive to First-Time Employees: Offers **EPF wage support up to Rs 15,000**, paid in two installments (after 6 and 12 months), for **first-time workers registered with EPFO**. A portion of the incentive will be mandatorily saved in deposit instruments to **encourage financial literacy and savings**.
Part B – Support to Employers: Offers **monthly incentives up to Rs 3,000 per new employee**, to EPFO-registered employers who **hire additional employees** and retain them for at least six months. **Manufacturing sector** employers are eligible for extended benefits up to **four years**.

● **Eligibility Criteria and Incentive Structure**
Eligibility includes hiring **minimum two additional employees (for establishments with <50 workers)** or **five additional employees (for establishments with ≥50 workers)**. Salary ceiling for eligible employees is **Rs 1 lakh/month**. Incentives are stratified as follows:

- EPF wage up to Rs 10,000: ₹1,000/month

- EPF wage Rs 10,001–20,000: ₹2,000/month

- EPF wage above Rs 20,000 up to ₹1,00,000: ₹3,000/month

● **Payment Mechanism and Digital Transparency**
All payments under **Part A** (to employees) will be made through **DBT using Aadhaar Bridge Payment System (ABPS)**. Payments under **Part B** (to employers) will be credited directly into **PAN-linked bank accounts**, ensuring **transparency, accountability, and digital compliance**.

● **Strategic Alignment with National Priorities**
PM-VBRY reflects a **shift toward employment-led economic growth** and supports objectives of **inclusive development**, **formalization of the workforce**, and **manufacturing sector expansion**. It also complements existing schemes like **Atmanirbhar Bharat Rozgar Yojana (ABRY)** and the **Skill India Mission**.

Key Terms
● *EPFO (Employees' Provident Fund Organisation):* Statutory body under Ministry of Labour, ensuring social security for workers.
● *Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT):* Government scheme to directly transfer subsidies/welfare benefits to beneficiaries' bank accounts.
● *Financial Literacy Programme:* Training module to equip employees with basic financial management and savings habits.

Conclusion
PM-VBRY is a comprehensive scheme addressing both **demand and supply-side challenges in the job market**. By encouraging formal employment and supporting employers, it is poised to boost productivity, improve job quality, and advance the goal of a **Developed India by 2047**.

UPSC Relevance
Highly relevant for **GS Paper 3** (Indian Economy, Employment Generation, Government Schemes), **GS Paper 2** (Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections), and **Prelims** (Flagship schemes, EPFO, DBT). Also useful in **Essay** and **Interview** under themes like job creation, inclusive growth, and skill development.