WHAT IS THE DEFENCE ACQUISITION COUNCIL (DAC)?



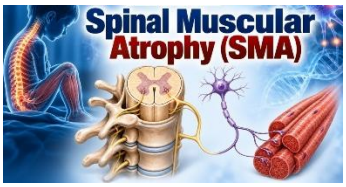
- It is the **highest decision-making body** of **India's Ministry of Defence on procurement.**
- **Main Objective:** To ensure **expeditious procurement** of the **approved requirements of the armed forces** in terms of capabilities sought and time frame prescribed by optimally **utilizing the allocated budgetary resources.**
- **Formation**: It was formed after the **Group of Minister's recommendations on 'Reforming the National Security System', in 2001, post-Kargil War (1999).**
- **Composition:**
  - The **Defence Minister** is the **chairman** of DAC.
  - Its **members** include senior civil and military leaders of the Ministry of Defence, among them the **Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) and chiefs of the Army, Navy, and Air Force;** the **Defence Secretary;** and **other senior officials** responsible for finance, production, and acquisition.
- **Functions:**
  - Give in-principle approval to long-term perspective planning, as applicable under the current framework.
  - **Categorisation of the acquisition proposals** relating to 'Buy', 'Buy & Make', and 'Make'.
  - Take **decisions regarding the Transfer of Technology** under the 'Buy & Make' category of acquisition proposals.
  - **Field trial evaluation.**

The categorisation decisions taken by the DAC are especially significant, because they influence whether contracts flow to Indian designers and manufacturers or to foreign suppliers.

- Through its approvals, the DAC effectively **sets** the **direction of India's military modernisation.**

Cross And Climb

WHAT IS SPINAL MUSCULAR ATROPHY (SMA)?



- SMA is a group of inherited neuromuscular disorders cause certain **muscles** to **become weak** and **waste away.**
- It is a **progressive disorde**r that can cause **life-threatening**

What Happens in SMA?

- In SMA, the **nerves that control muscle strength and movement break down.**
- These nerves (called **motor neurons**) are **in the spinal cord and lower part** of the **brain**.
- They **can't send signals** from the brain **to the muscles** to make them move.
- Because the **muscles** don't move, they **get smaller** (or **atrophy**).
- The weakness in SMA tends to be **more severe in the muscles that are close to the center of the body** (proximal muscles) than in the muscles farther away from the body's center (distal muscles).
- Muscle weakness tends to **worsen with time.**

What Causes SMA?

- **Motor neurons need** a **protein called SMN** (survival motor neuron) **to work.**
- Most kinds of SMA are caused by a **problem with a gene that makes this protein,** called the **SMN1 gene.**
- When this gene mutates (changes in some way), it can't make enough protein for the motor neurons to work properly.
- The motor neurons break down and can't send signals to the muscles.

- **Treatment**:
  - **There isn't a cure** for SMA.
  - Treatment for SMA mainly seeks to manage symptoms and prevent complications.

Cross And Climb

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT TRUST

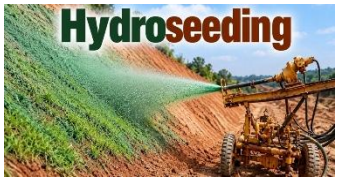


India's infrastructure investment trusts (InvITs) are attracting more investors, creating a potential avenue to channel domestic savings into roads, power transmission networks and other income-generating infrastructure assets.

- An Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT) is a SEBI-regulated investment vehicle that enables investors to invest in income-generating infrastructure assets through units of a trust.
- **Objective:** To provide **retail investors** with access to investment opportunities in infrastructure projects, which were previously only available to large institutional investors.
- **Features of the Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT):**
  - **Structure:** An InvIT has **4 parties namely**; Trustee, Sponsor(s) and Investment Manager and Project Manager.
  - INVITs are created by sponsors, who are typically infrastructure companies or private equity firms.
  - The sponsor sets up the INVITs and transfers ownership of the underlying infrastructure assets to the trust.
  - The trust then **issues units to investors,** which represent an ownership stake in the trust and thus the underlying assets.
  - While the trustee (certified by Sebi) has the responsibility of inspecting the performance of an InvIT, sponsor(s) are promoters of the company that set up the InvIT.
  - **Regulation:** InvITs are regulated by **the SEBI (Infrastructure Investment Trusts) Regulations, 2014.**

Cross And Climb

HYDROSEEDING



- It is a modern technique for **sowing seeds by spraying a slurry mixture** of seeds, water, fertilizers, mulch, and soil stabilizers onto the soil surface using specialized equipment.
- It aims to **stabilise dump slopes**, **prevent soil erosion** and **accelerate green restoration** through modern technology.
- **Process of Hydroseeding:**
    - **Preparing Slurry:** The process involves preparing a slurry of seeds, mulch, fertiliser and water. This mixture is loaded into a hydroseeder.
    - The slurry is then **sprayed onto the prepared soil** surface using a hose or cannon.
    - **Equipment and Technology:** It is carried out using **purpose-built hydroseeders** available in a range of tank sizes and output capacities to suit different project scales.
    - These machines are designed to properly mix fibre mulch, seed and additives while delivering an even, controlled spray pattern.
    - The machine can spray up to 50 metres and cover dump slopes up to 80 metres.
    - **Applications**: It is widely **used for lawn development, slope stabilization**, erosion control, and ecological restoration in difficult or uneven terrains.

Advantages:

- Compared to traditional seeding methods, it is **faster, cost-effective, and suitable** for large areas.
- It is especially useful on mine overburden dumps and rugged terrain where conventional plantation is difficult and time-consuming.
- It **controls erosion on open slopes**, strengthens slopes, reduces landslide risks, promotes faster plant growth and natural greenery, retains soil moisture for germination.

SPECIAL EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATES: POWERS AND LIMITS

- State governments appoint SEMs for specific areas, periods, or purposes, granting them **powers of Executive Magistrates** under **Section 15** of the BNSS (Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita), 2023.
- In Delhi, the Delhi Police Act empowers the Centre to authorise the Police Commissioner and officers not below ACP rank to exercise district/executive magistrate powers.
- **Key Distinction**
    - **Executive Magistrates/SEMs** function under the government, performing administrative and preventive roles. Their career progression depends on executive superiors, not the judiciary.
    - **Judicial Magistrates** (BNSS Section 9) are appointed by High Courts, form part of the judicial system, and can conduct trials, grant bail, and impose sentences.
    - SEMs cannot conduct criminal trials or convict — their role is strictly preventive, aimed at intervening before a disturbance occurs rather than punishing after an offence.

What Powers Do SEMs Actually Exercise?

- **Peace Bonds (Section 126, BNSS):** An SEM can require someone likely to breach peace to show cause why they shouldn't execute a bond to maintain peace, for up to one year.
- **Inquiry Process (Section 135):** The magistrate inquires into the matter and may order a person to furnish security during the inquiry, recording reasons in writing.
- **Breach Consequences (Section 141(1)(b)):** If a peace bond is breached, the magistrate can order arrest or detention for the bond's remaining period.
- **Urgent Preventive Orders**: SEMs can act against nuisance or apprehended danger — preventing obstruction, injury, threat to life, or public disturbance/riot.
- **Preventive Arrest (Section 170):** This is actually a police power, not exclusive to SEMs — police can arrest to prevent a cognisable offence.

Can SEM Actions Be Challenged?

- Yes — SEM orders are subject to judicial review and administrative oversight, and can be challenged before appropriate courts/authorities depending on the order's nature.

Conclusion

The SEM controversy reflects a deeper constitutional tension that India has grappled with since the colonial era: the risk of **blending executive and judicial functions** in matters touching **personal liberty**.

Despite repeated judicial interventions — from the 1984 Sunil Batra case to the 2018 Delhi High Court directions — courts have found the same procedural lapses recurring decades apart, including cyclostyled orders and disproportionate impact on marginalised groups.

As the CJP case shows, SEMs continue to wield significant preventive power over protesters, even as their orders remain subject to judicial review. Until recommendations like independent oversight mechanisms and renaming SEMs are actually implemented, the gap between constitutional safeguards and ground-level practice is likely to persist.

FORCING PRIVATE CITIZENS INTO CENSUS DUTY: WHAT THE LAW REALLY ALLOWS

Recently, the Centre amended the **Census Rules, 1990**, to explicitly include teachers of private educational institutions and employees of private establishments (banks, companies, societies, trusts) as eligible Census enumerators.

This has reignited a legal debate: can the government legally compel private individuals to perform Census duties — and why was this amendment needed if the old rules already allowed "any person" to be appointed?

What the Amendment Actually Changes?

- The amended rules now expressly name teachers of government, local authority, aided, and unaided private institutions as eligible enumerators.
- It also retains the broader category: **any person** whom a state/UT government considers suitable.

- Crucially, this isn't very different from before — the earlier Rule 3 already allowed enumerators to be chosen from "Teachers, Clerks or any official or any person."
- MHA's stated reason: to remove ambiguity and ensure smooth conduct of the Census, which needs lakhs of enumerators.

What the Census Act, 1948 Actually Says?

- **Section 4(2):** Gives state governments power to "appoint persons as census-officers," adding that such persons "shall be bound to serve." This broad wording ("persons") is the government's strongest legal basis.
- **Section 4A:** Requires local authorities (when Centre-directed) to provide necessary staff.
- **Sections 6 and 7:** Allow seeking assistance from private establishments, but in limited, defined circumstances — mainly counting people within their premises, not deploying employees as general door-to-door enumerators.

Does the Constitution Permit Compulsory Public Service?

- Yes, in principle. Article 23(1) bans forced labour (begar), but **Article 23(2) explicitly permits "compulsory service for public purposes**" — provided it's non-discriminatory.
- **Precedents For Compulsory Civilian Service**
    - **Police Act, 1861**: Allows appointing residents as special police officers in public-order situations — upheld as valid under Article 23(2) in Dulal Samanta v District Magistrate, Howrah (1958).
    - **National Service Act, 1972**: Allowed calling up qualified doctors and engineers, but with an elaborate statutory framework — registration, hardship postponement, prescribed remuneration, employer release/reinstatement obligations.

Conclusion

The Census Rules amendment illustrates a recurring tension between administrative necessity (deploying lakhs of enumerators for nationwide exercise) & statutory limits on compulsory service. Courts have consistently signalled that while Section 4(2) may offer the government a legally sound path to requisition "any person," the narrower Sections 6 and 7 cannot be stretched to justify blanket deployment of private employees.

A READY SOLUTION TO TACKLE ANAEMIA

- Despite economic progress and sustained public health efforts, **anaemia** remains a **major public health challenge** in India.
- Affecting over half of Indian women and nearly three-fourths of children, it contributes to maternal mortality, intergenerational malnutrition, impaired cognitive development and economic losses.
- The **revised 7X7X7 Anaemia Mukt Bharat (AMB)** strategy addresses prevention, screening, treatment, dietary diversification and behavioural change.
- However, Double Fortified Salt (DFS), containing both iron and iodine, remains underutilised despite its potential to reduce iron deficiency & advance Viksit Bharat 2047

What the Barriers Are?

- **Institutional Challenges and Uneven Implementation**
  - DFS adoption remains uneven, primarily because of institutional and administrative barriers, rather than technological limitations.
  - Nationwide adoption requires dedicated financing, stronger Centre-State coordination, political commitment, wider commercial availability and consumer awareness.
- **Regulatory Safeguards and Integration with Existing Policies**
  - DFS must complement, rather than replace, existing interventions under Anaemia Mukt Bharat.
  - It should operate within **a robust regulatory framework** that ensures product quality, appropriate monitoring and nutritional safety.

Conclusion

- **DFS** offers an affordable, evidence-based and scalable preventive intervention.
- With appropriate safeguards and sustained government commitment, **DFS can advance Anaemia Mukt Bharat,** improve productivity and support Viksit Bharat 2047, while establishing India as a global model for combating nutritional deficiencies.

WHAT IS THE GREATER FLAMINGO?



- It is the **most widespread** and **largest species of the flamingo family.**
- Scientific Name: Phoenicopterus roseus

- **Habitat and Distribution:**
  - The Greater flamingo **inhabits Africa**, the **Middle East, southern Europe,** and the **Indian subcontinent.**
  - They occur in relatively **shallow water bodies**, such as saline lagoons, salt pans, large alkaline or saline lakes, and estuaries.
  - Breeding takes place on sandbanks, mudflats, sandy or rocky islands, or open beaches.
- **Features**:
  - It is a **large bird** with an **elegant body,** a **long and slender neck**, and extremely **long legs.**
  - Its **plumage** is **predominantly pale pink,** with more **intense shades on the wings and black wingtips.**
  - The **beak is thick, downward-curved, and pink** with a black tip.
  - The **legs** are long, thin, and **bright pink**, perfectly adapted for moving through shallow waters.
  - **Juveniles** have a **gray-brown coloration,** with some pink on their underparts, tail and wings, with the legs and beak being mainly brown.
  - They are a **highly social** species, nesting in large, dense colonies.
  - They **feed by filtering water** with their specialized beaks, consuming crustaceans, algae, and small invertebrates.
- **Conservation Status:**
  - IUCN Red List: **Least Concern**

Cross And Climb