

**The Hindu Important News Articles & Editorial For UPSC CSE**

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—It's about quality—

- India's last imported warship, *Tamal*, nears commissioning in Russia, marking progress in naval self-reliance.

# *Tamal*, India's last imported warship, likely to be commissioned in June

**Dinakar Peri**

NEW DELHI

The Indian Navy crew that will operate *Tamal*, the stealth frigate under construction in Russia, reached St. Petersburg last week in preparation for its commissioning, which is expected to take place in early June.

The event is significant as *Tamal* will be the last warship to be commissioned outside India or imported. The country now designs and constructs its own warships.

The commissioning crew of around 200 personnel reached St. Petersburg around 10 days ago for training as the ship will undergo a series of trials leading up to its commissioning, officials sources in the know confirmed. The crew will shift to Kalinin-



*INS Tushil* was the first ship to be manufactured in Russia under the present deal. It was commissioned in December 2024. ANI

grad after the training to oversee the trials.

The ship is being built as part of the deal for four additional follow-on stealth frigates under an Inter-Governmental Agreement signed in October 2016. Under the deal, two ships are to be imported and two manufactured by Goa Shipyard Ltd. (GSL) under

technology transfer. A \$1-billion deal was subsequently signed for the two frigates under direct purchase.

*Tamal* has completed manufacturer trials and is currently undergoing State Committee Trials. It will then go through delivery acceptance trials, both in harbour and at sea, which

will be spread over 45 to 50 days, sources said, explaining the process.

The ship's weapons will also be fired after which it will be ready for commissioning.

*INS Tushil*, the first ship to be manufactured in Russia under the deal, was commissioned on December 9, 2024 at Kaliningrad in the presence of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. The ship reached its home port in Karwar on February 14 after sailing over 12,500 nautical miles, visiting eight countries across three continents through the journey.

The Indian Navy, which set up a Directorate of Naval Design way back in 1970, has, for sometime now, graduated into a builder's navy with over 60 warships being constructed at Indian shipyards.

## About *Tamal*:

- *Tamal* is a stealth frigate being constructed in Russia for the Indian Navy.

## Daily News Analysis

- It is part of a deal signed in October 2016 under an Inter-Governmental Agreement between India and Russia.
- The deal includes four follow-on stealth frigates, with two being built in Russia and two in India by Goa Shipyard Ltd. undertechnology transfer.
- A \$1-billion contract was signed for the two frigates being imported from Russia.
- Tamal has completed manufacturer trials and is undergoing State Committee Trials.
- The commissioning is expected in early June 2025 in Russia.
- Tamal will be the last warship to be commissioned outside India as the country now constructs its own warships.
- The Indian Navy has over 60 warships under construction at Indian shipyards.

- The Centre and Tamil Nadu government are in disagreement over the three-language policy in schools under the New Education Policy (NEP), 2020.

# Should a third language be compulsory?

Why is the Union government delaying funds under the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan to Tamil Nadu? When was the three-language policy first introduced and what did it mandate? What are the challenges in having extra language courses in government schools?

## EXPLAINER

Rangarajan. R

### The story so far:

There has been a tussle between the Centre and the Tamil Nadu government over the three-language formula in schools under the New Education Policy (NEP), 2020. The Union government has indicated that it needs to be complied with for release of funds tied to the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan. However, the Tamil Nadu government views it as a 'smokescreen' for Hindi imposition and insists that it would continue with its two-language policy.

### What are constitutional provisions?

The Constitution provides that Hindi is the official language of the Union. English was originally meant to continue as the official language for 15 years from the commencement of the Constitution (till 1965). However, the Official Languages Act, 1963 provides for the continued use of English, in addition to Hindi, for all official purposes of the Union without any time limit. The legislature of a State may adopt any one or more of the languages in use in the State or Hindi as the official language(s) for official purposes of that State.

Further, the Constitution provides that it shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India.

### What is the three-language policy?

The three-language formula was first introduced in the NEP of 1968. This policy and the Official Language Resolution, 1968 mandated the teaching of Hindi as a language in non-Hindi speaking States. There were protests against the same in Tamil Nadu and it has steadfastly followed its two-language policy of teaching Tamil and English in its government schools.



**Firm stance:** A protest against the three-language policy, in Chennai, on February 18, 2021.

The NEP, 2020 has retained the three-language formula albeit with a key difference that it doesn't impose any language on any State. It specifies that the languages to be learnt will be the choice of States, regions and the students, so long as at least two of the three languages are native to India.

### What are the issues?

The Annual Status of Education Research (ASER) conducted regularly by renowned NGO Pratham leaves much to be improved upon with respect to learning abilities. The report of 2022 indicates that close to 60% of students in Class V could

not read a Class II level text. The report of 2023 reveals that 25% of youth in the age group of 14-18 years could not read a Class II level text fluently in their regional language. More than 40% of this age group could not read sentences in English. The learning outcomes in foundational numeracy skills like subtraction and division is equally poor.

As per the report on 'Analysis of Budgeted expenditure on Education' prepared by the Ministry of Education, Government of India, in 2022, out of the total revenue expenditure on elementary education estimated at ₹3.03 lakh crore (2019-20), 15% is spent by the Centre

while 85% is spent by the States. The total expenditure on elementary, secondary, higher and technical education by the Centre and States combined hovers around 4-4.5% of the GDP as against the target of 6% set out in the NEP 2020. Thus, the expenditure on education is yet to reach the desired levels.

### What can be the way forward?

While English is not a native language, its proficiency has helped us in becoming globally competitive in various service industries. India is a multi-lingual country and the objective of learning more Indian languages in schools is desirable. However, the existing issues of learning outcomes coupled with constraints on resources require that the efforts of government run schools should be focused on improving the teaching of the mother tongue/local language and English, apart from foundational numeracy skills. Even in private schools where a third language is taught till Standard VIII, there is limited proficiency being attained by the students in such language.

The 2011 Census data reveals that approximately 26% of India is bilingual and 7% is trilingual. The corresponding figures for urban areas are 44% and 15%, as against 22% and 5% for rural areas. With rapid urbanisation and migration of labourers across the country, this number is bound to increase in the forthcoming Census, indicating that the young and adult population would learn additional languages according to their needs.

There must be a constructive dialogue between the Centre and the Tamil Nadu government to ensure that funding is not delayed.

Considering the share of expenditure borne by the States as well as regional diversities, there also needs to be a productive discussion on providing more autonomy to the States in policy matters relating to school education.

Rangarajan. R is a former IAS officer and author of 'Polity Simplified'. Views expressed are personal.

## THE GIST

The three-language formula was first introduced in the NEP of 1968. This policy and the Official Language Resolution, 1968 mandate the teaching of Hindi as a language in non-Hindi speaking States.

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## Background

- The Union government has linked compliance with the policy to the release of funds under the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan.
- The Tamil Nadu government views this as an attempt to impose Hindi and insists on continuing with its two-language policy of Tamil and English.

### Constitutional Provisions

- Hindi is the official language of the Union, while English continues to be used for official purposes under the Official Languages Act, 1963.
- States can adopt Hindi or any regional language as their official language.
- The Constitution mandates the Union to promote Hindi as a medium of expression across India.

### The Three-Language Formula

- Introduced in the 1968 NEP, the policy mandated Hindi in non-Hindi-speaking states, leading to protests in Tamil Nadu.
- Tamil Nadu has continued with its two-language policy.
- NEP 2020 retains the three-language formula but allows states, regions, and students to choose their languages, provided at least two are native to India.

### Challenges in Education

- The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) highlights poor learning outcomes among students.
- In 2022, 60% of Class V students could not read a Class II-level text.
- In 2023, 25% of youth (14-18 years) struggled with reading in their regional language, while over 40% could not read English sentences.
- Foundational numeracy skills like subtraction and division remain weak.

### Financial Constraints in Education

- According to the Ministry of Education (2022), 85% of elementary education expenditure is borne by states, while the Centre contributes 15%.
- Total education spending (elementary, secondary, higher, and technical) is around 4-4.5% of GDP, below the NEP target of 6%.

### Way Forward

- English proficiency has helped India's global competitiveness, but improving teaching in the mother tongue and foundational numeracy is crucial.
- Private schools teach a third language until Standard VIII, but student proficiency remains limited.
- The 2011 Census shows 26% of Indians are bilingual and 7% trilingual, with higher rates in urban areas.
- Urbanization and migration will likely increase multilingualism in future Censuses.

- Constructive dialogue is needed between the Centre and states to ensure timely funding.
- Greater autonomy for states in school education policy should be considered.

**UPSC Mains Practice Question**

**Ques :**Examine the implications of the three-language formula under the New Education Policy (NEP), 2020, in the context of federalism and linguistic diversity in India. (150 Words /10 marks)



Simandou mine's high-grade iron ore supply may reshape global markets, impacting Australia and China's dominance.

## 'Simandou mine can end or start Australia's golden iron ore age'

### OPINION

**Clyde Russell**  
LAUNCESTON, AUSTRALIA

The term gamechanger is often over used enough to be rendered meaningless, but the huge Simandou mine in the West African country of Guinea is going to be just that as its start up is set to rock the seaborne iron ore market.

The first cargoes from the project may arrive by the end of this year and it's expected that it will ramp up to its full capacity of 120 million metric tonne per annum fairly quickly.

The four blocks of Simandou are impressive in their scale and infrastructure challenges, boasting a 620 kilometre (384 mile)

rail line, a new port with dedicated trans-shipment vessels that will load bulk carriers offshore.

But Simandou is more than a technical marvel, as it will meet around 10% of the annual seaborne imports of China, the world's biggest buyer of the key steel raw material, taking about 75% of global seaborne iron ore. Simandou is largely a Chinese venture, with 75% of the production controlled by Chinese companies including Baosteel, and 25% held by Rio Tinto, the world's largest iron ore miner.

#### China's dominance

While in theory Simandou's output could be sold to buyers across the globe, in practice virtually all of it is likely to head to China.



**New era:** Simandou can also give impetus for Australia to kick-start new investment spree into adding value to iron-ore bounty. REUTERS

The project will also produce high-grade iron ore, around 65.3% iron content, which is better quality than most of what Rio and its competitors

mine in Western Australia, the top iron-ore producing region. High grade iron ore may be in stronger demand in coming years as Chinese steel mills seek to

decarbonise, an imperative given that steel production accounts for about 8% of total worldwide carbon emissions.

Simandou's iron ore will be of sufficient quality to be fed directly into electric arc furnaces (EAFs), which produce steel with considerably lower emissions than through the more common process of using basic oxygen furnaces, which require substantial volumes of coal. The question for the iron ore market is who gets pushed out of China when Simandou's ore starts to arrive?

This of course assumes China's steel output stays constant at around the 1 billion tonne a year level it has been at since 2019.

There may be some loss of supply from major ex-

porters Australia and Brazil as existing mines reach end of life and aren't replaced, but even allowing for this it's likely that some iron ore will be pushed out of the market.

This spells bad news for some of the miners in Western Australia as a combination of a switch to higher-grade iron ore, stagnant demand from China and increased supply from Guinea may put downward pressure on prices.

#### New investment

Australia's miners and governments have enjoyed a strong run with iron ore for much of the past decade, reaping the benefits of building vast, efficient mines and logistic solutions. Even at the current price of around \$108 a

tonne, iron ore remains vastly profitable given the cost of producing a tonne and getting it to a port in Western Australia is around \$23.

With Simandou's new high-grade iron ore coming and the need to decarbonise steel production, it could be argued that Australia's golden age of iron ore is coming to an end.

But it could also provide the impetus for Australia to kick-start a new investment spree into adding value to its iron ore bounty.

If the assumption is that the world's manufacturers will increasingly turn to green steel, then Australia is perhaps better placed than any other country.

To make green steel you need low-cost iron ore and massive volumes of cheap

renewable energy.

Australia already has the low-cost iron ore and is more than capable of building sufficient renewable energy, chiefly solar backed by battery storage.

The renewable energy is used to make green hydrogen, which in turn is used to turn iron ore into direct reduced iron (DRI) or hot briquetted iron (HBI).

DRI can be used to make steel in an EAF, while HBI can be shipped to customers in Asia to make into steel using EAFs.

However, it will likely take the support of both the federal and state governments to give momentum to any plans to beneficiate iron ore domestically.

*(The views expressed here are those of the author, a columnist for Reuters)*

### Places In News: Simandou Mine

- The Simandou mine in Guinea, West Africa, is one of the largest untapped iron ore deposits.
- It is set to impact the global iron ore market, with its first shipments expected by the end of the year.
- The mine has a full production capacity of 120 million metric tonnes per year.
- Simandou includes a 620 km rail line, a new port, and offshore trans-shipment vessels.
- China, the largest importer of iron ore, will receive about 10% of its annual imports from Simandou.
- Chinese companies control 75% of the project, with Rio Tinto holding 25%.
- The mine produces high-grade 65.3% iron ore, suitable for electric arc furnaces (EAFs).
- Increased supply may pressure Australian and Brazilian miners as demand from China remains stagnant.
- Australia may shift focus to producing green steel using renewable energy and hydrogen.

- ▶ Anglo American has sold its Brazilian nickel business to China's MMG Ltd. for up to \$500 million, simplifying its portfolio.

# China's grip on global nickel supply tightens with Anglo sale to MMG

Chinese companies already control around 75% of refining capacity in Indonesia, which has rapidly emerged as the world's largest supplier; with two other Western producers looking to offload their nickel operations due to low prices, China's market dominance could yet grow further

## OPINION

Andy Home  
LONDON

Anglo American's sale of its Brazilian nickel business to China's MMG Ltd. is a corporate win-win. Anglo gets to deliver on its promise to shareholders to simplify its portfolio and pockets up to \$500 million.

MMG, which is already a major producer of copper, cobalt and zinc, gets to diversify into another metal and expand its geographic footprint into Brazil. It is also buying into the one part of the nickel market that is showing signs of price resilience amid a glut of over-supply. But it's not such good news for Western countries looking to escape China's tightening grip on the global nickel supply chain. Chinese companies already control around 75% of refining capacity in Indonesia, which has rapidly emerged as the world's largest supplier.

And, with two other Western producers looking to offload their nickel operations due to low prices, China's market dominance could yet grow further.

### Price devastation

Anglo's Brazilian assets comprise two mines and two processing plants with annual combined capacity of 40,000 metric tonne of



**Metal boost:** MMG is already a major producer of copper, cobalt and zinc. VIA REUTERS

nickel. Both plants produce ferronickel for the stainless steel sector, which is still the largest consumer of nickel despite the metal's growing use in electric vehicle batteries.

This segment of the nickel market was the first to feel the full force of Indonesia's production boom, which initially came in the form of a competitor stainless steel input called nickel pig iron (NPI).

Such Class II nickel products always trade at a discount to the high-purity Class I refined metal traded on the London Metal Exchange (LME)

But Indonesia's production surge caused the discount to LME prices to balloon from an average 8.4% in 2001 to 27.2% in 2023, as per MMG's investor pre-



China is evidently still taking a strategic view of nickel, even though it has lost much of its battery metal lustre in the West

sentation on the deal.

It was a double whammy for Class II producers since the LME price was simultaneously collapsing.

Around half of the world's ferronickel output outside of China and Indonesia is now suspended, according to Macquarie Bank analyst Jim Lennon.

Anglo's Brazilian operations are among the survivors. They are low-cost and still cash-flow positive des-

pite the collapse in the London Metal Exchange (LME) nickel price to four-year lows below \$16,000 per ton. Anglo's ferronickel sells at a premium relative to other Class II products due to its quality and green credentials relative to Indonesian NPI. Carbon footprint is assuming greater significance in the stainless sector. The European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, which will tax higher-carbon imports, is due to come into force next year.

### The turnaround

Even as the LME nickel price has continued sinking under the weight of rising inventory, much of it Chinese and Indonesian, the Class II market has turned. The discount to

the LME nickel price narrowed to an average 25% over the first half of last year, according to MMG. That for Anglo material tightened to 15.9% from 20.8% in 2023.

### Supply constraints

Supply has been constrained both by the mass closure of capacity in the West and a change of product mix in Indonesia.

Many Indonesian operators switched their furnaces from producing NPI for the stainless steel sector to producing either nickel matte or mixed hydroxide for the battery sector.

Macquarie's Lennon estimates the Class II market was at best balanced last year as Indonesian surplus transferred to the Class I segment of the market.

The glut is now all too visible in the form of LME warehouse stocks, which more than doubled last year and have risen another 30,000 tonne to 192,828 tonne so far this year.

### Strategic metal

MMG is betting the supply glut won't last beyond this decade, when a combination of steady growth in global stainless steel production and exponentially higher demand from the battery sector will create supply deficits.

If so, the company will be well positioned to reap the rewards. Anglo's nickel assets sit on the world's

third largest resource of the metal, capable of transforming MMG into one of the world's largest producers outside of Indonesia.

And, although, the Brazilian operations currently produce ferronickel, that doesn't mean they couldn't go down the Indonesian route and be reconfigured to produce battery inputs.

China is evidently still taking a strategic view of nickel, even though it has lost much of its battery metal lustre in the West.

Brazil's Vale has just booked a \$1.4 billion impairment against its Thompson nickel operations in Canada and launched a strategic review of the business. It's unlikely the Canadian government would tolerate Chinese ownership but Thompson is not the only nickel asset up for grabs.

Australian miner South32 is also looking to sell its Cerro Matoso ferronickel operations in Colombia "in response to structural changes in the nickel market," it said in its Q4 2024 report. Those structural changes have been wrought by Chinese investment in Indonesia.

The resulting supply tsunami and price collapse means China can double down on long-term bet that nickel is still a critical metal for the energy transition.

*(The opinions expressed here are those of the author, a columnist for Reuters)*



### **China Strengthens Global Nickel Dominance:**

- MMG gains diversification into nickel and expands its presence into Brazil, strengthening China's control over the global nickel supply chain.
- Chinese companies already control around 75 percent of refining capacity in Indonesia, which has rapidly emerged as the world's largest supplier.

### **Why is Nickel Important?**

- Nickel is a key industrial metal used in stainless steel, batteries, and alloys.
- It enhances corrosion resistance and strength in stainless steel, which is widely used in construction and infrastructure.
- Nickel is a crucial component in lithium-ion batteries, making it essential for electric vehicles and renewable energy storage.
- It is used in aerospace, defense, and electronics due to its high-temperature resistance and conductivity.
- Nickel alloys are vital for chemical processing, medical devices, and desalination plants.
- Nickel's importance is rising due to growing demand for sustainable and high-performance materials.

### In News : African-Asian Rural Development Organization

- Recently, 21st African-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO) concluded and reaffirmed that development is strongest when rooted in community, driven by local knowledge, technology and south-south cooperation.

#### About African-Asian Rural Development Organization

- It is an autonomous inter-governmental Organization comprising country governments of Africa and Asia which was established in 1962.
- The organization was set up with a view to promote coordinated efforts, exchange of experiences and cooperative action for furthering the objectives of development of the rural areas.
- The membership of the Organization is open to all countries of the Afro-Asian region provided that it is a full or associate member of the United Nations or any of its specialised agencies, organisations and foundations concerned with the development of rural communities.
- **Member countries:** Currently it comprises 32 countries of Africa and Asia as full members and 3 associate members
  - It enjoys observer status with international organisations like Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi, India

#### Functions of African-Asian Rural Development Organization

- To develop understanding among members for better appreciation of each other's problems and to explore opportunities for collaboration of efforts for sustainable agricultural and rural development;
- To collaborate with the appropriate international and regional organizations, including UN agencies, the national bodies, governmental or non-governmental.
- To organize and facilitate the conduct of international, regional and in-country training programmes to strengthen the institutional capacity of Afro-Asian member countries in sustainable agriculture and rural development.
- To initiate research and action research studies of specific or common interest and disseminate disaggregated data/statistics and information to member countries.
- To provide technical and financial support to its member countries to undertake pilot projects for experimentation and replication.

# Human smuggling must engage Parliament's attention

The planeloads of Indians being deported to India from the United States are lucky to be back alive. Shackled, handcuffed, humiliated and in dire straits, they have flown back heartbroken and in shame. But there is also the case of illegal immigrants from north India clearing ammunition fields in Iraq, who were abandoned. They were brought back home after emergency documents were issued.

However, the key issue here is about illegal immigration. Every year, countless young Indians attempt what is called 'irregular migration'. Backing them are the 'unethical merchants of death' who sponsor this activity and who have proliferated in rural Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala and Gujarat. Manpower export – legally called human smuggling or *kabootarbazi* – is one of the most profitable forms of trade. It requires no technical skill, no educational or professional qualifications, no financial investment, and has no fear or respect for any law, checks, punishment or even criminal action.

## Horror and misery

Even though this menace is not new to India, we must learn from what has happened. The tradesmen of these flourishing rackets of human smuggling thrive on gullible youth who fantasise about making it big with dollar-fuelled dreams. In reality they are only waiting to be duped. This is organised crime that perpetuates horror and misery, and flourishes with impunity. Once in the net of these human smugglers, these migrants are vulnerable to exploitation and face grave risks to their life. As the world has seen, they end up being suffocated in containers, perish in scorching deserts, drown at sea or be herded into slave camps to work as forced labour. These human smugglers conduct their activities brazenly, without any regard for a precious human life.

Survivors often narrate harrowing tales of their



**Anil Malhotra**

is an international lawyer, author, an International Academy of Family Lawyers (IAFL) fellow and an alumni of SOAS University of London

The deportations from the U.S. must push Parliament to enact a central law that strikes at the roots of human smuggling

ordeal – of how they were forced to sit in piles of human waste, deprived of food and water, while others around them have died and their bodies dumped at sea or on road sides. Human smuggling generates high net worth profits for criminals, who in turn fuel corruption and organised crime. This is a deadly business that needs to be combated with grave urgency.

Naive youth fall prey to agents and land up somewhere working as slave labour in ammunition dumps or fields in Iraq, or as illegal immigrants elsewhere, who suffer immensely with no hope of returning home. The smuggling of migrants is a very profitable business with a low risk of detection. For criminals, it is becoming increasingly attractive to deal in human merchandise. The business of death is becoming more organised, involving professional international mafias across global borders.

India needs to be alert and check this global menace. Sadly, the Emigration Act, 1983 – officially 'an Act to consolidate and amend the law relating to emigration of citizens of India' – neither defines human smuggling nor looks at the serious problems connected with this deathly trade. Thus, Parliament must waste no time in legislating an Indian human smuggling law. There are pieces of State legislation that are piecemeal and with a limited ambit of application – only to State territorial borders. Having a new central law is a composite solution and Parliament must set the ball rolling. There has been some discussion about the Emigration (Overseas Mobility Facilitation and Welfare) Bill, but its fate remains uncertain. Till then, any piece of State legislation would be welcome. In this, the Government of Punjab deserves praise for its efforts. But, sadly, its implementation is poor.

## Punjab's Act

The Punjab Travel Professionals Regulation Act, 2012, is described as a law to provide for the regulation of the profession of travel agents with a

view to check and curb illegal, fraudulent activities, and malpractices such as organised human smuggling in the State of Punjab. Enacted to provide a licensing regime for travel agents, and with penal provisions, it has some regulatory functions to check human smuggling.

In this enactment, "travel agent" means a person who is doing a profession which involves arranging, managing or conducting affairs related to the sending of persons abroad or which arise out of the affairs of persons sent to a foreign country, and shall include a range of activities covering diverse practices. Likewise, "human smuggling" shall mean and include illegally exporting, sending or transporting persons out of India by receiving money from them or their parents, relatives or any other persons interested in their welfare, by inducing, alluring or deceiving or cheating them.

## Parliament must act

A comparison of both Acts, i.e., the Emigration Act, 1983 and the Punjab Travel Professionals Regulation Act, 2012, shows that they enshrine regulatory mechanisms for recruiting agents and travel agents separately. Viewed objectively, both have complimentary purposes in their own spheres. They are neither inconsistent or repugnant to each other. In fact, the two laws compliment each other as they provide similar objectives, aims and functions for recruiting and travel agents, respectively. Punjab has enacted a law which no other State in India has done.

In fact, human smuggling is a silent issue in the Emigration Act. The authority of law vested in Punjab must be exercised to enforce this law. Finally, Parliament must seriously contemplate enacting a national law to control Indian borders to regulate the human smuggling industry and deal with irregularities with an iron hand. Parliamentarians must rise to save precious human Indian lives. There needs to be a central law which has teeth.

GS Paper 02 Indian Polity

UPSC Mains Practice Question: Discuss the challenges posed by human smuggling in India and suggest legal and policy measures to curb it. (150 Words /10 marks)

## Context :

- The article highlights the plight of Indians deported from the U.S., facing inhumane treatment and humiliation.

- It underscores the broader problem of human smuggling and irregular migration from India.

### Plight of Deported Indians

- Many Indians who are deported from other countries face inhumane treatment.
- They are often shackled, handcuffed, and humiliated before being sent back.
- Some illegal immigrants from India have been abandoned in dangerous situations, such as clearing ammunition fields in Iraq.

### Growing Problem of Irregular Migration

- Every year, thousands of young Indians attempt illegal migration, also known as "irregular migration."
- This activity is supported by human smugglers operating in various states, including Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, and Gujarat.
- Human smuggling, also called "kabootarbazi," is a highly profitable business requiring no skills, investment, or fear of legal consequences.

### Horror and Exploitation of Migrants

- Many young people are misled by human smugglers into believing they will achieve success abroad.
- Instead, they become victims of exploitation, facing extreme risks such as:
  - Death from suffocation in containers.
  - Drowning at sea.
  - Being forced into labor camps.
- Survivors report horrifying conditions, such as being deprived of food and water or forced to sit in unsanitary conditions.
- Human smugglers operate without any regard for human life and generate significant profits, fueling organized crime and corruption.

### Criminal Networks and the Organized Nature of Human Smuggling

- Human smuggling has become an international criminal business, often involving mafia networks.
- Due to low risks and high profits, criminals continue to expand this illegal trade.

### Need for Stronger Legal Frameworks

- The Emigration Act, 1983, does not define or address human smuggling directly.

- The existing law does not effectively combat this illegal trade, leading to calls for a stronger national law.
- A proposed law, the Emigration (Overseas Mobility Facilitation and Welfare) Bill, remains uncertain in its implementation.

### **Efforts by Punjab and Their Limitations**

- Punjab has enacted the Punjab Travel Professionals Regulation Act, 2012, to regulate travel agents and curb humansmuggling.
- This law denes human smuggling as illegally transporting individuals abroad in exchange for money.
- The Act includes licensing requirements for travel agents and penalties for fraudulent activities.
- However, enforcement of this law has been weak, limiting its effectiveness.

### **Need for a Strong Central Law**

- The existing legal framework at the state and national levels is insufficient.
- A comprehensive central law is necessary to effectively regulate human smuggling.
- Parliament must take urgent action to create a strong legal mechanism to protect Indian citizens from falling victim to this dangerous trade.
- A national law with strict enforcement provisions is essential to control illegal migration and safeguard lives.