



**VAJIRAM & RAVI**  
Institute for IAS Examination

# The Analyst

**CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout**

**9th December 2025**



# Democracy Paradox, the chosen people of the State



**CONTEXT:** The article has raised legal challenges regarding SIR carried out by ECI in 12 States and Union Territories.

## Issues with SIR 2.0:

- **Issue of Timing:**
  - Between 2003 and 2024, there have been five general elections to the Lok Sabha and many elections in the States and Union Territories.
  - done right before elections in Bihar, and now in Tamil Nadu, Kerala & West bengal.
- **Legal Challenge:**
  - **Section 21** of the Representation of the People Act, **1950** outlines **four types of electoral roll revisions:**
    - Before Lok Sabha or Assembly elections; Before by-elections; On ECI's annual direction, and Special revision for a constituency or part of it (with the ECI recording reasons for doing so.
  - Revisions under **points (1) to (3) must use January 1 as the qualifying date, per Section 14 (b).**
  - **Only special revisions (point 4) can be conducted anytime, but only for a constituency or part thereof, not an entire state.**
- **Inexplicable Document list:**
  - list of documents that could be submitted as proof of identity.
  - Countrywide, there is no single piece of evidence that proves Indian citizenship — a document that has the status of being evidence of citizenship status.

- **Power to determine Citizenship:**
  - ECI has no power to determine citizenship, and only the Home Ministry has.
  - Or by quasi-judicial bodies such as Foreigners Tribunals constituted under the Foreigners Act, 1946.
- **Disenfranchisement of Voters: In Bihar After 1st phase**
  - 65 lakh voters deleted in Bihar's draft voter
  - average deletion of about 27,000 voters per constituency.
- **Competing for backwardness:**
  - large swathes of rural areas in Tamil Nadu with almost zero Internet connectivity.
- **Lack of machine readable voter list:** 2003 electoral roll - to verify the presence

## **Here are the documents for SIR:**

1. Any identity cards, pension payment order issued to a regular employee/pensioner of any central government/State govt/PSU.
2. Any identity cards/certificates/documents issued by the Indian govt./ Banks/local authorities/PCU
3. Birth certificate issued by the competent authority
4. Passport
5. Matriculation/Educational certificate issued by recognised Boards/Universities
6. Permanent resident certificate issued by the State authority
7. Forest Rights Certificate 8. OBC/ST/SC or any caste certificate
9. National Register of Citizens (wherever it exists)
10. Family register prepared by State/Local authorities
11. Any land/house allotment certificate by Govt.
12. For Aadhaar, Commission's directions issued vide letter No. 23/2025-ERS/Vol.II dated 9.09.2025 shall apply

## Democracy Paradox, the chosen people of the State



**CONTEXT:** The article has raised legal challenges regarding SIR carried out by ECI in 12 States and Union Territories.

### Way Ahead:

- **Use de-duplication software :** to identify duplicate names in the electoral roll.
- **Involvement of Local bodies:** to identify voters who had migrated or were dead.
- **Participatory approach:** a mandatory social audit for electoral roll revision and verification.
- **Electoral roll in machine readable formats**
  - convert all State/UT rolls into a fully searchable digital format, using English as the standard for searchable data and metadata.
- **Data integration:** fuse old records with reliable datasets — Aadhaar, PAN/Income Tax, driving licence, and local body records.
  - Aadhaar must be strengthened as the anchor for identity verification.

- **Submission of EFs online:** supported by mobile digital kiosks operated by trained personnel, while electoral officials handle ground verification.
- **Enable seamless integration of all processes through ECINet:** complete document verification, uploads, and post-validation checks entirely online, with transparent workflows.

### Mains Practise Question:

***“Accurate electoral rolls are essential for ensuring universal adult suffrage. In this context, evaluate the challenges posed by SIR 2.0. Critically analyse the way forward to ensure that the exercise remains inclusive, transparent, and free from exclusion errors.”***

***(15 Marks, 250 words)***



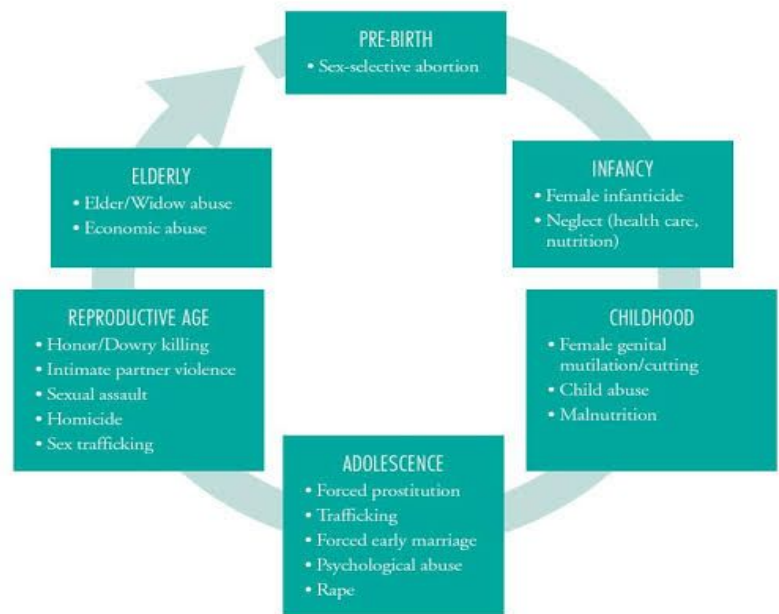
# Women Safety: A critical Concern

**CONTEXT:** Recent incidents in Odisha and Kerala have reignited national concern over women's safety, underscoring persistent gaps in prevention, policing, and societal attitudes.

## Stats:

- **National Annual Report & Index on Women's Safety (NARI) 2025:**
  - By NCW – perception-based reality check on urban safety in India.
  - **Least Safe Cities:** Patna, Jaipur, Faridabad, Delhi, Kolkata, Srinagar, and Ranchi.
  - **Harassment Trends:**
    - 7% of women reported harassment in 2024, rising to 14% for women under 24. Verbal harassment (58%) was most common, with neighborhoods (38%) and public transport (29%) as key hotspots.
  - **Low trust:** 75% of women lack trust in **police and legal systems.**
  - **Reporting Gaps:** Only 20% of victims reported incidents to authorities, with just 22% of complaints registered and 16% acted upon.

Figure 1. Types of Violence Against Women and Girls by Life Cycle Stages



Adapted from Watts and Zimmerman, 2002 and Shane and Ellsberg, 2002, in Ellsberg & Heise, 2005

- **National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5):**
  - 30% of women in India between 15-49 years of age have experienced physical, sexual or domestic violence.
- **Women, Peace and Security Index 2025/26:**
  - ranks **181 countries globally** based on women's status across **three key dimensions:** *inclusion, justice, and security.*
  - **India** ranks at the **131st position with a 0.607 score.**





# Women Safety: A critical Concern

**CONTEXT:** Recent incidents in Odisha and Kerala have reignited national concern over women's safety, underscoring persistent gaps in prevention, policing, and societal attitudes.

## Reasons:

- **Patriarchal Societal Norms:** *women as subordinate*
  - **Khap Panchayats** often enforce rigid gender norms.
  - Prevalence of '**Ladka hai Galti ho jaati hai mindset**' in India.
- **Inadequate safety in public places:**
  - **For ex- Nirbhaya Rape** in a public transportation and **Kolkata rape** in a public hospital highlights the lack of public safe spaces for women.
- **Increased objectification of sexuality in movies**
- **Underreporting of crime:** cultural stigma
  - ex- Brushing off the child molestation issues under the carpet.
- **Feminization of Poverty:**
  - **Periodic Labour Force Survey 2023-24** - about **85.9%** of employed women in India are in the informal sector.
  - **Agriculture Census 2015-16**, about **11.72%** of the total operated area in the country was operated by **female operational holders**.
- **Lack of Awareness and Education:**
  - **As per NARI, 2025:** 53% were unaware of mandatory Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) policies.

- **Weak Law Enforcement:**
  - NCRB data shows the conviction rate for rape ranged from 27 to 28% in the 2018-2022 period.



## Government Initiatives for Women's Safety:

- **Nirbhaya Fund**
- **SHe-Box Portal:** register workplace sexual harassment complaints. It is accessible to all women, regardless of their work sector (organized/unorganized, public/private).
- **Mission Shakti:**
  - UP government to make improvements to women's safety, and reduce the consequent violence and exploitation faced by them.
- **Police pink booths:**
  - Launched by the **Delhi government**, these booths are dedicated to addressing the grievances of women passersby.
- **Online Movements and campaigns:**
  - **#CallItOut because #ItsNotOK campaign, #MeToo movement**, have been launched to facilitate knowledge transfer.



**CONTEXT:** Recent incidents in Odisha and Kerala have reignited national concern over women's safety, underscoring persistent gaps in prevention, policing, and societal attitudes.



## Mains Practise Question

*“Despite multiple legal and institutional reforms, incidents of gender-based violence continue to rise in India. Analyse the underlying reasons for persistent gaps in women's safety.”*

(15 Marks, 250 words)

## Way Ahead:

- **Fast-Track Courts:** recommended by Justice Verma Committee. Increase women's representation in the judiciary.
- **Comprehensive gender sensitization programs**
- **Enhanced Police Training:** specialized police units like SHE Teams, a division of Telangana Police
- **Improved Survivor Support Systems**
  - **Rape Crisis Centres** like in countries like Australia, Canada, America, United Kingdom, etc, can be set up in India.
- **Media Responsibility:** responsible reporting of crimes

## Other Important Initiatives for Women Safety



# How can India benefit from neurotechnology



**SYLLABUS : GS 3 Paper : Developments in the field of science**  
**Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number: 10**

## The story so far:

**T**he brain remains humanity's final frontier. In the decades ahead, **neurotechnology** will stretch the boundaries of what it means to understand, and even shape, the functioning of the human brain.

## What is neurotechnology?

- Use of mechanical tools to talk directly to the brain.
- It includes systems that can **record, monitor, or even influence neural activity**, opening up new ways to understand how the mind works and, consequently, **how it might be repaired or enhanced**.
- **Brain-Computer Interface** - a technology that **blends neuroscience and computing** to translate thoughts into action.
  - ◆ Can **turn brain signals into digital commands** that control a computer cursor, a wheelchair, or even a robotic arm.
  - ◆ **Uses:** A BCI essentially *listens to the brain, decodes its signals*, and can turn them into instructions for a **prosthetic to follow**.
    - stimulating certain brain regions to **treat depression or Parkinson's disease**.

## → Why does India need it?

- ◆ **Significant neurological disease burden:**
  - from strokes and spinal cord injuries to Parkinson's disease and depression.
  - **Between 1990 and 2019**, the share of non-communicable and injury-related neurological disorders in India's overall disease load rose steadily, with **stroke emerging as the largest contributor**.
- ◆ **Making life easier:**
  - For those **living with paralysis**, **neuroprosthetics** could restore mobility and communication.
  - For **mental health patients**, targeted neural stimulation offers the possibility of **reducing long-term dependence on medication**.
- ◆ **Developing global competence:**
  - Neurotechnology sits at the **intersection of biotechnology, engineering, and AI**, sectors where India is rapidly developing global competence.





# How can India benefit from neurotechnology



**SYLLABUS : GS 3 Paper : Developments in the field of science**  
**Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number: 10**

## Where does India stand today?

- **Creating academic and private sector strengths:**
- ◆ **IIT Kanpur** unveiled a **BCI-based robotic hand** that could be useful for stroke patients.
  - ◆ **National Brain Research Centre in Manesar**, and the **Brain Research Centre at IISc, Bangalore** are leading **research centres for neuroscience**.
  - ◆ **Dagnosis, a startup**: is using neurotechnology to **study brain signals in dogs, aiming to detect the neural patterns** that occur when they **recognise the scent of cancer in human breath samples**.
    - potential to revolutionise cancer screening in humans.

## **What are other countries doing?**

The **U.S.** is the **global leader in neurotechnologies**. The NIH's Brain Research Through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies® Initiative, or The **BRAIN Initiative®**, is a partnership between federal and non-federal partners

function in paralytic patients. The **China Brain Project (2016-2030)** focuses on understanding cognition, developing brain-inspired AI, and treating neurological disorders. **EU and Chile** are pioneering laws for BCIs and neurorights.

However, if there is **inadequate regulatory support**, BCI development and adoption will be thwarted. **A public engagement strategy** to discuss the benefits and risks of BCIs would help in understanding public perception of these technologies. **Instead of a singular policy for all BCIs**, tailored regulatory pathways for the different types of BCIs based on their benefits and risks would help development of beneficial BCIs in the Indian context. A regulatory pathway that assesses BCI on technical and ethical aspects, **including ensuring data privacy and user autonomy** is of utmost need.





**SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Economy**  
**Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number: 15**

## Evolution of Money



BusinessToday.In

## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CRYPTOCURRENCY AND DIGITAL CURRENCY

### TL/DR



Digital currency is the electronic form of fiat money that can be used in contactless transactions.



Cryptocurrency is a store of value that is secured by encryption.

### Regulation



Digital currency is regulated by a central authority (RBI for India).



Cryptocurrency is decentralised and unregulated.

### Stability & usage



Digital currency rates are stable, and currencies are globally accepted.



Cryptocurrency rates are highly volatile, and digital coins are not widely accepted yet.

### Who gets to know about the transactions?



Digital currency transactions are only known to the sender, receiver, and the bank.



Cryptocurrency transactions are publicly available on a decentralised ledger.

### Encryption & blockchain usage



Digital currency needs strong passwords to protect digital wallets, banking apps, credit, debit cards.



Cryptocurrencies are secured by encryption.

## PYQs:

**Q.** Consider the following statements in respect of the **digital rupee: (2024)**

1. It is a sovereign currency issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in alignment with its monetary policy.
2. It appears as a liability on the RBI's balance sheet.
3. It is insured against inflation by its very design.
4. It is freely convertible against commercial bank money and cash.

**Which of the statements given above are correct ?**

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



# Perils of Monopolies & Duopolies



**SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Economy**

**Newspaper: Indian Express Page Number: 01**

## Types of Markets

Comparing Market Types					
Type of Market	Number of Producers	Kind of Competition	Barriers to Entry	Another Name for Firms	Special Traits
Monopoly	One	None	No entry possible	Price-setter	Only one firm
Oligopoly	A few	Primarily non-price competition	Medium barriers (difficult entry)	N/A	Firms can collude and behave as a monopolist
Monopolistic Competition	Many	Non-price competition; price competition	Low barriers (easy entry)	Price-maker	Product differentiation and branding
Perfect Competition	A great many	Price competition	No barriers (free entry)	Price-taker	Perfectly elastic demand

**Sukalp Sharma & Anil Sasi**

*New Delhi, December 8*

THE CRISIS at IndiGo that led to scores of flights being cancelled daily since early last week threw the country's entire aviation ecosystem out of gear.

**E.**

The reason for that outsized impact is IndiGo's sheer dominance of India's aviation sector:

the carrier accounted for six out of every 10 Indian passengers travelling by air on domestic sectors and it is, for all intended purposes, too big to fail.

The true extent of IndiGo's stranglehold over India's do-

## • INDIGO PROFUSELY APOLOGETIC: DGCA

DGCA said it has received IndiGo's response to the show-cause notice, and the airline is 'profusely apologetic'

**MORE REPORTS P 4, 7, 14**

mestic aviation market goes well beyond its nearly 65 per cent domestic market share by passenger volumes and the mantle of the country's largest airline. While India's aviation sector is effectively a duopoly — with the Air India group having a market share of 26.5 per cent

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 2





# Perils of Monopolies & Duopolies



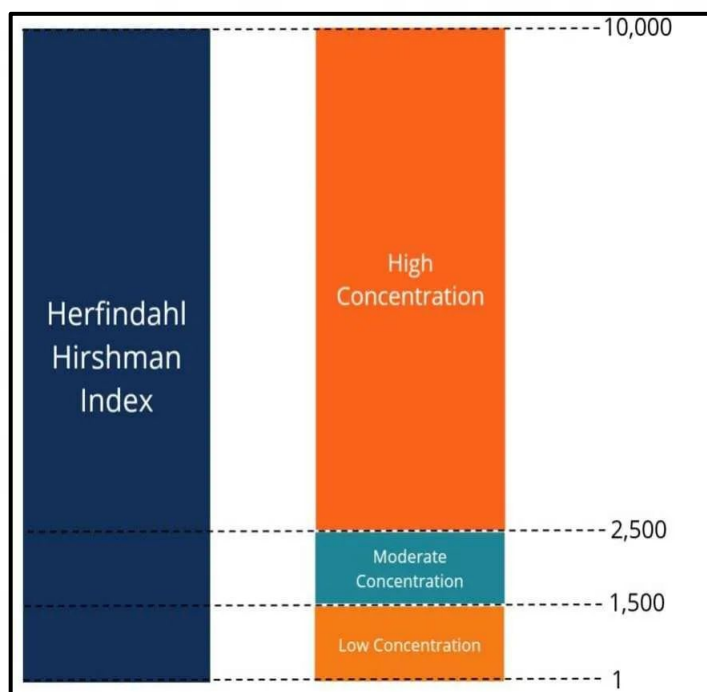
**SYLLABUS : PRELIMS : Economy**

**Newspaper: Indian Express Page Number: 01**

## Issues with monopolies :

of a dominant airline means that many routes, which would otherwise shut down, are in operation. And until this crisis broke, IndiGo had established

High market concentration problems include systemic risk if the dominant players falter, fewer choices for consumers due to low competition, higher prices, less innovation and lower quality.



## About the Index:

- It measures the size of companies relative to the size of the industry they're in.
- **How it is calculated:**
  - we take the **percentage market share of each firm** in an industry, **square that number**, and then add all the squares together.
- **Range:** ranges **from 1 (least concentrated) to 10,000 (most concentrated)**.
  - The 10,000 figure comes from a theoretical scenario where there is only one company operating in the industry, with 100% of the market share.

$$HHI = s_1^2 + s_2^2 + s_3^2 + \dots s_n^2$$

where:

$s_n$  = the market share percentage of firm  $n$

expressed as a whole number, not a decimal

growth. The Herfindahl-Hirschman Index, a measure of market concentration in an industry, has been increasing in sectors such as telecom, airlines, cement, steel and tyres.





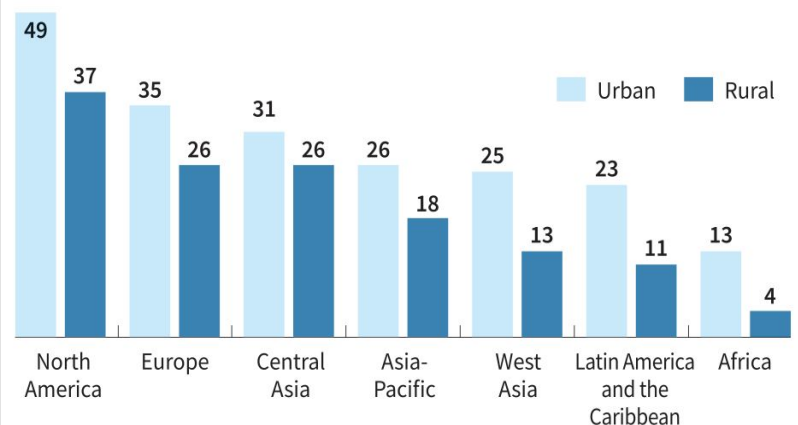
**SYLLABUS : Prelims: Science & Technology**  
**Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number: 9**

Over the past decade, newly funded AI companies have quadrupled the world-over, while AI investment has surged 15-fold (Chart 1). Countries in the Asia-Pacific are also racing to harness this technology. However, a UN report argues that the Asia-Pacific region begins this transition from widely unequal starting points. The AI Preparedness Index in the region varies drastically, ranging from over 70% in advanced economies to under 20% in fragile states. The Index by IMF assesses countries' digital infrastructure, human capital and labour market policies, innovation and economic integration, and regulation and ethics.

The report notes that inclusive adoption will require strengthening both hard and soft foundations. Hard infrastructure includes affordable internet, reliable and clean electricity, cooling resources, and adequate computing capacity. Internet access has expanded rapidly across Asia-Pacific, but inequalities remain (Chart 4). Soft infrastructure includes human capital, strong public institutions, and legal frameworks that ensure secure and fair access. Many nations in the region face skill shortages too (Chart 5).

A few economies such as Singapore, South Korea and China have equipped themselves better for AI. Many others, however, lack the access to electricity, data systems, and connectivity needed to participate fully in the transition (Chart 2). These regional divides sit atop deep inequalities within countries themselves. Income and wealth remain heavily concentrated in the top 10% across much of Asia and the Pacific (Chart 3).

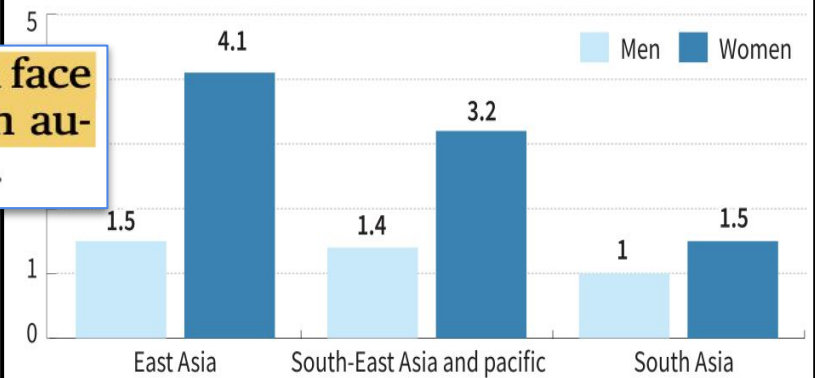
**Chart 5:** Share of population with knowledge of basic arithmetic formula in spreadsheet in 2025 (in %)



**SYLLABUS : Prelims: Science & Technology**  
**Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number: 9**

Across Asia-Pacific, women face greater exposure to AI-driven automation than men (Chart 6).

**Chart 6:** Jobs exposed to AI-driven automation by sex (in %)



### About AI Preparedness Index :

- It assesses the **level of AI preparedness** across **174 countries**.
- **Released by:** IMF
- The rating for each country is given based on the **assessment of readiness in four key areas** – digital infrastructure, human capital and labour market policies, innovation and economic integration, and regulation and Ethics.
- The Index has **categorised each country** into Advanced Economy, Emerging Market Economy, and Low-Income Country.
  - ◆ **India** categorised as an Emerging Market Economy.

### About IMF:

- **Genesis:** formed in **1944 at the Bretton Woods Conference** with the goal of reconstructing the international monetary system.
- **Membership:**
  - **191 member countries**
  - To **become a member of the World Bank**, a country must first join the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- **Three critical missions:**
  - furthering international monetary cooperation
  - encouraging the expansion of trade and economic growth
  - discouraging policies that would harm prosperity.
- **Important Reports:**
  - World Economic Outlook and Global Financial Stability Report
- **Headquarters:** Washington, DC, USA.






**SYLLABUS : Prelims: Diseases**

**Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number: 6**

## About Scrub Typhus

DANGER OF BEING UNDETECTED		
<b>CAUSED BY</b> Bacteria called <i>orientia tsutsugamushi</i>		<b>WHERE DO CHIGGER MITES STAY?</b> ➤ Moist, grassy areas like fields, forests, lawns, lakes and streams
<b>CARRIED BY</b> Mite called <i>Leptotrombidium</i> , also known as chigger		
<b>SYMPTOMS</b>   Fever, muscle pain, cough, gastrointestinal symptoms, liver and spleen enlargement, and meningitis in extreme cases	<b>BABY BITES</b> ➤ Adult chiggers do not bite. It's the babies, at the larval stage, that you have to watch out for ➤ They're red, orange, yellow, or straw-coloured, no more than 0.3mm in length	
<b>TREATMENT</b>   Doxycycline, fluids, supportive measures		

## Decoding the News

- It is an occupational disease frequently found in people **who work in the fields** and are in the habit of gardening.
- **No vaccines are available as of now.**
- **What to do then?**
  - Using residual insecticides to **spray the infested areas** help in decreasing and eliminating mite population.

## Saving lives by faster resolution of complications

India is one of the hotspots for scrub typhus disease with at least 25% disease burden



■ Combination therapy with doxycycline and azithromycin achieved faster resolution of complications compared with monotherapy using either drug

■ Combination therapy achieved faster clearance of the bacteria compared with monotherapies

thousands of lives

■ Scrub typhus infection does not cause typical symptoms, making correct and early diagnosis difficult

■ Awareness about the infection and disease is very low, despite the high disease burden and mortality rate





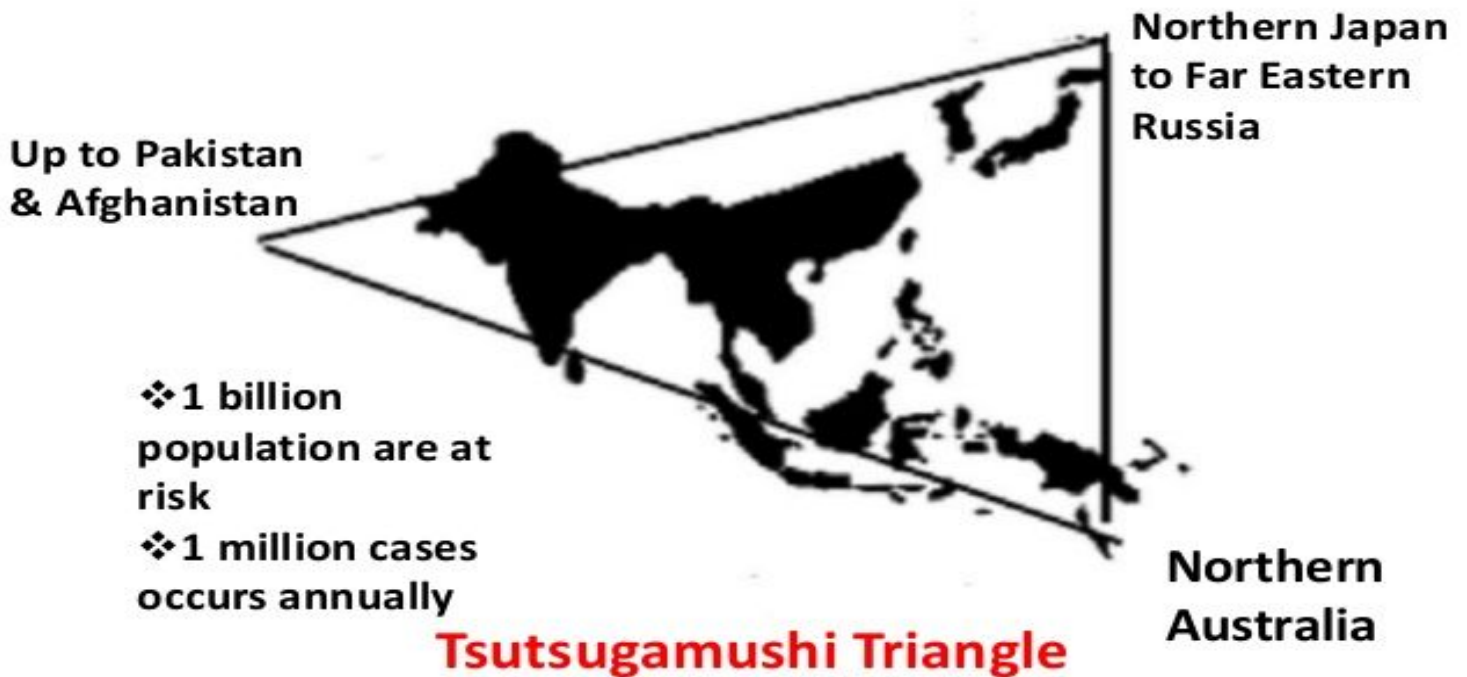
# Scrub Typhus



**SYLLABUS : Prelims: Diseases**

**Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number: 6**

## World Scenario: Triangle of Scrub Typhus/Rural Typhus



Parag Sharma, Rakesh Kakkar, Shilpa.N.Kaore,Vijay. K. Yadav, Raj Sharma. Geographical Distribution, Effect of Season & Life Cycle of Scrub Typhus.



**Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the Scrub Typhus:**

1. It is caused by a virus called Orientia tsutsugamushi.
2. It is carried by a mite called Leptotrombidium.
3. There exists no vaccine for scrub typhus as of now.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

**Answer: c**

**Q2. Which of the following is the most suitable definition for an "Oligopoly" type of market?**

- a) The competition is price-based competition with low barriers to entry.
- b) The competition is primarily non-price competition with medium barriers to entry.
- c) The competition is primarily non-price competition with no barriers to entry.
- d) There exists no competition at all, with entry into the market being completely denied.

**Answer: b**

**Q3. Consider the following statements regarding the Herfindahl-Hirschman Index:**

1. It is a measure of the size of firms in relation to the industry they are in and is an indicator of the amount of competition among them.
2. It aims primarily to evaluate and understand how mergers will affect their associated markets.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Answer: c**

**Q4. Which of the following statements regarding the "AI Preparedness Index" is NOT correct?**

- a) It assesses the level of AI preparedness across 174 countries.
- b) It is released by the World Bank.
- c) The rating for each country is given based on the assessment of readiness in digital infrastructure.
- d) India is categorised as an Emerging Market Economy.

**Answer: b**

**Q5. Consider the following statements :**

1. As per the National Family Health Survey-5, more than one-third of the women in India aged between 15-49 years have experienced sexual & domestic violence.
2. India ranks at 150th position in the Women, Peace & Security Index 2025.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Answer: d**





# **VAJIRAM & RAVI**

## **Institute for IAS Examination**

A unit of Vajiram & Ravi IAS Study Centre LLP

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9-B, Bada Bazar Marg, Old Rajinder Nagar,  
New Delhi - 110060 • Ph.: 41007400, 41007500

New No. 62, P Block, 6th Avenue, Anna Nagar,  
Chennai - 600040 • Ph.: 044-4330-2121

Visit us at : [www.vajiramandravi.com](http://www.vajiramandravi.com)