# UPSC Mentorship
## A Unit of Mentorship India

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

## 30 August 2024

# Table of Contents

# GS I

## 1.Portal launched for registering sexual harassment cases

**Source: The Hindu**

**Context:** The Union Ministry of Women and Child Development has launched SHe- Box, a centralised portal for registering and monitoring complaints of sexual harassment of women at the workplace.

**SHe- Box:**
- **Objective:** Enacted under The **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013**, to ensure a safe work environment for women.
- **Scope:**
  - Applies to **all women in both organised and unorganised sectors**, including domestic workers.
  - Covers all **public and private sectors,** regardless of work hierarchy.
- **Definition:**
  - **Defines sexual harassment comprehensively**, including threats to employment, creation of a hostile environment, or humiliating treatment affecting health or safety.

**SHe-Box Portal:**
- **Purpose:** Provides a single-window access for women to register complaints of sexual harassment at work.
- **Procedure:**
  - Requires a **valid email ID and mobile number for registration**.
  - Complaints are **directed to the relevant authority for action**.
- **How to Register:**
  - Click "Register your Complaint" on the portal's homepage.
  - Refer to the User Manual on the website for detailed instructions.

**Repository of Resources:**
- **Content:**
  - **Legislation:** Includes the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013, and associated Rules in Hindi and English.
  - **Handbook:** Provides practical information about the SH Act.
  - **Training Module:** For government officials; customizable for private organisations.
  - **Advisories and Guidelines:** From the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).
- **Additional Resources:**
  - Videos and other materials for awareness and training.
- **Access:** All documents are available online for viewing or free download.

## 2.Monsoon likely to extend, threatening ripe summer crops

**Source: The Hindu**

**Context:** The southwest monsoon is expected to last into late September this year due to a low-pressure system developing mid-month, according to IMD officials.

**Mechanism of Indian Monsoon**
- **Overview:**
  - **Definition:** Seasonal reversal of wind direction; summer winds travel from sea to land, winter winds from land to sea.
  - **Regions:** Indian subcontinent, central-western Africa, Southeast Asia; most pronounced in India.
  - **Significance:** Accounts for over 70% of India's annual rainfall.

**Classical Theories:**
- **Historical References:** Monsoons mentioned in ancient texts; early scientific studies by Arab traders.
- **Sir Edmund Halley's Theory:**
  - Summer Monsoon: Caused by high temperatures and low pressure over Central Asia attracting moist air from oceans.
  - Winter Monsoon: High pressure over colder northwestern India causes reversal of wind direction.
- **Drawbacks:** Fails to account for irregularities and complexities of monsoon patterns.

**Modern Theories:**
- **Air Mass Theory:** Based on seasonal migration of the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) and its impact on wind patterns.

**Role of ITCZ:**
- **Function:** Zone where southeast and northeast trade winds meet, leading to ascending air and heavy rainfall.
- **Seasonal Shifts:** Moves northward in summer, bringing southwest monsoons; shifts southward in winter, affecting weather patterns.

**Onset of the Monsoon:**
- **Timing:** Begins in early June with winds arriving on the Kerala coast, reaching other regions by mid-July.
- **Process:** Driven by intense low-pressure systems over northern India and high-pressure conditions over the Indian Ocean.

**Southwest Monsoon Season:**
- **Duration:** June to September.
- **Characteristics:** Moist air from the Indian Ocean brings heavy rains; sudden onset and significant cooling effect.

**Bursts of the Southwest Monsoon:**
- **Phenomenon:** Sudden onset of rain with strong winds and thunderstorms, known as "monsoon breaks."

**North-East Monsoon:**
- **Timing:** October to December.
- **Impact:** Brings rain to southern India, including Tamil Nadu and parts of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

**Season of Retreating Monsoon:**
- **Timeline:** October to November.
- **Effects:** Southwest monsoon weakens, leading to the end of the rainy season and increased risk of cyclones.

**Importance of the Indian Monsoon:**

- **Agriculture:** Critical for irrigation and crop production, impacting the livelihoods of over half the population.
- **Economic Impact:** Influences GDP due to its effect on agriculture and water resources.

Conclusion:
- **Impact:** Transforms regions from semi-desert to lush greenery; crucial for agriculture and water management.

# GS III

# 3. Analysing the Gender Budget of 2024-25

**Source: The Hindu**

**Context:** Women empowerment highlighted in the Finance Minister's Budget. GB reached 1% of GDP for the first time in 2024-25.

**Analysis of the Gender Budget 2024-25:**
- **Gender Budget (GB) Achievements:**
  - GB reached 1% of GDP for the first time in 2024-25.
  - Overall allocations exceed ₹3 lakh crore for pro-women programmes.

**Reasons for Increase in GB Allocations:**
- **New Component Addition:**
  - Introduction of Part 'C' in the Gender Budget Statement (GBS) reporting schemes with less than 30% women provisioning.
  - **Example:** PM Kisan scheme reported in Part C with an outlay of ₹15,000 crore (25% of total outlay).
- **Increment in Part A Allocations:**
  - Part A covers schemes with 100% allocation for women.
  - Share of Part A increased from 15-17% to nearly 40% due to reclassification of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) allocations.

**Instances of Reporting Issues:**
- **Over-reporting Examples:**
  - The PM Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) reported ₹920 crore (40% of total allocation) without explanation.
- **Under-reporting Examples:**
  - **National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM)** reported in Part A for the first time, reflecting accurate 100% women allocation.
  - Missing allocations for women in schemes like **PM Vishwakarma, SVANidhi, and Stand-Up India.**
  - MGNREGS reported 33.6% in GBS despite women constituting 59.3% of person-days.

**Recommendations for Improvement:**
- **Incorporate Explanations:**
  - Provide detailed explanations for GBS entries to ensure accuracy and transparency.
- **Adopt Systematic Approach:**
  - Improve the scientific and systematic approach of GBS reporting.
  - Ensure gender-responsive budgeting to effectively address women's needs.
- **Ensure Accurate Reporting:**
  - Maintain rigorous reporting standards to reflect actual spending on women's development.

# 4.Union to organise campaign to restart MGNREGS in Bengal

**Source: The Hindu**

**Context:** In a bid to pressure the Centre into resuming the MGNREGA in West Bengal, workers nationwide will each donate one rupee to cover unpaid wages from the scheme, which was suspended in December 2021 due to corruption complaints.

**MGNREGS Dispute in West Bengal:**
- **Issue:**
  - **Workers across India plan to donate one rupee each to cover unpaid wages in West Bengal.**
  - The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) was suspended in West Bengal in December 2021 due to corruption complaints.
- **Government Actions:**
  - Union Rural Development Ministry stopped MGNREGS payments in West Bengal under Section 27 of the Employment Guarantee Act due to "improper utilisation" of funds.
  - The Centre owes the State ₹7,500 crore, including ₹2,744 crore in unpaid wages.
  - No fresh budget has been approved for the State for two consecutive years.

**Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA):**

**Overview:**
- **Act Enacted:** 2005
- **Objective:** Guarantees the "right to work" to rural citizens.
- **Employment Guarantee:** Provides a minimum of 100 days of unskilled manual work per year to an adult member of an eligible rural household.
- **Key Role Players:** Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) and development economists.

**Key Provisions:**
- **Eligibility Criteria:**
  - Indian citizen
  - 18 years of age
  - Rural household
  - Willing to do unskilled work
- **Guaranteed Employment:** 100 days of unskilled work at minimum wage.
- **Unemployment Allowance:** If work is not provided within 15 days, entitlement to unemployment allowance (1/4 of minimum wage for first 30 days, 1/2 thereafter).
- **Social Audit:** Mandated for all works under MGNREGA (Section 17).
- **Work Proximity:** Employment provided within 5 km of residence; travel allowance for distances beyond.
- **Decentralised Planning:** Panchayati Raj Institutions lead planning and implementation; Gram Sabhas to suggest work.
- **Payment Timeliness:** Payments made weekly; delayed payments compensated.

**Evolution Over Time:**
- **Current Scope:** 15 million workers at 1.4 million sites.
- **Budget Trends:** Decrease in budget allocation; ₹60,000 crore for 2023-24, down from ₹89,400 crore in 2022-23.
- **Employment Generation:** Over 31 billion person-days of employment; ₹6.4 lakh crore spent.
- **Infrastructure Creation:** Over 30 million water conservation assets created.

- **Technological Integration:** Online registration, electronic fund transfer, geotagging, National Mobile Monitoring Software (NMMS) App for attendance.
- **Program Integration:** Aligns with National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.

**Significance:**
- **Infrastructure Improvement:** Enhances rural infrastructure, natural resource base, and accessibility to basic services.
- **Income Compensation:** Helps offset income loss from economic disruptions (e.g., COVID-19 lockdown).
- **Migration Prevention:** Aims to reduce rural-to-urban migration by utilising local labour.
- **Livelihood Improvement:** Creates durable assets and improves rural livelihoods.
- **Rights-Based Approach:** Provides a legal right to work, unlike previous schemes.

**Best Practices:**
- **Jalpaiguri:** Blue revolution through integrated fish farming and vegetable cultivation.
- **Paschim Bardhaman:** Poultry sheds empowering women and providing steady income.
- **South West Khasi Hills:** Construction of a suspension bridge for market access.

**Challenges:**
- **Corruption:** Instances of fund embezzlement and record manipulation.
- **Limited Employment:** Only 100 days of work may not suffice for all rural citizens.
- **Awareness Issues:** Many rural citizens are unaware of their rights.
- **Bureaucratic Delays:** Inefficiencies and delays in accessing benefits.
- **Quality of Work:** Concerns about work quality and alignment with local needs.
- **Financial Inclusion:** Limited financial inclusion affecting wage transfers.

**Positive and Negative Outcomes:**
- **Positive:**
  - Inclusive growth and livelihood security
  - Creation of durable assets
  - Improved standard of living and empowerment
- **Negative:**
  - Lack of regular social audits
  - Leakage of funds
  - Technology issues in rural areas
  - Delays in wage payments
  - Low wage rates

**Reforms for Improvement:**
- **Urban MGNREGA:** Extend to urban areas to address unemployment.
- **Universal Basic Income (UBI):** Consider UBI as an alternative for efficiency.
- **Convergence with Other Schemes:** Align MGNREGA projects with other schemes for better sustainability.
- **Innovative Measures:** Use digital platforms for transparency, link with the private sector, and involve Panchayat Raj Institutions in implementation.
- **Regular Social Audits:** Conduct mandatory social audits every six months.
- **Job Cards:** Issue job cards to eligible individuals, not to PRI representatives or MGNREGA officials.

# Editorial, Ideas and Opinions

## 5. Connecting the dots in the Kyiv visit

**Source: The Hindu**

**Context:** The visit coincided with new Ukrainian military actions in the Kursk region. The country has historically maintained a neutral stance in the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

**PM visit to Kyiv:**
- **Overview of the Meeting:**
  - **Historic Meeting:** The Prime Minister met the Ukrainian President in Kyiv.
  - **Attention:** The meeting drew significant global attention from academics and journalists.
- **Historical Foreign Policy Approach:**
  - **Non-Alignment and Autonomy:** The policy traditionally balances relationships with global powers and supports peaceful dispute resolutions.
  - **Neutral Stance:** There has been avoidance of condemning Russia and promotion of dialogue through the UN.
- **Implications of the Visit:**
  - **Potential Peace Role:** The visit might indicate an interest in mediating the conflict, despite minimal trade and defence ties with Ukraine.
  - **Balancing Act:** Analysts view the visit as a balancing act following a recent visit to Russia, positioning the country as a neutral player.
- **Broader Strategic Considerations:**
  - **Request for Mediation:** A prior request for mediation supports a potential role in conflict resolution.
  - **Global South:** The involvement aligns with the role in the Global South, aiming to contribute to conflict resolution.

**Stakeholder Interests:**
- **U.S. Perspective:**
  - **Negotiations:** Preference for negotiations from a position of strength.
  - **Diplomatic Achievement:** Seeking a diplomatic achievement before the end of the current leadership term.
- **European Concerns:**
  - **Economic Impact:** Facing economic strain due to the war and energy shortages.
  - **Desire for Resolution:** A temporary peace could alleviate immediate economic and energy concerns.

**Russia's Position:**
- **Neutral Mediation:** Viewed as a preferable mediator due to historical ties and trust.
- **Honourable Exit:** Negotiations through a neutral party could provide a way to exit the conflict without appearing to surrender to Western pressures.

**Impact on the Country:**
- **Diplomatic Legacy:** Successful mediation could enhance global reputation and strengthen the position as a central player in international peace.
- **Domestic and International Standing:** The initiative could improve the image amid domestic challenges and boost global stature.

**Challenges to Mediation:**
- **Maximalist Positions:** Both Russia and Ukraine have rigid positions, complicating negotiations.

- **Geopolitical Interests:** Deeply entrenched interests of major powers pose significant obstacles.
- **Complex Negotiations:** Involvement of multiple international actors makes the negotiation process intricate.

**Conclusion:**
- **Temporary Peace:** While a permanent solution may be elusive, a unique position could enable facilitation of a temporary ceasefire or limited peace agreement.
- **Significance:** Such an outcome would be a notable step towards de-escalation and provide relief to all parties involved.

# 6. On the controversy over lateral entry into the civil services

**Source: The Hindu**

**Context:** UPSC withdrew its advertisement for 45 lateral recruitment posts (Joint Secretaries, Directors, Deputy Secretaries) due to objections and PMO intervention.

**What is the merit versus spoils system?**
- **Merit System:**
    - Appointments based on rigorous selection by an independent body.
    - Originated in 1858 with the introduction of the Indian Civil Service (ICS).
    - Aims to create career bureaucrats who provide impartial advice and avoid political bias.
- **Spoils System:**
    - Appointments are made based on political support rather than merit.
    - Originated in the U.S., replaced by merit-based systems in 1883.
    - In the U.S., only around 4,000 out of 2.8 million federal posts are politically appointed.

**What is lateral entry?**
- **Lateral Entry:**
    - Involves appointing professionals from private and public sectors into senior government positions.
    - Examples include economists and scientists appointed to high-level posts.
    - Recommended by the Second Administrative Reforms Commission (2005) and NITI Aayog (2017) to infuse specialised knowledge.
- **Pros of Lateral Entry:**
    - Brings specialised expertise in emerging areas like technology and climate change.
    - Introduces fresh perspectives and innovative ideas.
    - Can enhance responsiveness of career bureaucrats.
- **Cons of Lateral Entry:**
    - May lack the field experience of career bureaucrats.
    - Potential coordination issues with existing bureaucrats.
    - Risks of opacity and conflicts of interest, especially with private sector recruits.

**Way Forward:**
- Lateral entrants, particularly at senior levels like Secretary, can influence policy and face greater scrutiny.
- Appointments should balance technical expertise with equity and social justice.
- The PMO's intervention is seen as a step towards ensuring fairness.

**Broader Perspective:**

- ○ Focus on lateral entrants should not overshadow systemic issues.
- ○ Career bureaucrats face challenges including political interference and operational complexities.
- ○ Strengthening the merit system while ensuring autonomy for bureaucrats is crucial.
- ○ Supreme Court's **T.S.R. Subramanian case (2013)** underscores the need for effective Civil Service Boards to manage postings and transfers.

# 7. Moving the spotlight to grassroots democracy

**Source: The Hindu**

**Context:** The Election Commission of India (ECI) is highly respected for its consistent record of conducting free, fair, and timely elections to Parliament and State legislatures.

**Overview of State Election Commissions (SECs):**
- **Institutional Credibility:** The Election Commission of India (ECI) is recognized for its free and fair elections to Parliament and State legislatures.
- **Current Challenge**: SECs, responsible for local elections, require significant strengthening and support.

**Systemic Disempowerment of SECs:**
- **Constitutional Provision:** SECs were established by Articles 243K and 243ZA (73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments, 1993) to oversee elections to panchayats and urban local governments.
- **Current Issues:**
  - ○ **Litigation:** SECs are often in legal disputes with State governments, e.g., Karnataka SEC's contempt petition and Andhra Pradesh SEC's legal challenges.
  - ○ **Audit Findings:** CAG reports indicate 70% of urban local governments lacked elected councils, attributed to SEC disempowerment.
  - ○ **Survey Results:** Janaagraha's 2023 ASICS shows only 11 out of 34 States/UTs have empowered SECs for ward delimitation.

**Electoral Reforms for Strengthening SECs:**
- **Need for Reforms:** Regular and fair local government elections are crucial for grassroots democracy and effective service delivery.
  - ○ **Enhancing SEC Independence and Transparency:**
    - ■ **Appointment Process:** Propose a three-member SEC appointed by a committee including the Chief Minister, Leader of Opposition, and Chief Justice of the High Court.
    - ■ **Constitutional Amendment:** Amend the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act to improve SEC independence.
  - ○ **Regular Delimitation and Reservation:**
    - ■ **Fixed Intervals:** Mandate ward delimitation and reservation of seats at fixed intervals, e.g., every 10 years, to prevent arbitrary delays by State governments.
  - ○ **Empowering SECs with Key Responsibilities:**
    - ■ **Delimitation and Reservations:** Grant SECs authority over ward delimitation and seat reservations for local governments.
    - ■ **Elections to Key Positions:** Entrust SECs with the election of mayors/presidents and other key positions, ensuring timely publication of reservation rosters.
  - ○ **Addressing Malpractices:**

- ■ **Malpractice Prevention:** Address issues of malpractices by presiding officers appointed by State governments. Consider transferring the responsibility of electing mayors, presidents, and standing committees to SECs.

**Conclusion**

Implementing these reforms will enhance the functioning and credibility of SECs, ensuring timely and fair local elections.

# 8.SEBI moots UPI-like block mechanism for securities market

**Source: The Hindu**

**Context:** The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has proposed mandating Qualified Stock Brokers (QSBs) to cover the facility of trading in the secondary market using the UPIbased block mechanism.

**UPI-Based Block Mechanism:**
- **Proposal:** SEBI suggests that Qualified Stock Brokers (QSBs) should offer trading in the secondary market using a UPI-based block mechanism.
- **Functionality:** Clients can trade based on blocked funds in their bank accounts, similar to the ASBA (Application Supported by Blocked Amount) system used in primary markets.
- **Optional:** This facility is optional for investors and not mandatory for Trading Members.

**Existing Facilities and Alternatives:**
- **ASBA Facility:** Currently available for primary markets, ensuring funds are moved only upon allotment.
- **Alternative Proposal:** SEBI proposed that QSBs might offer a '3-in-1 trading account facility' instead of mandating the ASBA-like facility.

**SEBI:**

**Origin of SEBI:**
- **Previous Authority:** Regulated by the Controller of Capital Issues under the Capital Issues (Control) Act, 1947.
- **Establishment:**
  - ○ 1988: SEBI was established as a non-statutory body to regulate the securities market.
  - ○ 1992: SEBI gained statutory powers with the enactment of the SEBI Act, 1992 by the Indian Parliament.

**SEBI's Organisational Structure:**
- **Chairman:** Appointed by the Union Government of India.
- **Members:**
  - ○ Two members from the Union Finance Ministry.
  - ○ One member from the Reserve Bank of India.
  - ○ Five additional members nominated by the Union Government, with at least three being whole-time members.
- **Headquarters:** Mumbai.
- **Regional Offices:** Ahmedabad, Kolkata, Chennai, Delhi.

**Powers of SEBI:**
- **Quasi-Legislative Powers:** Formulates rules and regulations related to obligations, insider trading, and disclosure requirements.
- **Quasi-Executive Powers:** Examines accounts and documents to gather evidence on malpractices.

- **Quasi-Judicial Powers:** Can pass judgments on fraud and unethical practices in the securities market.
- **Approval of By-Laws:** Approves by-laws of securities exchanges for effective functioning.

# In Brief

## 9. India commissions second nuclear-powered missile submarine INS Arighat strengthening its nuclear triad

**Source: Business Today**

**Context:** The second Arihant-Class submarine 'INS Arighaat' was commissioned into the Indian Navy in August at Visakhapatnam in the presence of the Union Defence Minister.

**INS Arighat:**
- **Overview:**
  - INS Arighat is **India's second indigenously built nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN).**
  - It follows **INS Arihant, India's first nuclear submarine**, which was commissioned in 2018.
  - Constructed at the **Indian Navy's Ship Building Centre (SBC) in Visakhapatnam.**
- **Strategic Role:**
  - Integral to India's nuclear triad, which includes capabilities to launch nuclear missiles from land, air, and sea.
- **Specifications:**
  - **Length:** 111.6 meters
  - **Beam:** 11 meters
  - **Draught:** 9.5 meters
  - **Displacement:** 6,000 tonnes
  - **Speed:** 12–15 knots (22–28 km/h) on the surface; 24 knots (44 km/h) submerged
  - **Propulsion:** Single seven-blade propeller driven by a pressurised water reactor
- **Armament:**
  - Capable of carrying up to four K-4 SLBMs (Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles) with a range exceeding 3,500 kilometers.
  - Alternatively, can carry up to twelve K-15 SLBMs with a range of about 750 kilometers.
  - K-15 SLBMs can also be equipped with strategic nuclear warheads.
  - Equipped with torpedoes and mines.
- **Safety and Mobility Features:**
  - Includes two standby auxiliary engines for emergency power.
  - Features a retractable thruster for additional mobility in critical situations.

# 10.Artificial rain likely to be part of Delhi govt.'s plan to curb pollution
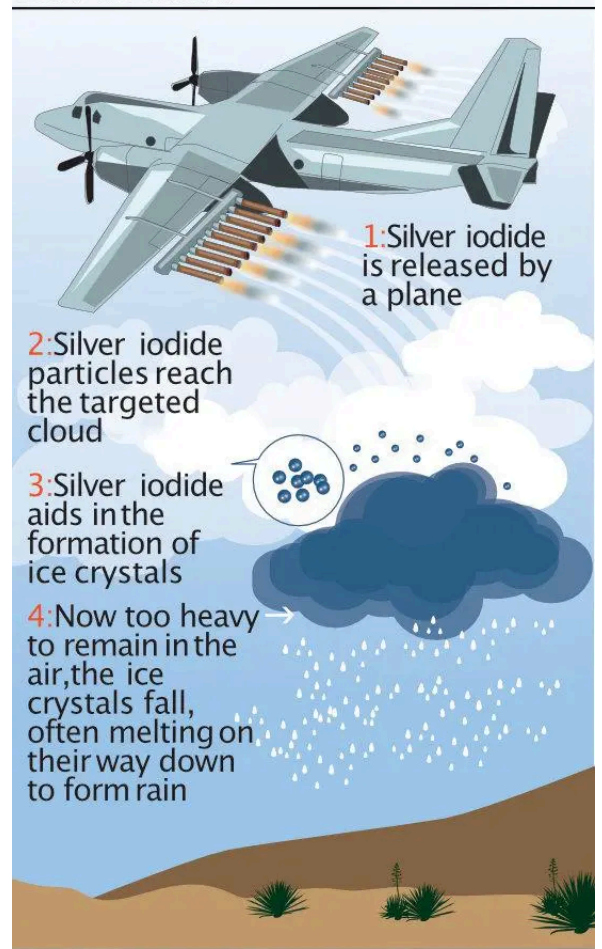
**Source: The Hindu**

**Context:** The Delhi government's Winter Action Plan is expected to include artificial rain, a work-from-home policy, vehicle bans in pollution hotspots, and awareness campaigns to change citizen behaviour.

**Artificial Rain or Cloud seeding:**
- **Cloud Formation:**
  - Clouds form when water vapour cools and condenses around particles like dust or salt in the atmosphere.
  - These particles, known as **condensation or ice nuclei**, are **essential for the formation of raindrops or snowflakes.**
- **Cloud Seeding:**
  - **Definition:** An artificial method to increase rainfall by introducing substances into clouds.
  - **Method:** Chemicals such as silver iodide, potassium iodide, and dry ice are dispersed into clouds using aircraft.
  - **Purpose:** These chemicals attract water vapour, promoting the formation of rain clouds.
  - **Timeframe:** It typically takes about 30 minutes for cloud seeding to induce rainfall.
- **Techniques of Cloud Seeding:**
  - **Hygroscopic Cloud Seeding:**
    - Aims to enhance the coalescence of droplets in liquid clouds.
    - Uses substances that act as cloud condensation nuclei (CCN) to increase droplet size and precipitation efficiency.
  - **Glaciogenic Cloud Seeding:**
    - Focuses on inducing ice formation in supercooled clouds.
    - Involves dispersing ice nuclei, like silver iodide or dry ice, to boost ice particle production and precipitation.
- **Utility of Cloud Seeding:**
  - Helps reduce drought impacts.
  - Assists in preventing forest fires.
  - Increases precipitation levels.

**HOW CLOUD SEEDING WORKS**
The technology involves use of salt flares to target specific types of clouds and stimulate rainfall

1: Silver iodide is released by a plane

2: Silver iodide particles reach the targeted cloud

3: Silver iodide aids in the formation of ice crystals

4: Now too heavy to remain in the air, the ice crystals fall, often melting on their way down to form rain

ARAB NEWS

# 11.Bonda tribe student set to pursue MBBS programme in Odisha

**Source: The Hindu**

**Context:** Mangala Muduli, a 19-year-old Bonda tribe student, has travelled 420 kilometres from Badbel village in Odisha's Malkangiri district to study medicine at MKCG Medical College in Berhampur.

**Bonda Tribe:**
- **Bondas:**
  - One of the 13 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in Odisha.
  - India has a total of 75 PVTGs.
- **Austroasiatic Tribes:**
  - The **Bondas are part of the Austroasiatic language group** and are believed to have migrated from Africa around 60,000 years ago.
  - They are among the earliest forest settlers in India.
- **Culture:**
  - The Bondas have maintained their distinct identity and cultural practices despite external influences.
  - Traditionally forest dwellers, they relied on **hunting and foraging**.
- **Social Structure:**
  - They have a **matriarchal society** where women prefer younger husbands who can support them in old age.

**Settlement Division:**
- The Bonda tribe is split into **two groups**:
  - **Upper Bondas:** Reside in the remote forest areas.
  - **Lower Bondas**: Live in the plains.

**Tribal Communities in Odisha:**
- Odisha hosts 62 tribal communities, representing a diverse tribal population.
- Thirteen of these communities are PVTGs: Bonda, Birhor, Chuktia Bhunjia, Didayi, Dungaria Kandha, Hill Kharia, Juang, Kutia Kondh, Lanjia Saora, Lodha, Mankirdia, Paudi Bhuyan, and Saora.

**Q1.Which of the following substances is commonly used in cloud seeding to encourage precipitation?**
- A. Carbon dioxide
- B. Sodium chloride
- C. Silver iodide
- D. Methane

**Q2.With reference to the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), consider the following statements:**
1. SEBI aims at regulating the securities market and safeguarding the interests of investors.
2. SEBI is accountable to the Reserve Bank of India.
3. SEBI has quasi-judicial powers in regulating the securities market.
4. SEBI was established on the recommendations of the Rangarajan Committee.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**
- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. All four

**Q3.Local self government can be best explained as an exercise in:**
- A. Federalism
- B. Democratic decentralisation
- C. Administrative delegation
- D. Direct Democrac

**Q4.Which of the following statements are true regarding different types of clouds?**
1. Cirrus clouds are high-altitude clouds that are thin and wispy, typically indicating fair weather but can also signal a change in the weather.
2. Cumulonimbus clouds are associated with stable weather conditions and rarely bring precipitation.
3. Stratus clouds form in low layers and often cover the sky like a blanket, leading to overcast conditions and light precipitation.

**How many of the statements given above are correct?**
- A. Only statement 1 is correct.
- B. Statements 1 and 3 are correct.
- C. Statements 2 and 3 are correct.
- D. All three statements are correct.

**Q5.Which of the following bodies is a constitutional body?**
- A. National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)
- B. Election Commission of India (ECI)
- C. Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)
- D. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)

**Q6.Which of the following rivers is correctly matched with its country?**

| River | Country |
| --- | --- |
| **A.** Nile River | India |
| **B.** Amazon River | Brazil |
| **C.** Thames River | Germany |

**Q7.** Which of the following types of budgets is characterised by adjusting expenditures based on actual revenue and expenditure performance?

| | Options | Description |
|---|---|---|
| **A.** | Zero-Based Budget | A budget where each expense must be justified for each new period, starting from a "zero base." |
| **B.** | Performance-Based Budget | A budget that allocates funds based on the performance outcomes of programs or departments. |
| **C.** | Incremental Budget | A budget that adjusts previous budgets by adding or subtracting incremental amounts. |
| **D.** | Flexible Budget | A budget that adjusts expenditures based on actual revenue and expenditure performance. |

**Q8.** Consider the following statements regarding the Indian monsoon:
1. The Indian monsoon is influenced primarily by the differential heating of the land and the ocean.
2. The southwest monsoon typically begins in the month of June and withdraws by the end of September.
3. The retreating monsoon period is characterised by the dominance of the northeast trade winds over the Indian subcontinent.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
   A. 1 and 2 only
   B. 2 and 3 only
   C. 1 and 3 only
   D. 1, 2, and 3

**Q9.** Consider the following statements regarding Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in India:
1. PVTGs are classified based on their socio-economic status and are provided with special protection and development programs by the government.
2. As of the latest data, there are 75 PVTGs officially recognized in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
   A. 1 only
   B. 2 only
   C. Both 1 and 2
   D. Neither 1 nor 2

**Q10.** Consider the following statements regarding pollution:
1. Particulate Matter (PM2.5) refers to fine particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 micrometres or less, which can penetrate deep into the respiratory system.
2. The National Air Quality Index (AQI) in India categorises air quality into six different ranges, with "Severe" being the most polluted category.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
   A. 1 only
   B. 2 only
   C. Both 1 and 2
   D. Neither 1 nor 2

# Solutions

**1.Correct Answer is C**
**Explanation:**
Cloud seeding is a **technique used to enhance precipitation by introducing certain substances into clouds**. The most commonly used substances for this purpose are:

- **Silver iodide:** This is the most widely used cloud seeding agent because its crystalline structure is similar to ice, which helps in the formation of ice crystals in supercooled water droplets within the clouds. This process encourages the droplets to grow and eventually fall as precipitation.
- **Sodium chloride:** Also known as table salt, it is sometimes used in cloud seeding, but it is less effective compared to silver iodide because it does not mimic the crystalline structure of ice as closely.
- **Carbon dioxide and Methane** are not used in cloud seeding. Carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas and methane is a gas with significant environmental impacts, but neither has the properties needed to induce precipitation in clouds.

Silver iodide's effectiveness in cloud seeding comes from its ability to serve as a nucleus around which ice crystals can form, making it a key substance in this technology.

**2.Correct Answer is A**
**Explanation:**
- **Statement 1 is correct.** SEBI's primary role is to regulate the securities market and protect investor interests. Its goals include maintaining market stability, safeguarding against fraud, and ensuring proper market operations.
- **Statements 2, 3, and 4 are incorrect:**
    - SEBI reports to the Finance Minister and is accountable to Parliament, not the Reserve Bank of India. The Finance Minister can issue policy directives to SEBI.

- SEBI has quasi-legislative powers, not judicial powers. It can create rules and regulations under the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1956, and the SEBI Act, 1992.
- SEBI was established based on the recommendations of the Narasimham Committee, not the Rangarajan Committee.

**3.Correct Answer is B**
**Explanation:** Local self-government refers to the system where local authorities have the power to govern themselves and make decisions on local issues. It is best described as an exercise in democratic decentralisation.

**4.Correct Answer is B**
**Explanation:**
- **Statement 1 is correct.** Cirrus clouds are high-altitude clouds known for their wispy appearance and can indicate fair weather or upcoming changes in the weather.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect.** Cumulonimbus clouds are associated with severe weather, including thunderstorms, heavy rain, and even tornadoes, not stable conditions.
- **Statement 3 is correct.** Stratus clouds form in low layers and often create overcast conditions, leading to light precipitation or drizzle.

**5.Correct Answer is B**
**Explanation:**
- **Election Commission of India (ECI)** is a constitutional body established under Article 324 of the Indian Constitution to supervise, direct, and control the entire process of elections to the Parliament and state legislatures, as well as the offices of the President and Vice-President of India.
- **National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Central Vigilance Commission**

**(CVC), and National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)** are statutory bodies established by Acts of Parliament. They are not created by the Constitution.

**6.Correct Answer is B**
**Explanation:**
- **Nile River:** The Nile flows primarily through northeastern Africa, notably Egypt and Sudan, not India.
- **Amazon River:** The Amazon is the largest river in terms of discharge and flows through Brazil, as well as other countries in South America.
- **Thames River:** The Thames River flows through the United Kingdom, not Germany.

**7.Correct Answer is D**
**Explanation:**
- **Zero-Based Budget:** Starts from scratch each period, requiring justification for all expenses.
- **Performance-Based Budget:** Allocates resources based on the results and performance of programs.
- **Incremental Budget:** Modifies the previous period's budget by applying incremental changes.
- **Flexible Budget:** Adapts expenditures based on the actual performance, allowing adjustments to be made as conditions change.

**8.Correct Answer is D**
**Explanation:**
- **Statement 1 is Correct:** The Indian monsoon is indeed influenced by the differential heating of the land and the ocean, which causes significant seasonal changes in wind patterns.
- **Statement 2 is Correct:** The southwest monsoon typically starts in June and withdraws by the end of September, marking the primary rainy season.
- **Statement 3 is Correct:** During the retreating monsoon period (October to December), the northeast trade winds

become dominant over the Indian subcontinent, leading to a change in weather patterns.

**9.Correct Answer is A**
**Explanation:**
- **Statement 1 is Correct:** PVTGs are indeed classified based on their socio-economic status and are provided with special protection and development programs to address their specific needs.
- **Statement 2 is Incorrect:** As of the latest data, there are 75 PVTGs recognized in India, not 75. The number of PVTGs can vary based on the latest government updates. As of the most recent figures, there are 75 PVTGs, so the statement may have been updated to reflect a higher or different number. Always check the latest official data for the most accurate count.

**10.Correct Answer is C**
**Explanation:**
- **Statement 1 is Correct:** PM2.5 refers to particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 micrometers or less. These fine particles can penetrate deep into the lungs and are associated with various health issues.
- **Statement 2 is Correct:** The National Air Quality Index (AQI) in India categorizes air quality into six ranges: Good, Satisfactory, Moderately Polluted, Poor, Very Poor, and Severe. "Severe" is the most polluted category.

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