



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).

## Face to Face Centres



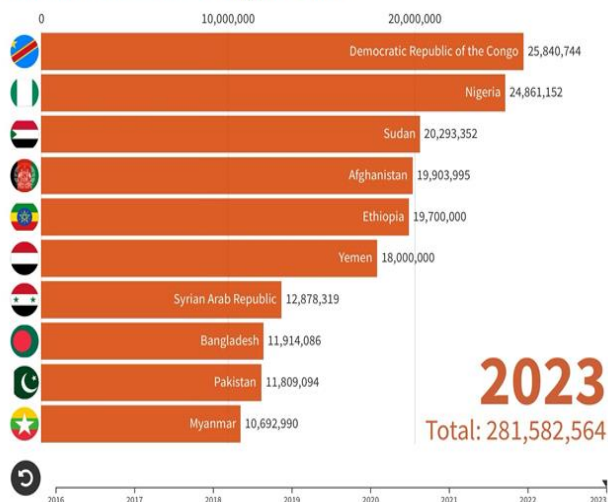


25 April, 2024

### ➤ 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.

## Face to Face Centres





25 April, 2024

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The visa also allows transit through the territory and airports of the Schengen states.</li> <li>The Schengen visa can be obtained in the form of a <b>single-entry visa</b>, 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.</li> <li>The Schengen area includes <b>23 of the 27 EU member states</b>, Iceland, Liechtenstein, <b>Norway</b> and <b>Switzerland, Bulgaria, Cyprus</b> and <b>Romania</b> and Ireland.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pulicat Lake</b></p> 	<p><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></p> <p><b>About Pulicat Lake:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pulicat Lake is a <b>brackish water lagoon on the Coromandel Coast of India</b>, located on the border of <b>Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu</b>.</li> <li>It is the <b>second largest brackish water lagoon in India after Chilika Lake</b>.</li> <li>It is <b>also a Pulicat Lake Bird Sanctuary</b> that hosts a large congregation of flamingos, grey pelicans, painted storks, and other birds.</li> <li>Pulicat Lake is known for its rich biodiversity, featuring a variety of aquatic species and migratory water birds.</li> <li>The lake is <b>separated from the Bay of Bengal by Sriharikota Island</b>, home to the Satish Dhawan Space Centre.</li> <li>Major inflows to the lake include <b>Arani, Kalangi</b> and <b>Swarnamukhi</b> rivers, while the Buckingham Canal serves as a navigation channel.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Chloride Mass Balance Method</b></p> 	<p><i>Recently, a study across Australia utilized 200,000 groundwater chloride measurements to estimate recharge rates using the chloride mass balance (CMB) method.</i></p> <p><b>About Chloride Mass Balance Method:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Chloride Mass Balance (CMB) method is a <b>quantitative technique</b> employed for estimating <b>groundwater recharge rates</b> by analysing the <b>chloride content</b> present in both precipitation and groundwater samples.</li> <li>This method <b>operates on the principle of chloride's conservative</b> behaviour within the hydrological cycle, assuming that chloride input through precipitation is equal to its output via groundwater discharge.</li> <li>It considers various factors influencing <b>groundwater recharge rates</b>, including climatic variables such as <b>rainfall distribution</b> and <b>evapo-transpiration</b>, alongside vegetation-related factors like vegetation health and density.</li> <li>This method finds particular utility in <b>arid or semi-arid environments</b> where traditional groundwater recharge estimation methods may be less effective due to limited data availability.</li> <li>Through this method, researchers can estimate groundwater recharge rates and <b>produce gridded maps</b> illustrating spatial variations in recharge across the study area.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Snake Venoms</b></p> 	<p><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></p> <p><b>About Snake Venoms:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Snake venoms are a <b>highly toxic saliva</b> that <b>snakes use for defense</b> and to immobilize and digest their prey</li> <li>They consist of <b>intricate mixtures of various toxins</b>, with compositions varying among species and even within the same species across different regions.</li> <li>Two primary families of venomous snakes, <b>elapids</b> (including cobras, kraits, and mambas) and <b>viperids</b> (such as rattlesnakes and adders), produce venoms containing distinct toxic components.</li> <li>These venoms contain a variety of toxins, including <b>neurotoxins</b> that target nervous system receptors, hemotoxins affecting blood clotting and tissue destruction, cytotoxins causing cell damage and <b>enzymes</b> disrupting physiological processes.</li> <li>Snake venoms can <b>also be beneficial medical tools</b> as they contain many components with valuable <b>pharmacological</b> actions, including: <b>Neurotoxicity, Myotoxicity, Cytotoxicity, Hemotoxicity</b> and <b>Antimicrobial</b> activity.</li> </ul>

## Face to Face Centres







25 April, 2024

## 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)**

## Face to Face Centres

