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IMPORTANT INSIGHTS

India's GDP Revisions in 2026: New PPI-Based Deflation and Improved Measurement of Real Economic Growth

Recent Developments:

- The **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** has revised India's GDP estimates from FY 2022–23 onwards after incorporating the new **Producer Price Index (PPI)** and **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** series with base year 2022–23. MoSPI clarified that the revision reflects improved data inputs and does not represent a change in the GDP base year or a mid-series change in the underlying National Accounts framework.
- The latest revision follows the introduction of the **new GDP series with 2022–23 as the base year** in February 2026, replacing the earlier 2011–12 base year. The new series incorporated methodological improvements, wider administrative data use, improved quarterly benchmarking and **double deflation** in agriculture and manufacturing.
- MoSPI released the **Q1 FY 2026–27 GDP estimates on 31 August 2026**, while the updated PPI and IIP series were incorporated into the National Accounts estimates as planned.
- The revisions can move GDP growth **upward or downward**, because the effect depends on the difference between the newly available price indicators and the indicators previously used. Therefore, incorporation of PPI should not automatically be interpreted as an upward revision of economic growth.

Why GDP Estimates Are Revised:

Routine Revision of National Accounts:

- GDP estimates are revised because the initial estimates rely partly on **advance indicators**, while more comprehensive production, corporate, administrative and survey data become available later.
- Quarterly GDP estimates use high-frequency indicators and are subsequently benchmarked to annual estimates, causing revisions in both quarterly levels and growth rates when underlying information changes.
- Revisions are therefore a normal feature of national accounting and do not necessarily indicate that earlier estimates were erroneous.

Base-Year Revision versus Regular Revision:

- A **base-year revision** changes the benchmark structure and may incorporate new data sources, improved coverage, updated weights and methodological improvements.
- The 2026 GDP series changed the base year from **2011–12 to 2022–23**, with FY 2022–23 selected as a recent normal year with comparatively comprehensive economic data.
- Regular revisions mainly incorporate newly available information within the existing framework, whereas base-year revisions can substantially improve the conceptual and statistical framework.

Understanding GDP, GVA and Deflation:

GDP and GVA:

- **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** measures the value of final goods and services produced within an economy during a specified period.

- From the production approach, GDP is derived from **Gross Value Added (GVA)** across economic activities, adjusted for taxes on products and subsidies on products.
- **GVA** represents the value added by producers and is broadly calculated as output minus intermediate consumption.
- GDP at current prices reflects both changes in production volumes and changes in prices, whereas GDP at constant prices attempts to isolate changes in real economic activity.

Need for a Price Deflator:

- Nominal economic output cannot directly measure real growth because an increase in its value may result from higher prices rather than greater production.
- A **price deflator** removes the price effect from nominal values so that changes in the volume of economic activity can be estimated.
- The choice of deflator is therefore important because an inappropriate price index can distort measured real growth.

Single Deflation: Earlier Approach:

Method and Limitation:

- Under **single deflation**, output and intermediate consumption were generally adjusted using the same or closely related price deflator, although sector-specific approaches existed.
- The method can produce misleading real GVA when input prices and output prices move at different rates.
- For example, if input costs rise sharply while output prices increase only slightly, applying a common deflator may fail to capture the actual change in value added.
- This limitation becomes particularly important in sectors where input and output price movements are structurally different.

Double Deflation: Improved Measurement:

Concept and Application:

- **Double deflation** separately adjusts output and intermediate consumption using price indicators appropriate to their respective price movements.
- Real value added is then derived from real output minus real intermediate consumption.
- The method is intended to provide a more theoretically consistent estimate of real GVA because producers may face substantially different inflation rates for their inputs and outputs.
- In the 2022–23 GDP series, MoSPI adopted **double deflation for agriculture and manufacturing**, while different volume or extrapolation approaches are used for other sectors according to data availability and activity characteristics.

Why Double Deflation Matters:

- If input prices rise faster than output prices, producer margins can be squeezed even when nominal output increases.
- If output and input prices move differently, a common deflator may either overstate or understate real value added.
- Double deflation attempts to capture these relative price movements separately and thereby improve the measurement of **real GVA growth**.

Shift from WPI to PPI:

Why PPI Is Important:

- **Producer Price Index (PPI)** measures changes in prices received by domestic producers for their output and is therefore conceptually closer to producer-side economic activity than a retail price index.
- India historically relied on **Wholesale Price Index (WPI)** as a proxy for producer-side price movements where suitable PPI information was unavailable.
- MoSPI stated that PPI is recommended for relevant National Accounts applications because it provides a more appropriate representation of producer prices.
- The new PPI series became available in 2026, enabling its incorporation into GDP compilation alongside the updated IIP series.

Why the Choice of Index Matters:

- **CPI** measures prices paid by consumers, while **PPI** measures producer-side prices and **WPI** primarily tracks wholesale prices of goods.
- These indices have different baskets, coverage and economic purposes; therefore, they cannot be treated as interchangeable measures of inflation.
- Using a price index that better corresponds to the underlying economic activity can improve the conversion of nominal values into real measures.

Services Sector and Deflation:

The Measurement Challenge:

- A comprehensive **Services Producer Price Index (SPPI)** covering the entire services sector is not currently available.
- Consequently, MoSPI uses the most appropriate available price or volume indicator for individual service activities, which may include CPI-based indices, sector-specific price indices, unit-value indices, output indicators and administrative data.
- Therefore, it is inaccurate to state that PPI has universally replaced WPI or CPI for every service-sector activity.

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GDP Implicit Price Deflator:

Meaning and UPSC Relevance:

- The **GDP Implicit Price Deflator (GDP IPD)** is derived as: GDP at current prices divided by GDP at constant prices, multiplied by 100.
- Unlike CPI or PPI, the GDP IPD is not directly constructed from a single basket of surveyed prices.
- It captures the combined price movements of goods and services represented in domestic GDP, including components such as investment goods and government services.
- Consequently, GDP IPD should not be expected to move one-to-one with CPI or PPI because their coverage and conceptual bases differ.

Other Major Improvements in the 2022–23 GDP Series:

Methodological and Data Improvements:

- The new series introduced **double deflation** in agriculture and manufacturing and improved the use of volume-based measures in other sectors.
- MoSPI improved the treatment of **multi-activity enterprises** by segregating their activities for better estimation of the private corporate sector.
- The series incorporates improved coverage of the **unincorporated sector** through annual survey data.
- **GST data and other administrative databases** have been used more extensively for quarterly National Accounts.
- The quarterly series adopted **Proportional Denton Benchmarking** in place of the earlier pro-rata benchmarking approach.
- Improved integration with the **Supply and Use Table (SUT)** framework is intended to reduce discrepancies between production-side and expenditure-side estimates.
- Updated survey-based rates, ratios and methodological studies have also been incorporated to improve sectoral estimates.

Significance for the Indian Economy:

Better Measurement and Policy Use:

- More appropriate price indices can improve the measurement of **real GDP and GVA**, which are important for monetary policy, fiscal planning, investment decisions and international comparisons.
- Better sector-specific deflation can reduce distortions in measured growth caused by inappropriate price proxies.
- Greater use of GST, survey and administrative data can improve the timeliness and coverage of National Accounts.
- However, revisions should be interpreted carefully because an improved statistical methodology can alter historical growth rates without implying an equivalent change in the underlying physical output of the economy.

Remaining Limitations:

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Statistical Challenges:

- The new methodology does not eliminate all measurement limitations because the availability and quality of sector-specific price indicators remain uneven.
- A comprehensive producer-price framework for the entire services economy is still unavailable, requiring MoSPI to use different indicators according to the nature of individual activities.
- The GDP IPD, PPI and CPI measure different concepts, so differences between their movements should not automatically be interpreted as statistical inconsistency.
- Continued revisions are likely as additional survey, administrative and sectoral information becomes available.

Value Addition for UPSC:

Conceptual Linkage:

- **Nominal GDP → Deflation → Real GDP → Real Growth** represents the basic statistical chain through which price effects are separated from production changes.
- **PPI → Producer-side prices → Better deflation → Improved real GVA measurement** provides the key conceptual link behind the 2026 revisions.
- **Base-year revision + better data sources + improved methodology + sector-specific deflators** collectively strengthen the credibility and analytical usefulness of India's National Accounts.

Proposed Article 371(K) for Ladakh: Constitutional Safeguards and a New Democratic Governance Model

Recent Developments:

- The **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** has discussed a proposed **Article 371(K)** as a possible constitutional arrangement for Ladakh, with the objective of providing stronger safeguards for **land, culture, language, environment and natural resources** along with greater democratic representation.
- The proposal reportedly envisages a **sui generis governance model** under Part XXI of the Constitution rather than simply extending the existing Sixth Schedule framework to Ladakh.
- Discussions between the Union Government and representatives of Ladakh have focused on creating a mechanism that can balance **constitutional protection, democratic participation, tribal interests and strategic-administrative requirements**.
- The proposal is significant because Ladakh is a **Union Territory without a legislature**, while most existing special provisions under Articles 371 and 371-A to 371-J were designed for specific States.
- The Administration of Ladakh has simultaneously continued administrative reforms and discussions on constitutional safeguards, including efforts to extend the benefits of the **Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council Act** to newly created districts.

Constitutional Context of Article 371:

Part XXI and Special Constitutional Arrangements:

- **Part XXI** of the Constitution is titled “**Temporary, Transitional and Special Provisions**” and contains Article 371 along with Articles 371-A to 371-J, which provide differentiated constitutional arrangements for particular States.
- These provisions demonstrate the Constitution's capacity to accommodate **regional diversity, customary institutions, geographical conditions and distinctive administrative requirements** without adopting an identical governance structure throughout India.
- Article 371 itself provides special arrangements for **Maharashtra and Gujarat**, particularly through provisions relating to separate development boards for specified regions.

Existing Articles 371-A to 371-J:

Article	State	Broad Constitutional Focus
371	Maharashtra, Gujarat	Special responsibility for regional development through development boards
371-A	Nagaland	Naga customary law, religious and social practices, land and resources
371-B	Assam	Committee for tribal areas within the Legislative Assembly
371-C	Manipur	Hill Areas Committee and special administrative arrangements
371-D, 371-E	Andhra Pradesh, Telangana	Equitable opportunities in public employment and education; Central University
371-F	Sikkim	Special constitutional arrangements following Sikkim's integration with India
371-G	Mizoram	Customary law, religious and social practices, land and resources
371-H	Arunachal Pradesh	Governor's special responsibility regarding law and order
371-I	Goa	Special provision concerning the Legislative Assembly
371-J	Karnataka	Special provisions for the Hyderabad-Karnataka, now Kalyana Karnataka, region

- The existing framework therefore illustrates that **Article 371 is not a uniform template**, but a constitutional mechanism capable of creating State-specific arrangements.

Why is Article 371 Relevant to Ladakh?

Ladakh's Distinct Constitutional Position:

- Ladakh became a separate **Union Territory without a legislature on 31 October 2019** following the **Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019**, creating a governance structure different from States and Union Territories such as Delhi or Puducherry that have legislatures.
- The absence of an elected Legislative Assembly means that Ladakh does not possess a conventional State-level legislative institution through which regional political demands can be expressed.
- Consequently, a specially designed constitutional provision could provide an intermediate institutional arrangement between **direct Union administration and full Statehood**.
- A proposed **Article 371(K)** could therefore become a **tailor-made constitutional model for a Union Territory**, subject to the precise constitutional text ultimately proposed and enacted.

Democratic Representation and Local Governance:

- Before the reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh's political representation operated within the larger **Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly**, while the post-2019 arrangement shifted substantial administrative authority towards the Union Territory administration.
- The existing **Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils (LAHDCs)** provide an important layer of local democratic governance in Leh and Kargil, but their constitutional position differs fundamentally from the autonomous district councils established under the Sixth Schedule.
- The Ladakh Administration continues to conduct elections for the **LAHDC Leh and LAHDC Kargil**, demonstrating that representative institutions already exist at the district level even though there is no Union Territory legislature.

Why Does Ladakh Seek Stronger Constitutional Safeguards?

Land, Employment and Cultural Identity:

- Concerns over **land ownership, employment opportunities, demographic change and preservation of cultural identity** have remained central to political demands in Ladakh.
- The region possesses distinctive cultural traditions and communities, including **Drokpa, Balti and Changpa**, whose cultural heritage was specifically highlighted by the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes.
- The **National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)** recommended in September 2019 that Ladakh be included within the **Sixth Schedule**, citing the need for democratic devolution, protection of land and agrarian rights, preservation of cultural identity and greater transfer of development funds.

Political Demands:

- The **Leh Apex Body (LAB)** and **Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA)** have emerged as important platforms representing political demands from the region.
- Their demands have broadly included **statehood, Sixth Schedule protection, stronger democratic institutions, safeguards for land and employment, and greater local participation in decisions concerning infrastructure and development.**
- The demand for constitutional safeguards therefore reflects a broader debate concerning how **development, environmental protection, cultural preservation and democratic representation** can be balanced in a strategically sensitive Himalayan Union Territory.

What Has Been Proposed Under Article 371(K)?

Proposed Sui Generis Governance Model:

- The reported proposal envisages a **new Chapter K under Article 371**, designed specifically for Ladakh rather than mechanically applying the constitutional arrangements created for States.
- The proposed elected body is expected to be **directly elected**, thereby creating a stronger democratic mandate than the present administrative structure.
- The proposed body could receive legislative authority over subjects closely connected with Ladakh's regional identity, including **land, culture and language, forests, environment and natural resources.**
- The arrangement could potentially provide authority over additional matters presently administered through the Union Territory framework, subject to the final constitutional and statutory design.
- The concept is therefore important from the perspective of **asymmetric federalism**, under which different regions can receive different institutional arrangements according to their historical, geographical and socio-cultural circumstances.

Why a Sui Generis Model?

- A sui generis model could allow Parliament to address Ladakh's requirements without necessarily converting the Union Territory into a State or extending the entire Sixth Schedule framework to it.
- Such an arrangement could potentially combine **Union-level control over strategic matters** with greater local authority over subjects directly affecting everyday life and regional identity.
- The approach would therefore represent an example of **constitutional flexibility within Indian federalism.**

Key Unresolved Issues:

Executive and Legislative Powers:

- The most important unresolved question concerns the exact division of **legislative and executive powers** between the proposed elected body, the Lieutenant Governor and the Union Government.
- A meaningful elected institution would require clearly defined authority over **policy-making, implementation, budgeting and local administration**, rather than merely consultative functions.

Finances and Planning:

- The effectiveness of democratic decentralisation would depend on adequate **financial resources, budgetary powers and planning authority**.
- Without predictable financial devolution, even constitutionally protected institutions could remain dependent on administrative approvals from higher authorities.

Bureaucratic Control:

- Another major issue is whether the proposed elected body would exercise meaningful control over the **local bureaucracy and implementation machinery**.
- Clear allocation of responsibilities would be necessary to prevent institutional overlap between elected representatives and the Union Territory administration.

Police and Public Order:

- **Police and law-and-order powers** are particularly sensitive because Ladakh is a strategically important border Union Territory.
- Any future arrangement would therefore need to reconcile **democratic accountability** with the Union Government's legitimate requirements concerning national security, border management and public order.

Role of the Lieutenant Governor:

- The precise scope of the **Lieutenant Governor's discretionary and administrative powers** would be crucial for determining whether the proposed arrangement provides substantive democratic autonomy.
- A clearly defined constitutional distribution of powers could reduce institutional conflicts and establish predictable decision-making procedures.

Sixth Schedule and Article 371(K): A Comparison:

Sixth Schedule:

- The **Sixth Schedule**, read with **Article 244**, provides constitutionally protected **Autonomous District Councils** in specified tribal areas of **Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura**.
- These councils can exercise legislative, judicial and administrative functions over specified subjects, including **land, forests, water management, agriculture, village administration, social customs, inheritance and certain local matters**.
- The Sixth Schedule therefore provides a comparatively strong constitutional framework for **tribal self-governance and protection of customary institutions**.

Why Ladakh's Inclusion Is Significant:

- The NCST recommended bringing Ladakh under the Sixth Schedule in 2019 because of its **tribal population, distinctive cultural heritage and need for stronger democratic devolution and land protection**.
- However, the existing constitutional framework of the Sixth Schedule specifically identifies tribal areas in the northeastern States, making Ladakh's inclusion constitutionally distinctive.
- The proposal for Article 371(K) can therefore be viewed as an attempt to create an **alternative constitutional route** that addresses Ladakh-specific requirements without simply reproducing the existing Sixth Schedule model.

Article 371-A and 371-G as Comparators:

- **Article 371-A** protects specified Naga customary practices, religious and social matters, and ownership and transfer of land and its resources in Nagaland.
- **Article 371-G** provides comparable protections for Mizoram concerning Mizo customary law, religious and social practices, and land.
- These provisions demonstrate how the Constitution can provide **special protection to cultural practices and land-related interests** while retaining the State within the Union's constitutional framework.
- A future Article 371(K), if enacted, could similarly be designed around **Ladakh-specific cultural, ecological, land and governance requirements**.

Article 240 and the Present Union Territory Framework:

Presidential Regulatory Power:

- **Article 240** empowers the President to make regulations for the peace, progress and good government of specified Union Territories.
- The present constitutional text does not list Ladakh directly among the Union Territories named in Article 240, but the **Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils (Amendment) Regulation, 2025** was promulgated using Article 240 read with the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019.
- This illustrates the importance of the statutory framework created after the reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir in understanding the present governance of Ladakh.

Constitutional Amendment Process:

How Could a New Article 371(K) Be Inserted?

- A new constitutional article would ordinarily require a **Constitution Amendment under Article 368**, rather than an ordinary law passed by Parliament.
- A Constitution Amendment Bill may be introduced in **either House of Parliament**.
- The Bill must ordinarily be passed by a **majority of the total membership of each House and by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the members present and voting**.
- Ratification by **at least half of the State Legislatures** is required where the amendment affects specified federal provisions, including certain provisions relating to the Union-State constitutional structure, representation of States, the Seventh Schedule or Article 368 itself.
- After completion of the constitutionally prescribed procedure, the Bill is presented to the **President for assent**, following which the Constitution stands amended according to the terms of the legislation.
- Any future Article 371(K) would therefore have to satisfy not only the political negotiations surrounding Ladakh but also the **constitutional amendment procedure and the Basic Structure doctrine**.

Significance for Indian Federalism:

Asymmetric Federalism:

- The Ladakh debate highlights India's model of **asymmetric federalism**, where constitutional arrangements can vary according to regional history, ethnicity, geography and administrative requirements.
- Articles 371-A to 371-J already demonstrate that **uniformity is not the only constitutional conception of federalism** in India.
- A Ladakh-specific provision could further demonstrate the Constitution's ability to accommodate **territorial diversity without compromising national unity**.

Democratic Decentralisation:

- Stronger constitutional protection could deepen **participatory governance** by transferring appropriate decision-making powers closer to local communities.
- Such decentralisation can improve the alignment between public policy and local requirements in areas such as **land use, cultural preservation, tourism, infrastructure and environmental management**.

Environmental Governance:

- Ladakh's fragile Himalayan ecosystem makes **sustainable development** particularly important.
- Local participation in decisions concerning land, water, forests and infrastructure can potentially improve environmental governance while maintaining national standards and strategic oversight.

Borderland Governance:

- Ladakh shares sensitive international boundaries and has considerable **strategic and geopolitical significance**.
- Any decentralised governance model must therefore balance **local democratic aspirations with national security, border infrastructure and strategic mobility requirements**.

Way Forward:

Balancing Autonomy and National Interests:

- The future constitutional arrangement should clearly distinguish between **local subjects**, where democratic institutions can exercise substantial authority, and **strategic subjects**, where stronger Union oversight may remain necessary.
- The proposed framework should establish clear rules for **executive authority, legislative competence, financial devolution, bureaucratic accountability and the Lieutenant Governor's powers**.
- A transparent consultation process involving **Leh, Kargil, elected councils, tribal communities, civil society and the Union Government** can improve the legitimacy of the eventual settlement.
- Constitutional safeguards should also be accompanied by effective institutions for **environmental protection, sustainable tourism, employment generation and equitable regional development**.

Value Addition for UPSC:

- **Essay:** The proposed arrangement illustrates the constitutional principle that **unity can be strengthened through accommodation of diversity rather than administrative uniformity**.

- **Constitutional keywords:** Asymmetric Federalism, Article 244, Article 240, Article 368, Sixth Schedule, Article 371, Democratic Decentralisation, Constitutional Safeguards and Basic Structure Doctrine.
- **Core analytical takeaway:** The Ladakh debate is not merely about creating another administrative institution; it concerns the constitutional balance between **democratic representation, regional identity, tribal and land rights, environmental protection and national security.**

Open Waste Burning in Indian Cities Intensifies During Winter, Exposing Gaps in Municipal Waste Management and Air-Quality Governance

Recent Developments:

- A recent **World Resources Institute India** working paper based on field surveys across **11 Indian cities** found that open waste burning rises sharply during winter, with the incidence, quantity of waste burned and associated emissions becoming **up to three times higher** than in summer.
- The winter increase is associated with colder conditions, stagnant atmospheric conditions, greater demand for warmth and persistent weaknesses in municipal waste collection and processing systems.
- The findings indicate that **open waste burning is not merely an air-pollution issue but also a municipal-service delivery and environmental-governance problem.**
- Paper, plastics and other combustible materials form important components of the waste being burned, while burning of plastics is particularly concerning because incomplete combustion can release hazardous pollutants.
- The problem becomes especially important during winter because lower temperatures, shallow atmospheric mixing and weaker dispersion can increase the persistence of locally emitted pollutants.

What is Open Waste Burning?

Meaning and Nature:

- **Open waste burning** refers to the uncontrolled combustion of municipal solid waste in streets, vacant plots, community spaces, roadside locations, collection points and dumpsites without appropriate emission-control systems.
- It commonly involves mixed waste containing plastics, paper, textiles, organic matter and other combustible materials, making the resulting emissions difficult to predict and control.
- Unlike scientifically designed waste-treatment facilities, open burning generally occurs at low and uncontrolled temperatures, increasing the possibility of incomplete combustion and toxic emissions.

Why Winter Intensifies the Problem:

- Winter increases open burning because accumulated waste is sometimes burned for disposal and, in vulnerable communities, combustible waste may also be used as an easily available source of warmth.
- **Temperature inversions and a lower atmospheric boundary layer** during winter can restrict pollutant dispersion, increasing local exposure even when the absolute quantity burned is relatively small.
- Therefore, the winter problem reflects an interaction between **waste-management failure, human vulnerability and unfavourable meteorology.**

Major Causes of Open Waste Burning:

Weak Municipal Waste Collection:

- Irregular or incomplete **door-to-door collection** allows household and commercial waste to accumulate, encouraging residents and businesses to dispose of it through burning.
- The Central Pollution Control Board has identified door-to-door collection, regular sweeping, waste removal and covered transportation as critical elements of an effective solid-waste-management system.

Insufficient Waste-Processing Capacity:

- Inadequate **segregation, recycling, composting, biomethanation and material-recovery facilities** can cause collected waste to accumulate at intermediate points and dumpsites.
- Lack of adequate processing infrastructure can also weaken the effectiveness of source segregation because recyclable and organic fractions may ultimately be mixed and disposed of together.

Cost and Convenience:

- Open burning is often perceived as a quick and inexpensive method of disposing of accumulated waste, particularly where formal collection systems are unreliable.
- Small commercial establishments and households may therefore resort to burning when alternative disposal arrangements are inconvenient or costly.

Winter Heating and Socio-economic Vulnerability:

- Some economically vulnerable groups use combustible waste as a readily available source of warmth during cold weather.
- Burning of paper and plastics for heating creates a **double burden**, because vulnerable populations may simultaneously become the source and immediate victims of toxic exposure.

Weak Enforcement:

- Repeated burning at vulnerable locations indicates gaps in **monitoring, enforcement and accountability**.
- CAQM has specifically directed NCR authorities to strengthen surveillance, particularly during winter and at locations vulnerable to garbage burning, while adopting zero tolerance towards open burning of municipal solid waste.

Environmental and Health Impacts:

Air Pollution:

- Open burning releases **PM2.5, PM10, black carbon, carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds and other hazardous pollutants**, depending on the composition of the waste and combustion conditions.
- Plastic-containing waste can generate highly toxic combustion products, including **dioxins, furans and other persistent organic pollutants** under uncontrolled conditions.
- Open waste burning can also contribute to ozone formation through emissions of reactive gases and volatile organic compounds.

Soil, Water and Ecosystem Contamination:

- Ash and partially burned residues can contain heavy metals and persistent contaminants that may enter **soil and groundwater**.
- Runoff from contaminated residues can transport pollutants into nearby drains and water bodies.
- Plastic residues can fragment into smaller particles and contribute to long-term environmental contamination and ecological damage.

Climate Implications:

- Open burning releases **carbon dioxide, black carbon and other climate-forcing pollutants**.
- Black carbon has a strong short-lived climate effect and can also influence snow and ice albedo when deposited on high-altitude surfaces.
- Preventing open burning therefore supports both **air-quality improvement and climate mitigation**.

Public Health:

- Exposure to smoke can cause **coughing, eye irritation, breathing difficulties and aggravation of respiratory conditions**.
- Fine particulate matter can penetrate deep into the lungs and enter the bloodstream, increasing risks associated with **cardiovascular and respiratory diseases**.
- Long-term exposure to carcinogenic compounds such as certain polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons can increase health risks.
- Waste-management workers and people living near burning sites face disproportionate exposure, creating an **environmental-justice dimension** to the problem.

Government Initiatives and Policy Framework:***Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016:***

- The **Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016** provide the principal regulatory framework for municipal solid waste management, including responsibilities relating to collection, segregation, transportation, processing and disposal.
- The rules emphasise scientific waste management and assign important responsibilities to **urban local bodies and local authorities**.
- CPCB guidance also promotes the waste hierarchy, under which **prevention, reduction, reuse, recycling and recovery** are preferred over final disposal.

CAQM Measures:

- The **Commission for Air Quality Management** has treated open municipal-waste burning and fires at dumpsites as important air-quality concerns in the NCR.
- CAQM's directions require effective collection, segregation, transportation and processing of municipal solid waste, strengthened surveillance at vulnerable locations and **zero tolerance towards open burning**.
- Under **Operation Clean Air**, CAQM has continued inspection and enforcement activities across NCR cities, demonstrating the shift towards source-specific and location-specific pollution control.

Waste-to-Energy:

- The **Ministry of New and Renewable Energy** supports Waste-to-Energy projects that can convert suitable urban, industrial and agricultural wastes or residues into **biogas, Bio-CNG, electricity and producer or syngas**.
- Such projects can provide an alternative to uncontrolled disposal, provided that waste segregation, appropriate technology, emission standards and financial viability are ensured.

Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN Yojana:

- The **Pradhan Mantri JI-VAN Yojana** supports integrated bio-ethanol projects that utilise suitable biomass and agricultural residues, thereby promoting resource recovery and reducing dependence on uncontrolled residue disposal.
- The scheme links waste-residue management with **renewable energy and circular-economy objectives**.

Extended Producer Responsibility:

- **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)** places responsibility on producers for managing specified post-consumer waste streams, including plastic packaging, e-waste and batteries.
- Effective EPR can increase collection and recycling, reduce landfill pressure and limit the quantity of combustible waste entering informal disposal channels.

Single-Use Plastic Regulation:

- Restrictions on specified **single-use plastic items** seek to reduce littering and the environmental burden created by low-utility plastic products.
- However, restrictions must be accompanied by affordable alternatives, effective enforcement and improved collection systems to prevent waste displacement into informal burning.

Key Challenges in Tackling Open Waste Burning:***Governance and Institutional Coordination:***

- Waste management involves **urban local bodies, State Pollution Control Boards, CPCB, CAQM, private operators and citizens**, making coordination essential for effective implementation.
- Fragmented responsibilities can weaken accountability when waste is generated, collected, transported and finally disposed of by different agencies.

Infrastructure and Financial Constraints:

- Smaller cities and economically weaker urban areas may lack adequate **material-recovery facilities, composting units, biomethanation plants and scientific disposal facilities**.
- Municipal finances and technical capacity therefore remain critical determinants of waste-management performance.

Behavioural and Social Factors:

- Open burning cannot be eliminated through penalties alone when residents lack reliable collection services or affordable disposal alternatives.

- Public participation, source segregation and community-level monitoring are therefore essential components of sustainable waste governance.

Way Ahead:

Shift from Reactive Enforcement to Source-Level Prevention:

- Cities should move from responding to visible burning incidents towards **universal door-to-door collection, source segregation, decentralised processing and systematic monitoring** of waste-sensitive locations.
- Waste-management systems should prioritise prevention, reuse, recycling and recovery before considering disposal.

Integrate Winter Waste and Air-Quality Planning:

- Urban authorities should prepare **winter-specific waste-management plans** alongside air-pollution action plans, with enhanced night-time surveillance and rapid response at vulnerable locations.
- Local pollution-control strategies should account for seasonal meteorology, population vulnerability and the spatial distribution of waste-burning hotspots.

Protect Vulnerable Communities:

- Providing **safe and affordable heating alternatives** to sanitation and waste-management workers can reduce the incentive to burn waste for warmth.
- Worker protection should include appropriate personal protective equipment, training and safeguards against exposure to toxic smoke.

Strengthen Circular Economy:

- Greater investment in **recycling, composting, biomethanation, material recovery and resource recovery** can convert waste from an environmental liability into an economic resource.
- EPR should be strengthened through traceable collection systems, recycling targets, digital monitoring and accountability across the value chain.

Improve Urban Governance:

- Urban local bodies should establish measurable indicators for collection efficiency, segregation, processing capacity, open-burning incidents and grievance resolution.
- Data-driven identification of **waste-sensitive locations** can enable targeted enforcement and better allocation of municipal resources.

Value Addition for UPSC:

Important Concepts:

- **Waste Hierarchy:** Prevention → Reduction → Reuse → Recycling → Recovery → Disposal.
- **Circular Economy:** Treating waste as a resource through recovery, reuse and recycling rather than linear disposal.
- **Environmental Justice:** Disproportionate exposure of economically vulnerable communities and waste workers to environmental hazards.

- **Source-Level Prevention:** Preventing waste accumulation and burning through reliable collection, segregation and decentralised processing.
- **Seasonal Air Pollution:** Interaction between emission sources and meteorological conditions such as temperature inversion and reduced atmospheric mixing.

Mains Analytical Takeaway:

- Open waste burning demonstrates that **air pollution cannot be addressed only through pollution-control measures**; it requires simultaneous improvement in municipal services, waste-processing infrastructure, social protection, enforcement and citizen participation.
- The sustainable solution lies in transforming waste management from a **disposal-oriented system into an integrated circular-economy model**, while making winter air-quality governance more targeted and locally responsive.

Gram Sabha Consent and Forest Clearance Debate Highlights Tension Between Tribal Rights and Infrastructure Development

Recent Developments:

- In August 2026, the **Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs** informed the Ministry of Power that the **Forest Rights Act, 2006** does not contain an explicit provision requiring Gram Sabha consent for Stage-II forest clearance and indicated that such clearance-matters do not-fall within its administrative purview.
- The communication came amid concerns regarding delays in **hydropower projects of the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation**, particularly projects where forest-clearance processes have remained pending because of objections or non-consent from affected Gram Sabhas.
- The **Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Undertakings** reported that forest clearance for under-construction hydropower projects of the corporation takes an average of about **106 months**, considerably longer than the reported environmental-clearance timeline of around 7.2 months.
- The Committee recommended examining a **70–75% qualified super-majority** of affected Gram Sabhas for large hydropower projects of national importance, while simultaneously recommending safeguards for community interests and early compliance with the Forest Rights Act.
- The debate has therefore shifted from merely accelerating clearances to a larger constitutional and governance question: **how can India reconcile strategic infrastructure development with legally recognised forest rights, tribal participation and grassroots democracy?**

What is the Issue Regarding Gram Sabha Consent?

Project Delays:

- The requirement for obtaining decisions or consent from affected Gram Sabhas has emerged as an important issue in **forest diversion for large infrastructure projects**, particularly hydropower projects located in forested and tribal regions.
- The Parliamentary Committee observed that delays in obtaining Gram Sabha consent can significantly affect project schedules, construction costs and the commercial viability of hydropower projects.
- The **Teesta-IV Hydroelectric Project** in Sikkim has been cited in the debate because the project remains stalled over pending consent from some affected village institutions despite consent having been obtained from several others.

Proposed Qualified Super-Majority:

- The Parliamentary Committee recommended examining whether **70–75% consent** could be considered for large hydropower infrastructure projects of national importance instead of requiring consent from every affected Gram Sabha.
- The proposal attempts to balance **community participation with national infrastructure requirements**, but it raises concerns about whether a numerical majority can adequately protect a small community whose land, cultural sites or forest resources may be directly affected.
- The Committee also recommended initiating **Forest Rights Act compliance at the pre-feasibility stage**, which could identify community-rights issues before large financial and construction commitments are made.

What is the Legal Basis of Gram Sabha's Role?

Forest Rights Act, 2006:

- The **Forest Rights Act, 2006** primarily recognises and vests individual and community forest rights in forest-dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers.
- The Act does not expressly contain the phrase “**Gram Sabha consent for Stage-II forest clearance**”, which forms the basis of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs' recent position.
- However, **Section 5 of the Act** empowers the Gram Sabha and village-level institutions to protect wildlife, forests, biodiversity, water sources and the cultural and natural heritage of forest-dwelling communities.
- The Ministry of Tribal Affairs' own earlier official FAQ states that, in light of Section 5, the decision of affected Gram Sabhas is necessary before diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes or development projects.

Forest Rights Rules:

- The **Forest Rights Rules** assign Gram Sabhas important functions in determining forest rights, receiving claims, passing resolutions and constituting institutions for the protection of wildlife, forests and biodiversity.
- Section 3(1)(i) of the Forest Rights Act also recognises the right to protect, regenerate, conserve and manage **community forest resources**, strengthening the role of communities in forest governance.

Forest Clearance Framework:

- Diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes requires prior approval of the Central Government under the **Van (Sanrakshan Evam Samvardhan) Adhiniyam, 1980**, which regulates the conversion of forest land for non-forest purposes.
- Forest clearance generally involves an **in-principle approval stage and a final approval stage**, although the precise procedural requirements have evolved through amendments, rules and executive directions.
- The **Forest (Conservation) Rules, 2022** changed the sequencing of forest-rights compliance and clearance procedures, becoming an important part of the present debate over when community consultation and rights recognition should occur.

Gram Sabha:

Constitutional Status:

- The **Constitution (Seventy-third Amendment) Act, 1992** constitutionalised Panchayati Raj institutions and inserted **Article 243(b)**, which defines the Gram Sabha as the body comprising persons registered in the electoral rolls of a village within the area of a Panchayat.
- The Gram Sabha has no separately elected representatives and functions as a **permanent participatory institution** at the village level.
- Although it is not one of the three tiers of Panchayati Raj institutions, its powers and functions are determined by State legislation.

Role in Local Governance:

- Gram Sabha meetings provide a platform for villagers to participate directly in **development planning, beneficiary identification, social audits, public-resource management and local accountability**.
- State laws determine the frequency and procedures of meetings, while the effectiveness of Gram Sabha participation depends on awareness, accessibility, social inclusion and administrative responsiveness.

Role in Forest and Natural-Resource Governance:

- In areas covered by the Forest Rights Act, the Gram Sabha plays a central role in **recognising forest rights, protecting community forest resources and regulating activities that adversely affect forests, wildlife and biodiversity**.
- This makes the Gram Sabha an important institutional link between **tribal self-governance, environmental protection and participatory democracy**.

Role of PESA and the Fifth Schedule:

Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas:

- The **Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996** extends the Panchayati Raj framework to Fifth Schedule Scheduled Areas while recognising the importance of traditional community institutions.
- PESA gives Gram Sabhas an important role in protecting **traditions, customs, cultural identity, community resources and customary dispute-resolution practices**.
- It also provides for consultation or recommendation by Gram Sabha or Panchayat institutions in specified matters involving land acquisition, rehabilitation and management of community resources, subject to the statutory framework applicable in the concerned State.
- Therefore, **PESA and FRA operate through distinct but overlapping legal frameworks**, and their requirements should not be treated as legally identical.

What are the Major Concerns?

Dilution of Community Rights:

- Replacing a requirement of consent or decision-making by all affected Gram Sabhas with a **70–75% threshold** could allow a project to proceed even when a directly affected minority community strongly objects.
- A majority-based approach may therefore fail to adequately protect **sacred sites, customary lands, community forests and culturally significant landscapes**.

Constitutional and Judicial Concerns:

- The issue is closely connected with the constitutional principles of **democratic decentralisation, protection of Scheduled Areas, tribal autonomy and environmental governance**.
- In the landmark **Niyamgiri judgment of 2013**, the Supreme Court recognised the authority of Gram Sabhas to determine whether proposed mining activities affected the religious and cultural rights of forest-dwelling communities.
- The judgment demonstrated that community institutions can have substantive decision-making significance when development projects affect legally protected cultural and forest rights.

Risk of Social Conflict:

- Weakening meaningful participation without establishing credible safeguards may increase the risk of **displacement, inadequate rehabilitation, livelihood loss and social conflict**.
- In resource-rich tribal regions, insufficient consultation can undermine public trust and create prolonged resistance to infrastructure projects.

Development and Energy Security:

- At the same time, prolonged clearance delays can increase **project costs, construction uncertainty and energy-system planning challenges**, particularly for hydropower and pumped-storage projects.
- Hydropower also contributes to grid balancing and renewable-energy integration, making timely project execution relevant to India's broader energy-transition objectives.

Way Ahead:***Ensure Early and Informed Participation:***

- **Forest Rights Act compliance should begin during the pre-feasibility stage**, allowing rights recognition, social impacts and community concerns to be identified before major project commitments are made.
- Gram Sabha consultations should be transparent, adequately informed, accessible and conducted in local languages wherever necessary.

Avoid a One-Size-Fits-All Consent Model:

- Any reform of the consent framework should distinguish between **broadly affected communities and communities facing direct displacement or loss of critical cultural and ecological resources**.
- A numerical threshold alone should not override legally recognised individual or community forest rights.

Strengthen Inter-Ministerial Coordination:

- The **Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Ministry of Power and State or Union Territory administrations** should establish a coordinated mechanism for resolving forest-rights and clearance disputes.
- Clear allocation of responsibilities can reduce procedural duplication while ensuring that the nodal role of each ministry remains meaningful.

Create Time-Bound and Transparent Procedures:

- Time limits should apply to administrative processing, verification and grievance redressal rather than weakening substantive community rights.
- A **digital tracking mechanism** can improve transparency by displaying the status of forest-rights recognition, Gram Sabha proceedings, clearance conditions and pending objections.

Balance Development with Rights:

- Infrastructure development should follow the principle of **minimum ecological and social disruption**, with alternatives examined before diversion of forests or displacement of communities.
- Where diversion is unavoidable, fair compensation, effective rehabilitation, livelihood restoration and long-term ecological safeguards should accompany the project.

Value Addition for UPSC:***Important Constitutional and Legal Provisions:***

- **Article 243(b):** Constitutional definition of the Gram Sabha.
- **Fifth Schedule:** Administration and control of Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes.
- **PESA, 1996:** Extension of Panchayati Raj to Scheduled Areas with recognition of community institutions.
- **Forest Rights Act, 2006:** Recognition and vesting of forest rights and community participation in forest governance.
- **Section 5, FRA:** Powers of Gram Sabha and village-level institutions to protect forests, wildlife and biodiversity.
- **Niyamgiri Judgment, 2013:** Recognition of Gram Sabha's role in protecting the religious and cultural rights of forest-dwelling communities.

Mains Analytical Takeaway:

- The Gram Sabha consent debate represents a broader challenge of **balancing developmental imperatives with democratic participation and rights-based environmental governance**.
- The solution is neither unrestricted community veto nor automatic dilution of community participation; instead, India needs **early rights recognition, informed consultation, time-bound procedures, institutional coordination, effective grievance redressal and project-level social and ecological safeguards**.
- Sustainable infrastructure governance requires treating affected communities not merely as project stakeholders but as **rights-bearing participants in decisions concerning their forests, resources, culture and livelihoods**.

Supreme Court Examines Marital Rape Exception under BNS amid Debate over Consent, Autonomy and Constitutional Equality

Recent Developments:

- The **Supreme Court** is examining a batch of petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the marital rape exception under the **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023**, along with related challenges arising from the earlier Indian Penal Code framework.
- On 9 September 2026, a three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant, comprising Justice Joymalya Bagchi and Justice V. Mohana, directed that the matters be listed for final hearing after three weeks, with hearings scheduled on Wednesdays and Thursdays.
- The Court has also questioned whether a husband can be prosecuted for rape while the statutory exception remains in force, particularly in the context of a Karnataka High Court judgment that permitted prosecution in a marital sexual-assault case.
- The Union Government has maintained that **criminalising marital rape is primarily a matter for Parliament**, while the Court has indicated that marriage cannot automatically extinguish an individual woman's autonomy.

Current Legal Framework:

Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023:

- **Exception 2 to Section 63** excludes sexual intercourse or sexual acts by a man with his own wife, when the wife is 18 years of age or above, from the legal definition of rape.
- **Section 67** separately criminalises sexual intercourse by a husband with his wife without her consent when she is living separately, whether under a decree of separation or otherwise, with imprisonment of two to seven years and liability to fine.
- **Section 85** penalises cruelty by a husband or the relatives of a husband, but it does not create a separate offence specifically addressing non-consensual sexual intercourse within an ongoing marriage.

Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005:

- The **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005** recognises **sexual abuse** as a form of domestic violence, including conduct of a sexual nature that abuses, humiliates, degrades or violates a woman's dignity.
- The Act primarily provides protective and remedial mechanisms such as protection orders, residence orders, monetary relief and compensation, rather than treating marital rape itself as a separate offence under the general law.

Status and Prevalence:

Crime Data:

- The **National Crime Records Bureau** does not maintain a separate category for marital rape, making the precise national incidence difficult to quantify through recorded crime statistics.
- In 2024, cruelty by husband or relatives remained the largest reported category of crime against women, accounting for 27.2% of registered crimes against women.

National Family Health Survey:

- NFHS-5 reported that 29.2% of ever-married women aged 18–49 years had experienced spousal physical and/or sexual violence, demonstrating the wider prevalence of violence within marital relationships.
- The absence of a separate marital rape category can contribute to an **evidence gap**, because non-consensual sexual violence within marriage may be recorded under other forms of domestic violence or may remain unreported.

Why Should Marital Rape Be Criminalised?:

Article 14 and Equality:

- **Article 14** guarantees equality before the law and equal protection of the laws; critics argue that excluding married women from the protection of rape law creates an **arbitrary classification** between married and unmarried women despite the common element of absence of consent.
- The constitutional question therefore concerns whether marital status can constitute a sufficient basis for denying a woman equal protection against non-consensual sexual violence.

Article 21, Privacy and Bodily Autonomy:

- **Article 21** protects life and personal liberty, which judicial decisions have expanded to include **privacy, dignity, bodily integrity and individual autonomy**.
- The Supreme Court's privacy jurisprudence recognises that every individual possesses an inalienable sphere of personal autonomy, including the ability to make intimate decisions concerning the body and personal life.
- Supporters of criminalisation therefore argue that marriage cannot by itself amount to permanent or irrevocable consent to sexual activity.

Constitutional Rejection of Coverture:

- Retaining the exception is criticised as perpetuating the **colonial doctrine of coverture**, under which a married woman was historically treated as having a diminished independent legal identity within marriage.
- Contemporary constitutional morality increasingly recognises women as autonomous rights-bearing individuals rather than persons whose bodily choices are subsumed within the marital relationship.

Justice J. S. Verma Committee:

- The **Justice J. S. Verma Committee**, constituted after the 2012 Delhi gang-rape case, examined the legal framework concerning sexual violence and recommended major reforms to strengthen women's protection.
- Its approach rejected the assumption that marriage itself establishes continuing consent to sexual activity and emphasised the need to treat sexual autonomy as an individual right. The Committee's broader recommendations substantially influenced the **Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013**.

International Human Rights Standards:

- The **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women** has previously urged India to criminalise marital rape and bring the legal framework into conformity with protections against gender-based violence.
- International human-rights bodies have also raised concerns that the continued exclusion of marital rape from the BNS leaves a gap in protection against gender-based violence.

Arguments Against Criminalisation:

Protection of Marriage as an Institution:

- The Union Government has argued that criminalising marital rape could **destabilise the institution of marriage** and produce greater state intervention in intimate family relationships.
- The Government has also maintained that the issue involves complex social, cultural and legal considerations that should be addressed through legislative deliberation rather than judicial law-making.

Evidentiary Challenges:

- Establishing the **absence of consent** within a continuing and often cohabiting marital relationship can create difficult evidentiary questions, particularly when allegations are made after prolonged periods.
- Criminal law must balance effective protection of survivors with procedural safeguards for accused persons, including the presumption of innocence and proof beyond reasonable doubt.

Possibility of Misuse:

- Opponents of criminalisation argue that the provision could be **misused in matrimonial disputes**, particularly during separation or divorce proceedings.
- They compare this concern with broader debates surrounding the misuse of laws relating to cruelty and dowry, although allegations of potential misuse do not by themselves determine whether an offence should exist.

Legislative Competence and Separation of Powers:

- The Union Government argues that defining a new criminal offence is fundamentally a **legislative policy choice**, requiring Parliament to determine its ingredients, evidentiary framework, safeguards and punishment.
- The Supreme Court has also recognised the need for caution in constitutional review of penal provisions because judicially created uncertainty in criminal law can have serious consequences for individuals.

Important Judicial Developments:

Independent Thought v. Union of India:

- In **Independent Thought v. Union of India**, the Supreme Court removed the protection of the marital rape exception for wives below 18 years of age, thereby affirming that marriage cannot shield sexual intercourse with a minor wife from rape law.

Privacy and Autonomy Jurisprudence:

- The **K. S. Puttaswamy judgment** established privacy as a constitutionally protected right linked with liberty, dignity and individual autonomy, providing an important constitutional foundation for arguments concerning bodily integrity and decisional autonomy.

Present Constitutional Question:

- The present controversy therefore goes beyond whether marital rape should be criminalised and raises the broader question of **how constitutional rights interact with marriage, legislative policy and individual consent**.

Key Constitutional and Governance Issues:***Individual Autonomy versus Marital Institution:***

- The central constitutional tension lies between recognising marriage as an important social institution and ensuring that marriage does not extinguish the individual's **bodily autonomy, dignity and right to consent**.

Judicial Review versus Legislative Policy:

- The Supreme Court must consider whether the existing exception violates fundamental rights and, if so, whether it can be read down or invalidated, while also respecting Parliament's role in determining criminal policy.

Gender Justice and Substantive Equality:

- The debate highlights the distinction between formal equality and **substantive equality**, because identical legal treatment may not adequately protect women from structural forms of gender-based violence.

Data and Reporting Gap:

- The absence of a dedicated marital rape category in official crime statistics creates difficulties in measuring prevalence, designing evidence-based policy and evaluating the effectiveness of existing remedies.

Way Forward:***Rights-Based Legal Reform:***

- Any reform should place **free and meaningful consent**, bodily integrity, dignity and equality at the centre while ensuring due-process safeguards for accused persons.

Clear Legislative Framework:

- Parliament may consider defining marital sexual violence through clear statutory ingredients, evidentiary safeguards, appropriate punishment and protection against malicious prosecution.

Strengthening Support Systems:

- Legal aid, medical assistance, counselling, shelter services and trauma-informed investigation should be strengthened so that survivors have effective access to justice irrespective of the final classification of the offence.

Better Data Collection:

- The **National Crime Records Bureau** and other relevant institutions should consider improving data collection on sexual violence within domestic relationships while maintaining survivor confidentiality.

Balance Rights with Due Process:

- Criminalisation, if undertaken, should be accompanied by safeguards against arbitrary investigation, victim-blaming, secondary victimisation and malicious prosecution, thereby protecting both survivor rights and principles of criminal justice.

Value Addition for UPSC:***Important Legal Provisions:***

- **Article 14:** Equality before law and equal protection of laws.
- **Article 21:** Protection of life and personal liberty.
- **Section 63 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023:** Definition of rape and marital rape exception.
- **Section 67 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023:** Sexual intercourse by husband with wife during separation.
- **Section 85 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023:** Cruelty by husband or relatives.
- **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005:** Recognition of sexual abuse as domestic violence and provision of protective remedies.

QUESTIONS

1. Consider the following statements regarding national accounting revisions:

Statement 1: Base-year revisions involve updating structural weights, administrative data coverage, and underlying methodological frameworks across all sector accounts.

Statement 2: Regular routine revisions of GDP are primarily intended to correct fundamental statistical errors made during initial advance estimates.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

- (A) Both Statement 1 and Statement 2 are correct and Statement 2 is the correct explanation for Statement 1.
- (B) Both Statement 1 and Statement 2 are correct but Statement 2 is NOT the correct explanation for Statement 1.
- (C) Statement 1 is correct but Statement 2 is incorrect.
- (D) Statement 1 is incorrect but Statement 2 is correct.

2. Match List-I (Article of the Constitution) with List-II (State / Subject Protected):

List-I:	List-II:
A. Article 371-A	1. Sikkim (Special arrangements following integration)
B. Article 371-C	2. Nagaland (Naga customary law and land protection)
C. Article 371-F	3. Karnataka (Kalyana-Karnataka regional development)
D. Article 371-J	4. Manipur (Hill Areas Committee)

Match the pairs using options below:

- (A) A-2, B-4, C-1, D-3
- (B) A-4, B-2, C-1, D-3
- (C) A-2, B-4, C-3, D-1
- (D) A-3, B-1, C-4, D-2

3. Given below are two statements: One is labelled as Assertion (A) and the other is labelled as Reason (R).

Assertion (A): Open burning of waste containing synthetic polymers generates higher quantities of hazardous dioxins and furans.

Reason (R): Open burning occurs at uncontrolled higher combustion temperatures without oxygen regulation or flue-gas scrubbing systems.

In the light of the above statements, choose the correct answer:

- (A) Both A and R are true and R is the correct explanation of A.
- (B) Both A and R are true but R is NOT the correct explanation of A.
- (C) A is false but R is true.

(D) A is true but R is false.

4. With reference to the constitutional and legal status of the Gram Sabha and local governance in India, consider the following statements:

- (1) Article 243(b) of the Constitution defines the Gram Sabha as a body consisting of persons registered in the electoral rolls of a village within the area of a Panchayat.
- (2) The Gram Sabha is constitutionalized as the lowest elected tier of the three-tier Panchayati Raj system under Part IX.
- (3) Under Section 5 of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006, the Gram Sabha is empowered to protect water sources and cultural heritage.
- (4) PESA, 1996 applies automatically to all rural areas of Fifth and Sixth Schedule states without requiring state-specific enabling legislation.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (A) 2 and 4 only
- (B) 1, 2 and 3 only
- (C) 1 and 3 only
- (D) 1, 3 and 4 only

5. Consider the following penal and civil provisions under Indian law concerning marital relationships and women's rights:

- (1) Section 63 (Exception 2) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023
- (2) Section 67 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023
- (3) Section 85 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023
- (4) Section 3 of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005
- (5) Article 21 of the Constitution of India

How many of the above provisions specifically penalize non-consensual sexual intercourse by a husband with his wife when the couple is living together in an ongoing, legally subsisting marriage?

- (A) Only two
- (B) Only three
- (C) Only four
- (D) None

ANSWER KEY

1 – Answer (C), 2 – Answer (A), 3 – Answer (D), 4 – Answer (C), 5 – Answer (D)



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