



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

21st November 2025



CONTEXT: Pendency of cases in Juvenile Justice Boards

How Children can be tried as adults?

- JJ Act 2015 - 16-18, heinous offences
- 3 categories
- Section 15 - heinous offence - JJB to conduct a preliminary assessment
 - mental and physical capacity
 - Ability to understand the consequences
 - Circumstances
- Section 18 (3) - transfer of the case to the Children's Court.
- Sole objective of preliminary assessment

Responsibilities of JJB

- Preliminary assessment
- Child psychology or child psychiatry
- Legal aid counsel
- Social Investigation Report

Concerns

- Risk of Recidivism
- > 7 years of imprisonment - 46 offences
- Article 14, 15 (3)
- International norms
- Policy guided more by emotion than evidence?
- Arbitrary Assessment Mechanism
 - Shilpa Mittal v. State of NCT of Delhi, 2020

Other Provisions of Juvenile Justice Act, 2015

- Adoption - district magistrate issues all orders
- Appeals - Divisional Commissioner
- Designated Court - Children's Court
- Child Welfare Committees (CWCs)
 - each district

- criteria for the appointment of members to CWC
 - i. involved in health, education, or welfare of children for at least seven years or
 - ii. practising professional with a degree in child psychology, psychiatry, law, or social work

More than half (55%) of the cases before 362 Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs) across the country remained pending as of October 31, 2023, says a first-of-its-kind study by the India Justice Report (IJR) which was released on Thursday.

While 92% of 765 districts in India have constituted JJBs, the authority dealing with children in conflict with law, the pendency rate varies widely, from 83% in Odisha to 35% in Karnataka,

Unlike the National Judicial Data Grid, there is no Central and public repository of information on the JJBs. For the study titled

Additionally, vacancies in the juvenile justice system (24% of the JJBs were not fully constituted), and inadequate legal aid (30% JJBs do not have an attached legal services clinic) have led to high workload in crucial functions.



CONTEXT: Pendency of cases in Juvenile Justice Boards

International Declarations and Conventions

- **UDHR, 1948**
 - All humans are born free and equal in dignity and rights
 - Childhood entitled to special care and assistance
- **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966**
 - Protection without discrimination – for all children
- **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966**
 - Accused juveniles separate & speedy trial
 - Right to family, state protection, a name, and a nationality
- **Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989**
 - Best interests of the child
 - Right to Life, Survival, and Development
- **The Beijing Rules, 1985**
 - Rule 5
 - Procedural safeguards: Privacy, separate facility
- **The Riyadh Guidelines, 1990**
 - Focus on the prevention
 - Early protection and intervention for children in "social risk"

Approaches for Juvenile Justice

- Welfare Model
 - Principle of *doli incapax* in Roman Law
 - Belgium
 - France: education and rehabilitation
 - New Zealand: Family Group Conferencing
- Justice Model
 - UK age of criminal responsibility
 - US

Mains Practice Question

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act seeks to balance the goals of child reform and societal safety. Yet concerns regarding implementation, and the trial of children in conflict with law persist. Critically examine.



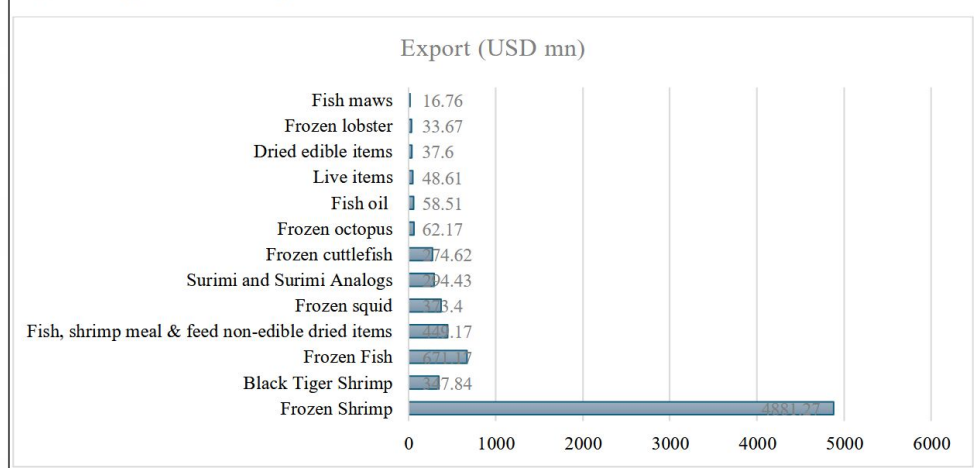
CONTEXT: UN FAO supporting India's Blue Transformation

Significance

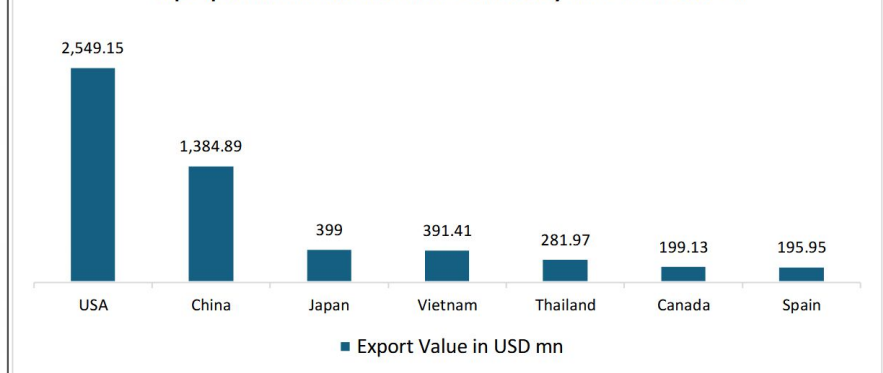
- 2.36 million hectares of ponds and tanks, >11k km coastline, 1.1 mn hectares of brackish water
- Livelihoods to 28 mn
- 2nd globally in the aquaculture industry
- Fisheries – 3rd largest producer, 4th largest exporter
 - 25% marine
 - AP>WB>Guj
- Growth: 11%
- Food Security, Employment



Figure 1: Species wise export in 2023-24¹⁶



Top Export Destinations for India's Seafood by value in FY 2023-24



Fisheries & Aquaculture

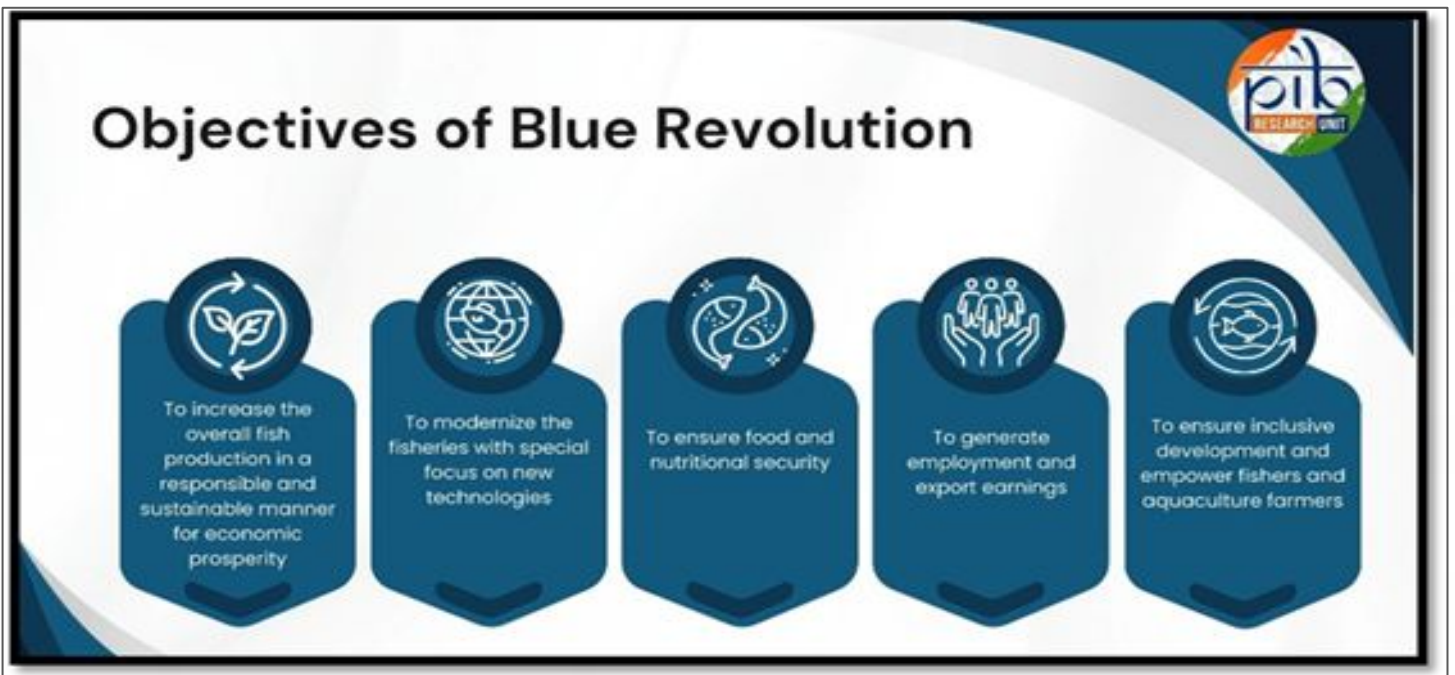
CONTEXT: UN FAO supporting India's Blue Transformation

Challenges

- Overfishing/Unsustainable Fishing
- Bycatch
- Illegal Fishing
- Extension services - information support, credit
- Infrastructure
 - availability of quality seed
 - cold chain
 - Post harvest losses
 - Price discovery mechanisms

Govt Steps

- Blue Revolution 2.0

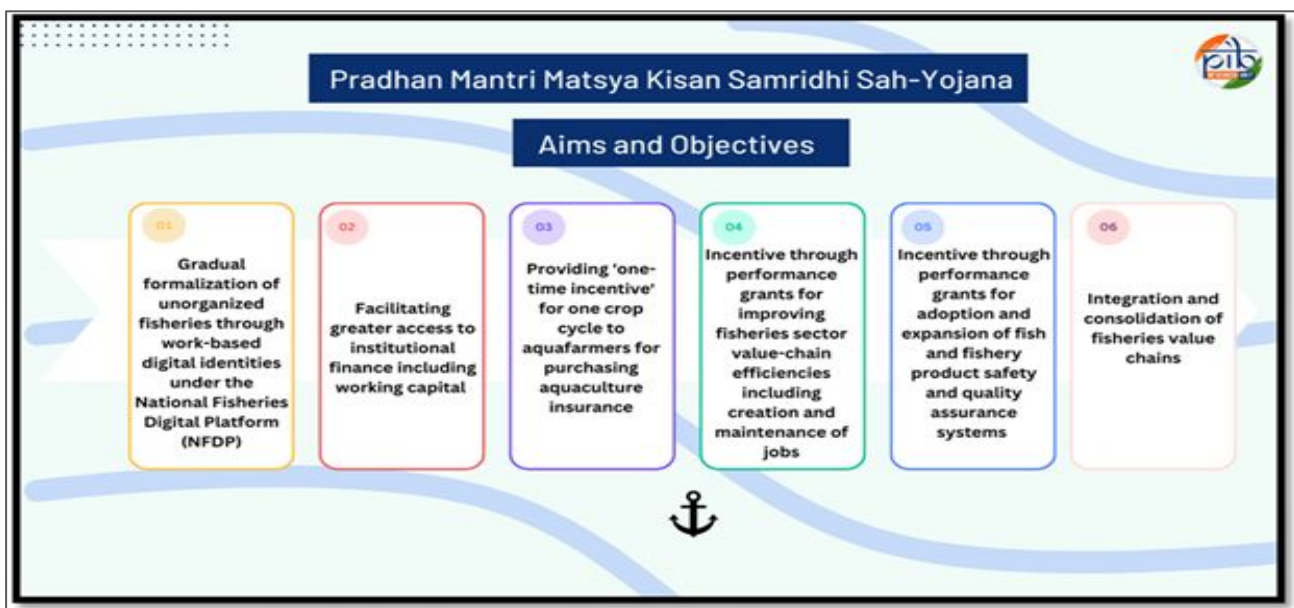


- PMMSY
 - Goal - production, exports, jobs, income
 - Fish Farmers Producer Organisation
 - Fisheries and Aquaculture Infrastructure Development Fund
 - Integrated Aqua Parks
 - Artificial Reefs Deployed
 - Pradhan Mantri Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah-Yojana



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Govt Steps

- National Genetic Improvement Facility for shrimp breeding
- National Surveillance Programme for Aquatic Animal Diseases
- Kisan Credit Card facility extended
- New areas – saline and brackish waters, reservoirs, and floodplains
- e-Gopala app
- Sagar Parikrama
- Sustainable Fishing
 - National Policy on Marine Fisheries 2017
 - Uniform Fishing Ban
 - Prohibition of Destructive Fishing Methods
 - Promoting Sustainable Practices
 - Climate-Resilient Coastal Fishermen Villages Programme

Mains Practice Question: *The fisheries sector plays a pivotal role in India's food security, employment generation, and export earnings. Discuss the significance of the fisheries sector in India and the major government initiatives taken to strengthen the sector.*



16th Presidential Reference answered



Syllabus: GS Paper 2: Indian Constitution—Significant Provisions

Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 16

141. Law declared by Supreme Court to be binding on all courts

The law declared by the Supreme Court shall be binding on all courts within the territory of India.

143. Power of President to consult Supreme Court

- (1) If at any time it appears to the President that a question of law or fact has arisen, or is likely to arise, which is of such a nature and of such public importance that it is expedient to obtain the opinion of the Supreme Court upon it, he may refer the question to that Court for consideration and the Court may, after such hearing as it thinks fit, report to the President its opinion thereon.

it firmly rules that **Governors cannot indefinitely sit on Bills, effectively outlawing the “pocket veto”, but simultaneously rejects the judiciary’s power to impose rigid timelines on constitutional authorities, as**

1. What are the **constitutional options** before a Governor when a Bill is presented to him under **Article 200**?

Article 200 of the Constitution outlines the process for a Governor to give assent to a bill passed by the state legislature. The SC held that the Governor has three specific options: to grant assent, to reserve the bill for the President’s consideration, or to withhold assent and return the bill to the legislature with comments for reconsideration. Crucially, the SC ruled that there is **no option to “withhold assent simpliciter” — the Governor cannot simply refuse to sign a bill and keep it pending.**

2. Is the Governor **bound by the aid and advice** of the Council of Ministers while exercising options under Article 200?

No. The court ruled that in the specific function of granting assent to bills, the Governor enjoys **discretion** and is not bound by the advice of the Council of Ministers (as stated in **Article 163** of the Constitution). The Bench reasoned that if the Governor were bound by the Cabinet, they could **never return a bill for reconsideration, as no government would advise against its own legislation.**

3. Is the exercise of constitutional discretion by the Governor under Article 200 **justiciable**?

While courts cannot review the wisdom of a Governor’s decision, the SC ruled that **“prolonged, unexplained, and indefinite inaction”** is subject to judicial review. If a Governor sits on a bill without taking any decision, the **court can direct them to act.**

4. Is Article 361 an absolute bar to **judicial review** in relation to the

actions of a Governor under Article 200?

No. Article 361 grants the President and Governors personal immunity, stating they are **not “answerable to any court” for the performance of their duties.** The SC held that while **this protects the individual, it does not protect the “office” of the Governor from judicial scrutiny regarding constitutional inaction.** This immunity cannot **be used to shield indefinite delays,** the court held.

5. Can **timelines be imposed on the Governor through judicial orders** for the exercise of powers under Article 200?

No. The SC overruled its judgment from April which had set specific timelines of one to three months for a Governor to act on bills. (President Murmu’s reference came in response to this judgment). The apex court held that since **Article 200 uses** the elastic phrase **“as soon as possible”** rather than a fixed timeframe, it would be inappropriate for the judiciary to prescribe rigid deadlines.



16th Presidential Reference answered



Syllabus: GS Paper 2: Indian Constitution—Significant Provisions
Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 16

6. Is the exercise of constitutional discretion by the President under Article 201 justiciable?

No. Article 201 deals with bills reserved by the Governor for the President's consideration. **Similar to the Governor**, the President's decision to assent or withhold assent to a state Bill is not open to judicial review on its merits, the SC opined.

7. Can timelines be imposed on the President for the exercise of discretion under Article 201?

No. The President cannot be bound by judicially prescribed timelines when dealing with state bills reserved for their consideration.

8. Is the President required to seek the advice of the SC under Article 143 when a Governor reserves a Bill?

No. Article 143 allows the President to consult the SC on questions of law. The court clarified that the President is not required to seek this opinion every time a bill is reserved; the **President's subjective satisfaction is sufficient**.

9. Can courts adjudicate the contents of a bill?

No. The SC ruled that judicial review applies **only to "laws"**, that is, enacted legislation, not **"Bills"**, which are proposed legislation. Courts cannot adjudicate on the validity of a bill before it receives assent and becomes law.

10. Can the exercise of constitutional powers by the President/Governor be substituted under Article 142?

No. Article 142 grants the SC the power to pass any order necessary to do "complete justice". The court firmly **rejected the concept of "deemed assent"** — that is, assuming a Bill is passed if delayed — introduced by its April verdict. It held that **Article 142 cannot be used to create a legal fiction that substitutes the Governor's constitutional role**.

UNDER ARTICLE 143(1) of the Constitution, the **President may refer a "question of law or fact"** to the Supreme Court for its opinion. Such an **opinion, unlike a ruling, is not binding on the court or the President**.

142. Enforcement of decrees and orders of Supreme Court and orders as to discovery, etc

- (1) The Supreme Court in the exercise of its jurisdiction may pass such decree or make such order as is necessary for doing complete justice in any cause or matter pending before it, and any decree so passed or order so made shall be enforceable throughout the territory of India in such manner as may be prescribed by or under any law made by Parliament and, until provision in that behalf is so made, in such manner as the President may by order prescribe.

Court's rebuttal

The Supreme Court on Thursday countered objections raised by non-BJP-ruled States that the 2025 Presidential Reference was an "appeal in disguise" against the court's binding verdict

■ Tamil Nadu had argued that the May 13 Presidential Reference was only a thinly-veiled "appeal" against the April 8 judgment in the Governor case

■ The Reference Bench, however, pointed to a majority opinion delivered by Justice Y.V. Chandrachud (retired) in a 1978 PR in which he said that "our opinion may even go so far as to overrule, if necessary"

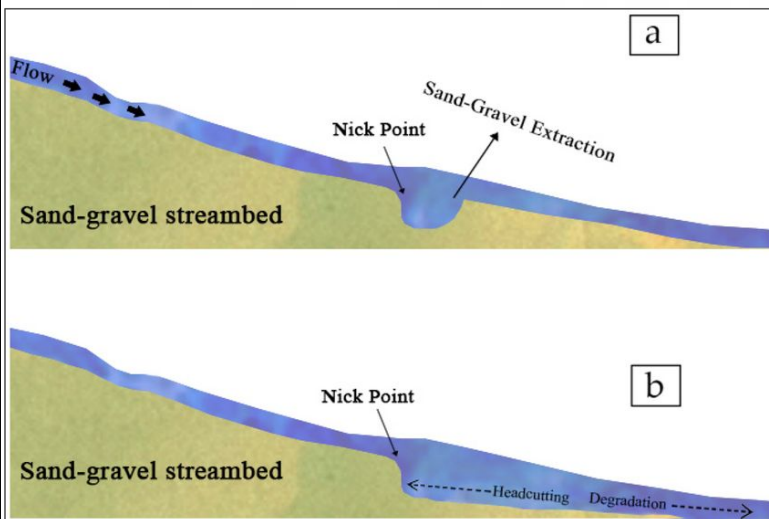
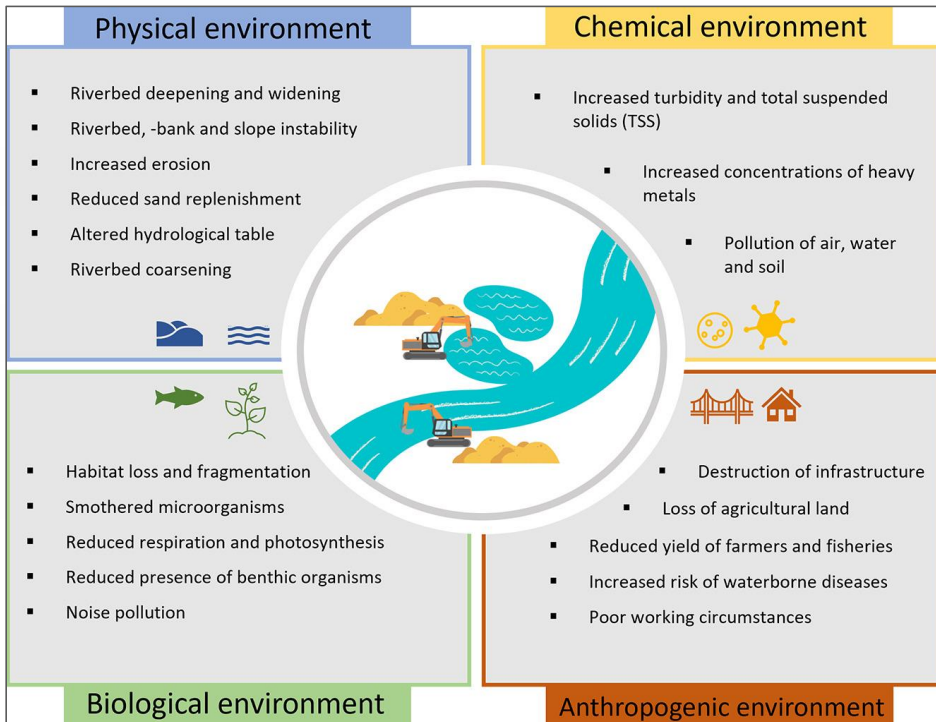


Sand mining ban leads to quarries expansion

Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment

Newspaper: The Hindu, Page No. 10

Impact of Sand Mining



Reasons

- Demand for Construction materials
- Population & Urbanization
- Sand mafia
- Few alternatives
- Weak EIA

Initiatives to Check

- MMDR (Amendment) Act, 2023
 - Minor Mineral
 - Section 3(e)
- EIA
 - Even for <5 ha
- Sustainable Sand Management Guidelines, 2016
 - environmentally sustainable
 - socially responsible mining
 - conservation of river equilibrium
 - prevention of depletion of GW reserves
- Enforcement & Monitoring Guidelines for Sand Mining, 2020
 - uniform protocol for monitoring sand mining
 - identification of sources, end-use
 - surveillance technologies: drones and night vision



Sand mining ban leads to quarries expansion



Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment

Newspaper: The Hindu, Page No. 10

Kerala banned river sand mining in January 2016 to protect its rivers and their ecosystems from the degradation caused by excessive extraction. After the ban, M-sand, an artificial alternative produced by crushing hard rock such as granite into fine particles, quickly became a popular alternative, leading to the rise in stone quarrying. To assess the impact of the

quarries, within the buffer zone of the Silent Valley National Park across the Palakkad, Malappuram, and Nilgiris districts, also doubled in size.

complexity of micro-level sand mining and extractive activities on natural resource trade flows, livelihood welfare conundrums, and socioecological systems, Matovu Baker, a research

MAINS

Coastal sand mining, whether legal or illegal, poses one of the biggest threats to our environment. Analyse the impact of sand mining along the Indian coasts, citing specific examples. (2019)

PRELIMS

Which of the following is/are the possible consequence/s of heavy sand mining in riverbeds?

1. Decreased salinity in the river
2. Pollution of groundwater
3. Lowering of the water-table

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

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



21st November 2025

Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Achievements of Indians in Science & Technology; Indigenization of Technology and Developing New Technology

Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 13

What is Sickle Cell Anaemia (SCA)?

- Shape of RBC - RBC contain hemoglobin
- SCD - hemoglobin is abnormal, RBC become hard and sticky and look like a C-shaped farm tool

What happens in SCA?

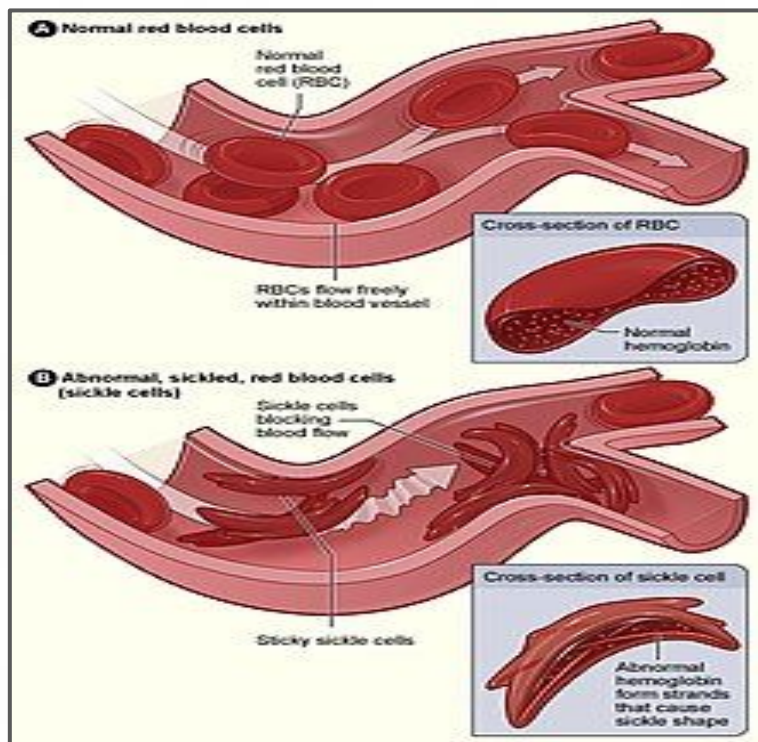
- Round RBC move easily through blood vessels
- Sickle RBC slowing and even blocking, the blood flow
- sickle cells die early - shortage of RBC, deprive the body of oxygen
- obstructions and shortages may cause chronic anaemia, pain, fatigue, stroke

Can SCA be treated?

- Genetic disorder
- Gene therapy (DNA inside haemoglobin gene edited) and stem cell transplants (bone marrow replacement) - costly, still in developmental
- Blood transfusion - RBC
- **Challenges**
 - scarcity of donors
 - safe supply of blood
 - risk of infection

National Sickle Cell Anaemia Elimination Mission:

- **Union Budget 2023-24** : mission to eliminate sickle cell anemia by **2047**
- **Awareness and screening programs** for people **ages 0 to 40**.
- **India's tribal belt** (Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra).
- **Vital medicines like hydroxyurea** in the essential medicines list



A GENE editing tool developed by researchers from CSIR-Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology (IGIB) has been transferred to the Serum Institute of India for developing treatments for genetic diseases. The tool - that uses the same principle as the Nobel Prize-winning CRISPR Cas9 gene editing technology - is completely indigenously developed, with Indian scientists holding all patents.

Researchers have used the tool to develop a therapy to cure sickle cell disease. The therapy has been named 'Birsas-101' in honour of tribal icon Birsas Munda, sickle cell disease being most prevalent in tribal populations. IGIB has set up a

ease. 'Birsas-101' corrects the mutations in the genetic code that causes the disease once it is

given as a one-time infusion.

This method is very different from the globally approved treatment Casgevy, which edits a gene to push the body's blood manufacturing mechanism to make more foetal haemoglobin, which does not carry the same defect. Foetal haemoglobin does not carry the same abnormalities as adult haemoglobin.



'Birsa-101' therapy for Sickle Cell Anaemia



Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment

Newspaper: Indian Express, **Page No.** 15

- India's proposed CAFE 3 fuel-efficiency rules
- Weight-based formula
- Lighter, small cars face much steeper efficiency improvements than heavier SUVs

Arguments Against the Proposed Norms (e.g., Maruti Suzuki)

- Unequal burden on budget, small cars
- Already wafer-thin margins
- Limited room for costly tech like hybrids
- Unaffordable for first-time buyers
- Could accelerate shift toward larger, more expensive vehicles
- Original idea was to make big cars improve
- Weight-based definitions conflict with critical safety imperatives

How the CAFE 3 Formula Works

- Efficiency formula: $[0.002 \times (W - 1170) + c]$
- The constant c decreases each year from FY28 to FY32, making rules stricter
- **Example of a 740kg small car:**
 - Must become 48% more efficient from CAFE 2 to the end of CAFE 3
- **Example of a 2500kg heavy car:**
 - Only needs to become 25% more efficient

Global Comparison

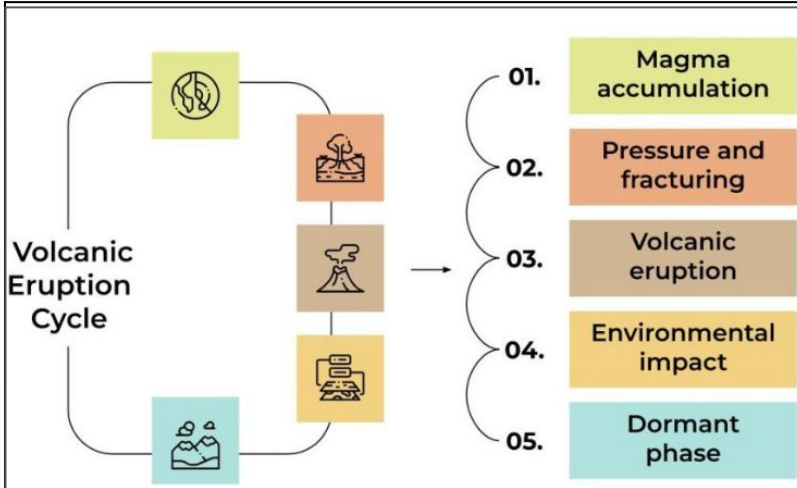
- **USA & China:** "piecewise linear" approach with fixed targets below a certain size/weight
- **South Korea:** Fixed targets for light cars and extra credits for selling small cars
- **Japan:** non-linear approach to avoid disproportionately high targets for small cars
- **Europe:** negative slope, meaning bigger cars have a *lower* absolute CO₂ target



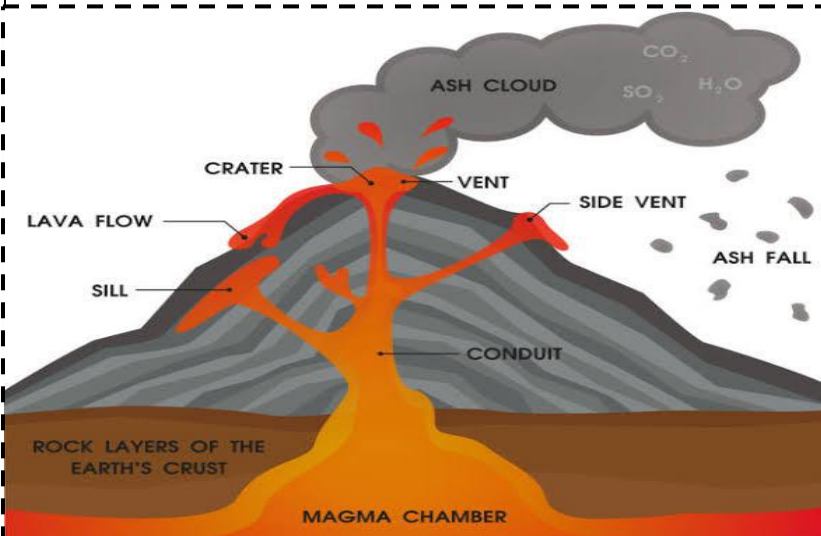
21st November 2025

Syllabus: GS Paper 3: Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment

Newspaper: Indian Express, Page No. 15



Volcano	Location
Kilauea	Hawaii, USA
Mauna Loa	Hawaii, USA
Mount Merapi	Indonesia
Mount Kilimanjaro	Tanzania
Mount Fuji	Japan
Mount Mayon	Philippines
Mount Etna	Italy
Mount Vesuvius	Italy
Mount St. Helens	Washington, USA
Mount Pinatubo	Philippines
Eyjafjallajökull	Iceland



MOUNT SEMERU, among the most active of Indonesia's 120 live volcanoes, erupted on Wednesday, spewing hot clouds of volcanic ash and debris.

Volcanoes erupt because of how heat moves beneath Earth's surface. Deep within the planet, it is so hot that rocks slowly melt to become a thick flowing substance called magma. Since it is lighter than the solid rock around it, magma rises, collecting in chambers near the surface.

As these chambers fill up, pressure exerted on the surrounding rock increases. Eventually, some of the magma pushes through the cracks in the rock, and vents onto the surface. This is a volcanic eruption; the magma that has erupted is called lava.

The explosivity of an eruption depends on the composition of the magma. Thin, runny magma allows gasses to escape easily; upon eruption,



Semeru spewing volcanic ash. REUTERS

such magma simply flows out of the volcano (like in Hawai'i). Thick, sticky magma does not allow gasses to escape, and is thus much more explosive. Such eruptions

see magma blast into the air, solidifying into deadly tephra, which can range in size from fine dust to massive, house-sized boulders (like with Semeru).

{ SCIENCE }

ENS

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding international instruments related to child rights and juvenile justice:

1. The ICCPR, 1966, provides for the best interests of the child, including non-separation of accused juveniles from adults.
2. The Beijing Rules, 1985, emphasise that juveniles in conflict with the law must be protected through privacy and separate facilities during proceedings.
3. The Riyadh Guidelines, 1990, focus primarily on preventive measures and early intervention for children at social risk.

Which of the above statements are correct?

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

Answer: c

Q2. With reference to the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY), consider the following statements:

1. It is a centrally sponsored scheme implemented only in coastal States having marine fisheries.
2. It seeks to establish a National Fisheries Digital Platform to integrate all fisheries-related activities.
3. It supports both marine and inland fisheries, including aquaculture and ornamental fish.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) All Three
- d) None

Answer: b

Q3. Consider the following statements regarding Article 143 of the Constitution of India:

1. The President may seek the Supreme Court's opinion only on questions of law that have arisen or are likely to arise, and not on questions of fact.
2. The opinion given by the Supreme Court under this Article is binding on the government.
3. The Supreme Court may refuse to answer a reference made under Article 143.
4. This Article can be invoked even when a matter related to the question referred is already pending before the Supreme Court.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) Only Three
- d) All four

Answer: c

Q4. With reference to the environmental impacts of riverbed sand mining in India, consider the following statements:

1. It can alter the longitudinal profile of a river, leading to upstream erosion and downstream sediment starvation.
2. It reduces groundwater recharge by lowering the water table in the floodplain aquifers.
3. It increases the vulnerability of riverbanks and nearby infrastructure to collapse due to undercutting.
4. It enhances fish breeding due to increased water turbidity and habitat complexity.

How many of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) Only One
- b) Only Two
- c) Only Three
- d) All Four

Answer: c

Q5. With reference to Mount Semeru, consider the following statements:

1. It is the highest volcano on the island of Java.
2. It lies on a tectonic boundary where the Indo-Australian Plate is subducting beneath the Eurasian Plate.
3. It is located in the Philippines archipelago.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

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

Answer: a





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