DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

22nd December, 2023

S.NO.	TOPIC
1.	INDIAN PENAL CODE TO NYAYA SANHITA,2023
2.	HOW AN AI TOOL CAN MAKE WEATHER FORECASTS MORE ACCURATE
3.	PRELIMS POINTERS

INDIAN PENAL CODE TO NYAYA SANHITA,2023
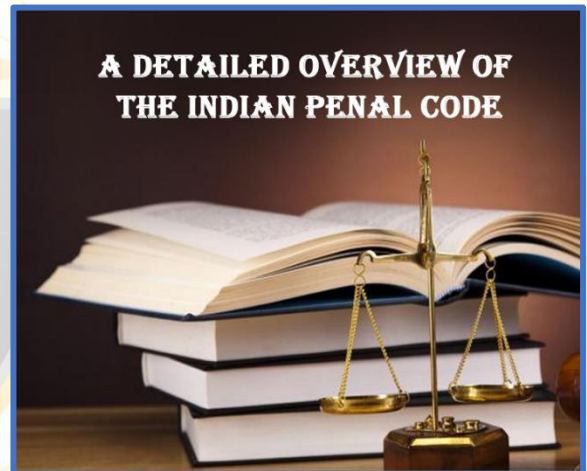
SOURCE: **INDIAN EXPRESS**

WHY IN NEWS?

➢ *The **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) Bill, 2023** seeks to replace the **Indian Penal Code**, ushering in substantial changes.*

➢ Departing from the existing legal framework, the **BNS introduces new offenses**, **eliminates certain provisions, and modifies existing laws.**

➢ *From addressing **issues of terrorism and organized crime** to introducing gender neutrality, the bill represents a departure from existing legal frameworks.*

WHAT WAS INDIAN PENAL CODE, 1860?

➢ **Introduction:**
   ✓ The Indian Penal Code (IPC) is the **primary body of law governing criminal acts** in India.
   ✓ **Enacted in 1860 during British colonial rule**, it has undergone revisions to adapt to changing legal requirements and societal norms.

Historical Background:
➢ **Role of Thomas Babington Macaulay:**
   ✓ **Thomas Babington Macaulay,** a prominent legal mind and Whig politician, saw codification as essential to modernize India and fulfill the **British "civilizing mission**."

➢ **Influence of Jeremy Bentham:**
   ✓ **Macaulay was influenced by Jeremy Bentham**, the father of modern utilitarianism, who advocated for the codification of law to replace the cumbersome legal system in England.

➢ **Drafting of the IPC:**
   ✓ In 1833, the **British Parliament passed the Government of India Act**, leading to the creation of a **law commission under Macaulay** to modernize laws.
   ✓ **Macaulay focused on criminal law**, completing the **first version of the IPC in 1837**.

➢ **Foundation on British Common Law:**
   ✓ **The IPC completely ignored existing Indian laws** and was founded on British common law, prompting scholars to view it as the **transplanting of English law in India**.

➢ **Mutiny and Enactment:**
   ✓ The **IPC remained in limbo for years due to governmental inertia**, resistance from European residents, and a loss of reform momentum.
   ✓ The **Rebellion of 1857 changed the landscape**, leading to the **demise of the East India Company** and the **British Crown taking direct control in 1858**.
   ✓ The IPC's genesis lies in the **aftermath of the Rebellion of 1857,** a significant event that prompted the British colonial government to **reconsider legal administration in India**.

REASONS FOR REVAMPING: MAJOR DRAWBACKS UNDER IPC,1860

- **Comprehensive Criminal Code:**
  - ✓ The IPC **addresses various offenses**, categorizing crimes **against the state, public peace, public employees, property, morality, and individual integrity**.
- **Intent and Act:**
  - ✓ **To be found guilty**, a person must **demonstrate both intent (mens rea)** and the **physical act (actus reus)** of committing a crime.
- **Defined Offenses:**
  - ✓ Crimes like **murder, theft, robbery, abduction, rape, fraud, defamation**, etc., are defined with specific requirements and **standards for criminal responsibility**.
- **Legal Framework:**
  - ✓ Establishes the **legal framework for determining the age of criminal responsibility**, outlines accused parties' rights, and prescribes protocols for investigation and trial.
- **Outdated Provisions:**
  - ✓ The **IPC lacks provisions** to address **contemporary crimes like mob lynching, financial crimes, white-collar crimes, and economic offenses.**
- **Uneven Punishments:**
  - ✓ **Disparities** exist in the **punishment for crimes of grievous hurt**.
  - ✓ Standardization is needed to address **incidents like chain-snatching**, which may be **life-threatening but is inconsistently** categorized under robbery or theft.
- **Technological Advances:**
  - ✓ **Technological advancements and economic developments demand** a reevaluation of IPC to include provisions for **cybercrimes and other modern offenses**.

Three bills introduced in Lok Sabha

Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860 **TO BE REPLACED BY** Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Bill, 2023	Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1973 **TO BE REPLACED BY** Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023
• 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	• 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

Indian Evidence Act, 1872 **TO BE REPLACED BY** Bharatiya Sakshya Bill, 2023	• 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

"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

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 retd IPS officer).

BHARATIYA NYAYA SANHITA (BNS) BILL, 2023: KEY CHANGES

The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) Bill, 2023 aims to replace the Indian Penal Code, bringing significant changes:

New Offenses:
- **Promise to Marry:** (*Section 69*)
  - ✓ **Criminalizes deceitful promises to marry**, addressing concerns related to **"love jihad."**
  - ✓ **Involves consensual sexual activity**, punishing those making **false promises with imprisonment up to ten years.**
- **Mob Lynching:** (*Section 101(2))*
  - ✓ Codifies offenses related **to mob lynching and hate-crime murders**.
  - ✓ **Imposes punishment** ranging from **life imprisonment to death** for murders **committed by mobs based** on factors **like race, caste, community, or personal belief.**
- **Organized Crime:**
  - ✓ Tackles organized crime **within ordinary criminal law**.
  - ✓ Differentiates punishment based on whether the **offense caused death**, with a mandatory **minimum sentence of five years** for cases without death.
- **Stricter Laws on Sexual Offences:**
  - ✓ Enhancement of punishment **for rape from seven to ten years** (*Section 64).*

- ✓ Death penalty for **gang rape of women below 18 years** *(Section 70).*
- ✓ Introduction of a **law protecting the identities of sexual assault victims** *(Section 72).*
- ➤ **Petty Organized Crime:** *(Section 302)*
  - ✓ Introduces a category criminalizing offenses like **theft, snatching, cheating**, unauthorized **selling of tickets, unauthorized betting, or gambling.**
- ➤ **Terrorism:** *(Section 111)*
  - ✓ Incorporates language from the **Unlawful Atrocities Prevention Act**, bringing terrorism under ordinary criminal law.
  - ✓ Broader definition of offenses related to **terror financing compared to UAPA**.
- ➤ **Attempt to Suicide:**
  - ✓ **Criminalizes attempted suicide** with the intent to restrain public servants from performing their duties.
  - ✓ Prescribes a **jail term of up to one year** with community service.

Changes proposed in criminal laws

Union home minister Amit Shah has introduced three key bills in the Lok Sabha that, if approved, will overhaul India's criminal justice system. A look at key aspects of the bills

THE BHARATIYA NYAYA SANHITA (BNS) BILL, 2023
Proposed to replace **Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860**
The IPC, which was framed by the British, is the official criminal code of India that lists various crimes and its punishments

KEY TAKEAWAYS
- Sedition deleted, but another provision penalising secessionism, separatism, rebellion and acts against sovereignty, unity and integrity of India brought in
- Provision of **death penalty** for gang rape of minors and for mob lynching
- **Community service introduced** as one of the punishments for the first time

THE BHARATIYA NAGARIK SURAKSHA SANHITA, 2023
Proposed to replace **Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), 1973**
The CrPC lays down the procedure for investigation, arrest, court hearing, bail and punishment in criminal cases

KEY TAKEAWAYS
- **Time-bound investigation**, trial and judgment within 30 days of the completion of arguments
- **Video-recording** of the statement of sexual assault victims to be made mandatory
- New provision for **attachment of property and proceeds** of crime

THE BHARATIYA SAKSHYA BILL, 2023
Proposed to replace the **Indian Evidence Act, 1872**
The IEA applies to all judicial proceedings in the country and defines the particulars of evidence produced and admissible in courts

KEY TAKEAWAYS
- **Documents to also include** electronic or digital records, e-mails, server logs, computers, smart phones, laptops, SMS, websites, locational evidence, mails, messages on devices
- **Digitisation of all records** including case diary, FIR, charge sheet and judgement
- Electronic or digital record shall have the same legal effect, validity and enforceability as paper records

Deletions:
- ➤ **Unnatural Sexual Offenses:** *(Section 377)*
  - ✓ **Repeals Section 377,** decriminalizing homosexuality but raises concerns **regarding non-consensual sexual acts.**
- ➤ **Adultery:**
  - ✓ **Omission of the offense of adultery**, previously struck down by the Supreme Court as unconstitutional in 2018.
- ➤ **Thugs:** *(Section 310)*
  - ✓ **Omission of the provision labeling individuals as "thugs"** based on habitual association for committing robbery or child-stealing.
- ➤ **Gender Neutrality:**
  - ✓ Amends **laws related to children to introduce gender neutrality.**
  - Offenses like **procuration of a girl and kidnapping of minors** have uniform age limits.

Other Tweaks:
- ➤ **Fake News:**
  - ✓ Introduces a **provision criminalizing the publishing of false** and **misleading information**, extending beyond existing hate speech laws.
- ➤ **Sedition:** (*Section 150*)
  - ✓ **Renames 'rajdroh' to 'deshdroh'** and **widens the definition**, including aiding subversive activities and encouraging separatist feelings.
- ➤ **Mandatory Minimum Sentence:**
  - ✓ **Modifies** *(Section 303)* **to allow for a punishment of "death or imprisonment for life"** instead of a mandatory death sentence.

- ➤ **Damage to Public Property:** *(Section 4)*
    - ✓ Offenses related to **causing damage to public property** now carry a graded fine corresponding to the amount of damage caused.

NEGATIVE CHANGES AND LOOPHOLES:

- ➤ **Lack of Definition for Community Service:**
    - ✓ While the introduction of **community service as a punishment** is a positive change, the BNS **fails to provide a clear definition** of what community service entails.
    - ✓ This absence of **clarity may lead to sentencing disputes and inconsistencies** in the application of community service.
    - ✓ Some instances of **unusual community service mandates**, such as do**nating money to a gaushala or engaging in temple service**, raise concerns about potential biases or religious overtones.
- ➤ **Lack of Gender Neutrality in Rape and Sexual Assault:**
    - ✓ Despite progressive changes being introduced, the **BNS, like its predecessor IPC, does not embrace gender neutrality** in **recognizing victims and perpetrators of rape and sexual assault**.
    - ✓ This **perpetuates a gender-biased approach**, overlooking the fact that m**en and transgender individuals can also be victims of such crimes**.
    - ✓ The **failure to recognize male victims** may contribute to an incomplete understanding of sexual offenses.
- ➤ **Limited Change in Sedition Law:**
    - ✓ **Section 150 of BNS** maintains the criminalization of acts that **"excite or attempt to excite"** secessionist activities or **encourage separatist feelings**, without making i**ncitement to violence or disruption of public order** a prerequisite for charges.
    - ✓ The **broad scope of Section 150** may **lead to the criminalization of various expressions**, including **speeches, newspaper articles, books, and plays, similar to Section 124A of IPC.**

WAY FORWARD & CONCLUSION:

- ➤ **Recommendation:**
    - ✓ The BNS should include a defined **list of possible community service activities** or guidelines to ensure uniformity and prevent the imposition of tasks that may **carry religious or patriarchal undertones.**
    - ✓ BNS **should align with the spirit of the proposed 2019 Criminal Law Amendment Bill**, moving towards **gender-neutral language to acknowledge that individuals of any gender** can be victims or perpetrators of rape and sexual assault.
    - ✓ A more nuanced approach is needed, **specifying that charges under sedition laws** should require a **direct incitement to violence or a clear threat to public order**.
    - ✓ This would **prevent the misuse of sedition charges** to stifle free expression.
- ➤ **Political Neutrality:**
    - ✓ Ensure that the reformed IPC is **free from political biases and serves the interests of all citizens** impartially.
    - ✓ **Uphold democratic principles** and maintain a fair and **unbiased justice system**.
- ➤ **Effective Implementation:**
    - ✓ **Address challenges in the implementation of reformed laws, including training law enforcement agencies**, creating awareness among the public, and establishing **mechanisms for efficient enforcement.**

Conclusion:

- In the context of recent changes from IPC to Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023, **it's essential to evaluate how these suggestions align with the new legal framework.**
- The transition provides an opportunity to **address longstanding issues and create a criminal justice system** that reflects the **values and needs of contemporary India**.
- **Continuous monitoring, public engagement**, and **periodic reviews** will be crucial to ensuring the effectiveness and relevance of the reformed legal framework.

HOW AN AI TOOL CAN MAKE WEATHER FORECASTS MORE ACCURATE
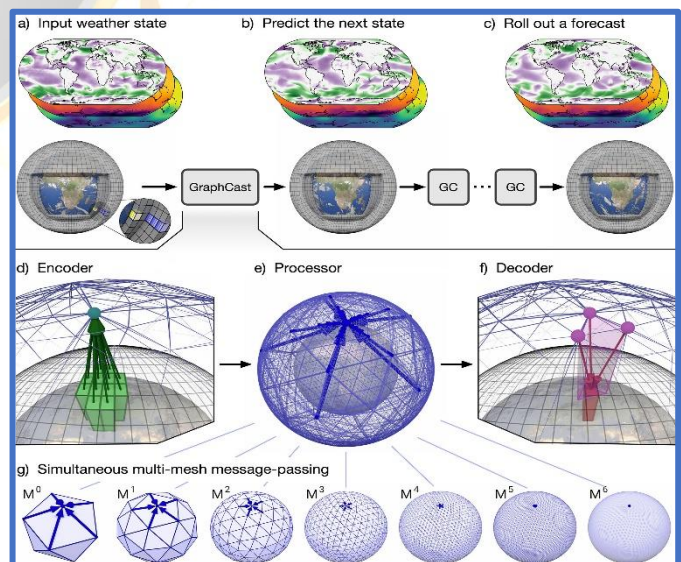
SOURCE: INDIAN EXPRESS

WHY IN NEWS?

- ➢ *The introduction of Watsonx.ai was **announced at COP28**, a significant **global platform addressing climate change.***
- ➢ *Highlighting the collaboration between IBM and NASA, the tool **aims to contribute to climate change** mitigation through advanced AI.*
- ➢ *Watsonx.ai represents an innovative **approach to weather forecasting**, utilizing AI **to interpret satellite imagery** and predict environmental changes.*
- ➢ *The model's ability to enhance mapping accuracy and reduce data requirements is a **notable advancement in the field of climate science.***

AI AND WEATHER FORECASTING:

- ➢ **Understanding Artificial Intelligence (AI):**
  - ✓ AI, or artificial intelligence, is the field of creating intelligent systems **capable of tasks that typically require human-like intelligence**.
  - ✓ It encompasses various approaches, with **machine learning being a significant subset relevant to weather forecasting.**
- ➢ **AI and Weather Forecasting:**
  - ✓ *Improvements in Weather Prediction:*
    - AI, particularly machine learning, has significantly contributed to **improving weather prediction accuracy over the years**.
    - Today's **six-day forecasts are as accurate** as five-day forecasts a decade ago.
- ➢ **Role of Technology:**
  - ✓ **Advances in atmosphere** and **ocean technology**, coupled with **high-computing power**, have played a crucial role in enhancing weather models.
  - ✓ These models rely on massive computing simulations interpreting extensive climate data sets.

Revolutionizing Weather Prediction with AI:
- ➢ **Record Number of Extreme Weather Events:**
  - ✓ This year **witnessed a surge in unpredictable extreme weather** events exacerbated by climate change, emphasizing the need for **faster and more accurate weather predictions** to enhance disaster preparedness.
- ➢ **Introduction of Watsonx.ai by NASA and IBM:**
  - ✓ *COP28 Announcement:*
    - The collaboration between NASA and IBM on **Watsonx.ai was announced at COP28**, emphasizing its importance in climate change efforts.
  - ✓ *AI for Earth Monitoring:*
    - Watsonx.ai, an AI tool, is designed to monitor **Earth from space, utilizing NASA's data trove and IBM's AI technology.**
    - It aims to **measure environmental changes and make predictions** about future events.

- **GraphCast AI Model by Google DeepMind:**
  - ✓ Google **DeepMind introduces GraphCast**, an AI model capable of predicting weather conditions up to 10 days in advance.
  - ✓ In a groundbreaking study published in Science, **GraphCast outperformed the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF)** model in **over 90% of more than 1,300 test areas.**

HOW EFFECTIVE IS AI FOR WEATHER FORECASTING?

*AI has played a crucial role in **advancing weather forecasting by addressing key challenges** related to data interpretation and analysis. Here are **some ways in which AI,** specifically models like watsonx.ai developed by NASA and IBM, has contributed to **improving weather predictions***:

- **Data Interpretation and Analysis:**
  - ✓ Climate data sets are massive and time-consuming to analyze.
  - ✓ AI, particularly **deep-learning models**, helps in interpreting and analyzing these **extensive datasets more efficiently.**
- **AI Emulators:**
  - ✓ The European Centre for **Medium-Range Weather Forecasting** has implemented deep-learning models known as AI emulators.
  - ✓ These emulators **generate forecasts based on historical weather patterns**, allowing for quicker predictions by inferring the laws of physics from the available data.

- **Increased Speed and Efficiency:**
  - ✓ *Quick Forecast Generation:* **AI models like watsonx.ai** can generate forecasts in a **matter of minutes,** significantly **reducing the time compared to traditional systems** that took hours.
  - ✓ This **speed is crucial for providing timely** and accurate weather predictions.
- **Improved Accuracy in Mapping and Prediction:**
  - ✓ *Visual Sequence Comprehension:*
    - Models are trained to **comprehend visual sequences over time**, enabling them to understand how **different weather patterns and events unfold**.
    - This results in improved accuracy in mapping flood and burn scars, among other factors.
- **Beta Test Results:**
  - ✓ In beta tests, models like watsonx.ai have **demonstrated a 15% improvement in mapping flood** and burn scars over the continental United States, using less labeled data compared to traditional techniques.
- **User-Friendly Interface:**
  - ✓ *Simple Operation:*
    - Models are designed to be user-friendly, allowing users to select a location and a date.
    - The AI model then **highlights changes in relevant factors such as floodwater levels and reforestation efforts.**
    - This simplicity makes the technology more accessible to a broader audience.

➢ **Open Source Collaboration:**
  ✓ *Sharing Knowledge:*
    • NASA and IBM have taken a **collaborative approach by open-sourcing** the watsonx.ai model, making it available to the global community.
    • This open approach **aims to encourage collaboration and the widespread use of AI in weather forecasting.**

TRADITIONAL WEATHER FORECASTING VS. AI:

Aspect	Traditional Weather Forecasting	AI in Weather Forecasting
Model Basis	✓ **Physical models** with millions of equations	✓ **Statistical models** identifying patterns in historical data
Approach	✓ **Numerical Weather Prediction** (NWP)	✓ **AI methods leveraging** various data sources and patterns
Foundation	✓ **Laws of physics** and equations	✓ **Data-driven, pattern recognition**
Data Consideration	✓ **Limited metrics** (temperature, pressure, etc.)	✓ **Wide range of metrics** (temperature, humidity, wind speed, etc.)
Data Sources	✓ **Satellites, radar**, weather stations	✓ **Diverse data sources**, including satellites and **historical records**
Handling Missing Data	✓ **Limited handling**, may impact accuracy	✓ **Resilient to uncertainties**, robust handling of missing data
Computational Power	✓ **Supercomputers** used for NWP modeling	✓ **Relatively less dependence on supercomputing** resources
Accuracy Improvement	✓ Limited by **model accuracy and data quality**	✓ **Improved accuracy** through diverse data and pattern recognition
Incorporation of Uncertainty	✓ Limited **resilience to uncertainties**	✓ Designed to **handle uncertainties and variations**
Flexibility	✓ May **struggle with complex**, dynamic patterns	✓ **Adaptable to complex and dynamic weather patterns**
Collaborative Approach	✓ Traditional methods used as a **foundation**	✓ **Collaboration between traditional and AI-based methods**

CHALLENGES OF WEATHER FORECASTING WITH AI:

➢ **Limited Training Data:**
  ✓ AI in weather forecasting faces challenges due to the **limited availability of historical data**, particularly for **extreme weather events**.
  ✓ This scarcity can **hinder the ability to train accurate models**, and biased training on a limited or skewed dataset may **lead to unreliable predictions or unfair outcomes**.
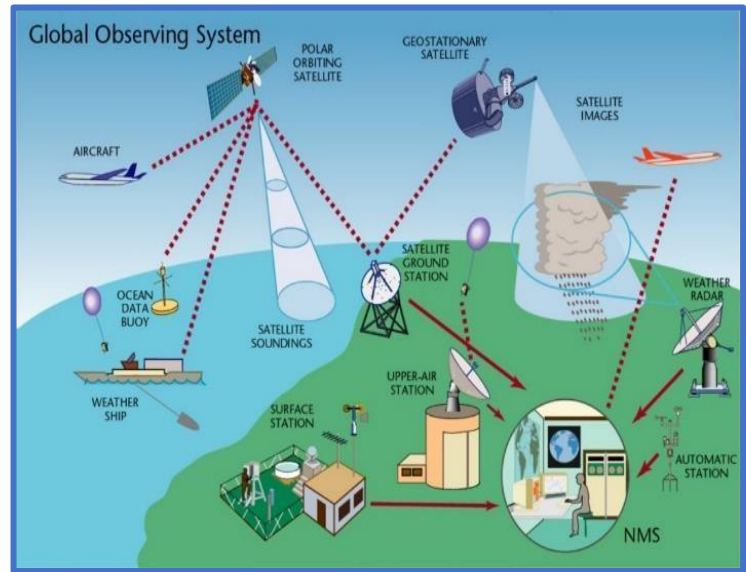➢ **Complex Data:**
  ✓ **Weather data is intricate**, featuring multiple predictor variables that **interact in complex ways**.

- ✓ Identifying the **most critical variables for modeling and forecasting** becomes a challenge, given the intricate nature of these interactions.
- ➢ **Uncertainty:**
    - ✓ **The inherent complexity of weather systems**, coupled with limited data availability and the potential for **imprecise measurements**, introduces a level of uncertainty in weather forecasting.
    - ✓ This uncertainty poses **difficulties in building accurate AI models**, and predicting failure becomes challenging without the clear interpretability seen in classical models.

- ➢ **Real-time Data:**
    - ✓ **Rapidly changing weather conditions demand real-time data** for accurate forecasting with AI models.
    - ✓ **Establishing a sophisticated data collection system capable of capturing** and processing data in real-time is essential to meet this requirement.
- ➢ **Interpretability:**
    - ✓ AI models **utilized in weather forecasting often exhibit complexity and lack interpretability**.
    - ✓ Understanding the rationale behind specific forecasts becomes challenging, **potentially leading to a lack of trust in the AI models among meteorologists and end-users**.
- ➢ **Data Quality:**
    - ✓ The accuracy of AI models relies **heavily on the quality and quantity of input data**.
    - ✓ **Poor-quality data, including errors**, can result in inaccurate predictions.
    - ✓ However, ensuring the accuracy, completeness, and **up-to-date nature of the data poses a significant challenge** in the context of AI-based weather forecasting.

The Way Forward: AI in Weather Forecasting and Climate Change

- ➢ **Improved Weather Predictions:**
    - ✓ AI tools like Watsonx.ai enhance accuracy in **forecasting hurricanes, droughts, wildfires**, and **urban heat patterns** by analyzing NASA's vast data.

- ➢ **Data Accessibility:**
    - ✓ AI simplifies data interpretation, **overcoming challenges posed by the increasing volume of climate data.**
- ➢ **Open-Source Collaboration:**
    - ✓ Making AI models **open-source (like Watsonx.ai on Hugging Space)** fosters global collaboration for better understanding Earth's dynamics.
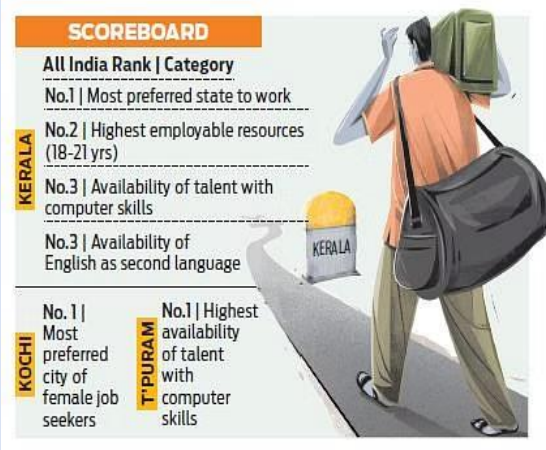- ➢ **User-Friendly Applications:**

- ✓ User-friendly interfaces, as seen in Watsonx.ai, make **AI insights accessible to various stakeholders by allowing them to easily select locations and dates**.
- ➢ **Climate Change Mitigation Beyond Forecasting:**
  - ✓ AI is **considered essential in fighting climate change**, with applications **in transportation, agriculture, and other sectors optimizing resource usage and reducing emissions.**
- ➢ **Community Empowerment:**
  - ✓ Open-source AI empowers communities **for disaster preparedness, infrastructure development, and personal decision-making, regardless of size.**
- ➢ **Continuous Research and Development:**
  - ✓ Ongoing research in AI for climate applications is crucial for **refining models, exploring new solutions, and addressing emerging challenges.**

PRELIMS POINTERS:

TOPIC	DISCRIPTION
'India Skills Report 2024'	**WHY IN NEWS?**

WHY IN NEWS?

❖ *Kerala is the most preferred state to work* for employable talent in the country, with *Kochi being the top choice among Indian cities* for female job aspirants, according to the *'India Skills Report 2024'*, released by talent assessment firm **Wheebox** in partnership with organisations including *Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).*

ABOUT THE INDIA SKILLS REPORT 2024

❖ **Eleventh Edition:**
  ☞ 11th edition based on the evaluation of **3.88 lakh candidates through Wheebox National Employability Test (WNET).**
  ☞ Insights gathered from **152 corporations across 15 industries** via the **India Hiring Intent Survey for 2024**.

❖ **Theme - Impact of AI:**
  ☞ Theme revolves around the impact of **AI on the future of work, skilling, and mobility.**

❖ **AI Leadership:**
  ☞ Highlights India's global leadership position in **AI skill penetration and talent concentration with a score of 3.09.**

SCOREBOARD

All India Rank | Category
- No.1 | Most preferred state to work
- No.2 | Highest employable resources (18-21 yrs)
- No.3 | Availability of talent with computer skills
- No.3 | Availability of English as second language

KERALA

- No.1 | Most preferred city of female job seekers — KOCHI
- No.1 | Highest availability of talent with computer skills — T'PURAM

  ☞ *AI Professional Demand:* Anticipation of a **14-fold increase in AI-skilled** individuals in India from January 2016 to June 2023.

❖ **Growth Potential of Indian AI Industry:**
  ☞ Indian AI industry projected to reach **USD 28.8 billion by 2025 with a CAGR of 45%.**

KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT

❖ **AI Transformative Impact**:
  ☞ Report focuses on the transformative impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on India's workforce.

❖ **Impressive AI Skill Metrics:**
  ☞ **India scores 3.09** in AI skill penetration and talent concentration.
  ☞ **416K AI professionals installed talent** base as of August 2023.
  ☞ Current demand of **approximately 629K**, projected to **reach 1 million by 2026.**

❖ **Employability Insights:**
  ☞ WNET employability survey reveals nuanced trends and demographic transformations among employable youth.
  ☞ Overall young employability in **India improved to 51.25%.**

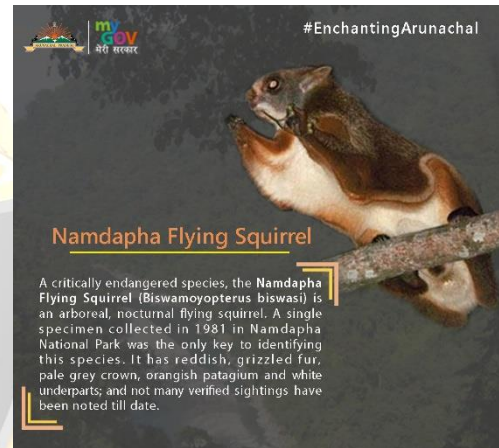|	

53/1	❧ *States with high talent pools:* **Haryana, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, and Telangana**.
	❧ **Haryana leads with 76.47% scoring 60%** and above on WNET.
	❖ **Regional and Demographic Factors:**
	    ❧ Regional variations and **demographic factors** influence the **employability landscape.**
	    ❧ **Uttar Pradesh leads in talent concentration (22-25 age group) at 74.77%**, followed by **Maharashtra at 71.97%.**
	    ❧ Overall employability rate in this **age group across top 10 cities is 63.58%.**

Namdapha Flying Squirrel	**WHY IN NEWS?**
	❖ *Namdapha flying squirrel (Biswamoyopterus biswasi) resurfaces in **Arunachal Pradesh** after being missing for 42 years.*
	❖ *Last described in 1981 based on a **single individual found in Namdapha Tiger Reserve**.*
	
	ABOUT THE NAMDAPHA FLYING SQUIRREL
	❖ **Arboreal Nocturnal Species:**
	    ❧ Recently resurfaced in Arunachal Pradesh after being missing for 42 years.
	    ❧ **Endemic to Arunachal Pradesh**, it is an arboreal, nocturnal flying squirrel.

Namdapha Flying Squirrel

A critically endangered species, the **Namdapha Flying Squirrel (Biswamoyopterus biswasi)** is an arboreal, nocturnal flying squirrel. A single specimen collected in 1981 in Namdapha National Park was the only key to identifying this species. It has reddish, grizzled fur, pale grey crown, orangish patagium and white underparts; and not many verified sightings have been noted till date.

#EnchantingArunachal

❖ **Global Rarity:**
    ❧ One of the 43 known **flying squirrel species worldwide**.
❖ **Discovery Location:**
    ❧ Named after **Namdapha National Park**, the area where it was first discovered.
❖ **Glide Movement:**
    ❧ **Not capable of true flight**; instead, they **glide between trees**.
    ❧ Inhabits **tall Mesua ferrea jungles**, especially on **hill slopes** in the catchment area of the **Dihing River** in northeastern India.
❖ **Diet and Habitat:**
    ❧ **Herbivores (frugivores, granivores) feeding on fruits**, nuts, seeds, fungi, flowers, and tree sap.
    ❧ Primarily found in the **Patkai range on the western slope**, particularly in the **Dihing River catchment area**.
❖ **Conservation Status:**
    ❧ *IUCN Red List:* **Critically Endangered**.

☛ Protected under the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, Schedule II.**
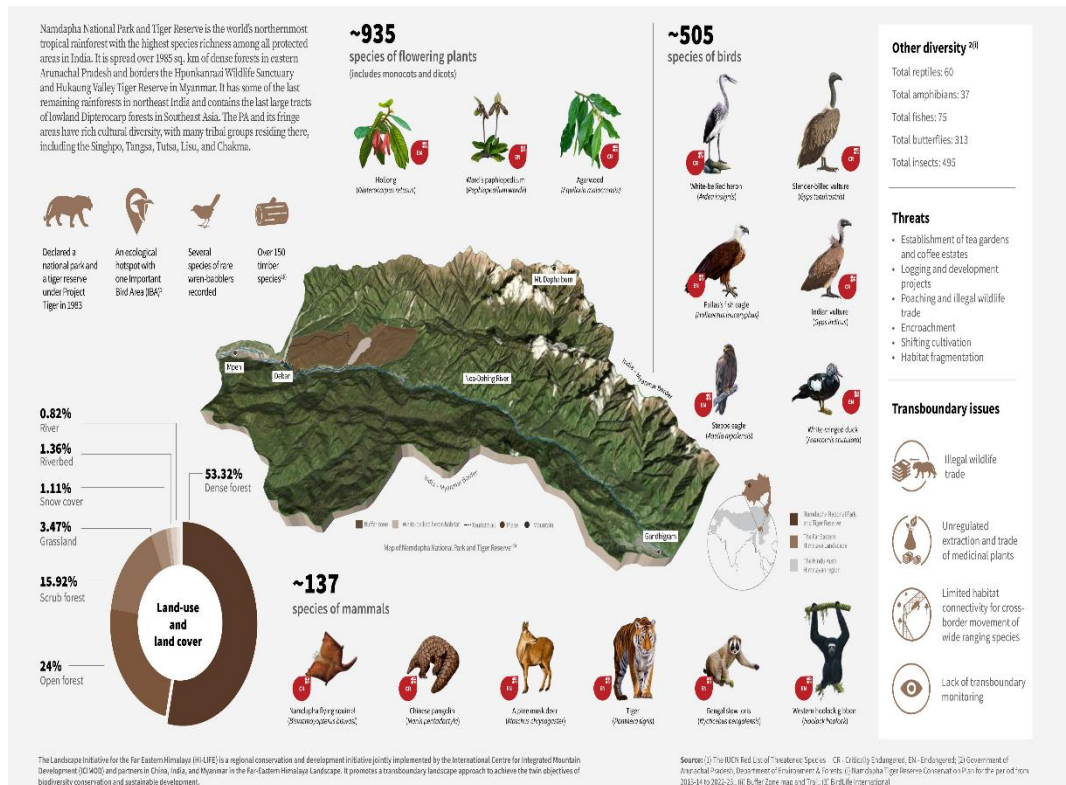

Figure 1: Namdapha National Park and Tiger Reserve

Country's first Himalayan Air Safari started from Uttarakhand

WHY IN NEWS?

❖ Uttarakhand plans to **launch a unique "breakfast tourism" scheme**, combining aviation excitement with natural serenity.

❖ The state **aims to introduce gyrocopters**, a **mix of a helicopter and an airplane**, for tourism exploration.

BREAKFAST TOURISM SCHEME

❖ **Concept:**

☛ Combines aviation **thrill with nature's tranquility**, offering tourists breakfast at select, **hard-to-reach locations**.

☛ *Identified starting points:* **Kalsi, Chinyalisaur, Gaucher, Bairagi Camp, Nainisaini, and Pantnagar.**

☛ *Breakfast spots:* Raithal, Harsil, George Everest, Rishikesh, and Nainital.

❖ **Ecological Preservation:**

☛ Preservation methods explored, such as t**emporary setups and locals offering authentic delicacies** instead of permanent structures.

☛ Aims to **boost the local economy** and foster partnerships between tourists and local communities.

❖ **Future Phases:**
  ☛ **Envisions multiple meals at scenic spots**, promising diverse encounters with Uttarakhand's landscapes.
  ☛ Planning for **summer launch in the coming year**.

GYROCOPTER INITIATIVE OVERVIEW
  ❖ **Trial Run:**
    ☛ Recent trial run for **India's first Himalayan AirSafari using gyrocopters**.
  ❖ **Gyrocopter Features:**
    ☛ **Compact and agile aircraft**, blending helicopter and airplane features.
    ☛ **Propelled by a rotating blade** through forward movement.
    ☛ Offers **safety, stability, and maneuverability**.
    ☛ Suitable for **smaller airfields or open spaces, doesn't require extensive runways.**
  ❖ **Advantages:**
    ☛ Considered safe and stable, enabling **closer flights to attractions**.
    ☛ Potential use in the breakfast tourism plan due to **lower altitude flying and better views.**

    ☛ Operates effectively in various weather conditions.
  ❖ **Pilot Project:**
    ☛ Introduction of two gyrocopters from **Germany under the Himalayan AirSafari scheme in the PPP mode.**
    ☛ Successful trial flight at **Bairagi Camp in Haridwar**, where **DM Haridwar Dheeraj Singh Garbyal took part.**
    ☛ Unique initiative to **boost adventure tourism in Uttarakhand**.
    ☛ DGCA approval obtained for **gyrocopter air safari**.
    ☛ Collaboration between Uttarakhand Tourism Development Council and **Rajas Aero Sports and Adventures Pvt. Ltd**.
  ❖ **Key Points:**
    ☛ Aim to promote adventure tourism by providing a unique aerial experience.
    ☛ **Single-seater aerocopter** purchased from Germany.
    ☛ Allows tourists to easily reach **untouched places in the state**.
    ☛ Enables aerial views of the Himalayas, **mountain ranges, and rivers**.
    ☛ **Enhances the overall tourism experience** with an adventurous touch.

Draft Omnibus	**WHY IN NEWS?** ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released a **'Draft Omnibus Framework for Recognizing Self-Regulatory Organizations (SROs)'** for **Regulated Entities (REs).**

| **Framework for SROs by RBI** | ❖ The proliferation of *REs and their growing scale*, along with technological **innovations, posed challenges for effective regulation by the RBI.**

KEY COMPONENTS OF THE DRAFT FRAMEWORK
- ❖ **Objectives:**
  - ☞ **Enhance industry standards** for self-regulation.
  - ☞ **Improve regulatory** compliance for healthy and **sustainable development of the sector.**
- ❖ **Governance Standards:**
  - ☞ SROs expected to **operate with credibility, objectivity, and responsibility under the regulator's oversight.**
  - ☞ Must have sufficient authority to set ethical, professional, and governance standards for members.
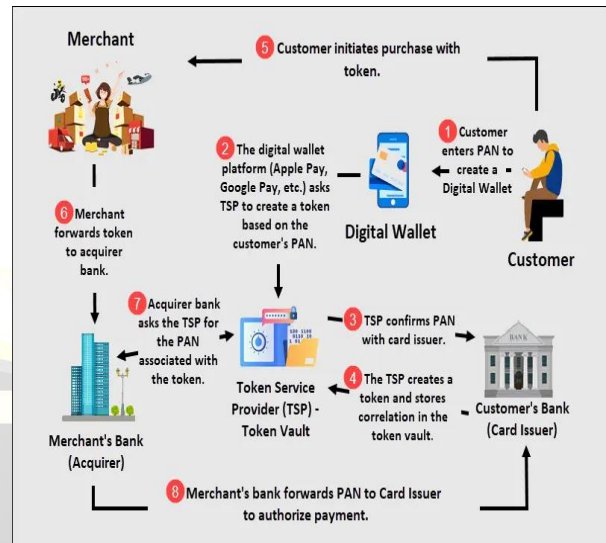- ❖ **Responsibilities of SROs:**
  - ☞ Promote **best business practices** and **establish benchmarks for professional market conduct.**
  - ☞ Frame a **code of conduct, monitor adherence**, and ensure compliance with regulatory instructions.
  - ☞ **Develop a uniform, reasonable, and non-discriminatory** membership fee structure.
  - ☞ Disseminate **sector-specific** information for creating awareness among members.
  - ☞ Establish a grievance redressal and dispute resolution framework.
- ❖ **Eligibility Criteria for SROs:**
  - ☞ Must be set up as a **not-for-profit company** registered **under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013.**
  - ☞ **Should represent the sector** and have specified membership or a roadmap for achieving it.
- ❖ **Communication with RBI:**
  - ☞ SROs expected to act as the c**ollective voice of members in engagements with the RBI,** government authorities, and **other regulatory bodies**.
  - ☞ **Keep the RBI informed of sector** developments regularly.

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| **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** | **WHY IN NEWS?**
- ❖ **Ansuman Pattnaik** has been selected as the **new head of the investigations** unit at the **Competition Commission of India (CCI).**
- ❖ Pattnaik, with significant **government experience**, including overseeing **investigations into companies like Google, brings valuable expertise to the role.** |

COMPETITION COMMISSION OF INDIA (CCI): OVERVIEW

- ❖ **Establishment:**
  - ☞ CCI is a **statutory body** of the Government of India.
  - ☞ Constituted in **March 2009.**
  - ☞ Aims to **enforce the Competition Act, 2002.**
- ❖ **Legal Background:**
  - ☞ **Replaced the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act, 1969 (MRTP Act).**
  - ☞ Focuses on **promoting fair competition** and preventing anti-competitive practices.
- ❖ **Objectives:**
  - ☞ Establish a **robust competitive environment**.
  - ☞ Proactive **engagement with stakeholders**, including consumers, industry, government, and **international jurisdictions**.
  - ☞ **Knowledge-intensive organization** with high competence.

COMPETITION ACT, 2002

- ❖ **Philosophy:**
  - ☞ Passed in **2002 and amended in 2007**.
  - ☞ **Prohibits anti-competitive agreements**, abuse of dominant position, and regulates combinations affecting competition.
  - ☞ Establishes CCI and **Competition Appellate Tribunal**.
- ❖ **Composition of CCI:**
  - ☞ **One Chairperson and six Members** appointed by the Central Government.
  - ☞ **Quasi-judicial body** with full-time Members.
  - ☞ Eligibility criteria include **judicial or specialized knowledge**.

FUNCTIONS AND ROLES OF CCI

- ❖ **Competition Promotion:**
  - ☞ Eliminate adverse practices on competition.
  - ☞ **Promote and sustain fair** competition.
  - ☞ Protect consumer interests and **ensure freedom of trade**.
- ❖ **Opinions and Advocacy:**
  - ☞ **Provide opinions on competition issues**.
  - ☞ Undertake competition **advocacy, awareness, and training**.
- ❖ **Measures Taken:**
  - ☞ **Consumer welfare focus.**
  - ☞ Ensure fair competition for inclusive growth.

- ☞ Implement **competition policies efficiently**.
❖ **Relations with Sectoral Regulators:**
    - ☞ Collaborate with **sectoral regulators.**
    - ☞ Ensure alignment of **sectoral regulatory laws with competition law.**
❖ **Representation and Transparency:**
    - ☞ Act as the **collective voice of members**.
    - ☞ **Ensure equitable and transparent** treatment.
    - ☞ Represent and address **broader industry concerns**.