

CURRENT AFFAIRS

20th August 2022

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IS ABOUT LAND OWNERSHIP

SYLLABUS: GS PAPER-II (SOCIAL ISSUES-WOMEN & RELATED ISSUES)

CONTEXT: Very few Indian women have any legal title to property despite legislative efforts to fix a sharp gender imbalance in inheritance.

In his recent Independence Day speech, the Prime Minister asked for an **attitudinal shift across the country in favor of 'Nari Shakti'—or women's power**. According to PM, **"Respect for women is an important pillar for India's growth."**

The economist **Hernando de Soto**, in **'The Mystery of Capita'** opined that the legal ownership of land can make all the difference between poverty and the ability to escape it. Thus, **the empowerment of women too requires control over assets**, other than income and job opportunities. The **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals** requires the countries to **track the status of women's land rights**.

SURVEY FINDINGS PERTAINING WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

The empowerment of women, especially in rural India, is constrained by weak command over the farmland they till. The findings of the 5th round of the National Family Health Survey 2020-21 are as follows:

- There has been a drop in the country's women aged 15-49 who owned a house or land (either solely or jointly) to less than a quarter from over a third back in 2015-16.
- About 98 million women engaged in agriculture and allied activities, with most working as labor rather than cultivators.
- Less than 13% of Indian farmland is under female ownership.

LAWS REGULATING INHERITANCE IN INDIA

- **The Hindu Succession Act of 1956:** It provides for equal distribution of property among all inheritors, irrespective of gender. The law was amended in the year 2005 to grant sons and daughters equal rights in joint-family property.
- As far as Muslims are concerned, sons get twice the share on an avowal to provide for their sisters if necessary.

REASONS BEHIND WOMEN LACKING LAND OWNERSHIP

- Fathers are concerned about losing control of their land if it is transferred to their married daughters.
- Daughters are afraid that claiming their inheritance would sever family ties.
- Land fragmentation is a concern for policymakers.

LOK ADALAT

SYLLABUS: GS PAPER-II (DISPUTE REDRESSAL MECHANISM)

CONTEXT: Approximately 81 lakh cases were resolved in the third National Lok Adalat held across India (except in Delhi) under the aegis of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) that was presided over by the Chief Justice of India- designate UU Lalit.

ABOUT LOK ADALAT

- The concept of '**Lok Adalat**' which means '**People's Court**' is based on **Gandhian principles**.
- It is one of the components of the **Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) system** that delivers informal, cheap, and expeditious justice to the common people.
- The first Lok Adalat camp was organized in **Gujarat in 1982** as a voluntary and conciliatory agency without any statutory backing for its decisions.
- It was given **statutory status under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987** in lieu of its growing popularity.

ORGANIZATION OF LOK ADALAT

- The **State/District Legal Services Authority or the Supreme Court/High Court/Taluk Legal Services Committee** may organize Lok Adalats at such intervals and places as it deems fit.
- National Lok Adalats are held at regular intervals with Lok Adalats being held throughout the country on a single day, in all the courts across the country at all levels wherein cases are disposed of in large numbers.

COMPOSITION

- Every Lok Adalat organized for an area shall consist of such number of **serving or retired judicial officers and other persons of the area** as may be specified by the agency organizing.
- Usually, a Lok Adalat consists of a **judicial officer as the chairperson** and a lawyer (advocate) along with a social worker as members.

JURISDICTION OF LOK ADALAT

A Lok Adalat shall have jurisdiction to determine and to arrive at a compromise or settlement between the parties to a dispute in respect of:

- Any case pending before any court, or
- Any matter which falls within the jurisdiction of any court and is not brought before such court.

Any case pending before the court can be referred to the Lok Adalat for settlement if:

- Parties agree to settle the dispute in the Lok Adalat or one of the parties applies for referral of the case to the Lok Adalat or court is satisfied that the matter can be solved by a Lok Adalat.
- In the case of a pre-litigation dispute, the matter can be referred to the Lok Adalat on receipt of an application from any one of the parties to the dispute.

Matters such as matrimonial/family disputes, criminal (compoundable offenses) cases, land acquisition cases, labor disputes, workers' compensation cases, bank recovery cases, etc. are taken up in Lok Adalats as well.

However, the Lok Adalat shall have no jurisdiction in respect of any case or matter **relating to an offense not compoundable under any law**. It means that the offenses which are non-compoundable under any law fall outside the purview of the Lok Adalat.

POWERS OF THE LOK ADALAT

- The Lok Adalats have been vested with the same powers as are **vested in a Civil Court under the Code of Civil Procedure (1908)**.
- Further, a Lok Adalat has the **requisite powers to specify its own procedure for the determination of any dispute** presented before it.
- All **proceedings before a Lok Adalat are deemed to be judicial proceedings within the meaning of the Indian Penal Code (1860)**. Every Lok Adalat is deemed to be a **Civil Court for the purpose of the Code of Criminal Procedure (1973)**.
- An award of a Lok Adalat is deemed to be a **decree of a Civil Court or an order of any other court**.
- Every award made by a Lok Adalat is **final and binding on all the parties to the dispute**. No appeal shall lie to any court against the award of the Lok Adalat.

BENEFITS

- There is **no court fee** and in case the court fee has already been paid, then the amount will be refunded if the dispute is settled at Lok Adalat.
- It provides with the procedural flexibility and speedy trial of the disputes.
- The parties to the dispute can **directly interact with the judge through their counsel** which is not possible in regular courts of law.
- The award by the Lok Adalat is binding on the parties.
- It has the **status of a decree of a civil court** and is non-appealable, which does not cause delay in the settlement of disputes.

LOK ADALAT AND ITS FUNCTIONS LEGODESK

NATURE OF CASES TO BE REFERRED TO LOK ADALAT:

- Any case pending under any court.
- Any matter which has not been brought under any court & is probably going to be filed under the court.

WHEN LOK ADALAT TO BE APPROACHED:

According to sec.18(1) of Act, a Lok Adalat will have jurisdiction to decide & to land at a compromise or settlement between parties to a matter in regard:

- Any case pending previously; or
- Any issue which is falling inside the jurisdiction of, and isn't brought under any court for which the Lok Adalat is organized.

GETTING CASE REFERRED TO LOK ADALAT:

- Case pending under the court.
- Any matter at pre-litigative stage.

The State Legal Services Authority or District Legal Services Authority, as case might be on receipt of an application from any of the parties at a pre-litigation stage may allude such issue to Lok Adalat for amicable settlement of dispute for which notice would then be issued to other party.

LEVELS AND COMPOSITION OF LOK ADALATS:

STATE AUTHORITY LEVEL: Retired judge of the High Court, a social worker	HIGH COURT LEVEL: Retired judge of the High Court, a social worker	DISTRICT LEVEL: Retired judge of the High Court, a social worker, paralegal
TALUK LEVEL: Retired judge of the High Court, a social worker, paralegal	NATIONAL LOK ADALAT: Single day Lok Adalats are held all through the nation	PERMANENT LOK ADALAT: Chairman and two members for giving an obligatory pre-litigation system

PRELIMS FACTS

ARANMULA VALLASADYA

- It is a celebration in the Hindu temple of Aranmula Sree Parthasarthi at **Aranmula**.
- During the festival, the village conducts a **snake boat race in the Pampa River**.
- The rowers offer Nira Para to the presiding deity at the Nadappanthal in front of the gold-plated temple mast and go around the temple chanting **Krishna bhajans (Vanchi Pattu)**.

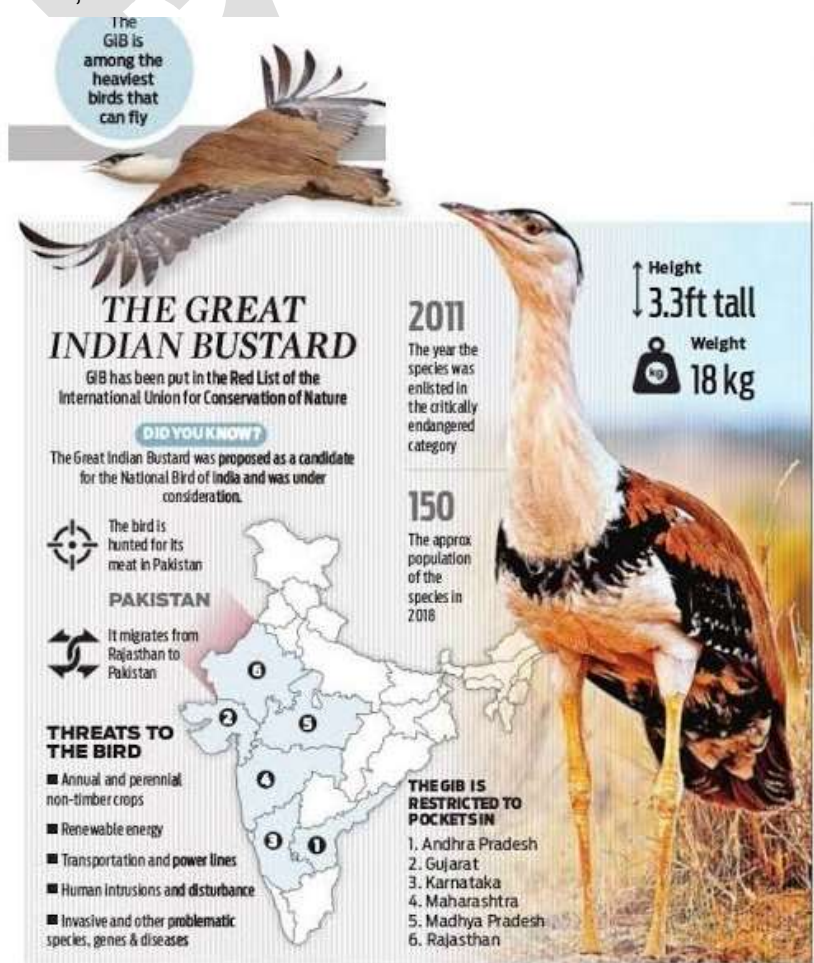
- It is one of the largest vegetarian mass feasts wherein each meal consists of 10 to 20 dishes served on banana or plantain leaves, and up to 64 dishes on **Ashtami Rohini Day, the birthday of Krishna.**

GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD

- The perceived beliefs and recorded observations of egg laying habit of the Great Indian Bustard (GIB) have changed after the recent excessive rains in western Rajasthan.
- The bird species has adopted an altogether new behaviour of giving clutch of two eggs at a time after getting additional protein diet during the monsoon season.
- The Great Indian Bustard (GIB), **the State bird of Rajasthan**, is considered as **critically endangered** as per the IUCN Red List.
- It is a **flagship grassland species**, representing the health of the grassland ecology.
- The population of this bird is confined to **Rajasthan and Gujarat**. It occurs in small populations in Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh.
- This bird is under constant threats due to **collision/electrocution with power transmission lines, hunting (still prevalent in Pakistan), habitat loss and alteration because of widespread agricultural expansion**, etc.

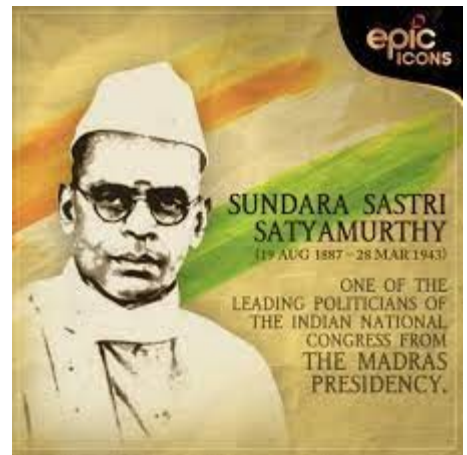
SUNDARA SASTRI SATYAMURTI

- Sundara Sastri Satyamurti (19 August 1887 – 28 March 1943) was an **Indian independence activist and politician**. He was acclaimed for his rhetoric and was one of the leading politicians of the Indian National Congress from the Madras Presidency, alongside S. Srinivasa Iyengar, C. Rajagopalachari, and T. Prakasam.
- Born in 1887 in Thir Umayam in the princely state of **Pudukkottai**, Satyamurti studied at the Maharajah's College, Madras Christian College, and the Madras Law College.
- In 1919, Satyamurti was sent as a delegate in the Joint Parliamentary Committee of the United Kingdom to protest the **Rowlatt Act and the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms**.
- Satyamurti was a patron of the arts and was instrumental in the establishment of the **Music Academy of Madras**.
- He took an active part in the Swadeshi movement and was arrested for participating in the individual Satyagraha during the Quit India



movement in 1942.

- After the trial, he was deported to the Nagpur jail wherein during the journey he suffered a spinal injury. He succumbed to his injury on 28 March 1943.



WORLD HUMANITARIAN DAY

- The World Humanitarian Day is **observed on August 19** every year to honor the humanitarian pursuits across the globe and to promote human welfare.
- It is a campaign by the **United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Efforts (OCHA)**.
- **THEME 2022: 'It takes a village.'**
- According to the United Nations, the 2022 campaign sheds a light on **"thousands of volunteers, professionals and crisis-affected people who deliver urgent health care, shelter, food, protection, water and much more."**
- **HISTORY:** On 19 August 2003, a bomb attack on the **Canal Hotel in Baghdad, Iraq, killed 22 humanitarian aid workers, including the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, Sergio Vieira de Mello**. Five years later, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution designating 19 August as World Humanitarian Day (WHD).
- The United Nations will use digital art to narrate the stories of people in need and those who help them.