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S.NO. TOPIC

1.	'CRIME' OF ADULTERY
2.	THE APPROVAL OF FIRST VACCINE FOR CHIKUNGUNYA
3.	PRELIMS POINTERS

'CRIME' OF ADULTERY

SOURCE: [INDIAN EXPRESS](#)

WHY IN NEWS?

The Parliamentary Committee on Home Affairs has recommended reinstating adultery as a criminal offense in the proposed Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023. This recommendation follows the Supreme Court's 2018 decision to strike down Section 497 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which criminalized adultery.

LEGAL POSITION ON ADULTERY:

- **Background:**
 - ✓ The Indian Penal Code (IPC) until 2018 contained Section 497, making adultery a criminal offense.
 - ✓ Section 497 was struck down by the Supreme Court in Joseph Shine vs Union of India in 2018 on grounds of discrimination.
- **Previous Law (Section 497 of IPC):**
 - ✓ Section 497 only punished men for adultery, not women.
 - ✓ It was deemed discriminatory and violative of constitutional rights.
- **Supreme Court's Ruling:**
 - ✓ The Supreme Court ruled in Joseph Shine case that Section 497 violated Articles 14, 15, and 21 of the Constitution.
 - ✓ Emphasized the autonomy of women, human dignity, and the intrusion into marital privacy if adultery is treated as a crime.
 - ✓ Declared that treating adultery as a criminal offense offends the Constitution.

Adultery and Section 497:

Adultery Defined:

- Involves **voluntary sexual intercourse** between a married person and **someone other than their current spouse or partner.**

Section 497 of the IPC:

- Declares that engaging in sexual intercourse with another man's wife, **without his consent, is punishable as adultery.**

Gender-Specific Punishment:

- Penalizes only the man involved, assuming men are the seducers, while the law does not punish the unfaithful wife.

PROPOSED CHANGES IN BHARATIYA NYAYA SANHITA (BNS), 2023:

- **House Committee's Recommendations (BNS, 2023):**
 - ✓ The Parliamentary Committee on Home Affairs suggests **reinstating adultery as a criminal offense in the proposed BNS, 2023.**
 - ✓ **Recommends making adultery gender-neutral, applying to both men and women.**
 - ✓ Argues that **marriage is considered sacred and needs protection.**
- **Concerns with the Recommendations:**

Three bills introduced in Lok Sabha

<p>Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860 TO BE REPLACED BY Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Bill, 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will have 356 sections (instead of 511 sections in IPC) • 175 sections have been amended • 8 sections have been added, and 22 sections have been repealed 	<p>Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1973 TO BE REPLACED BY Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will have 533 sections (instead of 478 sections in CrPC) • 160 sections have been changed • 9 sections have been added, and 9 sections have been repealed 	<p>"From 1860 to 2023, the country's criminal justice system functioned as per the laws made by the British. I can assure the House that these bills will transform our criminal justice system. The aim will not be to punish, it will be to provide justice." — AMIT SHAH</p>
<p>Indian Evidence Act, 1872 TO BE REPLACED BY Bharatiya Sakshya Bill, 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will have 170 sections (instead of 167 sections in IEA) • 23 sections have been changed • 1 section has been added, and 5 sections have been repealed 	<p>WHAT NEXT The three bills will be studied by the standing committee on home affairs, which is chaired by BJP MP Brijlal (who is a ret'd IPS officer).</p>	



- ✓ The Supreme Court's decision was **based not only on discrimination but also on broader constitutional principles.**
- ✓ The court viewed **adultery as unsuitable for criminalization**, suggesting it **should remain a ground for divorce.**
- ✓ The Committee's focus on **making it gender-neutral may not address the fundamental issues** raised by the Supreme Court.

WHY WOMEN WERE EXEMPT FROM ADULTERY PUNISHMENT:

- **Historical Context:**
 - ✓ Adultery laws **historically did not punish women due to prevalent polygamy.**
 - ✓ Women, **often deprived of love and affection in polygamous marriages**, were considered victims rather than offenders.
 - ✓ The provision **aimed to restrict men from engaging with other men's wives** and limit extramarital relations to unmarried women.
- **Adultery as an Offense Against the Husband:**
 - ✓ Adultery is an offense against the husband, **akin to trespass.**
 - ✓ The analogy is drawn between **entering someone's property without consent and engaging in sexual relations with someone's wife** without the husband's consent.
 - ✓ Section 497, therefore, **treats women as the husband's chattel.**
- **Changing Social Conditions:**
 - ✓ Polygamy has **become illegal in most religions**, and men are legally restricted to one wife.
 - ✓ The personal laws have evolved, **offering a more level playing field for both spouses.**
 - ✓ The original purpose of Section 497 is argued to be obsolete in the current social context.
- **Reasons Against Punishing Women:**
 - ✓ It contends that **punishing women for adultery lacks a clear objective.**
 - ✓ Changing the definition may **either result from outdated justifications or an attempt to achieve gender parity.**
- **Potential Horrific Consequences:**
 - ✓ There will be a **concern against amending the law to punish women**, as it could have severe consequences.
 - ✓ **Allegations of unfaithfulness**, even false ones, can **damage a woman's social status significantly.**
 - ✓ Making women punishable **may become a tool for husbands and in-laws seeking to harm women's reputations.**
- **Societal Imbalance and Reputation:**
 - ✓ **Society's unequal treatment of women**, evident in the aftermath of adultery allegations, is highlighted.
 - ✓ The proposed amendment **may lead to societal defamation of women**, worsening existing disparities.
 - ✓ Changing definitions **cannot equalize what is inherently unequal.**
- **Impact on Women's Reputation:**
 - ✓ Making women punishable under **adultery laws would harm women's reputation irreparably.**
 - ✓ Such a provision **could be misused to defame and exploit women**, defeating the purpose of the proposed amendment.

CHALLENGES:

- ***Is it possible to reverse or overturn the Supreme Court's ruling in this case?***
 - ✓ A ruling of the **Supreme Court is the law of the land.**



- ✓ Parliament **cannot directly contradict the Supreme Court** but can pass a law that removes the **basis of the court's judgment**.
- ✓ Such a law can be both retrospective and prospective, according to the **decision in Madras Bar Association vs. Union of India (2021)**.
- **Potential Challenges:**
 - ✓ The proposed changes **may face challenges as the Supreme Court's ruling was not solely based on gender discrimination** but on the broader principles of constitutional **rights and privacy**.
 - ✓ A new law may **need to address these foundational concerns** to withstand legal scrutiny.
- **Marriage as Personal Contract:**
 - ✓ Marriage is **both sacrament and civil contract**, allowing spouses to set their own terms.
 - ✓ National Commission for Women **recommends treating adultery as a civil wrong, not a criminal offense**.
- **Unwarranted Regulation:**
 - ✓ **Penal law intervention in personal contracts**, especially marriage, is deemed unwarranted.
 - ✓ Autonomy in defining **relationship terms should be respected without legal intrusion**.
- **Ineffectiveness of Criminal Punishment:**
 - ✓ Criminal punishment for **adultery is seen as an ineffective remedy for the aggrieved party**.
 - ✓ Prosecution often seeks **financial settlement rather than imprisonment**, making criminal punishment unnecessary.

ADULTERY CAN TAKE YOU TO COURT, NOT TO JAIL

What's struck down: Section 497 of Indian Penal code that said: "Whoever has sexual intercourse with a person who is... the wife of another man, without the consent... of that man, such sexual intercourse not amounting to the offence of rape, is guilty of the offence of adultery"

The problem: It treated woman as victim of the offence and as 'property' of her husband. It was not an offence if a man had sexual intercourse with a woman after getting her husband's consent

After the judgment: Adultery can be a ground for divorce but it's no more a criminal offence attracting up to 5 years' jail term

Govt's problem: Centre in its affidavit before the apex court had said that it would be against the sanctity of marriage to dilute the offence of adultery

Keep in mind: Though adultery per se is no longer a crime, if any aggrieved spouse commits suicide because of partner's adultery, it could be treated as an abetment to suicide—a crime

Making adultery a crime is retrograde and would mean punishing unhappy people... any law which dents **individual dignity and equity of women** in a civilised society invites the wrath of the Constitution
—CJI Dipak Mishra

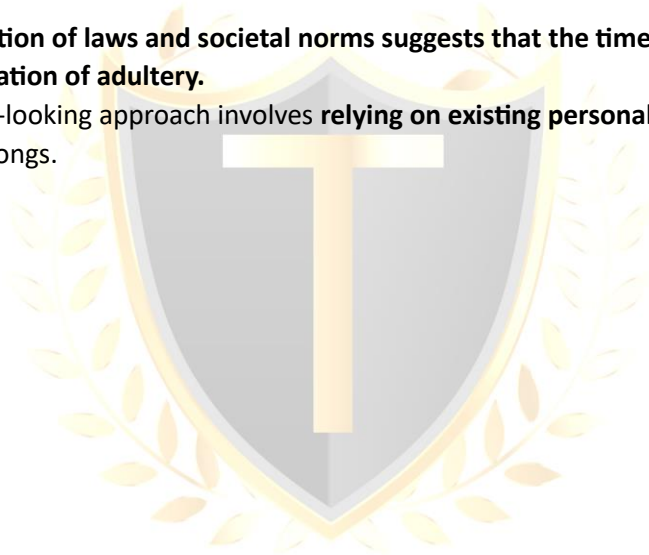
Ostensibly, society has **two sets of standards of morality** for judging sexual behaviour. One set for its female members and another for males... A society which perceives women as pure and an embodiment of virtue has no qualms of subjecting them to virulent attack: to rape, honour killings, sex-determination and infanticide
—Justice D Y Chandrachud

WAY FORWARD:

- **Original Object of Adultery Laws:**
 - ✓ Adultery laws were **initially designed to deter men from taking advantage of women deprived of love and affection**, treating women as victims rather than offenders.
 - ✓ Section 497, **enacted in a time of unequal and inoperative laws**, addressed societal imbalances.
- **Changing Legal Landscape:**
 - ✓ Polygamy, **once socially sanctioned, is now illegal, and monogamy is prevalent**.
 - ✓ Today's personal laws are equal, operative, effective, and efficient, **marking a significant shift from the past**.
- **Transformation in Matrimonial Laws:**
 - ✓ Matrimonial laws now **have a broader definition of adultery compared to criminal laws**.
 - ✓ Practicing polygamy or engaging in **extramarital relationships without facing civil consequences** has become nearly impossible.
- **Empowerment of Women:**
 - ✓ Women have **transcended the role of mere chattels** and have established their own identity in society.
 - ✓ Changes in societal norms have **empowered women, challenging the need to treat them as victims in adultery cases**.
- **Redundancy of Adultery as a Criminal Offense:**



- ✓ With the **evolution of personal laws and societal attitudes**, there is no compelling reason to **retain adultery** as a criminal offense in the penal code.
- ✓ Personal laws are **now equipped to address adultery as a civil wrong**, rendering the criminalization obsolete.
- **Global Trends in Decriminalization:**
 - ✓ Many **Western countries, including Britain, Austria, and Belgium, have decriminalized adultery.**
 - ✓ Acknowledging global shifts, the **article suggests aligning with evolving societal norms.**
- **Adequacy of Personal Laws:**
 - ✓ The existing personal laws provide a **comprehensive framework to address and remedy cases of adultery.**
 - ✓ Civil actions are **more appropriate and effective in dealing with issues related to marital fidelity.**
- **Contemporary Perspective:**
 - ✓ Considering the contemporary legal and societal landscape, **retaining adultery as a criminal offense is unnecessary.**
 - ✓ Adultery can be **adequately addressed and adjudicated** within the framework of evolving personal laws.
- **Conclusion:**
 - ✓ The **evolution of laws and societal norms suggests that the time has come to reconsider the criminalization of adultery.**
 - ✓ A forward-looking approach involves **relying on existing personal laws to address adultery cases as civil wrongs.**





THE APPROVAL OF FIRST VACCINE FOR CHIKUNGUNYA

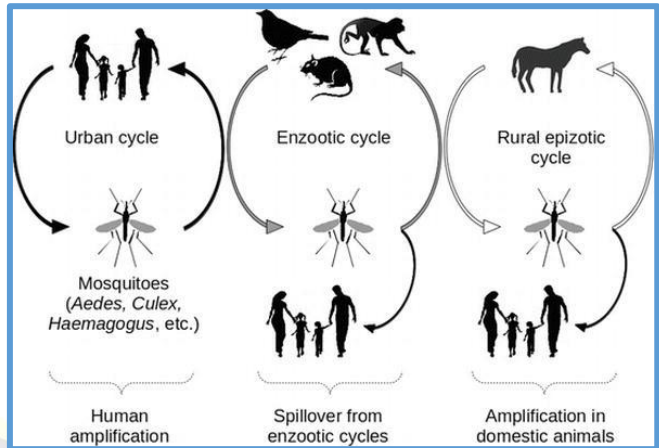
SOURCE: [THE HINDU](#)

WHY IN NEWS?

The recent **approval of the chikungunya vaccine, Ixchiq, by the U.S. FDA** marks a significant development in global health.

CHIKUNGUNYA: DECODING THE VIRAL MENACE:

- **Understanding Chikungunya:**
 - ✓ Chikungunya, a viral illness, emerged in **1952 in Tanzania**, causing joint pain and dubbed "to become contorted" in the local language.
- **Transmission Dynamics:**
 - ✓ Transmitted by mosquitoes, **Aedes aegypti** and **Aedes albopictus**, the same vectors for dengue.
 - ✓ Mosquitoes contract the virus by **biting infected humans or animals**, influenced by weather conditions.
- **Symptoms Unveiled:**
 - ✓ Symptoms encompass **severe joint pain, muscle pain, headache, nausea, fatigue, and rashes**.
- **Treatment Challenges:**
 - ✓ Before That, there is **no specific vaccines or antiviral medications target Chikungunya**.
 - ✓ Treatments mainly focused on **symptom relief, lacking a definitive cure**.
- **Factors Fueling the Outbreak:**
 - ✓ **Urbanization Maze: Unplanned urban growth** contributes to the rising incidence of Chikungunya.
 - ✓ **Waste Woes: Inadequate water and waste management** create breeding grounds for mosquitoes.
 - ✓ **Vaccine Void: The absence of targeted drugs or vaccines** hampers effective prevention and treatment.



FDA APPROVAL FOR CHIKUNGUNYA VACCINE:

- **First Preventive Shot for Chikungunya:**
 - ✓ Ixchiq is the first-ever preventive vaccine against the chikungunya virus approved by the FDA, marking a milestone in addressing this mosquito-borne disease in the United States.
- **Availability Details Awaited:**
 - ✓ While the FDA has granted approval, there is **no official information from Valneva about the availability of the Ixchiq vaccine in the U.S.**
 - ✓ Further updates from the company are awaited regarding distribution.
- **Vaccine Effectiveness:**

Vaccine Composition:

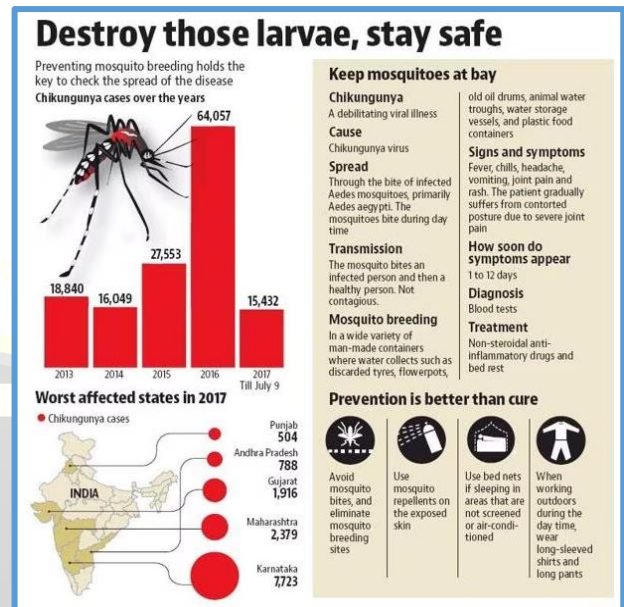
- *Ixchiq is administered as a singular injection into the muscle.*
- *It contains a live, weakened version of the chikungunya virus.*
- *Comprehensive studies engaged around 3,500 participants aged 18 and older.*
- *Common side effects include headache, fatigue, muscle pain, joint pain, fever, nausea, and injection site tenderness.*
- *Antibody levels evaluated against a protective threshold observed in non-human primates.*



- ✓ Approval is based on **late-stage clinical trials showing the vaccine's effectiveness.**
- ✓ The **trials demonstrated a remarkable 98.9% success rate** in triggering antibody production capable of neutralizing the **chikungunya virus within 28 days post-vaccination.**
- **Post-Marketing Study for Ongoing Safety Monitoring:**
 - ✓ The FDA has requested **Valneva to conduct a post-marketing study to assess potential risks** of severe chikungunya-like adverse reactions after vaccination.
 - ✓ This **ensures continuous safety monitoring and a commitment to long-term vaccine safety and effectiveness.**

INDIAN GOVERNMENT ENDEAVORS AGAINST CHIKUNGUNYA: UNVEILING INITIATIVES

- **National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP):**
 - ✓ A **flagship initiative addressing Malaria, Filariasis, Kala-azar, Japanese Encephalitis, Dengue, and Chikungunya.**
 - ✓ Operates under the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.**
 - ✓ **Aims to prevent and control the spread of various vector-borne diseases.**
- **Integrated Mosquito Management (IMM):**
 - ✓ A **holistic approach combining chemical, biological, and environmental methods** to manage mosquito populations.
 - ✓ **Targets the breeding sites of Aedes mosquitoes**, responsible for Chikungunya transmission.
- **Community Awareness Campaigns:**
 - ✓ Educational initiatives to **inform communities about preventive measures, symptoms, and early detection** of Chikungunya.
 - ✓ Empowers **communities to actively participate in vector control efforts.**
- **Research and Development (R&D) Initiatives:**
 - ✓ Allocates resources for research on **innovative strategies, vaccines, and treatment options** for Chikungunya.
 - ✓ Focuses on **staying ahead of the viral evolution and enhancing control measures.**
- **Urban Planning Integration:**
 - ✓ Collaborates with **urban planning bodies to incorporate mosquito control measures in city planning.**
 - ✓ Aims to address **haphazard urbanization contributing to increased mosquito breeding.**



WAY FORWARD:

- **FDA Approval Addresses Unmet Medical Need:**
 - ✓ The FDA's approval acknowledges the vaccine's role in addressing an unmet medical need, representing a **significant advancement in preventing a potentially debilitating disease.**
- **Limited Treatment Options for Chikungunya:**
 - ✓ The **approval emphasizes the importance of the vaccine in providing a preventive solution**, especially in the context of chikungunya, where treatment options are limited.
- **Fast-Track Pathway Inspired by COVID Research:**



- ✓ The hope is that the **fast-track pathway, inspired by the success of COVID research** and vaccine development, will expedite the **rollout of the chikungunya vaccine.**

➤ **Prevalent Regions for Chikungunya:**

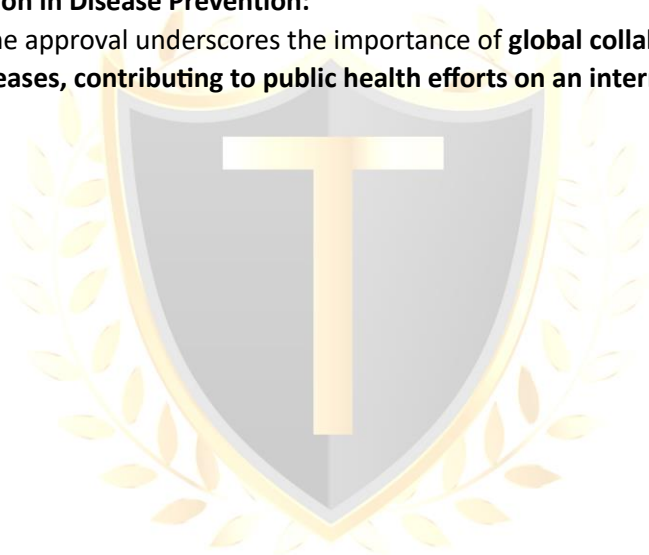
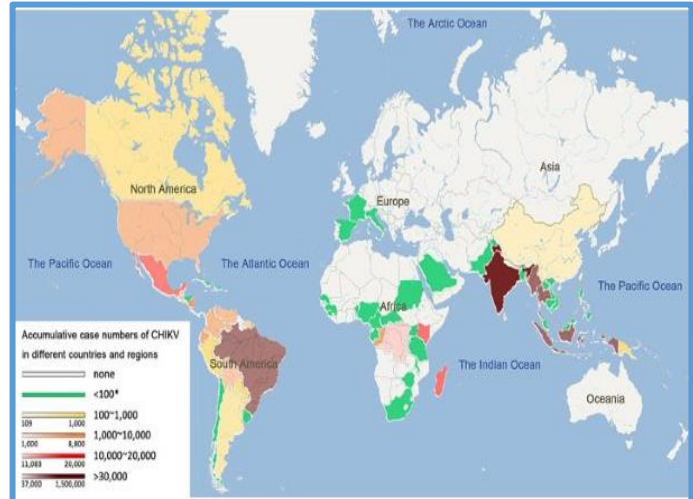
- ✓ The rollout is particularly **crucial in regions where chikungunya is more prevalent, such as Brazil, Paraguay, India (with a significant number of suspected cases), and parts of western Africa.**

➤ **Potential Impact on Chikungunya Cases:**

- ✓ The approval aims to have a positive impact on the prevalence of chikungunya by **making the vaccine accessible in regions with high incidences of the disease.**


➤ **Global Collaboration in Disease Prevention:**

- ✓ The vaccine approval underscores the importance of **global collaboration in preventing vector-borne diseases, contributing to public health efforts on an international scale.**





PRELIMS POINTERS:

Topic	Information
MARS SOLAR CONJUNCTION	<p>WHY IN NEWS? NASA announced that it will stop sending commands to its fleet of robotic probes on or orbiting the red planet (Mars) due to Mars solar conjunction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Phenomenon occurs when the Sun is between Earth and Mars. ➤ <u>Occurs once every two years.</u> ➤ Sun expels hot, ionized gas during this time. ➤ <u>May corrupt radio signals from Earth to Mars.</u> ➤ Could cause unexpected spacecraft behaviour on Mars. ➤ Occurring between November 11 and November 25 this year. <p>Key Facts about Mars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fourth planet in the solar system. ○ Seventh in size and mass. ○ Conspicuous reddish object in the night sky. ○ Two moons: Phobos and Deimos. ○ Very thin atmosphere. ○ Rust colour due to iron-rich minerals in regolith.
KAVRO DOMA 360	<p>WHY IN NEWS? World-first rifle-rated ballistic helmet developed by MKU Limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Uniform protection in all 5 zones of the head against threats like AK-47 bullets. ▪ Boltless design provides 40% more protection area against AK-47 assault rifles. ▪ Maintains Back Face Signature of less than 20 mm, reducing the risk of injury. ▪ Advanced harness system with dynamic impact technology. 
NATIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITY (NHA)	<p>WHY IN NEWS? National Health Authority (NHA) and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) have joined hands to operationalize the National Health Claim Exchange (NHCE).</p> <p>NHCE Overview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital health claims platform by the National Health Authority (NHA). • Acts as a gateway for exchanging claims-related information in the healthcare and health insurance ecosystem. • Designed to be interoperable, machine-readable, auditable, and verifiable. • Ensures accurate and trustworthy information exchange. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>ABOUT NHA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <u>Apex body implementing Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY).</u> ➤ Responsible for designing strategy, building technological infrastructure, and implementing the "National Digital Health Mission" for a National Digital Health Eco-system. </div>



- Successor of the National Health Agency, reconstituted for full functional autonomy in January 2019.
- Attached office of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with full functional autonomy.
- Governed by a Governing Board chaired by the Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare.
- Headed by a CEO, an officer of the rank of Secretary to the Government of India, managing its affairs.
- CEO serves as the Ex-Office Member Secretary of the Governing Board.
- Implementation at the State level involves State Health Agencies (SHAs) set up as societies/trusts by respective States.

**PRADHAN MANTRI-
PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE
TRIBAL GROUPS (PM-PVTG)
DEVELOPMENT MISSION**

WHY IN NEWS? Prime Minister will launch the PM-PVTG Development Mission in a bid to empower the tribals on the birth anniversary of Birsa Munda, which has been celebrated as Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas.

PM-PVTG Development Mission:

- Rs 24,000-crore project focusing on PVTG development.
- Aims to bring critical infrastructure (power, water, road connectivity, housing, education, healthcare) to PVTG communities in remote villages.
- Involves coordinated efforts of nine ministries, implementing 11 interventions including PM-Gram Sadak Yojana, PM-Gram Awaas Yojana, Jal Jeevan Mission, and others.
- Ensures saturation for schemes like Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna, Sickle Cell Disease Elimination, TB Elimination, 100% immunization, PM Surakshit Matritva Yojana, PM Matru Vandana Yojana, PM Poshan, and PM Jan Dhan Yojana.

Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs):

- More vulnerable among tribal groups in India.
- Characterized by **primitive traits, geographical isolation, low literacy, zero to negative population growth, and backwardness.**
- Largely dependent on hunting for food and maintain a pre-agriculture level of technology.
- Originated as Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) in 1973 by the Dhebar Commission, with 52 groups identified in 1975 and 23 more added in 1993.
- Renamed as PVTGs in 2006.
- Presently, 2.8 million PVTGs in 75 tribes across 22,544 villages in 220 districts across 18 states and Union Territories in India.
- **According to the 2011 Census, Odisha has the largest PVTG population at 866,000, followed by Madhya Pradesh at 609,000, and Andhra Pradesh (including Telangana) at 539,000.**
- **Odisha's Saura community is the largest PVTG, numbering 535,000.**