

P2. NATIONAL



1,169 candidates set to win unopposed in Tripura village committee elections - The TTAADC reflects how demands for tribal identity, land protection and political autonomy can evolve into constitutional self-governance

P3 NATIONAL



Ladakh Governance Proposal under Article 371 - The proposed framework seeks to balance greater local control over land, culture and natural resources with the Union's administrative authority.

P4. SCIENCE



Pollution from winter waste burning in cities three times higher than summer, study finds - Seasonal open waste burning reveals weak waste management, winter pollution conditions and unequal access to municipal services.

P7. HEALTH



India has to act on its 'sugar' problem : India's proposed front-of-pack warnings raise a larger question: can clearer food labels, and stronger regulation help consumers and producers move away from unhealthy diets?

Editor's Note

Today's edition of the Pala Civil Times is yet another special one as we debut our new India Heritage and History feature page as part of our Daily Specials. In this edition, we take a closer look at the ongoing debate surrounding the rendition of Vande Mataram. Through our regular pages, we explore a wide range of themes, from state autonomy in Tripura and Ladakh, to the Supreme Court's examination of marital rape, and the latest developments surrounding the CBSE's three-language policy.

Moving beyond the national landscape, we examine Germany's changing political character with the electoral rise of the far-right AfD, while also looking at the pressing issue of open waste burning and its environmental impacts. Our Health section focuses on the growing consumption of sugar among children and its wider consequences.

We hope these diverse themes encourage students to read, connect and assess each issue with greater clarity. Happy reading!

Daily Special



Vande Mataram: History, National Status and the 2026 debate

Editorials Decoded



Ray of hope



The Akriti Chaudhary case highlights the tension between preventive detention and individual liberty, showing how judicial review can check executive arbitrariness.



AfD success isn't just a Germany story



The AfD's electoral rise highlights how economic anxiety, regional inequalities, immigration concerns and distrust of established parties.

Three-Language Formula in CBSE Schools : Policy and Implementation

Recently, the Union government told the Supreme Court that it has concerns about categorising English as an indigenous language under CBSE's three-language scheme in schools.

What is the three-language formula?

Three-Language Learning: The scheme requires students to study three languages. Under the CBSE framework, at least two of the three languages must be Indian languages.

Indian Language Requirement: The CBSE cited alignment with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 while introducing the three-language requirement.

Foreign Language Option: Languages such as French or German can be taken as the third language when the first two languages are Indian, or alternatively as an optional fourth subject.

Earlier Policy Position: CBSE had earlier stated that implementation of the third-language requirement would be deferred until the 2029-30 academic year before subsequently moving towards earlier implementation. The CBSE later mandated the study of three languages for Class 9 students from July 1, 2026.

Class 10 Assessment: The third language is exempt from the Class 10 Board examination and is assessed internally by the school, with the marks reflected on the final certificate.

Current Issue

Indigenous Language Classification: Latest issue before the Court concerns whether English should be treated as an indigenous language within the three-language framework.

Union Government's Position: On September 9, 2026, the Solicitor-General stated that the Union government had an issue with treating English as an indigenous language.

Importance of Classification: At least two of the three languages must be Indian languages, making the categorisation of English relevant to students' language combinations.

Pending Judicial Consideration: The Court has not resolved this issue, and the Centre is expected to make further submissions.

1,169 candidates set to win unopposed in Tripura village committee elections

A record number of candidates are set to win unopposed in the upcoming village committee elections under the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC) because no rival nominations have been received. The State Election Commission said polling will not be held in 1,169 of the 4,597 seats across 587 village committees, as only one nomination has been received for each of these seats.

Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council

Demand for self-governance: After Tripura's integration into India in **1949**, Tiprasa leaders increasingly demanded greater autonomy to protect land ownership, cultural identity and educational and economic opportunities.

Sixth Schedule as a Model: During the 1970s, the demand increasingly focused on obtaining constitutional protection similar to the Autonomous District Councils functioning under the Sixth Schedule in other northeastern States.

1982 — Council under State Law: On January 18, 1982, the TTAADC was established through an Act of the Tripura Legislative Assembly. It initially functioned under State law and had limited powers.

1984 — Sixth Schedule Extension: The 49th Constitutional Amendment, passed on August 23, 1984, extended the Sixth Schedule to Tripura and strengthened the constitutional basis of TTAADC autonomy.

1985 — Operationalisation: The TTAADC became operational under the Sixth Schedule on April 1, 1985.

PYQ Compass



- Q. The Government enacted the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act in 1996. Which one of the following is not identified as its objective? (2013)
- To provide self-governance
 - To recognize traditional rights
 - To create autonomous regions in tribal areas
 - To free tribal people from exploitation

Ladakh Governance Proposal under Article 371

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has proposed an elected body for the Union Territory of Ladakh through a new constitutional provision under Article 371, proposed as **Chapter K**. The proposed UT-level body would be directly elected and would have legislative powers over land, culture and language, forests, environment, natural resources, and other matters reserved for the Union Territory under Article 240.

What is the three-language formula?

Special Constitutional Framework: Article 371 is part of Part XXI of the Constitution, dealing with temporary, transitional and special provisions. Its existing chapters run from A to J, with special provisions applicable to different States.

Proposed Chapter K: The MHA proposal would introduce a new Chapter K under Article 371 to create a special governance framework for Ladakh.

Sui Generis Model: The proposal is described as a sui generis, or specially designed, model of governance intended specifically for Ladakh.

Legislative Scope: The proposed elected body would have legislative powers over areas considered central to local interests, particularly land, culture and language, forests, environment and natural resources.

Why is Ladakh seeking greater autonomy?

After the special status of the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir was removed under the 2019 constitutional changes, Ladakh was created as a Union Territory without a legislative assembly.

Demand for Local Control: Since then, the Leh Apex Body and Kargil Democratic Alliance have demanded greater participation of local residents in decision making.

Statehood and Tribal Status: Ladakh's civil society groups have also been demanding Statehood and tribal status as mechanisms to provide stronger constitutional protection.

Protection of Land and Identity: A major concern is that large industries and outsiders could acquire greater influence over land and development, potentially affecting the region's social, cultural and environmental interests.

Marital Rape exception : Supreme Court's directive on criminalisation

The Supreme Court on September 9, 2026 examined whether a husband can be prosecuted for rape when the existing penal law continues to exempt marital rape from the offence of rape.

Core Dilemma: The Court recognised that a married woman subjected to involuntary sexual intercourse is a victim, but questioned whether a constitutional court can permit prosecution for an act that the existing penal law does not currently define as rape.

What is the Marital Rape exception?

Earlier IPC Provision: The second exception to Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) stated that sexual intercourse or sexual acts by a man with his wife, provided the wife was not under 15 years of age, did not constitute rape.

Current BNS Provision: The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) replaced the IPC in 2023 and carried forward the marital rape exemption under Section 63, while raising the wife's age threshold from 15 to 18 years.

Legal Position: Under the present penal law, non-consensual sexual intercourse by a husband with his adult wife is not legally classified as rape because of the statutory exception.

Legislative Role: The Court indicated that it may ultimately be for the legislature to decide whether such conduct should be criminalised as rape.

Judicial Review: Constitutional courts can examine whether a statutory provision violates constitutional principles and can declare provisions unconstitutional or interpret them within constitutional limits.

PYQ Compass



Q. Discuss the nature of Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly after the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act, 2019. Briefly describe the powers and functions of the Assembly of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. (GS II - 2025)

SCIENCE

Pollution from winter waste burning in cities three times higher than summer, study finds

A World Resources Institute (WRI) India working paper released on September 10, 2026 found that open waste burning rises sharply during winter across different categories of Indian cities. The average incidence, quantity of waste burned and associated emissions were found to be as much as three times higher in winter than in summer. The findings are significant as cities approach the post-monsoon period, when lower temperatures and stagnant atmospheric conditions can restrict the dispersion of pollutants.



What did the study find?

Burning Quantity: Tier 2 cities recorded the highest quantities of waste burned, with the quantity nearly doubling from about 21 tonnes per day in summer to 41 tonnes per day in winter.

Burning Incidence: Tier 3 cities recorded the highest winter incidence of burning at 49.6 incidents per square kilometre per day, compared with 46 in Tier 2 cities and 39.4 in Tier 1 cities.

Waste Composition: Paper and plastics were major components of the waste being burned across the cities studied.

Emission Share: Open waste burning contributed less than 1% of total citywide PM2.5 and PM10 emissions, indicating that it was not the dominant pollution source.

Significance of the observations

Local Exposure: Despite its small citywide emission share, open burning often occurs close to homes, streets and waste dumps, increasing short-term exposure to toxic smoke.

Winter Amplification: Weaker winds, stable atmospheric conditions and temperature inversions during winter can restrict pollutant dispersion and worsen local exposure.

Warmth Use: The study links increased winter burning partly to the use of waste for warmth, alongside seasonal waste-disposal practices.

Dual Concern: Open waste burning is therefore both a waste-management problem and a local air-pollution exposure problem, rather than merely a contributor to total citywide emissions.

Socio-Economic Dimension

Unequal Burden: Poorer areas of Tier 2 cities recorded the highest incidence in the study, at nearly 84 incidents per square kilometre per day during winter.

Service Gaps: The concentration of burning in poorer areas points to disparities in waste collection and other municipal services.

Environmental Inequality: Weaknesses in municipal waste management can therefore translate into unequal exposure to environmental pollution.

Governance Response

Hotspot Mapping: CAQM will identify repeated dumping and burning locations as “waste-sensitive” sites for intervention.

Capacity Building: training waste-management workers and public-awareness campaigns to discourage open burning.

Strict Enforcement: CAQM has called for zero tolerance towards open waste burning, backed by inspections under Operation Clean Air.

Processing Capacity: The Union Environment Ministry has urged Delhi to augment waste-processing capacity and enforcement to prevent winter burning.

Worker Alternatives: Heating facilities for workers can reduce the use of waste for warmth and address a seasonal driver of burning.

PYQ Compass



Q. In the context of WHO Air Quality Guidelines, consider the following statements: (2022)

1. The 24-hour mean of PM2.5 should not exceed 15 ug/m3 and annual mean of PM2.5 should not exceed 5 µg/m³.
2. In a year, the highest levels of ozone pollution occur during the periods of inclement weather.
3. PM10 can penetrate the lung barrier and enter the bloodstream.
4. Excessive ozone in the air can trigger asthma.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

a) 1, 3 and 4 b) 1 and 4 only c) 2, 3 and 4 d) 1 and 2 only



AfD success isn't just a Germany story (I.E : 10-09-2026)

The Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) won 43.8% of the vote and 39 of 83 seats in the September 6, 2026 Saxony-Anhalt state election, recording its strongest-ever performance in a German state election. The AfD came just three seats short of an outright majority, although its ability to form a government remains unclear because other major parties have refused to work with it. The result is significant because it represents the strongest breakthrough by a party that has been excluded from government cooperation under Germany's "firewall" strategy.

Firewall Strategy: Mainstream German parties have followed a "firewall" strategy of refusing to cooperate with the AfD in government. The strategy has prevented the AfD from entering government despite its growing electoral support.

Who are the AFD?

Origins: The AfD was founded in 2013 as a Eurosceptic party by Bernd Lucke, Alexander Gauland, Frauke Petry and Konrad Adam.

Rightward Shift: The party subsequently adopted a harder-right position, particularly on immigration and identity.

Migration: The AfD advocates "remigration", a controversial policy associated with forced deportation of immigrants and their European-born descendants not considered ethnically European by ethnonationalists.

Euroscepticism: The party has campaigned for "Dexit", or Germany's withdrawal from the European Union, and opposes Germany's climate policies.

Political Controversies: AfD has also faced criticism for attempts to diminish or distort the significance of the Holocaust.

Factors behind AfD's rise to power

Immigration: The 2015 European refugee crisis, when around 1.3 million refugees sought asylum in Europe, helped the AfD gain support by mobilising anti-immigrant sentiment.

Economic Anxiety: Weak economic growth, high energy costs, inflation and concerns over jobs have weakened confidence in Germany's political centre.

Industrial Strain: Germany's export-heavy industrial model has come under pressure, including from the rise of China.

Regional Discontent: Former East Germany continues to lag behind western Germany in incomes, employment and productivity, contributing to economic and political dissatisfaction.

Political Alienation: Perceived under-representation of eastern Germany and dissatisfaction with established parties have strengthened the protest vote.

Welfare and Infrastructure: Concerns over deteriorating infrastructure and pressure on the welfare state have broadened the grievances supporting the AfD beyond immigration.

Why is this result significant?

Historic Breakthrough: The result marks the AfD's strongest performance in a state election and brings it close to governing independently.

Electoral Expansion: Its vote share more than doubled from 20.8% in 2021 to 43.8% in 2026 in Saxony-Anhalt.

National Momentum: The AfD is already the largest Opposition party in the Bundestag, with recent national polling placing it at 28%.

Beyond Immigration: Its rise increasingly reflects broader concerns over economic performance, infrastructure, welfare, jobs and political representation.

European Pattern: The rise of the AfD parallels the growth of far-right forces such as the National Rally in France and Brothers of Italy, with immigration and economic concerns becoming major political fault lines.

PYQ COMPASS

Q. To what extent can Germany be held responsible for causing the two World Wars? Discuss critically (GS I – 2015)

Q. "Africa was chopped into States artificially created by accidents of European competition". Analyze. (GS I – 2013)



Ray of hope: On courts and reflexive arrests (The Hindu : 10-09-2026)

The Allahabad High Court quashed the NSA detention of DU student and activist Akriti Chaudhary, terming the State's case a "concocted story" and ordering ₹5 lakh compensation. The case highlights concerns over preventive detention, executive arbitrariness, judicial oversight and democratic dissent.

What is Preventive Detention?

Preventive detention: Allows the State to detain a person to prevent anticipated acts considered prejudicial to national security, public order or essential supplies, rather than to punish an offence already proved.

Section 3, NSA Act: The Central or State Government can order detention when satisfied that it is necessary to prevent conduct prejudicial to the security of the State, maintenance of public order or essential supplies and services.

Executive authority: A District Magistrate or Commissioner of Police can exercise specified detention powers when authorised by the State Government, subject to statutory safeguards and approval requirements.

Constitutional basis: Preventive detention is constitutionally permitted under Article 22, but is subject to prescribed procedural safeguards.



Why did the HC quash the detention?

Lack of supporting material: The allegations against Chaudhary were not adequately supported by the evidence placed before the Court.

Contradictory chronology: The Court noted that Chaudhary was already in police custody when the violence she was accused of inciting took place.

Non-application of mind: The District Magistrate was criticised for passing the detention order without properly examining the relevant material.

Abuse of preventive detention: The Court found the use of the NSA in the circumstances to be an improper exercise of extraordinary executive power.

Judicial scrutiny: The case demonstrates that preventive detention orders remain subject to judicial review when statutory or constitutional safeguards are violated.

Executive Discretion and Bureaucratic Accountability

Executive discretion: Preventive detention gives the executive considerable power because detention can be based on its satisfaction regarding anticipated threats.

Application of mind: Such discretion cannot be exercised mechanically. Rather, the detaining authority must meaningfully examine the material forming the basis of detention.

Official accountability: The High Court directed ₹5 lakh compensation to Chaudhary, with recovery from the salaries of the officials concerned.

Constitutional limits: Bureaucratic authority remains subject to legal and constitutional limits and cannot become an unrestricted instrument of executive power.

Institutional check: Judicial review provides a safeguard against arbitrary administrative action affecting individual liberty.

PYQ Compass



Q. Consider the following statements: (2023)

1. According to the Constitution of India, the Central Government has a duty to protect States from internal disturbances.
2. The Constitution of India exempts the States from providing legal counsel to person being held for preventive detention
3. According to the Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002, confession of the accused before the police cannot be used as evidence.

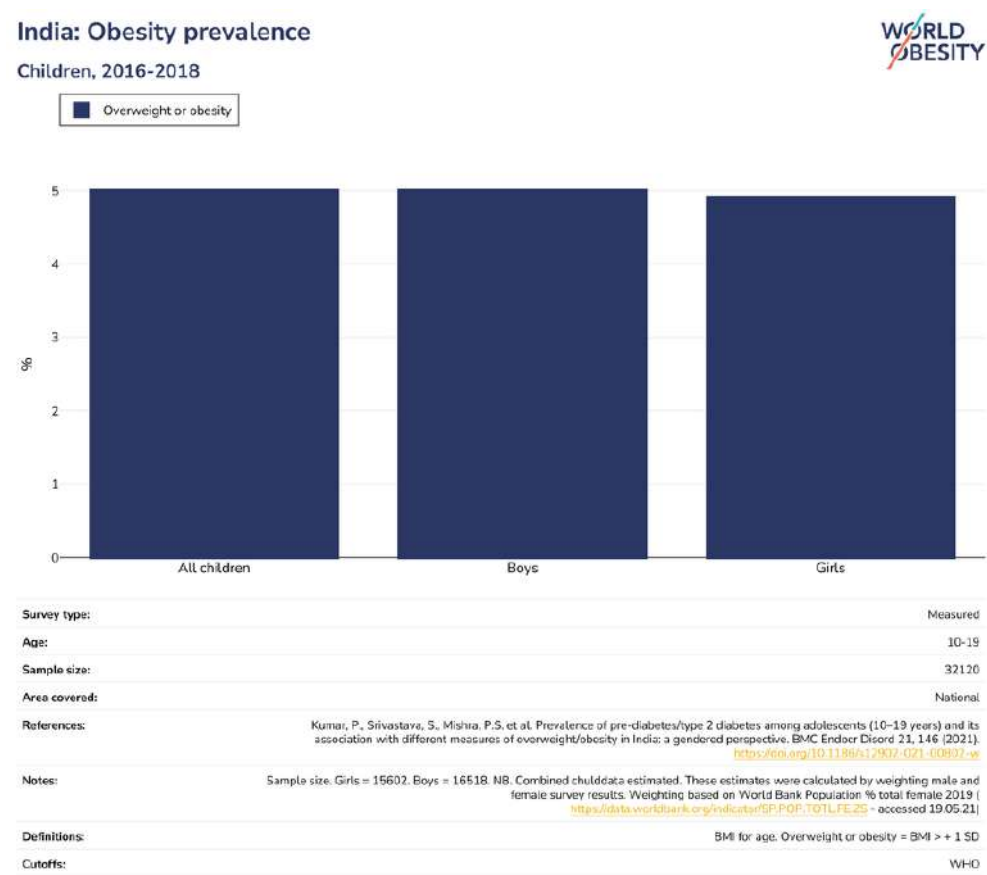
How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

HEALTH

India has to act on its ‘sugar’ problem

Amid rising childhood overweight, obesity and diet-related health concerns in India, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has proposed prominent red front-of-pack warning labels for packaged foods high in specified levels of fat, salt or sugar, following intervention by the Supreme Court.



The Health Concern

Childhood Obesity: The World Obesity Atlas 2026 estimates that 41 million Indian children and adolescents aged 5–19 are overweight or obese.

Dietary Exposure: The concern is not only how much children eat but also their increasing exposure to foods high in sugar, salt and fat and the way such products are marketed.

Health Burden: The sharp rise in children presenting with morbid obesity and diabetes highlights the health consequences associated with unhealthy dietary patterns.

Marketing Gap: Products such as breakfast cereals, sweetened yoghurt and “health drinks” may be promoted through claims about energy and vitamins while giving less prominence to their sugar content.

Sugar Tax

Policy Instrument: A sugar tax can discourage excessive sugar consumption while creating an economic incentive for manufacturers to reduce sugar content.

Reformulation: The United Kingdom’s soft drinks industry levy reduced sugar consumption among children and adults while encouraging manufacturers to reformulate drinks to reduce their sugar content and move below tax thresholds.

Indian Structure: Since September 2025, aerated and sweetened beverages, including sugar-free versions, have been placed under a 40% GST slab, meaning products with different sugar contents face the same rate.

Incentive Gap: A uniform tax rate provides less financial incentive for manufacturers to reduce the sugar content of a product.

Differential Taxation: A tax calibrated to sugar content could make lower-sugar products fiscally preferable and encourage product reformulation.

Way Forward

Mandatory Standards: Food standards and front-of-pack warnings should be made mandatory and effectively enforced rather than remaining voluntary measures.

Child Protection: Marketing of unhealthy foods to children requires stronger regulation, particularly where products are promoted as healthy or energetic.

Broader Coverage: Regulation should address the unorganised food sector alongside packaged foods.

Reformulation Incentives: Fiscal measures can be designed according to sugar content so that manufacturers have an economic reason to reduce unhealthy ingredients.

Equity Design: A sugar tax should be calibrated to sugar content, with part of the revenue used to make healthier food more affordable and reduce the burden on poorer households.

PYQ Compass



Q. How do you account for the growing fast food industries given that there are increased health concerns in modern society? Illustrate your answer with the Indian experience. (GS I - 2025)

Vande Mataram: History, National Status and the 2026 debate

What is Vande Mataram?

Meaning: Vande Mataram means “mother, I bow to thee” and was composed by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay in Sanskritised Bengali in 1875.

Literary Context: The composition was included in Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay's novel Anandamath in 1881, which deals with the late-18th-century Sanyasi Rebellion and armed uprisings in Bengal against East India Company rule and regional Muslim administrators.

Freedom Movement: The song gained prominence during the Swadeshi movement (1905–08) and became strongly associated with India's freedom struggle.

Anti-Imperialist Association: Mahatma Gandhi regarded Vande Mataram as an anti-imperialist expression and did not originally view it as exclusively a Hindu song.

Religious Objections: The Muslim League objected to certain references in the song and argued that the idea of bowing to the motherland could amount to idolatry.

Why were the first two stanzas distinguished?

Universal Imagery: The first two stanzas emphasise the beauty, prosperity and benevolent qualities of the motherland without explicitly invoking particular deities.

Religious Sensitivity: The later stanzas contain stronger religious and martial imagery, raising concerns about their suitability for mixed national gatherings.

Tagore's View: Rabindranath Tagore considered the first portion sufficiently distinct in spirit from the rest of the poem to be used as a national song without necessarily invoking the contentious elements of the complete composition.

1937 CWC Resolution: In October 1937, the Congress Working Committee decided that only the first two stanzas should be sung at national gatherings because the remaining stanzas contained religious references and ideas that might not be compatible with other religious groups.

Gandhi's Approach: Gandhi supported avoiding conflict over the song at mixed gatherings.

Why are the last two stanzas contentious?

Martial Imagery: The third stanza refers to vast numbers of arms ready to bear swords in defence of the motherland.

Religious Imagery: The fourth stanza describes the motherland's image as being present in every shrine, while the fifth associates the motherland with Durga, Lakshmi and Saraswati.

Monotheistic Objection: Muslim scholars have objected that representing the motherland through divine forms is conflicting with the Islamic principle of monotheism.

Literary Context: Historians have interpreted the context of the song within Anandamath as moving towards a call to war in which Muslims appear as the adversary and the motherland assumes the form of a Hindu goddess.

National Status

Demand for Anthem Status: At Independence, there were demands for Vande Mataram to be adopted as the National Anthem.

1947 Ceremony: On August 14, 1947, Sucheta Kripalani sang the first verse of Vande Mataram as the opening item at the Assumption of Power ceremony.

Constituent Assembly Decision: On January 24, 1950, Rajendra Prasad announced that Jana Gana Mana would be the National Anthem and stated that Vande Mataram, because of its historic role in the freedom struggle, would be honoured equally with it and have equal status.

2026 Context

National Honour Amendment: The Prevention of Insults to National Honour (Amendment) Act, 2026 amended Section 3 of the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971.

Legal Protection: The amendment extends to Vande Mataram legal protection against intentional prevention of its singing or deliberate disruption of an assembly engaged in singing it, similar to the protection given to the National Anthem.

Government Protocol: A January 28 Ministry of Home Affairs notification prescribed protocols requiring all six stanzas to be sung during official functions.

PYQ Compass



Q. The Government enacted the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act in 1996. Which one of the following is **not** identified as its objective? (2013)

- (a) To provide self-governance
- (b) To recognize traditional rights
- (c) To create autonomous regions in tribal areas
- (d) To free tribal people from exploitation

Ans : C

The Panchayat (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA) was enacted to empower Gram Sabhas and Panchayats in Scheduled Areas by extending the provisions of Part IX of the Constitution to these regions, with modifications. The objectives of PESA include:

1. To provide self-governance: Empowering tribal communities to self-govern through Gram Sabhas and Panchayats.
2. To recognize traditional rights: Protecting and safeguarding the customary and community rights of tribal people.
3. To free tribal people from exploitation: Preventing exploitation of tribal populations by ensuring control over local resources and decision-making. However, creating autonomous regions in tribal areas is not an objective of PESA. Autonomous regions are governed under the provisions of Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, which applies to certain areas in the northeastern states, not under PESA.

Thus, the correct answer is (c) To create autonomous regions in tribal areas.

Q. In the context of WHO Air Quality Guidelines, consider the following statements: (2022)

1. The 24-hour mean of PM_{2.5} should not exceed 15 µg/m³ and annual mean of PM_{2.5} should not exceed 5 µg/m³.
 2. In a year, the highest levels of ozone pollution occur during the periods of inclement weather.
 3. PM₁₀ can penetrate the lung barrier and enter the bloodstream.
 4. Excessive ozone in the air can trigger asthma. Which of the statements given above are correct?
- a) 1, 3 and 4
 - b) 1 and 4 only
 - c) 2, 3 and 4
 - d) 1 and 2 only

Ans : b

According to the WHO Air Quality Guidelines, the 24-hour mean of PM_{2.5} should not exceed 15 µg/m³, and the annual mean should not exceed 5 µg/m³.

Ozone pollution typically peaks during periods of sunny, warm weather, as sunlight helps to create ozone through chemical reactions. Inclement weather (such as cloudy or rainy weather) does not contribute to the highest levels of ozone.

While PM₁₀ (particulate matter with a diameter of 10 micrometers or less) can irritate the lungs and respiratory system, it is PM_{2.5} (smaller particles) that are more likely to penetrate deeper into the lungs and enter the bloodstream, not PM₁₀.

PYQ Compass



Q. Consider the following statements: (2023)

1. According to the Constitution of India, the Central Government has a duty to protect States from internal disturbances.
2. The Constitution of India exempts the States from providing legal counsel to person being held for preventive detention
3. According to the Prevention of Terrorism Act, 2002, confession of the accused before the police cannot be used as evidence.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- (a) Only one
- (b) Only two
- (c) All three
- (d) None

Ans : a

Statement 1 is correct: As per Article 355 of the Constitution, the Central Government has a duty to protect States from external aggression and internal disturbances. Statement 2 is incorrect: The Constitution does not exempt states from providing legal counsel to persons held under preventive detention. Article 22 ensures certain protections, including legal aid, for such persons. Statement 3 is incorrect: Under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA), 2002, a confession made before a police officer of a certain rank could be used as evidence in court. This provision was controversial and led to the repeal of POTA in 2004.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

Consider the following statements regarding sugar taxation:

1. A uniform rate of tax on sugar-sweetened beverages, irrespective of their sugar content, may provide less incentive for manufacturers to reduce the sugar content of their products than a tax linked to sugar concentration.
2. Imposing a sugar tax alone does not necessarily ensure that consumers will reduce their consumption of sugar-sweetened products.
3. A sugar tax is likely to have the same distributional impact across different income groups.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: a) 1 and 2 only

Statement 1 is correct. A uniform tax rate does not distinguish between beverages with different levels of sugar. Therefore, a manufacturer has less financial incentive to reduce the sugar content of its product. A tax linked to sugar concentration can encourage reformulation, as manufacturers can reduce their tax burden by lowering sugar content.

Statement 2 is correct. A sugar tax does not automatically guarantee a reduction in consumption. Consumers may continue purchasing the product despite the higher price, while manufacturers may simply pass the additional cost on to consumers. Therefore, the effectiveness of the tax depends on how both consumers and producers respond.

Statement 3 is incorrect. A sugar tax does not necessarily affect all income groups equally. If sugary products form a larger share of expenditure among lower-income households, a price increase can impose a greater relative financial burden on them.

Therefore, only Statements 1 and 2 are correct.

Q. The term “Firewall Strategy”, recently seen in discussions on international politics, is primarily associated with which of the following?

- a) Economic sanctions imposed by one country to isolate another from international markets
- b) Mainstream political parties refusing to cooperate with or form governments with a far-right political party
- c) A military strategy of creating a physical buffer zone along a country’s international border
- d) A cyber-security strategy aimed at preventing foreign interference in electoral systems

Answer: b) Mainstream political parties refusing to cooperate with or form governments with a far-right political party

Explanation: In the context of Germany, the “firewall” (Brandmauer) refers to the political practice of mainstream parties refusing electoral or governing cooperation with the Alternative for Germany (AfD), particularly because of its far-right positioning.