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GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA



The Geological Survey of India (GSI), one of the oldest scientific organizations in the country, is set to celebrate its 175th year of geoscientific legacy.

- It was set up in **1851** by **Sir Thomas Oldham**, primarily to find **coal deposits** for the Railways.
- Over the years, it has grown into a **repository of geo-science information** required in various fields in the country.

Role: It includes providing objective, **impartial and up-to-date geological expertise** and geoscientific information of all kinds, with a focus on policy-making decisions, and commercial and socio-economic needs.

- It also emphasises systematic documentation of all geological processes, both surface and subsurface, of India and its offshore areas.
- The organisation carries out this work through geological, geophysical, & geochemical surveys using the latest and most cost-effective techniques and methodologies.
- The main functions of the GSI relate to the **creation and updation of national geoscientific information** and mineral resource assessment.
- It has played a pioneering role in **geological mapping, mineral exploration**, disaster studies, and geoscientific research, significantly contributing to India's industrial and economic growth.

Headquarter: It is headquartered in **Kolkata** and has six regional offices located at Lucknow, Jaipur, Nagpur, Hyderabad, Shillong and Kolkata. Every state has a state unit.

- **Nodal Ministry:** Presently, GSI is an attached office to the **Ministry of Mines**.



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GILOY



The data from PubMed, a globally recognised database for biomedical and life sciences research, reveals a staggering 376.5% increase in the number of research publications around Giloy (*Tinospora cordifolia*) over the past decade.

- It is commonly known as **Guduchi** and familiar as **Amrita in Sanskrit**, which translates to the ‘herb of immortality’, because of its abundant beneficial property
- It is a **popular herb** and has been used in therapeutics for a long **time in Ayush systems**.
- **Distribution:** It is large climber with succulent, corky and grooved stems. It is found almost throughout India.
- **Parts Used:** Stem, leaves, root are used for many purposes.
- It grows well in **almost all types of soils** and under varying climatic conditions. The plant is cultivated by stem cutting in the month of May-June.
- **Uses:**
 - It is commonly used in the **management of fevers**. It is one of the important herbs for the management of gouty arthritis.
 - The increasing number of clinical studies and laboratory research suggests that Giloy may have a **significant role in cancer therapy, autoimmune disease management, and even inflammatory disorders**.

INDIA IS STARING AT AN OBESITY CHALLENGE

- Obesity in India has been increasing steadily, as indicated by the National Family Health Surveys (NFHS).
- The percentage of overweight/obese women rose from 20.6% (NFHS-4, 2015-16) to 24% (NFHS-5, 2019-21), while for men, it increased from 18.9% to 22.9%.
- Urban areas recorded significantly higher obesity rates than rural regions.

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Health Risks Associated with Obesity

- Obesity is often referred to as the "mother of all diseases" due to its strong link to life-threatening conditions.
- According to the WHO, obesity significantly increases the risk of:
 - **Cardiovascular diseases** – A leading cause of death and disability in India, occurring about 10 years earlier than in other countries.
 - **Diabetes** – India has the highest number of diabetes cases globally, with 101 million affected.
 - **Cancer** – The number of cancer cases is projected to rise from 14.6 lakh in 2022 to 15.7 lakh in 2025, as per ICMR data.
 - **Osteoarthritis** – A common obesity-related joint disorder.

Reasons for Rising Obesity in India

- **Unhealthy Diets and Processed Foods**
 - The increasing consumption of ultra-processed foods and unhealthy diets is a major driver of obesity in urban India.
 - These foods contribute to **visceral fat accumulation** and increase the risk of cardio-metabolic diseases.
- **Nutritional Deficiencies and Economic Barriers**
 - Low-income households, especially those relying on the **public distribution system**, consume more carbohydrates (rice and wheat) due to affordability issues.
 - Nutrient-rich foods like **fruits, vegetables, pulses, dairy, and animal-based foods** are expensive, making healthy eating inaccessible to many.
 - While obesity is currently more prevalent among urban middle-class populations, it is rising among the **rural poor** as well.
- **Lack of Physical Activity**
 - A study in The Lancet Global Health found that **nearly half of all Indians** do not get sufficient physical activity.

- Indoor sedentariness due to desk jobs and digital devices, combined with unsafe and uninviting outdoor environments, limits exercise.
- Factors such as:
 - Lack of cycling lanes and pedestrian pathways
 - Poorly lit streets and rising crime rates
 - Shrinking green spaces for recreation discourage physical activity, leading to higher obesity rates in cities and towns.
- **Environmental Factors**
 - Air pollution contributes to inflammation and metabolic disorders, further increasing obesity risk.
 - Without clean, green, and safe urban environments, physical activity remains difficult, fueling obesity growth.

CHALLENGES FACED BY ELECTED WOMEN REPRESENTATIVES IN PANCHAYATI RAJ SYSTEM

- A report by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj panel, chaired by former Mines Secretary Sushil Kumar, has highlighted various **challenges that prevent Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) from exercising their authority independently**.
- These challenges include **socio-cultural norms, patriarchal biases**, lack of deterrent laws, and inadequate political experience.
- The report **recommends policy interventions**, structural reforms, and strict penalties to curb the practice of '**Pradhan Pati**', '**Sarpanch Pati**', or '**Mukhiya Pati**'.
- The committee was formed in September 2023 following a **Supreme Court order** (July 6, 2023).
- **It conducted four regional workshops**, engaging representatives from 14 states, including MP, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, UP, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, etc.

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Key Challenges Identified:

- **Lack of political experience:**
 - Newly elected women representatives often lack exposure and experience.
 - They **struggle to discharge responsibilities effectively** at different levels of the Panchayati Raj system, especially at the Gram Panchayat level.
- **Gender-based discrimination:**
 - Women representatives are **often ignored** in official and informal meetings.
 - Male elected representatives and officials prefer interacting with male counterparts.
- **Patriarchal socio-cultural norms:**
 - Women are discouraged from speaking in male-dominated gatherings, including panchayat meetings. These practices limit their participation in governance.
- **Political pressure and threats:**
 - Women representatives face **coercion, threats, and sometimes violence** from political opponents and dominant groups.
- **Lack of training and mentorship:**
 - Women representatives have limited access to training programs that can enhance their leadership skills.

Recommendations and Way Forward:

- **Policy interventions:** Strengthen training programs and provide legal awareness to EWRs.
 - **Structural reforms:** Extend the duration of reservation to ensure leadership continuity.
 - **Exemplary penalties:** Enforce strict laws against male relatives functioning as proxies.
 - **Capacity building:** Enhance mentorship and skill development initiatives for women leaders.
 - **Awareness campaigns:** Promote gender sensitization at all levels of governance.
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CONTENTIOUS AMENDMENTS TO THE ADVOCATES ACT AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

- The Union Ministry of Law and Justice withdrew the **Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2025**, following strong opposition from the legal community.
- The Bill sought to amend the **Advocates Act, 1961**, which governs the legal profession in India.
- However, lawyers and the **Bar Council of India (BCI)** raised concerns that the amendments would undermine the independence of legal institutions, restrict protests, and give excessive power to the government.
- In response to nationwide strikes and legal representations, the government decided to withdraw the Bill and reconsider the proposed changes.

Key Provisions and Controversies:

- **Government Influence Over the Bar Council of India (BCI)**
 - The Bill proposed allowing the central government to nominate up to three members to the BCI.
 - Currently, the BCI is an independent body that regulates the legal profession in India.
 - Critics argued that government-appointed members could compromise the council's autonomy and lead to political interference in legal matters.
- **Restrictions on Lawyers' Right to Protest**
 - One of the most contentious provisions was **Section 35A**, which aimed to ban strikes and boycotts by lawyers.
 - It stated that any form of abstention from work, or obstruction in court functioning, would be considered misconduct, punishable under the Advocates Act.
 - Lawyers strongly opposed this provision, arguing that the right to protest is fundamental in a democracy.

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- **Entry of Foreign Law Firms and Lawyers**
 - The Bill sought to empower the central government to regulate the entry of foreign law firms and lawyers into India.
- **Expanded Definition of 'Legal Practitioner'**
 - The Bill proposed broadening the definition of 'legal practitioner' to include corporate lawyers and lawyers associated with foreign law firms.
- **New Misconduct Provisions and Penalties**
 - The Bill introduced additional provisions on lawyer misconduct, including:
 - Allowing clients to file misconduct complaints against lawyers if they faced financial loss due to legal proceedings.
 - Imposing monetary fines of up to ₹3 lakh on advocates found guilty of misconduct.
 - Allowing state bar councils to impose fines of ₹50,000 on clients who file frivolous complaints.
 - Lawyers argued that holding them financially liable for client losses was unfair, as legal outcomes depend on judicial decisions, not just advocacy.

Future Prospects and The Way Forward:

- While the Bill has been withdrawn, the government has stated that it will introduce a revised draft after consultations with stakeholders. Key areas for reconsideration include:
 - Ensuring the BCI remains independent and self-regulated.
 - Balancing the right to protest with judicial efficiency.
 - Revisiting foreign law firm regulations in consultation with legal bodies.
 - Refining the definition of legal practitioners to avoid ambiguity.
- Legal experts suggest that future amendments should focus on improving legal education, streamlining disciplinary mechanisms, and enhancing access to justice while maintaining the autonomy of the legal profession.

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MAPLE SYRUP URINE DISEASE



- It is a **rare genetic disorder** characterized by **deficiency of an enzyme complex** (branched-chain alpha-keto acid dehydrogenase) that is required to **break down** (metabolize) the three **branched-chain amino acids** (BCAAs) **leucine, isoleucine and valine**, in the body.
- The loss of this complex prevents the body from properly breaking down several amino acids, eventually leading to **neurological symptoms** and **life-threatening brain damage**.

Types:

- **Classic:** It is the **most severe and** also the most common. Symptoms usually develop within the **first three days of birth**.
 - **Intermediate:** It is **less severe than** classic MSUD. Symptoms typically appear in children between 5 months and 7 years old.
 - **Intermittent:** Children with intermittent MSUD develop as expected until an infection or period of stress causes symptoms to appear. People with intermittent MSUD usually tolerate higher levels of the three amino acids than those with classic MSUD.
 - **Thiamine-responsive:** This type of MSUD **responds to treatment using high doses of vitamin B1** (thiamine) along with a restricted diet.
 - **Symptoms:**
 - A sweet, syrupy smell in their pee, sweat or earwax
 - Lethargy (they may move slowly or appear tired or weak)
 - Irritability or fussiness
 - **Treatment:** The main treatment for MSUD is a **low-protein diet** with low levels of the three amino acids.
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BHAGWAN MAHAVIR WILDLIFE SANCTUARY



- Nestled in the **Western Ghats**, it is located on the eastern border of the state of **Goa**, near the village of Mollem.

- **Originally known as the Mollem Game Sanctuary**, it was declared a wildlife sanctuary in 1969 and then renamed the Bhagwan

Mahavir Wildlife Sanctuary.

- The sanctuary **includes the Mollem National Park**.
- It covers an area of 240 sq. km.
- It is also home to the famous **Dudhsagar waterfall**, the **Devil's Canyon**, the **Tambdi Surla temple**, the **Tambdi falls**, and a number of other historic and religious sites.

Vegetation: West Coast **tropical evergreen forests**, West Coast **semi-evergreen forests**, and **moist deciduous**

Flora: **Teak, bamboo, cashew**, and eucalyptus trees dominate the landscape.

Fauna: **Gaur, Sambar, Leopards, Spotted Deer, Slender TORIES, Jungle Cats, Malayan Giant Squirrels, Pythons, and Cobras.**