



**VAJIRAM & RAVI**  
Institute for IAS Examination

# The Analyst

**CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout**

**04th April 2025**



**CONTEXT:** President & CJI promote mediation for conflict resolution

- ADR modes - Arbitration, Negotiation, Mediation, and Lok Adalats
- Mediation - voluntary, settle disputes, independent third person providing conducive environment
- no strict or binding rules of procedure.
- reduce the case burden on courts.

#### Mediation in India:

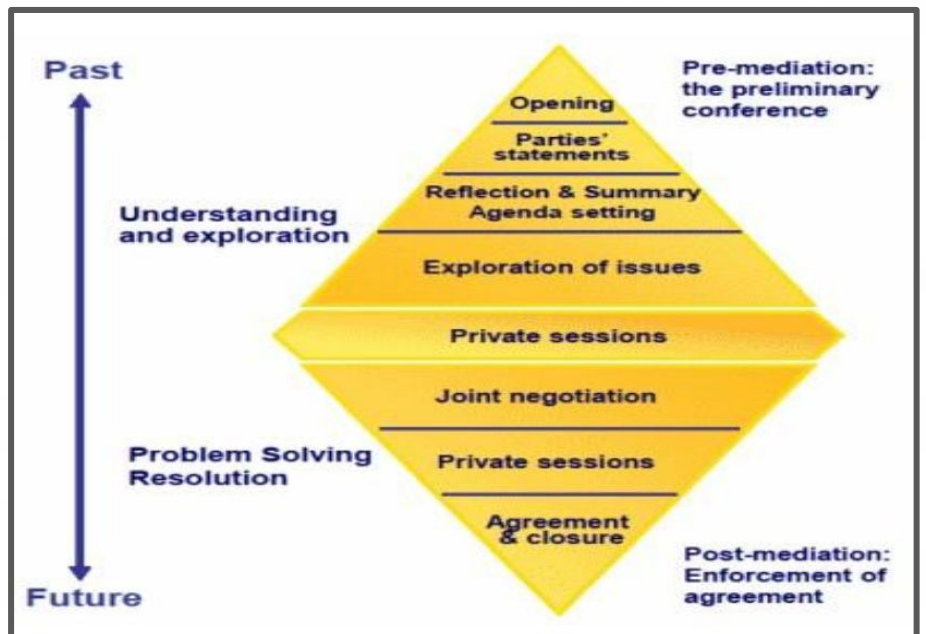
- Bandaranayake Upanishad
- Court referred
- Private - contract
- Specific statute
- Private ADR centres or court annexed mediation centres

#### Need

- Pendency
- Tiers of Appeals
- Judges per million
- Litigation Complexities
- Avoidable/Compoundable Litigation
  - Civil Matters - property, contract breach
  - Commercial Issues
  - Family conflicts
  - Govt Litigant

#### Why Statutory?

- Australia, Singapore, and Italy dedicated laws
- Mediation and Conciliation Project Committee of Supreme Court



- Several statutes
  - CPC, 1908
  - Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996,
  - Companies Act, 2013,
  - Commercial Courts Act, 2015, and
- Consumer Protection Act, 2019
- Singapore Convention on Mediation

#### Mediation Act, 2023

- **Pre-litigation mediation** - civil or commercial disputes, court may refer
- **Disputes not fit for mediation** - minors or unsound mind, criminal, rights of third parties. The central government may amend this list.
- **Applicability** - conducted in India, commercial disputes if govt is party
- **Mediation process:**
  - confidential proceedings, 180 days, extended by 180 days
  - withdraw after two sessions.
  - Court annexed mediation as per the rules framed by Courts.
- **Mediators:**
  - appointed by parties or mediation service provider institution
  - disclose conflict of interest - Parties may then choose to replace



**CONTEXT:** President & CJI promote mediation for conflict resolution

- **Mediation Council of India:**
  - Chairperson, 2 full-time members, 3 ex-officio members
  - Functions: (i) registration of mediators, and (ii) recognising mediation service providers/institutes (which train and certify)
- **Mediated settlement agreement:**
  - final, binding, and enforceable as court judgments.
  - challenge if: fraud, corruption, impersonation, or disputes not fit
- **Community mediation**

## Concerns & Challenges :

### Concerns with the Act

- **Pre-litigation mediation**
  - mandatory, reasonable reason else cost.
  - Article 21 – access to justice
- **Cross-border mediation in India**
  - domestic when it is conducted in India
  - Enforceable like decree of a court
- **Court annexed mediation rules**
- **Non-Applicability to Non-Commercial Disputes**

### Challenges in Mediation

- Only in Civil Cases
- Reliance on will of the parties
- Likelihood of winning litigation
- Misusing to postpone trial
- Attorneys discourage
- Certifying professional mediators

### MAINS PRACTISE QUESTION

The Mediation Act, 2023 is a significant step towards institutionalizing alternative dispute resolution in India. Examine the need for mediation in India, key provisions of the act, and the challenges of mediation.



# Reservation in Private Sector



**CONTEXT:** Demand after Caste Census

## Reservation in Private Sector

### Arguments Against

- Constitutional
  - Article 14 – reasonable classification
  - Article 16(2) prohibits discrimination based on place of birth or residence
  - Article 16(3) allows only Parliament to prescribe residence requirements
  - Article 19(1)(d): Right to move freely throughout India.
  - Article 19(1)(e): Right to reside and settle in any part of India.
  - Article 19(1)(g): Right to practice any profession or trade
  - Article 19(6) – restrictions only for technical qualifications or State monopolies, not regional reservations
  - Entry No.81 of the List-I – inter state migration
- Economic
  - Inter state mobility
  - Discouraging investment
  - Competitiveness
  - Inclusive growth
- National unity
- Indira Sawhney 50% ceiling
- Inspector Raj return

### Judicial Observations

- **Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India (1978)** – Right to travel and settle; creative mobility
- **Dr. Pradeep Jain v. Union of India (1984)** – "One domicile for India"; no State-based discrimination
- **State of Tamil Nadu v. K. Shyam Sunder (2011)** – Legislative purpose must align with constitutional values
- **Nagpur Improvement Trust v. Vithal Rao (1973)** – Arbitrary classification violates Art. 14

- **P.A. Inamdar v. State of Maharashtra (2005)** – Private entities cannot be forced
- **IMT Industrial Association and another v. State of Haryana and another, 2023**
  - HSELC Act, 2020 ultravires
  - beyond the purview of the State to legislate
  - violated constitutional morality
  - private can't be asked to do what the State has been forbidden for itself
- **Peterson v. City of Greenville (1963, US)** – State-enforced racial segregation violates equality

### Arguments in Favour

- Right to Livelihood
- Article 16(4) – State can
- Rising Unemployment
- Resentment against migrants
- Article 38
- Legitimate imposition on Private sector
- Global examples
  - US Civil Rights Act, 1964
  - Canada Employment Equity Act

### Way Forward

- Focus on Development & Employment generation
- Uniform Labour Rights
- Cultural Integration – Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat
- Expert Panel & Stakeholder consultations

## MAINS PRACTISE QUESTION

Q: The demand for reservation in the private sector has sparked a debate on social justice versus economic efficiency. Examine the arguments for and against introducing caste-based reservation in the private sector, citing the relevant judicial opinions.





**SYLLABUS : GS Paper 3:** Indian Economy and issues relating to Planning, Mobilization of Resources, Growth, Development

**Newspaper :** The Hindu **Page Number :** 04

## Benefits

- Faster, less transaction fees
- No middlemen
- Privacy
- Financial Inclusion
- Freelancers
- Business Opportunities
- International transactions

## Concerns

- SC Garg Committee
  - Risks to users - speculative nature, no sovereign guarantee, loss of access if private key is lost, cyber risk
  - Crime, money laundering
  - Anonymity
  - Supply outside the purview of RBI
  - Energy use
- Effectiveness of Monetary policy
- No underlying value

## Global Outlook

- El Salvador
- Bitcoin ETF by BlackRock in USA
- Nasdaq listings
- Israel & Germany
- OECD - Crypto Asset Reporting Framework

### Modus operandi

Bitcoin mining or farming is the process by which specialised computers are used to execute complex mathematical problems to validate, secure, create, and launch new coins into circulation. Ponzi schemes operate by creating fake Bitcoin exchange platforms with falsified data, luring potential victims with high returns initially, and disappearing after collecting enough investment in the form of Bitcoins or through bank transfers.

The probe agencies have often found the fraud-

sters to be using a complex web of transactions through the Dark Web and cryptocurrency wallets to hide the money trail.

According to a report by the United States's Federal Bureau of Investigation, released last year, India ranked fifth globally in terms of the number of cryptocurrency-related complaints and sixth in terms of the overall estimated losses.



# Niger: Coup & Mapping

**SYLLABUS :** GS Paper 2: Effect of Policies and Politics of Developed and Developing Countries on India's interests, Indian Diaspora

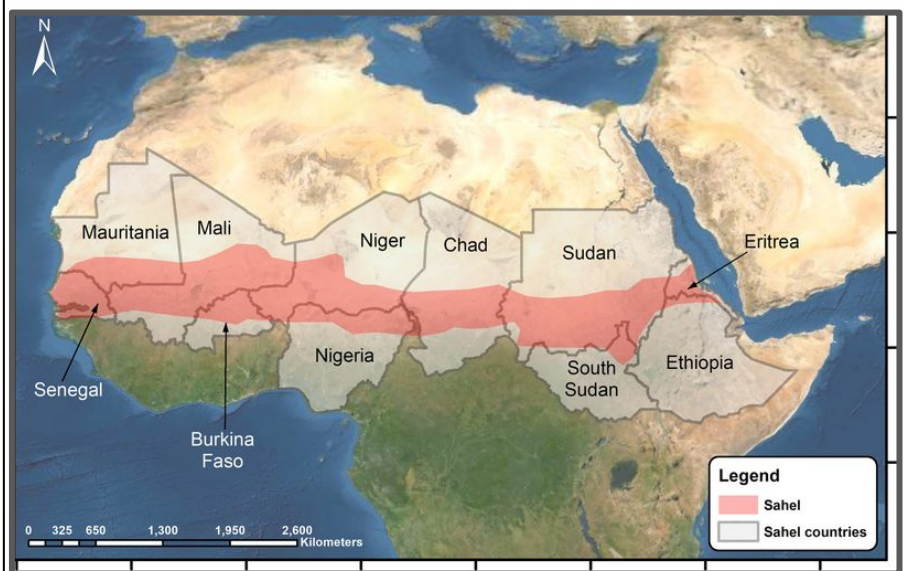
**Newspaper :** The Indian Express **Page No :** 1

## Sahel Region

- Atlantic Ocean to Red Sea
- Mali - Islamist extremism, al Qaeda-affiliated al-Mourabitoun group
- Mauritania - traditional route for drug and human trafficking between South America and Europe, sub-state militant activities
- Nigeria - Boko Haram
- Niger - Coup

## Niger

- Historically French colony
- 80% land in Sahara desert
- Resources: Gold, 7% Uranium
- Series of military coups
- Terrorist & Extremist groups
  - IS Sahel militancy and banditry in the central Tahoua region
  - Al-Qaeda-affiliated JNIM in the West
  - Boko Haram insurgency in southeastern Diffa region
  - Chadian and Sudanese rebels, drug traffickers - Agadez region along the border with Libya, Algeria, and Chad - smuggling route for armed groups



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## Niger River

- 4,200 km - third longest river in Africa - after Nile, Congo
- Boomerang River - serpentine shape
- Course: Sahara Desert, Mali's Timbuktu city, Gulf of Guinea
- Niger, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Burkina Faso, Algeria, Benin, Chad, Cameroon, and Nigeria
- River Basin - 7.5% of African continent
- Tributary - Benue River

## UPSC PYQ 2023

*In the recent years Chad, Guinea, Mali and Sudan caught the international attention for which one of the following reason common to all the them?*

- a) *Discovery of rich deposits of rare earth elements*
- b) *Establishment of Chinese military bases*
- c) *Southward expansion of Sahara Desert*
- d) *Successful coups*





# Rising Vaccine Preventable Diseases



**SYLLABUS : GS Paper 2: Health**  
**Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 14**

## Re-emergence of Vaccine-Preventable Diseases

- Measles, meningitis, yellow fever resurging due to vaccination gaps
- Children missing vaccines as funding cuts
- WHO, UNICEF, Gavi warn: misinformation, population growth, humanitarian crises

## Current Challenges in Vaccination

- Half of 108 surveyed countries face immunisation disruptions (WHO)
- Disease surveillance weakened in over 50% of countries
- 14.5 mn children missed all vaccines in 2023 (12.9 mn in 2019)
- >50% unvaccinated children in conflict-ridden region
- Measles outbreaks rising (e.g., U.S. cases tripled in 2024)
- Impact of Funding Cuts - Global health gains at risk; "Big Catch-Up" initiative (2023) critical to recover pandemic-era losses
- 

## Why Vaccination Matters

- Saves lives: 154M saved in 50 years
- 40% of infant survival linked to vaccines
- Measles vaccine alone - 60% of lives saved
- Eradicated smallpox, nearly eliminated polio
- ROI: 54% invested in immunisation

## India's Immunisation Progress

- UIP covers 26M newborns & 34M pregnant yearly
- Polio-free (2014), eliminated maternal/neonatal tetanus (2015)
- Introduced new vaccines: MR, PCV, RVV
- Full immunisation coverage at 76.1% (NFHS-5)
- 1 in 4 children still misses essential vaccines

## Way Forward

- Global support for immunisation
- Sustained funding & commitment to Immunisation Agenda 2030
- Gavi's 2025 summit - to raise \$9B to protect 500M children (2026-2030)
- Goal: Save 8M+ lives through expanded vaccination programmes





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

**Newspaper :** The Hindu **Page No :** 14

- Report of: Office of PSA, CII, Centre for Tech, Innovation & Economic Research
- 244 public-funded R&D organizations (excluding defence, space, atomic energy, academia)

## Purpose

- Evaluate if labs focus on academic research or industry-aligned innovations
- Guide R&D organizations to contribute to SDGs and national priorities
- Enhance socio-economic impact (health, women in science, employment, skilling).

## Key Findings

- **Startup Support:** Only 25% provided incubation; 16% supported deep-tech startups
- **Industry Collaboration:** 15% collaborated with overseas industries
- **Facility Access:** Half opened facilities to external researchers/students
- **National Missions:**
  - 50% contributed to 'Make in India'
  - 35% aligned with Skill India
  - 30% targeted Swachh Bharat
- **Workforce Trends:**
  - Decline in permanent staff; rise in contractual hires
  - Young researchers increased to 58%
- **Budget Growth:** Combined budget of 155 labs rose from ₹9,924 Cr (2017-18) to ₹13,162 Cr (2022-23)
- **Gender Parity:** Women scientists' representation stagnant (2021-23)

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## Recommendations

- **Realignment:** review mandates - *Viksit Bharat* and critical tech priorities
- **Industry Collaboration**
- **Startup Support:** Establish Section 8 companies to aid startups
- **Open Access:** Improve facility sharing with academia/researchers
- **Urgency:** Implement changes on a "war footing"



# Data on Judicial Vacancies & Backlogs



**SYLLABUS : GS Paper 2:** Structure, Organization and Functioning of the Judiciary  
**Newspaper : The Hindu Page No : 10**

- **Delhi HC observation:** "acute shortage of judges" is reason for case backlog
- 36 judges (sanctioned 60) – **40% vacancies**
- Pending cases: 1,34,090 in Delhi HC

## High Courts

- Sanctioned judges: 1,114
- Current Strength: 769 – 31% vacancies
- Worst-hit:
  - Allahabad HC: 81/160 vacant, 11.76 lakh pending cases
  - Punjab & Haryana HC: 32/85 vacant
  - Only Sikkim & Meghalaya HCs – 0 vacancies

## Case Disposal vs. Filing Trends

- **2019 exception:** More cases disposed (23.53L) than filed (22.01L)
- **2024:** 24.06L filed, 22.57L disposed – widening gap

## Appointment Delays

- **Pending proposals:** 150 with Govt/SC Collegium
- **Awaiting recommendations:** 205 from HC Collegiums
- **MoP non-compliance:** Rarely initiated 6 months before vacancy

## Ad-Hoc Judges – A Partial Solution?

- **2021 SC order:** Allowed retired judges for criminal case backlog
- **2025 relaxation:** HCs can appoint 2-5 ad-hoc judges ( $\leq 10\%$  sanctioned strength)
- **Current status:** No proposals from HCs

## India Justice Report 2025 Highlights

- 20% surge in pending cases (2020-24)
- Judge-population ratio: 1 judge per 18.7 lakh people
- Workload extremes:
  - Allahabad & MP HCs: 15,000+ cases per judge
  - Only Sikkim, Tripura, Meghalaya HCs:  $< 1,000$  cases/judge

## Case file

The pendency of cases in various Indian courts is increasing every year



### Number of pending cases

Name of court	Dec.31, 2022	Dec.31, 2023	Dec.31, 2024	As on Feb.7, 2025
Supreme Court	78,797	80,674	82,496	81,573
High Courts	53,92,031	54,42,547	55,40,682	62,35,242
District and subordinate courts	4,32,93,727	4,39,70,061	4,54,54,003	4,57,42,040

SOURCE: SUPREME COURT OF INDIA. NATIONAL JUDICIAL DATA GRID (NJDG)



**Q1. Consider the following statements regarding Mediation:**

1. Mediation is a voluntary process where an independent third person helps parties settle disputes in a conducive environment.
2. There are strict and binding procedural rules governing mediation.

**Which of the statements given above is/are NOT correct?**

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

**Answer: b**

**Q2. Consider the following judicial observations regarding Reservation in the Private Sector in India:**

1. In *P.A. Inamdar v. State of Maharashtra (2005)*, the Supreme Court ruled that private unaided institutions cannot be compelled to implement reservation policies.
2. In *Dr. Pradeep Jain v. Union of India (1984)*, the Court held that India should follow the principle of "one domicile," discouraging state-based discrimination.

**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**

**Q3. Consider the following statements regarding the Sahel Region:**

1. The Sahel stretches from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Red Sea in the east, acting as a transitional zone between the Sahara Desert and the savannas.
2. In Mauritania, the Sahel has become a significant route for drug and human trafficking between South America and Europe, often exploited by sub-state militant groups.
3. Niger has remained politically stable despite the regional turmoil caused by Islamist extremism and coups in neighbouring countries.

**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**

**Q4. Consider the following statements :**

1. The World Health Organization (WHO) has reported that over half of the 108 countries surveyed face disruptions in routine immunisation services.
2. In 2023, the number of children who missed all vaccines rose to 14.5 million, with more than half living in conflict-affected regions.
3. Global measles cases declined in 2024 as the "Big Catch-Up" initiative regained pre-pandemic vaccination coverage levels.

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

**Answer: b**

**Q5. Consider the following statements regarding the Garg Committee's observations on cryptocurrencies:**

1. The committee expressed concerns that the anonymous and decentralized nature of cryptocurrencies could facilitate money laundering and other illicit activities.
2. It recommended promoting private cryptocurrencies in India as a secure alternative to fiat currency

**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: a**





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