

GOVERNANCE [GS-II]

Stridhan Is Wife’s Absolute Property, Husband Holds No Title Over It: Supreme Court Reiterates

Recently, Supreme Court in Maya Gopinathan v. Anoop S.B. & Anr. reiterates that Stridhan’ Is Wife’s Absolute Property, Husband Holds No Title Over It.

Supreme Court’s Verdict on Stridhan

- A bench comprising Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta declared that stridhan is absolute property of a woman, granting her full authority to dispose of it as she sees fit.
- while the husband has no control over the same, he can use it in times of distress.
- However, he bears a moral responsibility to reimburse its value to his wife.
- Precedent from Rashmi Kumar v. Mahesh Kumar Bhada (1997):
- Citing the precedent set in the case of Rashmi Kumar v. Mahesh Kumar Bhada (1997), the Supreme Court affirmed that stridhan property does not become a joint property of the wife and the husband.
- The latter has no title or independent dominion over the property.

Streedhan

- The word Stridhan has been derived from the words ‘Stri’ meaning a woman and the word ‘dhana’ meaning property.
- Streedhan refers to gifts, money or property that a woman receives before her marriage, at the time of her marriage, during childbirth or widowhood, primarily from her parents, relatives or in-laws.
- It is considered her exclusive property and is meant to provide her with financial security and independence within her marital relationship.

Laws relating to Streedhan

- A woman’s right to her Streedhan is protected under law. S. 14 of the Hindu Succession Act, 1956 read with S. 27 of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955,
- “even if it is placed in the custody of her husband or her in-laws, they would be deemed to be trustees and bound to return the same if and when demanded by her”.
- Domestic Violence Act, 2005 :
- Sec. 12 of the Domestic Violence Act, 2005 provides for women the right to her Streedhan in cases where she is a victim of domestic violence.
- The provisions of this law can be easily invoked for recovery of Streedhan.
- The magistrate may direct the respondent to return to the possession of the aggrieved person her Streedhan or any other property or valuable security to which she is entitled.
- Again u/s 18(ii) of the Domestic Violence Act the law says that a woman is entitled to receive the possession of the Streedhan, jewellery, clothes and other necessary items.
- The term ‘economic abuse’ has also been provided under the Act.

Powers Associated with Streedhan to Elevate Women’s Status

Ownership of stridhan has become a symbol of status in society, equating women’s status with that of men. It grants women a sense of authority and ownership over their property, fostering independence and empowerment.

- Succession Authority: In the event of a Hindu woman dying intestate, her stridhan devolves upon her heirs, granting them succession rights.
- Management Privileges: Women hold sole authority over the management of their stridhan property, including possession and expenditure, aligned with their preferences.
- Alienation Rights: Female owners, despite having limited estate rights, possess the power of alienation under certain circumstances, such as legal necessity, estate benefit, or religious duties.
- Surrender Options: Women can voluntarily surrender their stridhan during their lifetime or through death, transferring it to their nearest successor. However, specific preconditions must be met for a valid surrender.

Stridhan Vs Dowry

Basis	Stridhan	Dowry
Definition	Streedhan is whatever a woman receives in her lifetime it includes all movable, immovable property gifts etc received prior to marriage, at the time of marriage, during child birth and during her widowhood.	Dowry means any property or valuable security given or agreed to be given either directly or indirectly by one party to a marriage to another party to the marriage.
Essentials	It is given voluntarily instead of being pressurized by undue influence of force.	It is not given voluntary as they are pressurized undue influence or compulsion
Breakdown of Marriage	If the marriage breaks down in the future, the woman has the right to recover the goods received as streedhan.	If the marriage breaks down in the future, the woman can’t recover the goods her family has given as a dowry. however can seek alternative reliefs against such dowry paid.
Legality	Acts of giving streedhan is legal	Acts of giving Dowry is illegal
Governing Act	Hindu Succession Act, 1956	Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961

Impact of AI on jobs and how social forces shape technology development

The article discusses the impact of AI on jobs and how social forces shape technology development. It mentions concerns about AI replacing jobs, but also points out how technology like AI can add value to businesses without reducing employee numbers

Impact of AI on jobs and how social forces shape technology development

Impacts of AI

Positive Impacts of AI:

- Improved Efficiency: AI improves search results and product recommendations, leading to better inventory management as noted by Jeff Bezos. This contributes to business growth and increased employment at companies like Amazon.
- Conversational Interfaces: AI like ChatGPT uses human-like conversational styles, making technology more accessible and user-friendly.

Negative Impacts of AI:

- Job Losses: AI is projected to cause significant job losses in sectors like call centers in India, affecting over 300,000 workers, and potentially 300 million white-collar jobs globally as per Goldman Sachs.
- Public Misconception: A risk of deceptive claims about AI’s capabilities, prompting government bodies like the America’s Federal Trade Commission to caution against exaggerations that could mislead consumers.

How do social forces influence technology?

- SCOT Theory: The Social Construction of Technology (SCOT) theory argues that technology’s direction and pace are steered by social dynamics, not just technical capabilities, evidenced by the collective scholarly efforts described in “The Social Construction of Technological Systems”.
- Direction of Development: Social forces shape the direction and speed of technological advancements, as seen with AI where technology is developed to reduce headcounts for increased profits.
- Adoption and Evolution: The bicycle evolved due to social needs, from a pedal-less version to the safety bicycle with equal-sized wheels and chain drives, widely adopted for its practicality and as a symbol of modernity.

Approach to developing AI

- Regulate Claims and Expectations: Governments should regulate AI claims to prevent deceptive practices, following the FTC’s example of cautioning against overhyped capabilities.
- Enhance Value Addition: AI should aim to add genuine value beyond replacing jobs, similar to Amazon’s use of AI for improving inventory management and customer experience, leading to business growth and not merely reducing employee headcount.

Artificial General Intelligence (AGI)

CEO of OpenAI expressed a commitment towards the development of Artificial General Intelligence (AGI).

About Turing test

According to the Turing test, if a machine can engage in a conversation with a human without being detected as a machine, it exhibits human intelligence.

Alan Turing is considered to be the father of theoretical computer science and artificial intelligence.

What is Artificial General Intelligence (AGI)?

In ‘Computing Machinery and Intelligence’ (1950), Alan Turing introduced the Turing test, a benchmark for machine intelligence. Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) refers to a machine or a software that can perform any intellectual task that a human can do. This includes reasoning, common sense, abstract thinking, background knowledge, transfer learning, ability to differentiate between cause and effect, etc.

- Objective: To emulate human cognitive abilities such that it allows it to do unfamiliar tasks, learn from new experiences, and apply its knowledge in new ways.
- With AGI, researchers aim to build a software or computer that can do everything that a human computer does.
- It will work like a super-intelligent robot capable of comprehending everything humans say, acquiring new knowledge akin to human learning, and generating solutions for complex problems.
- Difference between AGI and Artificial Intelligence/Narrow AI: Narrow AI is designed to perform specific tasks such as image recognition, translation, but it remains limited to its set parameters.
- On the other hand, AGI envisions a broader, more generalized form of intelligence, not confined to any particular task (like humans).

Significance of Artificial General Intelligence

- Healthcare: It can redefine diagnostics, treatment planning, and personalized medicine by integrating and analyzing vast datasets, far beyond the capabilities of humans.
- Finance and business: AGI could automate various processes and enhance the overall decision-making, offering real-time analytics and market predictions with accuracy.

- Education: AGI could transform adaptive learning systems that work towards the unique needs of students. This could potentially democratize access to personalized education worldwide.
- Economy: AGI will lead to a lot of productivity and economic value promising unprecedented problem-solving capabilities and creative expression.

Concerns Related to Artificial General Intelligence

- Environmental Implications: The immense computational power needed raises environmental concerns, stemming from both energy consumption and the generation of electronic waste.
- Job Losses: AGI could lead to a significant loss of employment, and widespread socio-economic disparity, where power would be concentrated in the hands of those who control the AGI.
- Security Concerns: It could introduce new security vulnerabilities creating challenges for the governments in the absence of adequate regulations.
- Loss of Human Skills: If humans become too much dependent on AGI, it might lead to the loss of basic human skills and capabilities.
- AGI Autonomy: Its capabilities could surpass those of human beings, rendering its actions challenging to comprehend and forecast.
- This could potentially result in a scenario where it attains an excessive level of autonomy, to the extent that humans lose control and take actions detrimental to human welfare.

Stringent regulations are needed to ensure that the development of Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) is in line with human values and safety standards

PRELIM FACT

1. Bhadra Tiger Reserve

Recently, there has been an increase in the number of visitors to the Bhadra Tiger Reserve for safaris. It is important for tourists to take proper precautions to avoid disturbing this environmentally sensitive area.

Specifications	Details
Location	1) It is located in the midst of the Western Ghats region of Karnataka. 2) It is surrounded by hill ranges of Mullaianagiri, Hebbegiri, Gangegiri, and Babaudangiri. 3) It is the first official tiger reserve to finish a successful village relocation programme and a success story in wildlife conservation. 4) The Bhadra Sanctuary was declared India's 25th Project Tiger in 1998 and listed its name in the list of national bird sanctuaries of Karnataka.
Rivers	It is also located near the Bhadra river and its tributaries such as Somavahini, Thadabehalla, and Odirayanahalla. A dam has been built across the Bhadra river near Lakkavalli.
Vegetation	Southern Tropical Dry Deciduous Dry Teak, Northern Tropical Dry Deciduous Mixed Forest, Dry Deciduous Scrub Forest, Boswellia Forest, Dry Bamboo Brakes, and Anogeissus pendula Forest are the major forest types found in the Reserve.
Flora	Teak, Rosewood, Mathi, Honne, Nandi and many medicinal plants etc.
Fauna	Tiger, Leopard, Leopard cat, Dhols, Indian Civet, ungulates like Gaur, Sambar and Barking Deer are commonly found.

2. Peptide

Recently, Researchers have identified an antimicrobial peptide derived from cows that shows promise in treating incurable infections caused by the bacterium *Klebsiella pneumoniae*. This offers a new approach to tackle severe infections resistant to conventional antibiotics.

1. About *K. pneumoniae*: It is a bacterium commonly found in the intestines and is usually harmless. However, when it enters other parts of the body, it can cause pneumonia, urinary tract infections, and wound infections.
2. Causes and its effect: The bacteria become a significant health hazard for vulnerable populations, including seniors and individuals with health conditions like diabetes, cancer, kidney failure, and liver disease.
3. Recent development: Some infections caused by *K. pneumoniae* cannot be effectively treated with existing antibiotics. Recently developed cow-derived peptides have been found capable of quickly killing *K. pneumoniae* by interacting with the sugar connections that maintain the slime structure, making it vulnerable. This breakthrough discovery might create new opportunities for treating drug-resistant infections.

About Peptides

Aspects	Description
About Peptides	i) Peptides are short chains of amino acids naturally found in the body. ii) They are linked by peptide bonds and are essential for various biological functions.

Differences between Peptides and Proteins	<p>i) Peptides are shorter than proteins. Peptides are defined as molecules that consist of between 2 and 50 amino acids, whereas proteins are made up of 50 or more amino acids.</p> <p>ii) Peptides tend to be less well defined in structure than proteins.</p>
Functions of Peptides	<p>i) Peptides have various functions in the body such as reducing inflammation, and helping to build muscle.</p> <p>ii) Some peptides work like hormones and can affect different parts of the body from where they are released.</p> <p>iii) Peptide supplements are often derived from food sources or synthesized for their health benefits.</p>

About Amino Acids

1. About Amino acids: They are the building blocks for proteins and peptides. There are 20 different amino acids that combine in various sequences to form proteins. Some amino acids are produced by the body, while nine essential amino acids must be obtained through diet.
2. Essential Amino Acids: The nine essential amino acids are histidine, isoleucine, leucine, lysine, methionine, phenylalanine, threonine, tryptophan, and valine.

3.Low COVID-19 Infection Rates in India

On May 5, 2023, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared that Covid-19 was no longer a global public health emergency. This marks the end of the pandemic.

Key Reasons for Low COVID-19 Infection Rates

- i) Reduced Testing: Fewer people getting tested, and this may lead to low detection of COVID-19 cases.
- ii) Natural Immunity and Vaccination: The Omicron variant (which was highly transmissible but less severe) and widespread vaccination by the end of 2021, has enabled a significant portion of the global population to acquire natural immunity.
- iii) Limited Virus Evolution: Natural infection and vaccination have spread so widely that they have limited the virus's opportunities to evolve into new and more dangerous variants. Also, the virus has not mutated into more severe forms recently, which helps manage the health risk it poses.
- iv) Enhanced Scientific Understanding: Improved knowledge among scientists and public health experts about COVID-19 has increased their capacity to anticipate its behavior and implement effective control measures.

Current situation of COVID

1. India continued to see the virus in circulation. The JN.1 variant, which is a descendant of Omicron, is now the most common strain. It is more infectious than previous variants but generally does not cause severe disease.
2. Recent WHO data up to April 14 shows that globally, over 2.42 lakh cases were reported, with significant numbers in Russia and New Zealand. About 3,000 of those cases were in India, where testing remains limited.
3. Key institutes like the National Institute of Virology in Pune and the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology in Hyderabad continue to monitor the virus. They use methods including wastewater surveillance, which has also detected the JN.1 variant in India.

4.Blue Corner Notice

A Blue Corner notice is likely to be issued against an absconding MP from Karnataka by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

- The MP fled to Germany on a diplomatic passport. He is accused of sexual harassment and abuse of party workers and other women.

A Blue Corner notice

Blue Corner notice is a part of Interpol's elaborate system of color-coded notices which enable countries to share alerts and requests for information on wanted criminals across the globe.

- A Blue Notice is issued to collect additional information about a person's identity, location or activities in relation to a criminal investigation.
- As enquiry notices: They are issued for identity verification; to obtain particulars of a person's criminal record; to locate someone who is missing or is an identified or unidentified international criminal or is wanted for a violation of ordinary criminal law and whose extradition may be requested.
- Blue notices are issued prior to or immediately after the filing of criminal charges.

The International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL)

It was founded in 1923 as the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC). In 1956, the ICPC adopted a new constitution and was thus named INTERPOL.

- Objective: INTERPOL facilitates worldwide police cooperation and crime control and is the world's largest international police organisation.
- Membership: 196 as on 2023 including India
- Headquarters: Lyon, France.

- Official Languages: Arabic, French, English and Spanish
- Organization: It has seven regional bureaus worldwide and a National Central Bureau (NCB) in all its member states which acts as a central point of contact for the general Secretariat of Interpol and other NCBS
- Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is designated as National Central Bureau of India.
- INTERPOL notices: These notices are issued by the Interpol's General Secretariat at the request of a member country's Interpol National Central Bureau, and are made available for all member countries.

5. Development of Goldene

For the first time, scientists have successfully developed a free-standing, single-atom-thick sheet of gold. This marks the first instance of a metal being transformed into a 2D sheet. This breakthrough paves the way for numerous exciting opportunities in the future.

Aspect	Description
About Goldene	Goldene is a 2-dimensional allotrope of gold, which means it consists of a single layer of gold atoms arranged in a two-dimensional structure.
Unique features	i) It exhibits semiconductor properties when fabricated into this single-atom-thick layer. Typically, gold is known for its excellent conductivity, but it behaves differently in its goldene form. ii) These sheets of goldene are roughly 100 nanometres thick (a nanometre is a billionth of a metre), approximately 400 times thinner than the thinnest commercially available gold leaf.
How is it created?	i) Goldene has been created by first placing a single layer of silicon between titanium carbide layers. ii) Then gold is added which diffused into the structure and replaced the silicon, forming a monolayer of gold. iii) This was done with the help of an age-old Japanese technique using chemical popularly known as Murakami's reagent. This chemical is also used to forge katanas and high-quality knives.
Potential applications	i) Electronics Industry Revolution: Goldene ultra-thin and lightweight properties could significantly reduce the amount of gold needed in electronics. ii) Catalysis: As a catalyst, goldene offers economic benefits over traditional three-dimensional gold due to its efficiency and reduced material usage. This could be useful in various chemical processes. iii) Extension to Other Metals: The technique developed to create goldene could also be adapted to produce two-dimensional sheets of other precious metals like iridium and platinum, expanding the range of applications. iv) Special Properties for Advanced Applications: Goldene has a unique structure where each atom connects to six others, not twelve. This could lead to specific uses in turning carbon dioxide into other materials, producing hydrogen, and purifying water.

ANSWER WRITTING

Q. Enumerate the key factors contributing to the uneven spatial distribution of the IT (Information Technology) industry in India.

The Information Technology (IT) industry, encompassing the development, maintenance, and utilization of computer systems, software, and related technologies for data handling, has become a pivotal sector in India's economic landscape since the liberalization policies adopted in 1990. However, it is mainly concentrated in major cities like Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Delhi, Pune, Kochi, Chennai, Mumbai, Thiruvananthapuram, and Chandigarh, because of various factors.

Key Factors Contributing to the Uneven Spatial Distribution of the IT Industry in India:

- Infrastructure: The availability of modern infrastructure significantly influences the geographic distribution of an IT industry. Cities with well-developed tech parks, reliable power supply, and efficient transportation networks often become favored locations for IT companies to set up their operations. For instance, Bangalore's robust infrastructure has attracted numerous IT firms, including Google India Private Ltd., Infosys, and Wipro, contributing to its status as a prominent IT hub.
- Human Capital: Cities that are home to prestigious educational institutions and a large talent pool have acted as the attractive destinations for IT firms. For instance, Pune and Hyderabad are known for their abundance of well-educated professionals, making them ideal locations for IT companies to establish their offices.
- Connectivity and Proximity to Markets: Access to both domestic and international markets plays a pivotal role in determining the location of the IT industry. Cities with excellent connectivity to crucial markets, such as Mumbai, tend to be preferred by IT companies aiming to effectively serve these markets.
- Orientation toward Exports: Some Indian cities specialize in export-oriented IT services, influencing the distribution of the industry. This orientation facilitates global business operations, as IT firms can cater to international clients more efficiently. Chennai, for instance, has strategically positioned itself as an export-oriented IT services hub, benefiting from this approach.

- Government Initiatives and Policies: Regions that offer favorable policies, tax incentives, and a supportive regulatory environment tend to attract IT companies. Hyderabad's remarkable growth in the IT sector can be attributed to proactive government initiatives like GRID policy that promote and incentivize industry development. Ex- Karnatka came up with its first IT policy in 1997
- Business Ecosystem and Networking Opportunities: A vibrant tech ecosystem fosters innovation, collaboration, and growth within the IT industry. Cities or regions with a thriving tech ecosystem provide access to venture capital, mentorship opportunities, and networking events, making them attractive to IT startups and talent. Bengaluru serves as a prime example of such a strong tech ecosystem.

The unequal distribution of India's IT industry stems from a complex interplay of various factors. To achieve a more balanced distribution of the IT industry in India and reduce regional disparities, central and state governments must prioritize investment in infrastructure, skill development, and pro-business policies, ultimately driving accelerated economic growth and fostering equitable and harmonious IT development.

MCQs

- Shaksgam Valley is situated to the
 - East of Aksai Chin
 - North of the Karakoram watershed**
 - South of Gilgit
 - South of Nubra Valley
- Consider the following statements:
 - The Supreme Court in the case of *Indira Gandhi v Raj Narain* recognised that free and fair elections are a part of the 'basic structure' of the Constitution of India, and any laws or policies that would violate this principle could be struck down.
 - A five-judge constitution Bench in 2006, in the case of *Kuldip Nayar v. Union of India* held that the right to vote is "pure and simple, a statutory right".
 Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2**
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- Which one of the following best describes the nature of Blue Corner Notice issued by the Interpol?
 - Member countries are obligated to arrest the individual once a Blue Corner Notice is issued.
 - Interpol can directly arrest individuals identified in a Blue Corner Notice.
 - The issuance of a Blue Corner Notice allows for the immediate extradition of the individual.
 - Interpol notices, including Blue Corner Notices, are discretionary, and member countries cannot be compelled to act upon them.**
- Consider the following statements about Spices Board:
 - It is one of the five Commodity Boards functioning under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry.
 - It is responsible for the overall development of the cardamom industry and export promotion of 52 spices listed in the schedule of the Spices Board Act, 1986.
 Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2**
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- The Atacama Desert is renowned for being:
 - The wettest desert on Earth
 - The coldest desert on Earth
 - The hottest desert on Earth
 - The driest desert on Earth**
- The 'Rule of Law' is important to make sure everyone follows the rules set by laws. Based on this context, which one of the following best describes the Rule of Law?
 - The government has the power to modify laws without judicial review.
 - The armed forces or ruler can implement laws without legal rationale.
 - The idea that a country should be ruled by the law rather than by the choices made by certain political representatives.**
 - The practice of enforcing laws differently depending on a person social rank.
- Consider the following statements about goldene
 - Goldene is a 2-dimensional allotrope of gold, which means it consists of a single layer of gold atoms arranged in a two-dimensional structure.
 - It exhibits semiconductor properties when fabricated into this single-atom-thick layer.
 - This was done with the help of an age-old Japanese technique using chemical popularly known as Murakami's reagent.
 Which of the above statements are correct?
 - 1 only
 - 2 and 3 only
 - All of the above**
 - 2 and 3 only
- Recently, there has been an increase in the number of visitors to the Bhadra Tiger Reserve for safaris. It is located in which state?
 - Karnataka**
 - Assam
 - Tamil nadu
 - Kerala
- Consider the following statements:
 - Section 123 of the Representation of the People (RP) Act considers the issuing of freebies as a corrupt practice.
 - The Model Code of Conduct (MCC) prohibits parties and candidates from appealing to caste, religion, or ethnic feelings in order to get votes.
 Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?
 - 1 only
 - 2 only**
 - Both 1 and 2
 - Neither 1 nor 2
- Consider the following statements about Amino acids
 - They are the building blocks for proteins and peptides
 - The nine essential amino acids are histidine, isoleucine, leucine, lysine, methionine, phenylalanine, threonine, tryptophan, and valine.
 Which of the above statements is/are true?
 - 1 only
 - 2 only
 - Both 1 and 2**
 - Neither 1 nor 2