

## Prelim Bits 12-12-2023 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

### Section 6A of the Citizenship Act, 1955

Recently, the centre have defended the constitutional validity of Section 6A of Citizenship Act, 1955 before the Supreme Court.

- It is added into the Citizenship Act of 1955 only ***in 1985***.

**Citizenship Act, 1955** provides the conditions for getting citizenship by birth, by descent, or by registration. 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1950 is the cut-off date for establishing citizenship by birth or descent.

- **Applicability** - Only to Assam.
- **Agreement between** - The Indian government and the leaders of the Assam Movement.
- **Purpose** - To preserve and protect the Assamese culture, heritage, linguistic and social identity.
- To furtherance of a Memorandum of Settlement, Assam Accord.

**Assam Accord** was signed in 1985 between the Union government and the All Assam Students' Union to determine who is a foreigner in the state of Assam.

**Clause 5** of the Accord states that 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1966 shall serve as the base cut-off date for the detection and deletion of 'foreigners'.

- **Cut-off date for citizenship** - 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1966
  - **Suspended citizenship** - This is for illegal migrants from 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1966 to 25<sup>th</sup> March, 1971, and who have been found as foreigners, can become full citizens only 10 years from the date of declaration of foreigner status.
  - **No citizenship** - For illegal migrants after 25<sup>th</sup> March, 1971.
- **Challenges** - Having a different cut-off date for Indian citizenship in Assam than in the rest of India.

### References

1. [The Indian Express| Centre defends Section 6A of Citizenship Act](#)
2. [The Hindu| Cut-off date in determining citizenship status](#)

## Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

*One of the Justice of Supreme Court recommended setting up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to look into alleged violations of human rights in J&K and to recommend measures for reconciliation.*

- It is also known as a 'truth and justice commission' or simply, a 'truth commission'.
- It is an official mechanism to acknowledge and **reveal the wrongdoings by both state and non-state**.
- **Aim** - To **address and resolve the conflicts of the past**.
- **Definition** - According to the Priscilla B. Hayner, a TRC
  - *Focusses on the past*, rather than ongoing events
  - *Investigates a pattern of events* over a period of time
  - Engages directly and broadly with the affected population, gathering information on their experiences
  - Acts as a *temporary body*, with the aim of concluding with a final report.
  - Is *officially authorized* or empowered by the state under review

*Priscilla B. Hayner authored the book 'Unspeakable Truths: Transitional Justice and the Challenge of Truth Commissions' that have the reviews of 40 truth commissions.*

- **Countries with TRC** - Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, Canada, Australia, **Sri Lanka and Nepal**
  - South Africa and Australia are best known and Canada is the most consequential

*Truth and Reconciliation Commission focusses on putting together information and evidence from both the victims and the perpetrators of violence, rather than on prosecution and punishment for crimes.*

## Reference

[The Indian Express| Recommendation to set up Truth Commission](#)

## Indian Forest & Wood Certification Scheme

*India have launched its 1<sup>st</sup> Indian Food and Wood certification scheme.*

- **Launched by** - MoEFCC
- **Aim** - To offer **voluntary 3<sup>rd</sup> party certification** to promote **sustainable forest management and agroforestry** in the country.
- To **incentivise entities** like State forest departments, individual farmers, or Farmer Producer Organizations, farm forestry and other wood-based industries in the value chain.

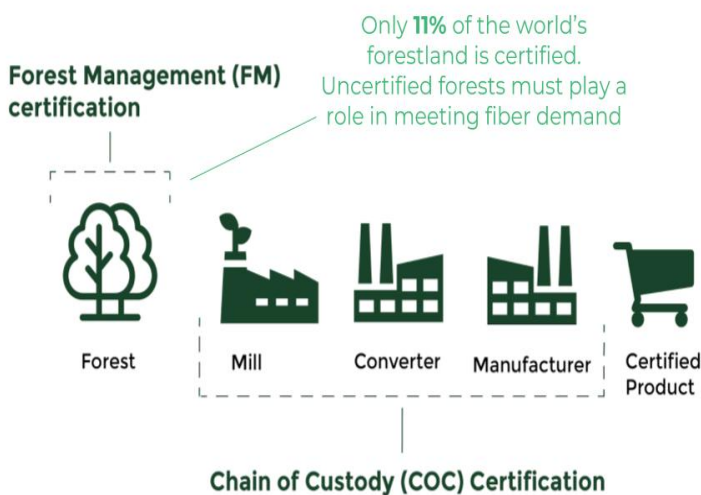
- **Certification Types**

- Forest management (FM) certification
- Tree outside forest management certification
- Chain of custody (CoC) certification

*Forest Management certification is based on the Indian Forest Management Standard, an integral part of the National Working Plan Code 2023 which consists of 8 criteria, 69 indicators and 254 verifiers.*

- **Overseen by** – Indian Forest and Wood Certification Council.
- **Operating agency** – Indian Institute of Forest Management in Bhopal, responsible for overall management.
- The [National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies](#) under the Quality Council of India (QCI) will accredit the certification bodies.
- **Certification bodies** – It will carry out independent audits and assess entities on their adherence to the prescribed standards.

**Forest certification** seeks to authenticate the origin, legality, and sustainability of forest-based products.



**Chain of custody (CoC) certification** is meant to guarantee the traceability of a forest product like timber throughout the supply chain from origin to market.

### Indian Forest and Wood Certification Council

- It will act as a multi-stakeholder advisory body.
- **Composition** – Representatives from Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education, FSI, QCI, IIFM, Union Ministry (Agriculture and Commerce), State Forest Departments, Forest Development Corporations and Wood-based industries

### References

1. [PIB| Indian Forest and Wood Certification Scheme](#)
2. [The Indian Express| Forest certifications](#)

## Karan Singh's Proclamation of 1949

Supreme Court cited Karan Singh's Proclamation of 1949 while upholding the abrogation of Article 370.

*Yuvraj Karan Singh was the heir to the throne of Jammu and Kashmir after his father 'Maharaja Hari Singh'.*

- **Repeal of Government of India Act, 1935** - It was until then governed the constitutional relationship between J&K and the dominion of India.
- **Applicability of Indian Constitution** - It shall govern the constitutional relationship between J&K and Union of India which shall be enforced by the king, his heirs and successors in accordance with the tenor of its provisions.
- **Supremacy of Indian Constitution** - It shall, as from the date of its commencement, supersede and abrogate all other constitutional provisions inconsistent therewith which were in force in J&K.
- Thus, the paragraph 8 of the Instrument of Accession ceased to be of legal consequence reflecting the full and final surrender of J&K's sovereignty to India.

***Instrument of accession (IoA)** is an agreement by which the ruler of the princely states agreed to the accession of his kingdom to independent India. Maharaja Hari Singh, then ruler of J&K signed the IoA in 1947.*

*Article 370 of the Indian Constitution accorded a special status to Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) by substantially limited Parliament's power to legislate for the State as compared to other States. This was revoked by a Constitution Order of 2019.*

## Reference

[The Indian Express| SC cites Karan Singh's Proclamation of 1949](#)

## Global River Cities Alliance (GRCA)

The GRCA was launched at the United Nations Climate Change Conference COP28 in Dubai in 2023.

- An **India-led initiative** inspired by India's '[River Cities Alliance](#)' (RCA).
- **Launched by** - National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG).
- **Secretariat**
  - **NMCG** under Jal Shakti Ministry
  - **NIUA** under Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs

- **Aim** - To empower global efforts towards **river conservation and sustainable water management**.
- **Membership** - **9 countries** (Indian, Denmark, Cambodia, Japan, Bhutan, Australia, Netherlands, Egypt, and Ghana).
  - **142 Indian River cities**, river cities of Den Haag from the Netherlands, Adelaide from Australia, and Szolnok of Hungary also joined.

*Recently, the RCA had signed a Memorandum of Common Purpose (MoCP) with 124 member Mississippi River Towns and Cities Initiative of the US which is 1<sup>st</sup> of its kind alliance in the world.*

- **Supported by** - World Bank, Asian Development Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.
- **Activities** - Water monitoring program, sharing best practices for renaturing urban areas, and restoring aquatic ecosystems for sustainable urban development initiatives will be discussed.

## References

[Hindustan Times| Launching of Global River Cities Alliance](#)

## Other Important News

### EXERCISE “VINBAX-2023”

- It is an **annual military training exercise** conducted alternatively in India and Vietnam.
- **Aim** - To foster collaborative partnership, promote inter- operability and share best practices between the two sides.
- The operation is under Chapter VII of United Nations Charter on Peace Keeping Operations.

### TechSaksham Program

- It is a top-up program that uses experiential learning to develop employability skills amongst **underserved female students** pursuing higher education.
- **Introduced by** - All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).
- This program will be delivered in a **blended mode** - a) instructor led face to face workshops/ classrooms and project work, and b) self-paced online learning modules.

### Universal Dynamic Crosslinker (UDC)

- Researchers at IIT Madras, Columbia University and Colorado State University in the US have developed a technique to merge diverse plastics into strong and recyclable materials.
- A universal dynamic crosslinker (UDC) is a specially designed crosslinker that can blend plastics that are usually incompatible.
- UDCs can be used to compatibilize immiscible mixed plastics.

### **'AMRIT' (Arsenic and Metal Removal by Indian Technology)**

- The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) - Madras has developed a technology called 'AMRIT' (Arsenic and Metal Removal by Indian Technology) for the removal of Arsenic and Metal ions from water.
- The technology uses nano-scale iron oxy-hydroxide, which selectively removes arsenic when water is passed through it.
- The technology can also remove other impurities from groundwater, such as Manganese, Uranium, Chromium, Mercury, Fluoride.

### **Bab al-Mandab Strait**

- It is a strait between Arabia and Africa that connects the Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean.
- The strait is bordered by Yemen on one side and Djibouti and Eritrea on the other.
- It is a strategic route for oil and a chokepoint between the Middle East and the Horn of Africa.
- It's also a vital link in the maritime trade route between the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean. About 10% of global trade passes through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait.





## Poland

- Donald Tusk becomes ***Poland's Prime Minister*** recently.
- Poland is the ***9<sup>th</sup> Largest Country*** in Europe. It's bordered by the Baltic Sea to the north.
- The country is bordering
  - Germany to the west, the Czech Republic and
  - Slovakia to the south,
  - Ukraine and Belarus to the east, and
  - Lithuania and the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad to the northeast.



## Anthrax

- 5 countries in East and southern Africa are in the middle of outbreaks of the anthrax disease recently.
- It is a serious infectious disease caused by gram-positive, rod-shaped bacteria known as ***Bacillus anthracis***.
- It occurs naturally in soil and commonly affects ***domestic and wild animals*** around the world.
- It is a ***zoonotic disease*** that can result in severe lung problems, difficulty breathing, and shock in humans, usually been found in ***India's southern states***.

## Pakadwa Vivah

- Pakadwa Vivah is a ***tradition in Bihar*** where ***a boy is kidnapped or coerced*** and then married to a girl.
- In this practice, the wishes of the boy and girl are not considered.
- The practice is ***illegal*** and prevalent in several parts of Bihar.

## **AARDO**

- The African-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO) is an intergovernmental organization that aims to improve rural areas in **Asian and African countries**.
- It is an **autonomous organization** established in 1962, headquartered in **New Delhi**.
- It's one of the earliest examples of South-South cooperation in rural development.

## **National Medical Commission**

- The new National Medical Commission logo has an image of god Dhanvantri, and replaces the word 'India' with 'Bharat' recently.
- The National Medical Commission (NMC) is **India's top regulatory body for medical education and practice**.
- It was established in 2020 by the National Medical Commission Act, 2019, replacing the Medical Council of India (MCI).
- The NMC has **33 members**.