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S.NO.

TOPIC

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| 1. | INDIA-SRI LANKA RELATIONS |
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INDIA-SRI LANKA RELATIONS

SOURCE: [THE HINDU](#)

WHY IN NEWS?

- **President Ranil Wickremesinghe's** recent announcement on **land connectivity with India** echoes a proposal he made 20 years ago about a **bridge between Rameswaram (India) and Talaimanar (Sri Lanka)**.
- The initial vision aimed at **regional economic integration**, fostering growth opportunities for both countries.

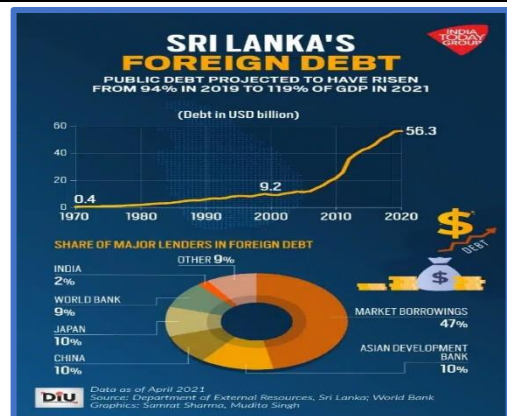
India-Sri Lanka Relations: A Brief Overview

- **Historical and Cultural Ties:**
 - ✓ The relationship between **India and Sri Lanka** dates back more than **2500 years**, marked by **intellectual, cultural, religious, and linguistic** interactions.
 - ✓ Both nations share a rich legacy of historical connections, **fostering a deep-rooted bond**.
- **Trade and Investment:**
 - ✓ Over the years, **trade and investment between India and Sri Lanka** have grown **significantly**, contributing to economic cooperation.
 - ✓ Bilateral engagements extend to various sectors, including development, **education, culture, and defence**.
- **International Cooperation:**
 - ✓ India and Sri Lanka collaborate on major **international issues**, reflecting a shared understanding and alignment on global matters.
 - ✓ The **two countries engage in diplomatic efforts** to address common challenges and contribute to regional stability.



Recent Status:

- **Power Grid Cooperation:**
 - ✓ Despite a **memorandum of understanding signed in 1970**, the progress on the bilateral power grid between India and Sri Lanka has been slow.
 - ✓ The **transmission network project, aiming for a 1,000 MW transfer and a High Voltage Direct Current link**, faces delays, impacting Sri Lanka's power supply.
- **Trade and Economic Ties:**
 - ✓ The **India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement, signed in 1998**, has not seen substantial progress.





- ✓ Bilateral economic ties have faced challenges, with **India regaining its position** as the **largest source of imports for Sri Lanka, contributing to about 26% of total imports.**
- **Tourism and Economic Potential:**
 - ✓ Tourism, a major revenue source for Sri Lanka, sees **India as the largest single country of tourist arrivals, constituting 17% of the total.**
 - ✓ Despite the potential for **stronger economic ties**, Sri Lanka's underperformance, **compared to its trade with Bangladesh**, raises questions about the current state of affairs.
- **Recent Developments and Initiatives:**
 - ✓ Positive momentum has been witnessed in the past year, with **resumed air services between Chennai and Jaffna**, passenger ferry services, and a joint venture in the dairy sector.
 - ✓ These developments indicate a **potential shift towards a more mutually beneficial economic relationship.**

INDIA-SRI LANKA BILATERAL RELATIONS:

- **Political Relations:**
 - ✓ **High-level Exchanges:** Regular visits and engagements at the highest levels, showcasing the importance both countries place on their relationship.
 - ✓ **Virtual Bilateral Summit (VBS):** Prime Minister Modi and Sri Lankan Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa held a VBS in September 2020, strengthening bilateral ties.
 - ✓ A joint statement, '**Mitratva Maga**,' covered various areas of cooperation.
 - ✓ **Official Visits:** Key visits include **Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's visit in 2019**, **PM Mahinda Rajapaksa's visit in 2020**, and **Indian EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar's visit in 2021**, enhancing diplomatic ties.
 - ✓ **Historical Visits:** Recounts visits by former leaders like **Narendra Modi's 2015 and 2017 visits, expressing solidarity after Easter Sunday attacks**, and visits by former leaders Maithripala Sirisena and Ranil Wickremesinghe.
- **Commercial Relations:**
 - ✓ **India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement (ISFTA):** Initiated in 2000, significantly contributing to bilateral trade expansion.
 - ✓ **Bilateral Trade:** India is Sri Lanka's largest trading partner, with merchandise trade reaching USD 5.45 billion in 2021.
 - ✓ Both countries **benefit from economic ties**, with Sri Lankan exports to **India utilizing ISFTA benefits.**
 - ✓ **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI):** India a major contributor to FDI in Sri Lanka, with investments in various sectors like **petroleum, tourism, manufacturing, real estate, and more.**
- **Development Cooperation:**
 - ✓ **Grant Projects:** India's **commitment of over USD 3.5 billion** in grants for projects spanning education, health, livelihood, housing, and industrial development.
 - ✓ **Indian Housing Project:** Building **62,500 houses**, showcasing India's commitment to post-war reconstruction.
 - ✓ **Lines of Credit:** 11 LOCs extended for projects in **railways, transport, connectivity, defense, and solar**, reinforcing economic collaboration.
- **Cultural Relations:**





- ✓ **Shared Heritage:** A 2,500-year legacy of historical, cultural, religious, spiritual, and linguistic ties.
- ✓ **Buddhism:** Deep-rooted Buddhist ties, with **India announcing a USD 15 million grant** for promoting bilateral Buddhist connections.
- ✓ **Cultural Exchange:** **Cultural Cooperation Agreement** forms the basis for periodic cultural exchange programs.
- **People-to-People Ties:**
 - ✓ **Pilgrimages:** Prime Minister Modi's announcement of a **USD 15 million grant for Buddhist ties** and the **inaugural flight to Kushinagar strengthens** people-to-people connections.
 - ✓ **International Day of Yoga:** Celebrated annually, fostering wellness and therapeutic yoga.
 - ✓ **India-Sri Lanka Foundation:** Facilitating civil society exchanges, enhancing contact between younger generations.
- **Tourism:**
 - ✓ **E-Tourist Visa: Launched in 2015**, enhancing tourism between the two nations.
 - ✓ **Open Sky Agreement:** Signed in 2016, enabling increased connectivity with unlimited flights to six Indian airports.
 - ✓ **Air Travel Bubble: Arrangement in 2021 to restore air connectivity affected by pandemic-related travel restrictions.**
- **Human Resource Development:**
 - ✓ **Scholarships:** India offers about **710 scholarship slots annually to Sri Lankan students**, fostering education ties.
 - ✓ **ITEC Program: Offering 402 fully-funded slots** annually for short-term training programs, enhancing skill sets.
- **Fisheries Issue:**
 - ✓ Joint efforts to **address the issue of fishermen crossing maritime boundaries**, with ministerial and JWG meetings.
- **Indian Community:**
 - ✓ **People of Indian Origin (PIOs):** Diverse communities engaged in business ventures, contributing to economic prosperity.
 - ✓ **Indian Origin Tamils (IOTs):** Employed in plantations, and a **growing population in Colombo engaged in business.**
 - ✓ **Indian Expatriates:** An **estimated 14,000 Indian expatriates living in Sri Lanka**, contributing to diverse sectors.

SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIA- SRI LANKA RELATIONS:

- **Strategic Geopolitical Position:**
 - ✓ Sri Lanka's **strategic location in the Indian Ocean** is crucial.
 - ✓ The **East-West maritime route** around the island handles a significant portion of global oil and container transportation.
- **Maritime Security and Trade Potential:**
 - ✓ Sri Lanka's ports **hold potential as essential maritime hubs.**
 - ✓ Plays a vital role in ensuring maritime security and **securing Sea Lanes of Communication.**
- **Chinese Influence and Regional Stability:**
 - ✓ Chinese influence, notably through the **Belt and Road Initiative, has increased.**
 - ✓ India prioritizes **stability, peace, and security**, intensifying Sri Lanka's regional significance.
- **Indian Ocean Strategic Importance:**
 - ✓ Sri Lanka's position in **major shipping lanes of the Indian Ocean is critical.**
 - ✓ Control over these lanes is **pivotal for India's trade and military operations.**
- **Ease of Doing Business and Tourism:**



- ✓ The adoption of **UPI enhances economic integration** and business ease.
- ✓ UPI facilitates **trade and boosts connectivity for tourism** between India and Sri Lanka.

CHALLENGES OF INDIA- SRI LANKA RELATIONS:

- **Fishermen Issue:**
 - ✓ Both countries have often **faced disputes related to fishing rights** in the Palk Strait and the Gulf of Mannar.
 - ✓ Conflicts arise **when fishermen from one country are apprehended by the other** for crossing maritime boundaries.
- **Economic Ties:**
 - ✓ **Trade imbalances and economic competition** can strain relations.
 - ✓ It's important to assess the **economic dynamics, trade agreements**, and any issues related to market access or trade barriers between the two nations.
- **Political Dynamics:**
 - ✓ **Political differences or changes in leadership** can influence bilateral relations.
 - ✓ **Shifts in foreign policy priorities or diplomatic approaches** can impact how the two countries interact on regional and global platforms.
- **China's Influence:**
 - ✓ The influence of external actors, particularly China, in the region can be a source of concern.
 - ✓ **India and Sri Lanka may perceive each other's relationships** with external powers as potential threats to their own strategic interests.
- **Security Concerns:**
 - ✓ **Security issues, such as terrorism or cross-border activities**, can strain relations.
 - ✓ Both countries **need to collaborate on security matters** to ensure regional stability.
- **Ethnic and Cultural Ties:**
 - ✓ Given the **shared history, ethnicity, and cultural ties**, any issues related to the **treatment of Tamil minorities in Sri Lanka can affect bilateral relations**.
 - ✓ India has historically been **concerned about the welfare of Tamils in Sri Lanka**.

WAY FORWARD:

- **Diplomatic Dialogue:**
 - ✓ **Continued diplomatic dialogue** is crucial for **addressing concerns and finding common ground**.
 - ✓ **High-level meetings and communication channels** between the governments can foster mutual understanding.
- **Trade and Economic Cooperation:**
 - ✓ **Strengthening economic ties** through **trade agreements and partnerships** can be mutually beneficial.
 - ✓ **Addressing trade imbalances and facilitating** smoother trade can contribute to improved relations.
- **Cultural and People-to-People Ties:**
 - ✓ **Encouraging cultural exchanges, tourism, and educational collaborations** can enhance people-to-people ties.
 - ✓ Promoting a better understanding of each other's cultures can help build stronger relations.
- **Security Cooperation:**
 - ✓ **Collaborating on security matters, including counter-terrorism** efforts and maritime security, can contribute to regional stability.
 - ✓ Joint efforts to address common security challenges can strengthen the strategic partnership.
- **Conflict Resolution:**



- ✓ If there are **outstanding issues or historical grievances**, both countries can work towards finding mutually acceptable solutions.
- ✓ This might involve addressing concerns related to **minority rights, border disputes, or historical issues**.
- **Regional Cooperation:**
 - ✓ Engaging in regional forums and organizations can provide **opportunities for collaboration on shared challenges**.
 - ✓ Both countries can work **together to address regional issues**, fostering a sense of common purpose.
- **Environmental and Climate Change Collaboration:**
 - ✓ Given the **shared geographical and ecological features**, collaboration on environmental and climate change issues can be an avenue for positive engagement.
 - ✓ Joint efforts to **address climate challenges** can contribute to regional sustainability.





THE ADVOCATES (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2023

SOURCE: [INDIAN EXPRESS](#)

WHY IN NEWS?

- On December 4, the **first day of the Parliament's Winter Session**, the Lok Sabha passed the **Advocates Amendment Bill, 2023**.
- This **bill aims to address issues within the legal system, specifically targeting the presence of 'touts.'**
- The legislation repeals the outdated **Legal Practitioners Act of 1879** and amends the **Advocates Act of 1961**, streamlining legal regulations and eliminating obsolete laws.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE REPEALED 1879 ACT:

- **Enactment and Scope:**
 - ✓ The **Legal Practitioners Act of 1879**, coming into force in 1880, aimed to **consolidate and amend the law related to Legal Practitioners** in specific provinces.
 - ✓ Initially **applied to areas in West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Orissa, and Delhi**, other state governments had the option to extend its applicability through official notifications.
- **Definition of "Legal Practitioner":**
 - ✓ **Section 2 of the 1879 Act** defined the term "legal practitioner" broadly, encompassing **advocates, vakils, or attorneys of any High Court**.
- **Introduction of the Term "Tout":**
 - ✓ The 1879 Act introduced a **new definition of the term "tout."**
 - ✓ A "tout" was identified as an individual who, in consideration of remuneration from any legal practitioner, procures the employment of a legal practitioner in any legal business.
 - ✓ This also included **someone proposing to procure, for remuneration, the employment of a legal practitioner** to anyone interested in legal business.
- **Role of a Tout:**
 - ✓ Simply put, a tout was someone **engaged in procuring clients for a legal practitioner** in exchange for payment.
 - ✓ The definition expanded to include **individuals frequenting civil or criminal courts, revenue offices, railway stations, etc.**, for the purpose of procuring clients for legal practitioners.



TRANSITION TO THE ADVOCATES ACT OF 1961:

- **Enactment of the Advocates Act of 1961:**
 - ✓ Post-independence, the need for legal reforms in India led to the creation of the **Advocates Act, 1961**.
 - ✓ This legislation aimed to **amend and consolidate laws related to legal practitioners**, also providing for the constitution of **Bar Councils and an All-India Bar**.
- **Pre-1961 Legal Governance:**
 - ✓ Prior to the **Advocates Act of 1961**, legal practitioners were governed by **three Acts**:
 - **The Legal Practitioners Act, 1879,**
 - **The Bombay Pleaders Act, 1920, and**



- **The Indian Bar Councils Act, 1926.**

➤ **Reform Initiatives:**

- ✓ The impetus for legal reform **came after independence**, with the Law Commission tasked to prepare a report on necessary changes.
- ✓ The **249th Report** titled '**Obsolete Laws: Warranting Immediate Repeal**' recommended the repeal of the 1879 Act.
- ✓ The **All-India Bar Committee** also made **recommendations in 1953**.
- ✓ Considering these inputs, **the Advocates Act of 1961** was enacted.

PROVISIONS UNDER THE ADVOCATES AMENDMENT BILL, 2023:

➤ **Introduction of New Provisions**

- ✓ The Advocates Amendment Bill, 2023, **introduces significant amendments to the Advocates Act of 1961**.
- ✓ The new provisions **primarily focus on addressing the issue of individuals engaging in illegal practices** within courts and other authorities.

➤ **Section 45A: Empowering High Courts and District Judges:**

- ✓ A key **addition is Section 45A**, inserted immediately after Section 45 of the 1961 Act.
- ✓ This section **prescribes a penalty of six months of imprisonment for individuals found to be illegally practicing** in courts and before other authorities.

➤ **Lists of Touts by High Courts and District Judges:**

- ✓ Section 45A **empowers every High Court (HC) and district judge to frame and publish lists of touts**.
- ✓ Importantly, **no individual's name can be included** in these lists **without providing them with an opportunity to present their case against such inclusion**.

➤ **Inquiry Process for Alleged Touts:**

- ✓ The **bill outlines a structured inquiry process** for alleged or suspected touts.
- ✓ **Any authority with the power to create these lists** can send the **names to subordinate courts**.
- ✓ These lower courts will then **conduct inquiries into the conduct of the individuals in question**, offering them an opportunity to present their case.
- ✓ Subsequently, the lower court reports **back to the authority that initiated the inquiry**.

➤ **Publication of Touts' Lists:**

- ✓ If proven to be a tout, **the person's name will be included in the list of touts published by the relevant authority**.
- ✓ These lists are to be prominently displayed in every court.
- ✓ Additionally, **the court or judge has the authority to exclude any individual** whose name appears on the list from the court's vicinity.

➤ **Penalties for Acting as a Tout:**

- ✓ The provision introduces **penalties for individuals acting as touts while their names are on the published lists**.





- ✓ Such individuals may **face imprisonment for up to three months**, a fine **extending to five hundred rupees, or both**.

OBJECTIVE OF THE ADVOCATES AMENDMENT BILL, 2023:

➤ Objective of Reducing Redundant Enactments:

- ✓ The **Bill's accompanying Statement of Objects and Reasons** emphasizes the government's **commitment to reducing the number of superfluous enactments** in the statute book.
- ✓ The **inclusion of Section 45A** addresses **the absence of a similar provision in the 1961 Act** and aims to **streamline legal regulations**.
- ✓ This aligns with the **government's broader policy** of **repealing obsolete laws or pre-independence Acts** that have lost their utility.
- ✓ The **consultation with the Bar Council of India** further **supports the decision to repeal the Legal Practitioners Act** and amend the Advocates Act.

CHALLENGES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATIONS OF AMENDMENT ACT:

➤ Implementation Issues:

- ✓ **Ensuring effective implementation** of the amended provisions may pose a challenge.
- ✓ This includes the **proper framing and publication of lists of touts**, conducting inquiries, and **enforcing penalties for illegal practices**.

➤ Judicial Capacity and Resources:

- ✓ The inquiry process for alleged touts **involves lower courts**.
- ✓ **Adequate resources and judicial capacity** will be required to conduct these inquiries promptly.
- ✓ Courts may face challenges in **managing additional responsibilities** arising from the new provisions.

➤ Definition and Identification of Touts:

- ✓ The definition of "tout" and the criteria for identifying individuals **engaging in illegal practices might be subjective**.
- ✓ **Clear guidelines and criteria will be necessary to prevent misuse** and ensure fair implementation.

➤ Legal Safeguards for Accused Individuals:

- ✓ Providing individuals accused **of being touts with an opportunity to show cause is essential for a fair legal process**.
- ✓ Ensuring that these **individuals have proper legal representation** and due process may be a challenge.

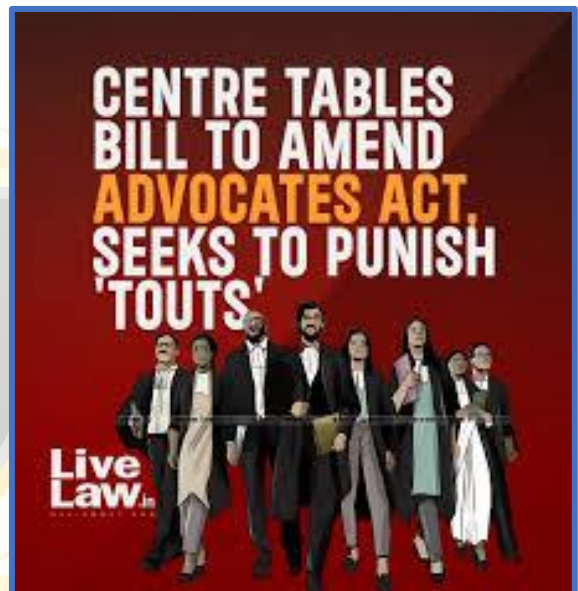
➤ Enforcement and Compliance:

- ✓ **Enforcing penalties on individuals acting as touts may face challenges**, and compliance may **vary**.
- ✓ The effectiveness of **deterrence measures will depend on the willingness** and capacity to enforce legal consequences.

➤ Integration with Existing Legal Framework:

- ✓ Integrating the new provisions **seamlessly with the existing legal framework**, particularly the **Advocates Act of 1961**, requires **careful consideration**.
- ✓ Any **inconsistencies or conflicts** may lead to **confusion and legal disputes**.

➤ Impact on Legal Practitioners:





- ✓ Legal practitioners may express concerns about the potential impact on their profession.
- ✓ **Balancing the need to curb illegal practices** with ensuring a conducive environment for legal professionals is crucial.

WAY FORWARD:

- **Effective Implementation Strategy:**
 - ✓ Develop a **comprehensive implementation strategy**, including guidelines for framing lists of touts, conducting inquiries, and enforcing penalties.
- **Capacity Building and Resources:**
 - ✓ Allocate adequate **resources for training judges and court staff**, ensuring lower courts have the **capacity to conduct inquiries efficiently**.
- **Transparent Criteria for Identifying Touts:**
 - ✓ **Establish clear and transparent criteria for identifying individuals engaged in illegal practices, preventing misuse and ensuring fairness** in the legal process.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:**
 - ✓ Conduct public awareness **campaigns to inform the public about the amended provisions**, the consequences of illegal practices, and **the importance of a transparent legal system**.
- **Collaboration with Legal Community:**
 - ✓ Foster collaboration with the legal community, **addressing concerns through ongoing dialogue** and garnering support for the **bill to positively impact the legal profession**.





PRELIMS POINTERS:

TOPIC	DISCRIPTION
<p>De-Extincting the Dodo</p>	<p>WHY IN NEWS?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Symbolic Extinction Icon: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ The dodo, symbolizing extinction, is set to be de-extincted through a genetic engineering collaboration between Colossal Biosciences and the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation. ❖ Human-Induced Extinction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ The project addresses the historic role of humans in the extinction of dodos, aiming to bring them back to Mauritius and restore their ecological role. ❖ Conservation Optimism Symbol: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Beyond scientific goals, the initiative aims to create 'conservation optimism,' providing hope amid climate change and biodiversity loss challenges. <div data-bbox="1018 510 1426 1048" data-label="Image"> <p style="font-size: small;">dodo (Raphus cucullatus)</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">© Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc.</p> </div> <p>ABOUT THE DODO BIRDS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The dodo (Raphus cucullatus), a flightless bird native to Mauritius, belonged to the extinct family Raphidae. ❖ Weighing approximately 23 kg, the dodo had blue-gray plumage, a large head, a 23-cm blackish bill with a reddish sheath forming a hooked tip, small useless wings, stout yellow legs, and a tuft of curly feathers on its rear end.
<p>Pompe disease</p>	<p>WHY IN NEWS?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The recent demise of Nidhi Shirol, India's first Pompe disease patient, at the age of 24 after battling the disease has brought Pompe disease into the spotlight. <p>WHAT IS POMPE DISEASE?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Pompe disease, or Glycogen Storage Disease Type II, is a rare genetic disorder caused by a deficiency of the enzyme acid alpha-glucosidase (GAA). ❖ Crucial for breaking down glycogen into glucose within cells. <p>PREVALENCE AND VARIABILITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Prevalence ranges from 1 in 40,000 to 1 in 300,000 births, affecting diverse ethnicities. ❖ Onset and severity vary, leading to a spectrum of clinical presentations. <p>IMPACT ON INDIVIDUALS</p> <div data-bbox="1034 1379 1398 1626" data-label="Image"> </div>

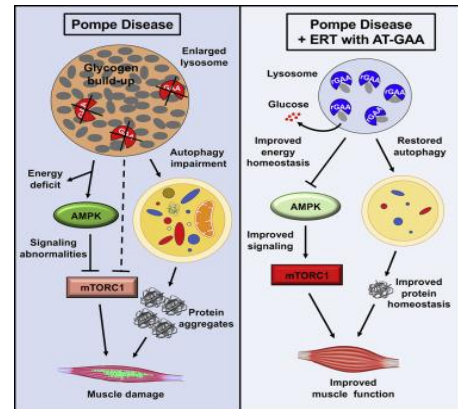
- ❖ Symptoms include progressive **muscle weakness, motor skill delays**, degenerative impact on **bones, respiratory complications, cardiac involvement**, and implications for daily living.

DIAGNOSIS APPROACH

- ❖ Diagnosis involves **enzyme assays to measure GAA activity**, genetic testing for **GAA gene mutations**, and clinical evaluations.
- ❖ **Enzyme tests and genetic analysis** confirm Pompe disease.

TREATMENT OPTIONS

- ❖ While there is no cure, **Enzyme Replacement Therapy (ERT)** is a standard treatment.
- ❖ It involves **infusing the missing enzyme** to alleviate **glycogen buildup**, managing symptoms, and **improving the patient's quality of life**.



Gene therapies for sickle cell disease

WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ The **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** granted approval for **two gene therapies for sickle cell disease**, marking a **significant development in the treatment of the inherited blood disorder**.

ABOUT SICKLE CELL DISEASE (SCD)

❖ **Definition:**

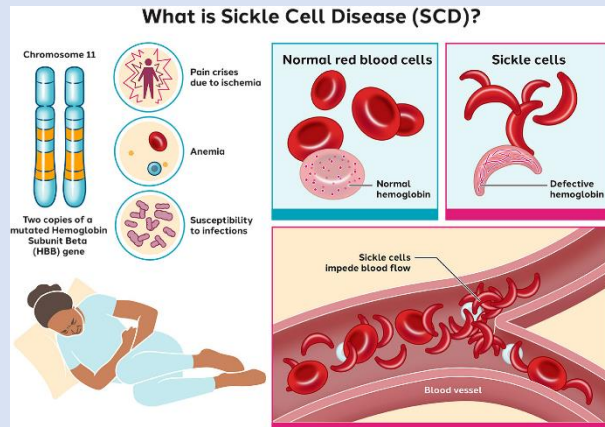
- ☛ Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) is a **chronic single gene disorder** that causes a **systemic syndrome with symptoms** such as **chronic anaemia, acute painful episodes, organ infarction, and chronic organ damage**.
- ☛ It significantly **reduces life expectancy**.

❖ **Symptoms:**

- ☛ Common symptoms include **chronic anaemia leading to fatigue, weakness, and paleness, as well as painful episodes (sickle cell crisis) causing intense pain in bones, chest, back, arms, and legs**.
- ☛ Delayed growth and puberty may also occur.

❖ **Treatment Options:**

- ☛ **Blood Transfusions:** Used to **relieve anaemia and reduce the risk of pain crises**.
- ☛ **Hydroxyurea:** A medication that helps reduce the frequency of painful episodes and **prevent long-term complications of the disease**.





- ☛ **Bone Marrow or Stem Cell Transplantation:** Another treatment option for SCD.

BREAKTHROUGH CRISPR GENE EDITING

- ❖ One of the approved therapies, **Casgevy, is based on the breakthrough CRISPR gene editing technology**, which earned its inventors the **Nobel Prize in 2020**.
- ❖ This highlights the **integration of cutting-edge gene editing methods** in medical treatments.

TREATMENT DETAILS

- ❖ The approved therapies include **Lyfgenia from bluebird bio and Casgevy** from Vertex Pharmaceuticals and CRISPR Therapeutics.
- ❖ Both treatments are **intended for individuals aged 12 years** and older, offering potential advancements in managing sickle cell disease.

SIGNIFICANCE FOR SICKLE CELL DISEASE

- ❖ Sickle cell disease, a **painful and debilitating blood disorder**, affects around 100,000 people in the U.S., primarily **impacting the Black population**.
- ❖ The approval of these gene therapies is **crucial for addressing the challenges posed by sickle cell disease**.

