



25 April, 2024

Article 244A

Context: Candidates in Assam's Diphu Lok Sabha constituency, where voting is on April 26, vow to implement Article 244(A) for an autonomous 'state within a state'.

➤ Article 244A - Autonomous State Creation:

- Article 244(A) permits the establishment of an 'autonomous state' within certain tribal areas of Assam.
- It envisions the formation of a local legislature or Council of Ministers, or both, for local administration.
- Inserted into the Constitution through the Twenty-second Constitution Amendment Act of 1969.
- Article 244(A) grants tribal areas more autonomous powers than the Sixth Schedule, particularly in controlling law and order.

➤ Sixth Schedule - Administration of Tribal Areas:

- The Sixth Schedule of the Constitution governs the administration of tribal areas in Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram, safeguarding tribal rights.
- This provision is outlined in Article 244(2) and Article 275(1) of the Constitution.
- In Assam, it encompasses the hill districts of Dima Hasao, Karbi Anglong, West Karbi, and the Bodo Territorial Region.
- The Governor holds the authority to alter the areas, names, or boundaries of autonomous districts within this schedule.
- While the executive powers of the Union extend to scheduled areas under the Fifth Schedule, sixth schedule areas remain under the state's executive authority.
- Scheduled areas operate with a distinct administrative machinery separate from the rest of the state.
- Currently, ten states including Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Telangana have Fifth Schedule Areas.
- Tribal habitations in Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, and Jammu & Kashmir are not covered by either the Fifth or Sixth Schedule.

➤ Demand for Autonomy and Political Developments:

- Demand for autonomy dates back to the 1950s hill areas movement in Assam.
- The Autonomous State Demand Committee (ASDC) and student bodies pressed for autonomy.
- Peace accords were signed with militant groups, promising greater autonomy and development packages.

2024 Global Report on Food Crisis (GRFC)

Context: In 2023, 282 million people in 59 countries faced acute food insecurity, with extreme weather as a significant factor, per the 2024 Global Report on Food Crisis released on April 24, 2024.

➤ Overview:

- In 2023, nearly 282 million people across 59 countries faced high levels of acute food insecurity.
- Extreme weather emerged as the second most significant factor driving food crises.
- The proportion of people facing acute food insecurity remained persistently high, exceeding pre-COVID-19 levels for four consecutive years.
- Conflict/insecurity was the primary driver in 20 countries, directly affecting 135 million people.
- Weather extremes affected 18 countries, impacting over 72 million people.

➤ Trends and Analysis:

- Acute food insecurity increased for the fifth consecutive year, affecting 1 in 5 people assessed.
- Analysis coverage increased, contributing to a rise in the number of affected individuals.
- Acute food insecurity worsened in 12 countries, with Sudan experiencing one of the worst food crises globally.
- The number of forcibly displaced people reached 90 million, the highest in eight years, driven by conflicts in Sudan and Gaza.

➤ Specific Crisis Areas:

- Sudan faced a severe food crisis, with almost a third of the population in need of emergency food aid.
- Conflict in Sudan's southeastern regions threatened the nation's food security, affecting cereal production and grain storage.
- Gaza witnessed the most severe food crisis in eight years, with almost 80% of the population internally displaced.

➤ Forecast and Warning:

- An Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis warned of impending famine in North Gaza and a risk of famine across the rest of the Gaza Strip.
- Approximately 1.1 million people were estimated to be experiencing catastrophic acute food insecurity (IPC Phase 5).

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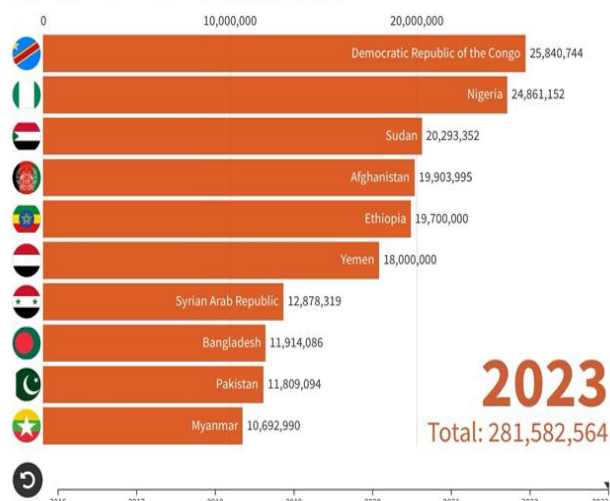


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➤ Drivers of Food Crisis:

- Economic shocks emerged as the third main driver in 21 countries, affecting over 75 million people.
- Low-income and import-dependent countries were particularly vulnerable, with decreasing global food prices failing to transmit.

Countries/territories with the largest number of people facing high levels of acute food insecurity, 2016-2023



Derivative Contracts

Context: The National Stock Exchange (NSE) announced the introduction of derivative contracts on the Nifty Next 50 index.

- NSE announced the approval and launch of derivative contracts on the Nifty Next 50 index.
- Three serial monthly index futures and index options contract cycles will be offered.
- Derivatives contracts will expire on the last Friday of the expiry month.
- The market capitalisation of Nifty Next 50 index constituents stood at ₹70 trillion as of March 29, 2024, representing 18% of the total market capitalisation of NSE-listed stocks.

➤ Derivatives:

- Derivatives are financial instruments reliant on existing instruments like stocks or indexes, serving as a speculation on their future value.
- Their primary purpose is hedging against price movements of underlying assets, with contracts expiring on predetermined dates and offering no ownership of the assets upon contract expiry.
- Derivative contracts are traded on stock exchanges and regulated by SEBI, treated as financial securities with distinct market workings and risk profiles.

Futures and Options:

➤ Futures:

- Futures contracts obligate the buyer to buy/sell assets upon entering, with settlement occurring on entry.
- Types include financial futures (e.g., stock, currency, index, interest rate) and physical futures (e.g., commodity, energy, metal).

➤ Options:

- Options contracts grant the buyer the right, but not the obligation, to buy/sell assets at a predetermined price before a fixed date.
- Call options give the right to buy, while put options give the right to sell.

➤ F&O Trading:

- F&O trading involves buying/selling underlying assets at predetermined prices, with profits made from price movements.
- Futures trading requires margin deposits, while options trading involves paying premiums.
- Traders include hedgers (mitigating risk), speculators (profiting from fluctuations), and arbitrageurs (exploiting price differences).

➤ Investment Considerations:

- Futures and options trading offer profit potential but entail risks.
- Investors include hedgers (managing price risks), speculators (profiting from price changes), and arbitrageurs (exploiting price differences).

NEWS IN BETWEEN THE LINES

Schengen Visa



Recently, the European Commission has introduced a new visa "cascade" regime for Indian nationals seeking Schengen visas, allowing for more straightforward access to multiple entry visas with extended validity periods.

About Schengen Visa:

- A Schengen visa is an entry permit that allows travelers to enter the Schengen area, which is made up of 27 European countries.
- The visa can be used for short stays of up to 90 days within any 180-day period, for activities such as tourism, business, visiting family, medical treatment, studies, training placements and volunteer activities.

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	- The visa also allows transit through the territory and airports of the Schengen states. - The Schengen visa can be obtained in the form of a single-entry visa, which allows the holder to enter the Schengen area once or a multiple-entry visa, which is granted for several visits to the Schengen area for as long as it is valid. - The Schengen area includes 23 of the 27 EU member states, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland, Bulgaria, Cyprus and Romania and Ireland.
Pulicat Lake 	<i>The Tamil Nadu government is considering denotifying a large area of the Pulicat Lake Bird Sanctuary, as discussed in the 77th meeting of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife.</i> About Pulicat Lake: - Pulicat Lake is a brackish water lagoon on the Coromandel Coast of India, located on the border of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. - It is the second largest brackish water lagoon in India after Chilika Lake. - It is also a Pulicat Lake Bird Sanctuary that hosts a large congregation of flamingos, grey pelicans, painted storks, and other birds. - Pulicat Lake is known for its rich biodiversity, featuring a variety of aquatic species and migratory water birds. - The lake is separated from the Bay of Bengal by Sriharikota Island, home to the Satish Dhawan Space Centre. - Major inflows to the lake include Arani, Kalangi and Swarnamukhi rivers, while the Buckingham Canal serves as a navigation channel.
Chloride Mass Balance Method 	<i>Recently, a study across Australia utilized 200,000 groundwater chloride measurements to estimate recharge rates using the chloride mass balance (CMB) method.</i> About Chloride Mass Balance Method: - The Chloride Mass Balance (CMB) method is a quantitative technique employed for estimating groundwater recharge rates by analysing the chloride content present in both precipitation and groundwater samples. - This method operates on the principle of chloride's conservative behaviour within the hydrological cycle, assuming that chloride input through precipitation is equal to its output via groundwater discharge. - It considers various factors influencing groundwater recharge rates, including climatic variables such as rainfall distribution and evapo-transpiration, alongside vegetation-related factors like vegetation health and density. - This method finds particular utility in arid or semi-arid environments where traditional groundwater recharge estimation methods may be less effective due to limited data availability. - Through this method, researchers can estimate groundwater recharge rates and produce gridded maps illustrating spatial variations in recharge across the study area.
Snake Venoms 	<i>Recently, scientists revolutionized antivenom production by substituting animal involvement with human antibodies, circumventing the outdated method of injecting large animals with snake venoms.</i> About Snake Venoms: - Snake venoms are a highly toxic saliva that snakes use for defense and to immobilize and digest their prey - They consist of intricate mixtures of various toxins, with compositions varying among species and even within the same species across different regions. - Two primary families of venomous snakes, elapids (including cobras, kraits, and mambas) and viperids (such as rattlesnakes and adders), produce venoms containing distinct toxic components. - These venoms contain a variety of toxins, including neurotoxins that target nervous system receptors, hemotoxins affecting blood clotting and tissue destruction, cytotoxins causing cell damage and enzymes disrupting physiological processes. - Snake venoms can also be beneficial medical tools as they contain many components with valuable pharmacological actions, including: Neurotoxicity, Myotoxicity, Cytotoxicity, Hemotoxicity and Antimicrobial activity.

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Place in News

Portugal

On the 25th of April 2024, Portugal commemorates the 50th anniversary of the revolution that ended the dictatorial regime and introduced democracy.

Portugal (Capital: Lisbon)

Location: Portugal, officially known as the Portuguese Republic is a country located on the Iberian Peninsula, in Southwestern **Europe**.

Boundaries: Portugal shares its borders with **Spain** (North and East) and the **Atlantic Ocean** (West and South).

Physical Features:

- The highest point in Portugal is **Mount Pico**, located on the island of Pico in the Azores archipelago
- Portugal is dominated by two main mountain ranges: the **Serra da Estrela** in the center and the **Serra de Monchique** in the south.
- The country also has extensive plateaus, notably the **Tras-os-Montes Plateau** in the northeast.
- The **Tagus** (Rio Tejo) is the longest river, flowing through the capital city of Lisbon.



POINTS TO PONDER

- Where is the G7 Climate, Energy, and Environment Ministers meeting scheduled to take place and when will it commence? – **Venaria Reale, Italy - April 28**
- Which city hosted the Fourth meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-4) concerning the UN Plastics Treaty? – **Ottawa, Canada**
- What type of battery technology has South Korean scientists developed recently? – **Hybrid sodium-ion battery**
- Which distinguished personality was the first president of the Madras City Cooperative Building Society Ltd. for its centennial celebration and also served as a crucial figure in the shaping of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution? – **N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar**
- Which species did researchers at the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) successfully achieve captive breeding for? – **Golden trevally (Gnathanodon speciosus)**

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