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S.NO.	TOPIC
1.	KENYA-LED SECURITY MISSION TO TROUBLED HAITI
2.	ELECTORAL BONDS
3.	SURROGACY

KENYA-LED SECURITY MISSION TO TROUBLED HAITI

SOURCE: [TH](#)

WHY IN NEWS?

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has approved the foreign security mission, led by Kenya, to restore security, protect critical infrastructure and control spiralling violence in Haiti.

BACKGROUND:

- In 2022, the Haitian government reached out for international assistance to support their national police. This move came as a response to a severe crisis that unfolded when a coalition of gangs known as "G9 and Family" took control of the main fuel port, Varreux, in the capital city. They were protesting the government's decision to cut fuel subsidies.
- The consequences of this crisis have been devastating, with numerous killings, extensive looting, and the burning of homes. This turmoil has led to the displacement of thousands of people, forcing approximately 200,000 individuals to flee their residences. According to estimates, nearly half of the population now requires humanitarian aid.



REASON FOR UN'S MULTINATIONAL SECURITY MISSION IN HAITI:

- In October 2022, Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry made an initial request for international assistance, marking the beginning of the UN's engagement in Haiti.
- Haiti faced a shortage of bottled water, and a fresh cholera outbreak further exacerbated the challenges.
- As the crisis escalated, straining the limited resources of the national police, Haitian leaders sought help from the international community. Their request was aimed at obtaining a specialized armed force capable of countering these gangs and their supporters.

DETAILS ABOUT THE MISSION:

- Unlike the previous UN peacekeeping mission that concluded in 2017, the current multinational security mission, approved by the United Nations Security Council, will not be directly administered by the UN.
- Kenya has offered to lead this force, with support from other countries such as the Bahamas, Jamaica, and Antigua and Barbuda.
- The mission's primary role is to provide operational support to the Haitian National Police. This includes enhancing the police force's capabilities to combat gangs, improve overall security within the country, and secure crucial locations like ports, airports, and intersections. Additionally, the multinational force will have the authority to make arrests in coordination with the Haitian police.
- The mission also aims to create a more stable environment within Haiti, setting the stage for upcoming elections. Notably, elections have not occurred in Haiti since 2016.



- While the United States has clarified that it will not deploy its own troops, it has committed to providing \$100 million in logistical support. This support encompasses areas such as intelligence, communications, airlift operations, and medical assistance.

UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OVERVIEW:

- United Nations Peacekeeping constitutes a distinctive global collaboration that involves the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Secretariat, troop-contributing nations, police contributors, and host governments. This partnership is aimed at collectively maintaining global peace and security.
- **Historical Background:** The origins of United Nations Peacekeeping date back to 1948 when the Security Council granted authorization for the deployment of military observers to the Middle East. The initial deployment involved UN Security Council-authorized military observers who were tasked with overseeing the Israeli-Arab Armistice Agreement in 1948.
- **Key Roles:** UN peacekeepers assume multiple responsibilities, which encompass providing security, extending political and peacebuilding assistance, and supporting nations as they navigate the challenging transition from conflict to peace. Their roles encompass conflict prevention, civilian protection, facilitation of political resolutions, promotion of human rights, and reinforcement of democratic processes. Additionally, they work on enhancing the capacity of state institutions and services and ensuring the active participation of women and youth in leading and engaging in peace initiatives.
- **Current Operations:** Presently, there are twelve United Nations peacekeeping operations active across three continents.
- **Guiding Principles:** United Nations Peacekeeping adheres to three fundamental principles: (1) Consent of the parties involved, (2) Impartiality, and (3) The non-use of force unless it's necessary for self-defense or in defense of the mission's mandate.

INDIA'S PARTICIPATION IN UN PEACEKEEPING:

1. **India's Inaugural Contribution:** India's involvement in United Nations Peacekeeping operations commenced with its engagement in the UN mission during the Korean War in the 1950s.
2. **Expanding Roles:** In subsequent years, the United Nations entrusted India's armed forces with various peace missions, notably in the Middle East, Cyprus, and the Congo.
3. **International Commissions Leadership:** India also played a pivotal role by chairing the international commissions established for the supervision and control of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. These commissions were established following the 1954 Geneva Accords on Indo-China.
4. **Present Contribution:** Presently, India's commitment to UN Peacekeeping remains robust, with approximately 5,500 troops and police personnel from India participating in these missions. India's contribution stands as the fifth-largest among the nations providing troops for UN Peacekeeping efforts.



ELECTORAL BONDS

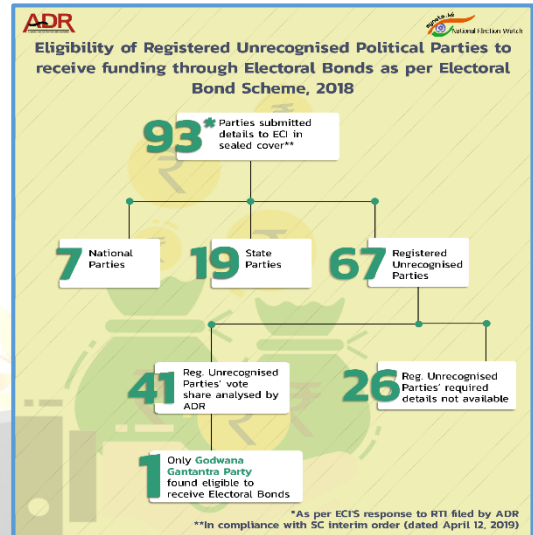
SOURCE: [THE HINDU](#)

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Chief Justice of India, D.Y. Chandrachud, has referred the challenge to the validity of the electoral bonds scheme to a **Constitution Bench of five judges**.
- The court's **decision to expedite the case signals its intent not to delay** the hearing further.

WHAT IS ELECTORAL BOND

- Introduced in **2018 via a Finance bill**, allowing individuals and corporations to make anonymous donations to political parties.
- These bonds were introduced to **promote transparency in political funding** by replacing cash donations with a more traceable system.
- **Features:**
 - ✓ Issued by **State Bank of India (SBI)** in various denominations.
 - ✓ **Interest-free and payable** to the bearer on demand.
 - ✓ Purchased by **Indian citizens or entities based in India**.
 - ✓ Valid for **15 calendar days**.
 - ✓ Can be bought **individually or jointly**.



- **Authorized Issuer:**
 - ✓ State Bank of India (SBI) issues **Electoral Bonds through designated branches**.
- **Eligibility of Political Parties:**
 - ✓ Only parties registered under **Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951**, and securing at least **1% of votes in the last general election**, can receive Electoral Bonds.
- **Purchase and Encashment:**
 - ✓ Bought **digitally or through cheques**.
 - ✓ Encashed only via the **political party's authorized bank account**.
- **Transparency and Accountability:**
 - ✓ Parties must **disclose their bank account with the Election Commission of India (ECI)**.
 - ✓ Donations made through banking channels.
 - ✓ **Parties must explain fund utilization**.

Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.

- ☛ **Registration of Political parties** is governed by this provision.
- ☛ A party must apply for registration with the **Election Commission within 30 days from its formation**.
- ☛ The Election Commission provides registration guidelines, **authorized by Article 324 of the Constitution and Section 29A of the Act**.

ADVANTAGE OF ELECTORAL BOND IN INDIA

- **Enhanced Transparency:**
 - ✓ Electoral Bonds have brought **greater transparency to political party funding** by making donations traceable through banking channels.
- **Accountability:**
 - ✓ Political parties are now **obliged to disclose their bank accounts with the Election Commission of India (ECI)**, ensuring **accountability** in their financial transactions.
- **Preservation of Donor Anonymity:**



- ✓ Electoral Bonds allow **donors to remain anonymous, preventing disclosure of their identities** and reducing potential donor-related risks.
- **Elimination of Quota Limitations:**
 - ✓ Unlike cash donations, there is **no upper limit on the amount that can be donated through Electoral Bonds**, potentially resulting in **higher financial support to political parties**.
- **Attracting Legitimate Funds:**
 - ✓ Electoral Bonds have encouraged **legitimate and white money contributions**, discouraging black money in political funding.
- **Protection from Influence:**
 - ✓ Anonymity safeguards **donors from potential coercion or undue influence**, ensuring the purity of political party funding.
- **Financial Security:**
 - ✓ Electoral Bonds provide a **level of financial security for political parties**, reducing their reliance on potentially questionable sources of funding.

Benefits of Electoral Bonds

WILL BRING substantial transparency in political donations against the present system of contributions in the election funding mechanism

HOW MUCH funding comes, what kind of funding it is, the source of funding and where it will be spent will be known clearly

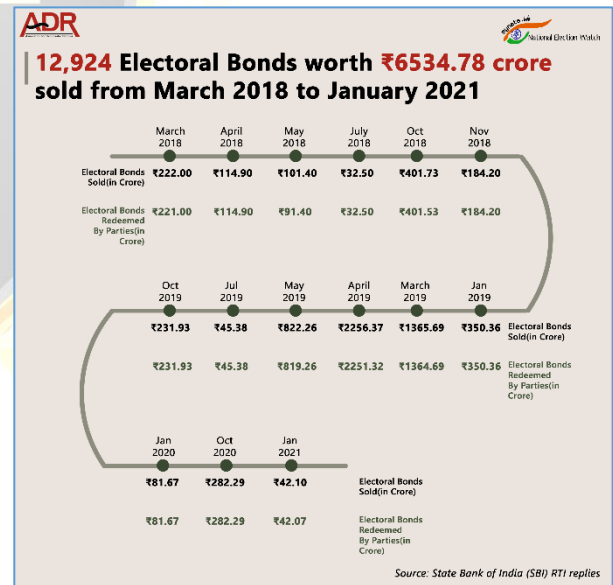
NON DISCLOSURE of recipients will ensure people are free to donate to any political party of their choice

WILL REINFORCE the idea of moving away from a cash system towards clean money which cheque system could not achieve

15 DAYS between buying and selling will ensure they don't turn into a parallel economy

CHALLENGES FOR ELECTORAL BONDS IN INDIA:

- **Lack of Donor Transparency:**
 - ✓ One of the primary challenges of Electoral Bonds is that they **allow donations to political parties to remain anonymous**.
 - ✓ This **lack of transparency raises concerns about the identity of donors and their potential influence on political decisions**.
- **Risk of Government Access:**
 - ✓ While designed to **protect donor anonymity**, there is a **risk that government authorities may gain access to donor data**, undermining the purpose of keeping donors' identities confidential.
 - ✓ This could **potentially be exploited for political leverage**, impacting free and fair elections.
- **Unauthorized Donations:**
 - ✓ The system of Electoral Bonds may **create opportunities for unauthorized donations that could violate regulations**.
 - ✓ Ensuring that **only eligible donors contribute** is a challenge that needs addressing.
- **Crony Capitalism:**
 - ✓ The anonymity provided by **Electoral Bonds could lead to crony capitalism**, where **business leaders and government officials form mutually advantageous relationships** that affect policy decisions and resource allocation.
- **Black Money Infusion:**
 - ✓ **Critics argue that Electoral Bonds could provide a channel for the infusion of black money** into political funding, as the source of these funds is not always clear.





- ✓ The **removal of the clause requiring companies** to have a net average **profit** has raised concerns in this regard.
- **Public Accountability:**
 - ✓ The **lack of direct public oversight in the process** of issuing and redeeming **Electoral Bonds** may raise concerns about **public accountability** and the **potential for misuse**.
- **Opaque Selection of Political Parties:**
 - ✓ The **criteria for determining which political parties are eligible** to receive Electoral Bonds **need to be transparent** and ensure fairness in distribution.
- **Regulatory Challenges:**
 - ✓ Regulating the process of Electoral Bonds and addressing **potential issues requires constant monitoring, periodic reviews, and public engagement** to adapt to evolving concerns and maintain transparency in the political funding process.

WAY FORWARD

- **Strengthen Transparency:**
 - ✓ Implement measures to **enhance transparency in the Electoral Bond Scheme**.
 - ✓ Enforce **stricter regulations for political parties to disclose** and let the Election Commission of India (ECI) examine the donations.
 - ✓ **Facilitate public access to information** about the **utilization of funds received by political parties**.
- **Periodic Review:**
 - ✓ Conduct **periodic reviews of the Electoral Bond Scheme to address emerging concerns**.
 - ✓ Ensure that the scheme remains **adaptive to changing landscapes** and responsive to the evolving needs of transparency in political funding.
- **Public Engagement:**
 - ✓ Involve **public engagement and consultations in decision-making processes** related to electoral bonds.
 - ✓ Encourage discussions and debates on the **subject, involving civil society and experts**.
- **Judicial Scrutiny:**
 - ✓ Subject the **Electoral Bond Scheme to judicial scrutiny to ensure its compliance with constitutional principles**.





Prelims Specific

The Representation of the People Act, 1951

- **Election Regulation:**
 - ✓ It governs the procedures for conducting elections, both general and by-elections.
- **Administrative Machinery:**
 - ✓ The Act establishes the administrative framework for the execution of elections.
- **Political Party Registration:**
 - ✓ It outlines the criteria and process for registering political parties.
- **Qualifications and Disqualifications:**
 - ✓ The Act defines the qualifications and disqualifications for individuals seeking membership in legislative houses.
- **Anti-Corruption Measures:**
 - ✓ It includes provisions to prevent corrupt practices and address other election-related offenses.
- **Dispute Resolution:**
 - ✓ The Act provides procedures for resolving doubts and disputes arising from elections.

PYQs

Q. consider the following statements:

1. According to the Constitution of India, a person who is eligible to vote can be made a minister in a state for six months even if he/she is not a member of that state.
2. According to the Representation of People Act, 1951, a person convicted of a criminal offence and sentenced to imprisonment for five years is permanently disqualified from contesting an election even after his release from prison.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

[a] 1 only

[b] 2 only

[c] Both 1 and 2

[d] Neither 1 nor 2



SURROGACY

SOURCE: [THE HINDU](#)

WHY IN NEWS?

- The Delhi High Court has raised questions regarding the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021, particularly its provisions related to the eligibility of single, unmarried women for surrogacy, leading to a legal challenge.

WHAT IS THE SURROGACY (REGULATION) ACT, 2021

The Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021 is a legal framework that regulates the practice of surrogacy in India. It includes the following key provisions:

- Bans commercial surrogacy, allowing only altruistic surrogacy where the surrogate mother is not paid beyond necessary medical expenses.
- Permits only married women aged between 25 and 35 with at least one biological child to be surrogates.
- Mandates that the surrogate mother must be married and genetically related to the intending couple or woman.
- Conditions for permitting surrogacy:
 - ✓ For intending couples who suffer from proven infertility.
 - ✓ Altruistic
 - ✓ Not for commercial purposes
 - ✓ Not for producing children for sale, prostitution, or other forms of exploitation
 - ✓ For any condition or disease specified through regulations.
- Surrogacy Regulation Acts:
 - ✓ The Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Act, 2021 and the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021 lay down guidelines for surrogacy in India.
 - ✓ While they prohibit commercial surrogacy, they allow altruistic surrogacy, where surrogate mothers do not receive financial rewards beyond essential medical expenses.



THE SURROGACY (REGULATION) ACT, 2021

[No. 47 of 2021, dt. 25-12-2021, w.e.f. 25-1-2022 vide GSR 292(E), dt. 20-1-2022]
(As amended by the Surrogacy (Regulation) Removal of Difficulties Order, 2022 vide SO 2204(E), dt. 12-5-2022)

and

- The Surrogacy (Regulation) Rules, 2022 [w.e.f. 21-6-2022]
- The National Assisted Reproductive Technology and Surrogacy Board (Appointment of Expert Members by Nominating) Rules, 2022
- The State Assisted Reproductive Technology and Surrogacy Board (Appointment of Expert Members) Rules, 2022

Alongwith

The Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Act, 2021

[No. 42 of 2021, dt. 18-12-2021]

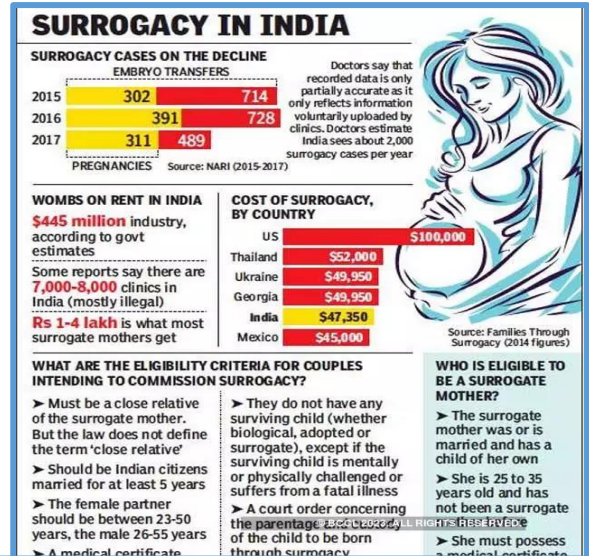
- The Assisted Reproductive Technology (Regulation) Rules, 2022

CHALLENGES TO SURROGACY REGULATIONS IN INDIA

- Discriminatory Restrictions:
 - ✓ The Delhi High Court has raised concerns regarding the discriminatory nature of the Surrogacy (Regulation) Act, 2021.
 - ✓ It questioned why single, unmarried women are excluded from the benefits of surrogacy, which was seen as a form of discrimination.
- Limited Eligibility Criteria:
 - ✓ The Act restricts surrogacy access to only widows or divorcees aged between 35 and 45, further limiting the eligibility criteria.



- ✓ This criterion has been **scrutinized for its exclusivity.**
- **Seeking Clarification:**
 - ✓ The **Court sought explanations from the Centre**, which requested time to **provide instructions on the matter**, indicating the need for clarity in the legislation.
- **Legal Challenge:**
 - ✓ A **44-year-old unmarried woman filed a petition challenging Section 2(1)(s) of the Act**, which prevents women like her from accessing surrogacy.
 - ✓ She also **contested the regulation obligating single women to use their own eggs**, which can be medically impractical due to their age.
- **Need for Gender-Neutral and Age-Inclusive Laws:**
 - ✓ The petitioner's argument centered on the **irrationality, unlawfulness, discrimination, and violation of fundamental rights, specifically Articles 14 (right to equality) and 21 (right to life) of the Constitution.**
- **Strict Criteria for Surrogates:**
 - ✓ The legislation permits **only married women aged 25-35 with at least one biological child** to be surrogates.
 - ✓ Surrogate mothers must also be **married and "genetically related" to the intending couple or woman.**



BILL EXCLUDES MANY

- Women must either be divorced or widow to be able to opt for surrogacy
- Women only between 23-50 years can go in for IVF or surrogacy
- Overseas Citizens of India or foreigners cannot go in for this procedure
- Only married Indian couples and NRIs can opt for surrogacy

COST DISPARITY

- Surrogacy procedure in India costs ₹15-18 lakh
- In other countries like US, South America, Russia \$50,000-\$1,50,000

It is very unfortunate that the bill is not inclusive. While we understand the need for regulation, it should have considered people from all sections of society. It is likely that many people will now travel abroad to have a child through surrogacy – **Nayana Patel** | RENOWNED IVF AND SURROGACY SPECIALIST FROM ANAND, GUJARAT

TECHNOLOGICAL ALTERNATIVES TO TRADITIONAL SURROGACY IN INDIA:

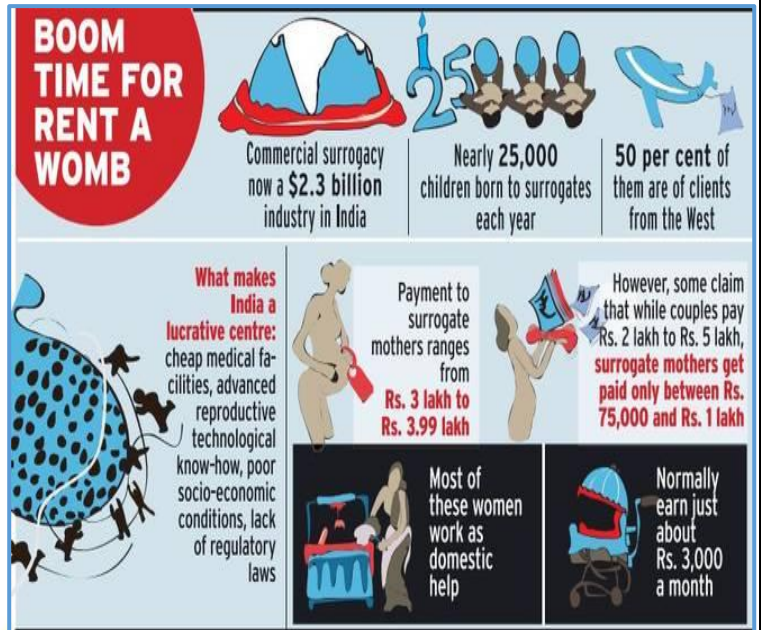
Technology	Description
<i>In Vitro Fertilization (IVF)</i>	Fertilization of egg and sperm in a lab ; embryo transfer to the woman's uterus ; helps couples with infertility.
<i>Egg Donation</i>	Use of donated eggs for fertilization via IVF ; eliminates the need for a surrogate.
<i>Sperm Donation</i>	Use of donated sperm for fertilization via IVF ; suitable for male infertility issues.
<i>Embryo Adoption</i>	Donation of frozen embryos to individuals or couples ; recipient carries the pregnancy.
<i>Uterine Transplant</i>	Experimental procedure involving donated uterus to allow the woman to carry a pregnancy.
<i>Preimplantation Genetic Testing (PGT)</i>	Genetic screening of embryos to identify those free from genetic disorders.
<i>Artificial Womb Technology</i>	Ongoing research for gestating embryos outside the human body , potentially reducing the need for surrogacy.



WAY FORWARD

The issue of surrogacy in India, particularly the exploitation of underprivileged women, requires initiatives like:

- **Regulation and Legal Framework:**
 - ✓ Develop **comprehensive regulations and a legal framework for surrogacy** to ensure the rights and protections of surrogate mothers.
 - ✓ This should **include clear contracts and obligations.**
- **Preventing Unscrupulous Middlemen:**
 - ✓ **Enforce strict measures to curb middlemen who exploit vulnerable women.**
 - ✓ Create a **system that directly connects intending parents** with surrogate mothers, eliminating intermediaries.
- **Ethical Practices:**
 - ✓ **Promote ethical practices within the surrogacy industry.**
 - ✓ **Encourage intending parents to choose ethical surrogacy agencies** that prioritize the well-being of both parties.
- **Counseling and Consent:**
 - ✓ **Provide counseling and ensure that all parties involved fully understand** and consent to the surrogacy arrangement.
 - ✓ **Protect the rights of surrogate mothers** to choose surrogacy freely.
- **International Surrogacy Agreements:**
 - ✓ **Regulate international surrogacy agreements to prevent situations** where intending parents **abandon children born through surrogacy.**
- **Awareness and Education:**
 - ✓ **Educate surrogate mothers about their rights** and the legal aspects of surrogacy.
 - ✓ **Increase awareness about ethical surrogacy practices.**
- **Support Systems:**
 - ✓ Establish support systems for **surrogate mothers, including legal assistance, counseling, and medical care**, both during and after the surrogacy process.
- **Government Oversight:**
 - ✓ **Implement stringent oversight mechanisms to monitor surrogacy practices**, with penalties for those who violate regulations.

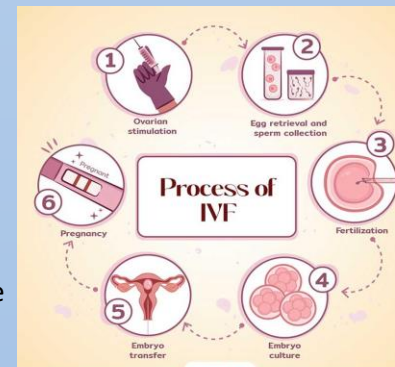




Prelims Specific

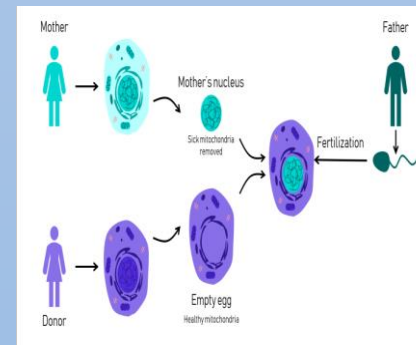
IVF (In Vitro Fertilization) Technology:

- ✓ IVF, or In Vitro Fertilization, is a **medical procedure to help couples with infertility have children.**
- ✓ It involves **combining an egg and sperm in a laboratory dish to create an embryo, which is then transferred to the woman's uterus.**
- ✓ IVF is used **when natural conception is challenging, and it can involve various techniques like ICSI (Intracytoplasmic Sperm Injection).**



Triple Parents Baby:

- ✓ A "Triple Parents Baby" is a term used when the **DNA of three individuals contributes** to the genetic makeup of a child.
- ✓ This can happen through a **medical technique where the nucleus from one woman's egg is placed into another woman's egg, resulting in a child with genes from both women and the father.**
- ✓ This technique is used **to prevent certain genetic diseases that are carried in a woman's mitochondria.**



Embryo Transfer Technology:

- ✓ Embryo technology is a **field of science and medicine that involves manipulating and studying embryos.**
- ✓ It can **include techniques like in vitro fertilization (IVF), pre-implantation genetic testing, and cloning.**
- ✓ Embryo technology is used for **infertility treatment, genetic testing, and scientific research.**

