



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 01-03-2025

GS-2

1. Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI)
2. WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC)
3. India – UK Free Trade Agreement

GS-3

4. Time Use Survey (TUS) 2024

Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI)

Syllabus: GS-2: Statutory Body.

Context:

- The Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI) has announced its Prani Mitra and Jeev Daya Award Ceremony, scheduled to be held at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, on 27th February 2025.
- The **Animal Welfare Board of India (AWBI)** is a pivotal statutory body dedicated to promoting animal welfare and preventing cruelty to animals in India.
- Established in **1962** under **Section 4 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960**, the AWBI operates under the **Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, Government of India**. Its headquarters is located in **Ballabgarh, Haryana**.

Key Highlights of AWBI:

- **Founding and Leadership:**
 - The AWBI was founded under the guidance of **Rukmini Devi Arundale**, a renowned animal rights activist and cultural icon.
 - Over the years, it has evolved to take on a broader role in animal welfare, including awareness campaigns, policy advisory, and financial support for animal welfare organizations.
- **Advisory Role:**
 - The AWBI advises the **Central and State Governments** on amendments to animal welfare laws and measures to prevent cruelty to animals.
 - It plays a critical role in shaping policies and ensuring the enforcement of animal welfare regulations.
- **Animal Welfare Programs:**
 - The Board monitors **animal shelters, rescue homes, and sanctuaries** to ensure proper care and treatment of animals.
 - It provides **financial aid** to **Animal Welfare Organizations (AWOs)** and supports initiatives like **Pinjarapoles**, which care for old and sick animals.
- **Regulatory Compliance:**
 - The AWBI ensures compliance with the **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960**.

- It oversees the functioning of **District Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCAs)** and supervises the treatment of animals in **slaughterhouses** and during **transport**.
- **Legal Enforcement:**
 - The Board assists in prosecuting offenders involved in animal cruelty and coordinates with **State Animal Welfare Boards (SAWBs)**.
 - It also works to prevent **illegal animal trade** and abuse.
- **Man-Animal Conflict Resolution:**
 - The AWBI monitors **human-wildlife conflicts** and promotes **humane solutions** to protect both animals and local communities.

Prani Mitra and Jeev Daya Award Ceremony:

- The AWBI is set to host the **Prani Mitra and Jeev Daya Award Ceremony** at **Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi**, to honor individuals and organizations that have made exceptional contributions to animal welfare.
- This event underscores the Board's commitment to recognizing and encouraging efforts toward the betterment of animal lives.

Significance of AWBI:

- The AWBI plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between policy and practice in animal welfare.
- By advocating for stronger laws, supporting grassroots organizations, and raising awareness, it strives to create a more compassionate and humane society for animals in India.

WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC)

Syllabus: GS-2: Social Sector – Health related conventions

Context:

- The **WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC)** marks its **20th anniversary** since its entry into force on **25 February 2005**.

- It is the **first public health treaty** negotiated under WHO, with **183 Parties** covering **90% of the global population**.
- The treaty provides a **legal framework** with **evidence-based tobacco control measures**, contributing significantly to public health improvements.

Impact of WHO FCTC

- **Global tobacco use prevalence has dropped by one-third** since its implementation.
- **Up to 5.6 billion people** are now covered by at least one tobacco control policy.
- **138 countries** require **large pictorial health warnings** on cigarette packages.
- **Dozens of countries** have implemented **plain packaging rules**, restricting branding and logos.
- **Over 25% of the global population** is protected by **smoke-free policies**, reducing exposure to second-hand smoke.
- **More than 66 countries** have imposed **bans on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship (TAPS)**.

Key Tobacco Control Measures Under WHO FCTC

- **Large pictorial warnings on cigarette packages** to educate consumers.
- **Smoke-free laws** to protect people from second-hand smoke.
- **Higher taxes on tobacco products** to discourage consumption.
- **Bans on advertising, sponsorships, and promotions** to reduce appeal, especially among youth.
- **Legal protection** against interference from the tobacco industry.

Challenges in Tobacco Control

- The **tobacco industry spends billions** to promote its products and **oppose regulation**.
- Tobacco use is a major contributor to **noncommunicable diseases (NCDs)**, leading to **premature deaths and high healthcare costs**.
- Tobacco cultivation leads to **land degradation** and **diverts resources** from sustainable food production.

- **Plastic cigarette waste** pollutes ecosystems, contributing to environmental damage.
- Emerging **new tobacco and nicotine products** pose new regulatory challenges.

Call for Strengthening Tobacco Control Measures

- Countries must **fully implement WHO FCTC measures**, including:
 - **Increasing tobacco taxes** to discourage use.
 - **Expanding smoke-free laws** to more public spaces.
 - **Stronger enforcement of advertising bans** to prevent industry influence.
 - **Regulating new tobacco products** to prevent youth addiction.
- The WHO urges governments to **intensify their efforts** despite resistance from the tobacco industry.

Conclusion

- The WHO FCTC remains one of the **greatest achievements in public health**.
- It has provided countries with **effective tools to combat the tobacco epidemic**.
- Continued commitment to **tobacco control** is essential to protect future generations and achieve global health goals.

WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC)

Introduction

- The **WHO FCTC** is a treaty adopted by the **56th World Health Assembly** on **21 May 2003** in Geneva, Switzerland.
- It became the **first WHO treaty** adopted under **Article 19** of the **WHO Constitution**.
- The treaty **entered into force on 27 February 2005**.
- **Signed by 168 countries** and **legally binding in 182 ratifying countries**.
- **14 UN member states** are **non-parties** to the treaty (**8 have not signed, 6 have signed but not ratified**).

Objectives and Significance

- Aims to **protect present and future generations** from the **health, social, environmental, and economic consequences** of tobacco consumption.

- Establishes **universal standards** to highlight the **dangers of tobacco** and limit its use.
- One of the **most rapidly ratified** treaties in UN history.
- Marks a **milestone for international public health**, being one of the first **binding agreements** on a **chronic, non-communicable disease**.

India – UK Free Trade Agreement

Syllabus: GS-3: Free Trade Market.

Context:

- India and the UK have resumed negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) after an eight-month gap, with 14 rounds of talks completed since January 2022.

India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA) – A Strategic Trade Partnership

What is a Free Trade Agreement (FTA)?

- An FTA is a pact between two or more countries to reduce or eliminate import duties on a majority of traded goods.
- It also aims to minimize non-tariff barriers, facilitate trade in services, and enhance bilateral investments.

Benefits of FTAs

- **Boosts Exports & Market Access** – Eliminates tariffs, making Indian goods more competitive.
- **Enhances Foreign Investment** – Encourages FDI inflows and technology transfer.
- **Diversifies Trade Relations** – Reduces over-reliance on specific markets.
- **Creates Jobs & Economic Growth** – Expands industries and employment opportunities.
- **Strengthens Strategic Partnerships** – Builds diplomatic and economic cooperation.

India's FTA Engagements

- **Signed FTAs:** Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Korea, Japan, Australia, UAE, Mauritius, ASEAN, EFTA.

- **Ongoing FTA Negotiations:** India is in talks with the **UK, EU, and US** to strengthen trade with western economies.

India-UK Free Trade Agreement (FTA)

Objectives of the India-UK FTA

- **Boost Trade & Investment** – Reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers.
- **Expand Opportunities** – Focus on technology, healthcare, education, and services.
- **Ease Movement of Professionals** – Facilitate student and workforce mobility.

India's Gains from the FTA

- **Merchandise Trade Growth** – India's exports to the UK stood at **\$12.9 billion (FY24)**, with key gains in:
 - Textiles, apparel, footwear, cars, marine products, grapes, and mangoes.
- **Tariff Reduction Benefits** – India to gain from **duty cuts on \$6.1 billion worth of goods**.
- **Market Access in Services** – IT, education, and healthcare sectors to benefit.
- **Increased UK Investments** – The Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) will promote UK FDI in India.

UK's Gains from the FTA

- **Tariff Reductions in India** – The UK exports **\$8.4 billion** to India, with 91% of goods facing tariffs:
 - **Cars (100%), Whisky (150%),** Machinery, Make-up Items, Precious Metals.
- **Better Access to Indian Markets** – UK's financial, legal, and high-value manufacturing sectors to gain.

Challenges to the India-UK FTA

- **Tariff Negotiations** – India is cautious about cutting duties on **whisky, automobiles, and meat**.
- **Visa & Mobility Issues** – India seeks **easier work visas**, but the UK has tight migration policies.
- **Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) Dispute Resolution** – India wants firms to exhaust local remedies before arbitration, which the UK opposes.
- **Regulatory Barriers** – The UK demands liberalization in **legal and financial sectors**, facing resistance.
- **Geopolitical Uncertainties** – Domestic political changes and economic slowdowns can delay the deal.

Way Ahead

- **Balanced Tariff Reductions** – Ensure fair duty cuts while safeguarding domestic industries.
- **Enhancing Market Access** – Address visa concerns for professionals and students.
- **Finalizing Investment Protections** – Ensure a mutually beneficial **Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT)**.
- **Sector-Specific Cooperation** – Strengthen partnerships in **technology, digital trade, and green energy**.

Conclusion

The India-UK FTA holds the potential to **redefine bilateral trade and investment**, fostering economic growth for both nations. Resolving **tariff disputes, investment protection concerns, and market access issues** will be crucial for finalizing a balanced agreement. A successful deal will **strengthen India's global trade position** while enhancing strategic ties with the UK.

Time Use Survey (TUS) 2024

Syllabus: GS-3: Indian Economy – Employment and related concepts.

Context:

- The Time Use Survey (TUS) 2024, Conducted by **Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI)**.
- Aims to assess the **time distribution of individuals** across various activities, including employment, unpaid work, caregiving, and leisure.
- Helps in understanding **gender disparities in workforce participation** and domestic responsibilities.

Key Data Insights & Important Findings

1. Women's Participation in Employment & Unpaid Work

- **Employment Participation:**
 - **25%** of women (15-59 years) engaged in employment (up from **21.8%** in 2019).
 - Men spent **132 minutes more** on employment-related activities (**473 min vs. 341 min**).

➤ **Unpaid Domestic Services:**

- Women spent **201 minutes more** than men (**289 min vs. 88 min**).

2. Caregiving & Domestic Work

➤ **Caregiving Participation:**

- **41%** of women vs. **21.4%** of men participated in caregiving.
- Women spent **137 min/day** on caregiving (men: **75 min/day**).

➤ **Unpaid Domestic Work:**

- Declined for women from **315 min/day (2019)** to **305 min/day (2024)**.

3. Learning & Skill Development

➤ **Participation in Learning Activities:**

- **89.3%** of children (6-14 years) engaged in learning activities, spending **413 min/day**.
- Learning time declined for both genders (**males: 415 min, females: 413 min**).

4. Leisure, Mass Media & Social Activities

➤ **Leisure and Cultural Engagement:**

- **11% of daily time** spent on culture, leisure, media, and sports (**up from 9.9% in 2019**).

➤ **Socialization Trends:**

- Women's socializing time **remained constant (139 min)**.
- Men's participation **decreased from 147 min to 138 min**.

5. Self-Care & Maintenance

➤ **Time Spent on Self-Care (Individuals 6+ years):**

- **Average: 708 min/day**.
- **Women: 706 min/day, Men: 710 min/day**.

Analysis of the Report

Positive Trends

Increase in Women's Workforce Participation

- Women's employment rate rose to **25%** (from **8% in 2019**), reflecting a shift towards **paid work**.

Reduction in Unpaid Domestic Work for Women

- Unpaid domestic work for women **decreased by 10 minutes/day**, indicating progress in **gender balance**.

More Recognition of Caregiving Responsibilities

- Higher participation of both **men and women in caregiving**, recognizing its importance in families.

Rise in Cultural & Leisure Activities

- Time spent on **culture, media, and sports increased to 11%** of daily time (from **9% in 2019**), improving work-life balance.

Higher Participation in Learning Activities Among Children

- **89.3% of children** (6-14 years) engaged in learning, spending **413 minutes/day**.

Negative Aspects & Challenges

Persistent Gender Disparity in Household Work

- Women still spend **201 minutes more** than men on unpaid domestic work.

Decline in Learning Time for Youth

- Learning time **declined for both males (-11 min) and females (-10 min)**, indicating possible **educational setbacks**.

Limited Male Participation in Caregiving

- Only **21.4% of men** participated in caregiving (vs. **41% of women**), reinforcing gender disparities.

Rural-Urban Divide in Employment & Domestic Work

- **Rural engagement in self-production activities (8%)** is higher than **urban areas (6.2%)**, highlighting **economic inequalities**.

Increase in Employment Not Equal to Gender Parity

- Despite an increase in employment, women still spent **132 minutes less** than men in paid work.

Way Forward

Promoting Gender Equality in Domestic Responsibilities

- Encourage **equal sharing of unpaid work** through policy interventions and awareness programs.

Enhancing Women's Workforce Participation

- Introduce **flexible work policies, childcare support, and skill development programs** to boost employment rates.

Revitalizing Learning & Skill Development

- Strengthen **educational infrastructure**, promote **vocational training**, and boost **digital learning**.

Reducing Rural-Urban Economic Disparities

- Implement **rural employment schemes, digital literacy programs, and financial inclusion initiatives**.

Conclusion

- While **women's workforce participation** has improved, gender disparities in **unpaid domestic work and caregiving** remain a concern.
- Addressing these inequalities through **policy reforms and social awareness** is key to achieving **inclusive development and gender parity**.