

## 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025: Daily Study Contents

### Ladakh Groups Submit Draft Proposal to MHA on Statehood & 6th Schedule Status

#### Why in News?

The Leh Apex Body (LAB) along with several aligned organisations have shared a 29-page draft with the Ministry of Home Affairs demanding:

- Full-fledged Statehood for Ladakh,
- Inclusion of the region under the Sixth Schedule,
- A blanket amnesty for individuals apprehended after the violence of September 24,
- Immediate withdrawal of the National Security Act (NSA) under which climate campaigner Sonam Wangchuk has been held.

Dialogue between Ladakhi representatives and the MHA had broken down in September following Wangchuk's hunger strike.

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#### Relevance:

##### GS2: Polity & Governance

- Dynamics between Centre and States; functioning of Union Territories without legislatures
- Sixth Schedule safeguards and tribal autonomy
- Issues of democratic representation, decentralisation, and cooperative federalism

##### GS3: Internal Security

- Governance challenges across border zones adjoining the LAC with China
- Application of NSA, role of civil society, environmental activism in sensitive regions

##### GS1: Society

- Tribal identity, cultural continuity, and protection of traditional Himalayan way of life

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#### Governance Structure of Ladakh

Ladakh was declared a Union Territory without its own legislature after the enactment of the Jammu & Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019.

Administrative authority currently lies with:

- The Lieutenant Governor (LG), and
- Two elected Autonomous Hill Development Councils:
  - Leh Hill Council
  - Kargil Hill Council

Since there is no Legislative Assembly, concerns about democratic representation, autonomy, and control over local resources have intensified.

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### **What is the Sixth Schedule?**

A constitutional mechanism designed for predominantly tribal regions which provides:

- Autonomous District Councils vested with legislative, executive, judicial, and financial authority,
- Strong protections for tribal land, culture, and natural resources.

It presently applies to parts of **Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram**.

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### **Why Ladakh Seeks Sixth Schedule Protection**

Approximately 90% of Ladakh's residents belong to Scheduled Tribes. Communities fear:

- Industrial expansion without safeguards,
- Threats to fragile ecosystems and traditional livelihoods,
- Demographic stress due to migration or capital-driven projects.

The Sixth Schedule is seen as offering far greater protection than the current Hill Council frameworks.

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### **Key Demands in the 29-Page Draft**

- Grant of Statehood for democratic self-governance,
  - Bringing Ladakh under the Sixth Schedule to constitutionally protect tribal land and resources,
  - General amnesty for all arrested following the September 24 unrest in Leh,
  - Immediate release of Sonam Wangchuk detained under the NSA,
  - Restarting dialogue with definite timelines,
  - Strengthening local institutions while enhancing environmental and tribal welfare safeguards.
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### **Why the Issue is Significant**

It implicates:

- Centre–State federal negotiations,
- Tribal autonomy rights,
- Governance of Union Territories after the 2019 restructuring,

- India's border management strategy near China,
  - Questions surrounding human rights, security legislation, and climate activism.
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### Challenges & Concerns

- The Centre's reluctance to extend the Sixth Schedule due to fears of creating new precedents,
  - Security sensitivities owing to Ladakh's strategic location near the LAC,
  - Ongoing differences between Leh's unionist stance and Kargil's earlier demand for old J&K statehood—though the gap is shrinking,
  - Youth dissatisfaction escalating, reflected in the September 24 incident.
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### Possible Outcomes Ahead

The MHA may consider:

- Granting more powers under the Ladakh Hill Councils Act rather than Sixth Schedule status,
- Providing limited cultural, ecological, or land protections without full autonomy,
- Setting up stronger advisory mechanisms such as a Tribes Advisory Council.

If discussions fail:

- Civil society mobilisation may intensify,
  - Climate activism may draw international attention to Ladakh's demands.
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### Social Audit for SIR 2.0

#### Why in News?

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has initiated Special Intensive Revision (SIR) 2.0 across 12 States/UTs to re-verify voter eligibility.

The article cautions that Bihar's earlier experience shows how such exercises can lead to large-scale exclusions—especially affecting women, Muslims, and migrants—threatening electoral democracy's inclusivity.

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#### Relevance:

#### GS2: Polity & Governance

- Electoral reforms and accuracy of electoral rolls
- Constitutional authority and accountability of the ECI
- Social audits in institutional transparency

### **What is Special Intensive Revision (SIR)?**

A burdensome documentation-based re-verification process requiring voters to resubmit proofs of:

- Identity,
- Address/ordinary residence,
- Age eligibility.

Its stated purpose is to update rolls by removing duplicates and correcting entries, but the exercise lacks statutory rules, procedural clarity, and independent oversight.

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### **Legal Framework for Electoral Roll Revision**

Guided by the Representation of the People Act, 1950:

- **Section 19:** eligibility requires “ordinary residence.”
- **Section 20:** defines “ordinary residence,” but fails to recognise:
  - long-term migrants,
  - circular migrants,
  - short-term workers.

Strict documentation under SIR can unintentionally disenfranchise such groups.

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### **Bihar Case Study: What Went Wrong?**

#### **Evidence of Exclusion**

- Sharp decline in adult-electors ratio,
- Mass removal of women and Muslim names,
- Duplicates and errors in deletion lists,
- Individuals stripped of voting rights for lack of documents.

#### **Why It Became Contentious**

- Process resembled citizenship verification rather than voter roll updating,
  - Burden shifted from ECI/BLOs to citizens,
  - Raised fears of a covert NRC-like screening via electoral rolls.
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### **Institutional Issues**

#### **Election Commission of India (ECI)**

Faced accusations of:

- Limited transparency,
- Defensive responses in court,
- Avoiding scrutiny,
- Erosion of perceived neutrality.

### **Supreme Court**

While monitoring, it:

- Did not adjudicate the legality of SIR,
- Permitted continuation despite flaws,
- Corrected only limited errors without addressing structural issues.

Risk: legitimising an unconstitutional and discriminatory process.

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### **Vulnerability of Migrant Voters**

India has over 450 million internal migrants.

In states like Tamil Nadu with large migrant labour populations, rigid residence rules can cause widespread disenfranchisement.

SIR does not distinguish migrant categories, leading to:

- Loss of voting rights,
  - Misrepresentation,
  - Urban/industrial worker exclusion.
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### **Democratic Implications**

Universal franchise depends on:

- Easy enrolment,
- Absence of arbitrary deletions,
- Minimal paperwork.

SIR introduces barriers that hinder participation.

Already 30–40% of voters do not turn out; adding re-verification deepens exclusion.

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### **Need for Mandatory Social Audit**

#### **Concept**

Community-led review of official records ensuring transparency and accountability.

#### **Constitutional Backing**



Articles 243A and 243J endorse community oversight;  
The CAG recognises social audits for public programmes.

### **Benefits for Electoral Rolls**

- Local verification by Gram Sabhas/Ward Committees,
- Minimises manipulation and maximises inclusion,
- Enables prompt correction of errors.

### **Precedent (2003)**

Under CEC Lyngdoh, decentralised social audits in five States corrected over seven lakh entries in Rajasthan alone.

### **Policy Recommendation**

ECI must:

- Create clear rules for SIR,
- Mandate social audits,
- Confer with civil society and political groups,
- Prevent repetition of Bihar's exclusions.

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## **Trajectory of Anti-Rape Laws in India**

### **Why in News?**

CJI B. R. Gavai condemned the Supreme Court's 1979 judgement acquitting accused in the Tukaram vs State of Maharashtra (Mathura rape case), calling it a blot on judicial history. His remarks shed light on India's changing legal framework on sexual violence, consent, custodial accountability, and recent changes under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) 2023.

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### **Relevance:**

#### **GS2: Polity & Social Justice**

- Evolution of criminal laws, custodial violence, women's safety legislation
- BNS 2023 updates

#### **GS1: Society**

- Gendered social attitudes, patriarchal biases

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## **Mathura Rape Case (1972–79)**

A minor Adivasi girl was raped by two policemen inside a police station.

### **Trial Court (1974)**

Dismissed her testimony, labelled her “habituated.”

### **Bombay HC (1976)**

Convicted the policemen, acknowledging the coercive context.

### **Supreme Court (1979)**

Acquitted them, reasoning that:

- absence of injuries indicated “consensual” intercourse,
- lack of resistance implied willingness.

The verdict reflected deep patriarchal prejudices.

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### **The 1979 Open Letter**

Written by legal scholars Baxi, Sarkar, Dhagamwar, Kelkar.

Arguments:

- Submission ≠ consent,
- No resistance ≠ consent,
- Court ignored power imbalance, minor’s age, custodial environment.

Triggered a national women’s rights movement and legal reforms.

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### **Immediate Legal Reforms (1983)**

- Custodial rape defined as an aggravated offence,
  - Burden shifted to accused once intercourse shown,
  - Strengthened anti-dowry and family court provisions.
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### **Key Milestones Since**

#### **Nandini Satpathy (1978)**

Women cannot be required to attend police stations; must be questioned at home.

#### **Bhanwari Devi Case & Vishaka Guidelines (1992–97)**

Laid foundation for sexual harassment law; emphasised safe workspaces.

#### **Nirbhaya Case (2012) & 2013 Amendments**

- Broadened definition of rape,
- Mandatory FIR registration,
- Free medical care,
- Affirmative consent principle,

- Age of consent raised to 18,
- Death penalty for extreme cases.

### **Unnao, Kathua & 2018 Amendment**

Introduced death penalty for rape of girls under 12; strict timelines for investigation and trial.

### **Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) 2023**

- Gender-neutral victim/perpetrator clauses,
- Severe penalties for gangrape of minors,
- New offence of sexual intercourse through deception,
- Expanded definitions of sexual misconduct.

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### **Key Themes in Legal Evolution**

- Recognition of power-based coercion,
- Affirmative consent standard,
- Victim-oriented procedures,
- Decline of outdated notions about chastity or resistance.

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### **Persistent Challenges**

- Low conviction rates,
- Police biases,
- Weak forensics,
- Inadequate survivor support,
- Social pressures and intimidation.

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### **Batukeshwar Dutt**

#### **Why in News?**

A recent piece revisited the life of Batukeshwar Dutt, compatriot of Bhagat Singh, highlighting his sacrifices and the comparative lack of national recognition.

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#### **Relevance:**

#### **GS1: Modern Indian History**

- Revolutionary nationalism and HSRA activities

#### **GS1: Heritage & Personalities**



- Historical memory and neglected revolutionaries

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## Key Facts

### Central Assembly Bombing (1929)

- Carried out by Bhagat Singh and Dutt,
- Intended as symbolic protest against anti-labour Bills,
- Non-lethal bombs used,
- Slogans of “Inquilab Zindabad,”
- Pamphlet “To Make the Deaf Hear,”
- Dutt sentenced to life; Singh executed later under Lahore Conspiracy Case.

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### Life of Batukeshwar Dutt

Born in 1910 in Burdwan; joined HSRA young; close ally of Bhagat Singh.

### Prison Struggles

- Jailed in multiple prisons, including Andamans,
- Participated in prolonged hunger strikes for political prisoner rights.

### After Release

- Freed in 1938; re-arrested during Quit India; jailed again for four years.
- Lived in Patna; given coal depot by government but economically unviable.
- Minimal state recognition: short-term nomination to Bihar Legislative Council.

### Illness & Death

- Developed bone cancer in mid-1960s; spent eight months at AIIMS.
- Died in 1965; cremated beside Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Sukhdev in Hussainiwala.

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### Neglect vs Recognition

- Despite a state funeral attended by national leaders,
- No portraits of Dutt or Bhagat Singh in Parliament,
- Minimal representation in school curricula and public memorials.

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### Documentation by Chaman Lal Azad

Compilation included:

- Rare letters, statements, photographs,

- Bhagat Singh's correspondence,
- Gandhi's letter to Dutt,
- Memories of fellow revolutionaries.

However, some translations remained unpublished due to copyright issues.

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### Key Themes

- Systematic neglect of many revolutionaries,
- Political biases shaping memorialisation,
- Importance of preserving archival records.

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### National Gopal Ratna Awards (NGRA) 2024–25

#### Why in News?

The Union Animal Husbandry Ministry declared the winners of NGRA. First prize for Best Dairy Farmer (indigenous breeds) awarded to Aravind Yashavant Patil from Kolhapur. A total of 2,081 applications were received; awards to be presented on November 26.

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#### Relevance:

##### GS3: Agriculture & Allied Sectors

- Dairy economy, indigenous breeds, breeding improvement

##### GS3: Rural Economy

- Role of cooperatives, SHGs, and FPOs

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#### Basics

Administered by the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying under the NPBBDD scheme.

Aims to promote:

- Indigenous bovine breeds,
- Scientific dairy management,
- Farmer-led conservation.

#### Award Categories

- Best Dairy Farmer (Indigenous breeds),
- Best AI Technician,

- Best Dairy Cooperative/SHG/Producer Company,
  - Best Dairy Entrepreneur.
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### Objectives

- Encourage rearing of native cattle and buffaloes,
  - Enhance genetics, purity, and productivity,
  - Reward good practices in feeding, health, milk hygiene,
  - Preserve local germplasm,
  - Strengthen rural livelihoods and nutrition.
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### Significance

India leads global milk output (>230 million tonnes).  
Indigenous breeds (Sahiwal, Gir, Murrah, etc.) offer:

- Disease resilience,
- Climate adaptability,
- Lower upkeep costs,
- Market demand for A2 milk.

NGRA promotes quality improvement and professionalisation in the dairy chain.

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### Recent Trends

- Growth of Rashtriya Gokul Mission, IVF, embryo transfer,
  - National Kamdhenu centres,
  - Increasing applications indicating rising adoption of scientific dairy methods.
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### Governance Angle

Supports Atmanirbhar Bharat by strengthening livestock-based rural income.  
Encourages women farmers, youth entrepreneurs, and cooperative growth.

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### Environmental Links

Indigenous breeds:

- Lower carbon footprint,
- Better suited for mixed farming and pastoral systems,

- Promote biodiversity.

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### Issues

- Lower yields than crossbreeds,
- Weak veterinary infrastructure,
- Fragmented conservation efforts,
- Need for fodder security, market access, and AI skill training.

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### Digital Labour Chowk, LCFCs & New Cess Portal

#### Why in News?

The Construction Workers' Federation of India (CWFI) criticised three digital initiatives launched by the Union Labour Ministry:

- Digital Labour Chowk portal & app,
- Labour Felicitation Centres (LCFCs),
- Online BOCW Cess Collection Portal.

They argue these measures weaken unions, empower employers, and distract from government failures in registering workers and distributing unspent welfare funds under the BOCW Act.

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#### Relevance:

##### GS2: Governance

- Labour law administration, digital welfare systems, de-unionisation debate

##### GS3: Economy

- Informal sector challenges, migrant labour issues, cess utilisation

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### Background: BOCW Act (1996)

Ensures construction workers receive:

- Registration,
- Safety,
- Welfare benefits funded by a 1% cess on construction projects.

State BOCW Boards manage funds and registrations.

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### New Digital Initiatives

### 1. Digital Labour Chowk

A digital hiring marketplace linking workers and contractors; tracks attendance and wages.

### 2. Labour Felicitation Centres (LCFCs)

Centres for onboarding, grievances, and digital literacy.

### 3. Online Cess Collection Portal

Simplifies cess payments, improves compliance and transparency.

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### CWFI Objections

- No union consultation—violates tripartite labour policy,
- Digital hiring weakens unions and bargaining power,
- Surveillance concerns regarding worker data,
- Digital divide prevents many workers from participating,
- Core welfare failures ignored:
  - low registration,
  - large unspent welfare corpus.

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### Detailed Criticisms

#### “Digital gates with locked vaults”

Tech upgrades meaningless if welfare funds remain undistributed.

#### Exclusion Risks

Smartphone/digital literacy prerequisites marginalise migrant labour.

#### Employer Dominance

Digital platforms may push wages lower by expanding employer control.

#### Transparency Issues

State-level cess funds often remain unused; digitisation may mask inefficiencies.

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### Government Rationale

- Digitisation improves efficiency and portability of benefits,
- Aids migrant tracking across States,
- Reduces corruption in cess collection,
- Builds a national labour database for Labour Codes.



## Structural Issues

- 5 crore construction workers in a highly informal, hazardous sector,
- Low registration and utilisation of funds,
- Labour Codes dilute earlier protections,
- New systems risk widening inequality.

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## UNESCO's Global Ethics Framework on Neurotechnology

### Why in News?

UNESCO released the world's first global ethical framework for neurotechnology on November 5, 2025, effective from November 12.

It aims to preserve mental autonomy, safeguard brain data, and prevent misuse of neurotech tools.

Simultaneously, a study on behavioural inheritance in *C. elegans* (eLife, Nov 11) raised concerns about neural data interpretation and future-generation ethics—aligning with UNESCO's principles.

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### Relevance:

#### GS2: International Relations

- Global standards, UNESCO's governance role, neurorights

#### GS3: Science & Technology

- Brain-computer interfaces, neurotech, AI, privacy risks

#### GS4: Ethics

- Autonomy, dignity, integrity of mental processes

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## What is Neurotechnology?

Tools that read, modify, or interact with the nervous system, including:

- AI-driven neuroimaging,
- Brain-computer interfaces (BCIs),
- Neural implants (e.g., Neuralink),
- Cognitive enhancement devices.

Public and private investment is rapidly increasing globally.

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## Why a Framework Was Needed

Neurotechnology can extract or influence:

- Emotions,
- Intentions,
- Preferences,
- Behaviour.

Risks include:

- Political microtargeting using neural responses,
- Insurance discrimination,
- Workplace neuro-screening,
- Covert behavioural manipulation.

Absence of global norms demanded an ethical architecture.

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### Pre-Framework Developments

- **OECD 2019:** standards for responsible innovation, licensing, IP sharing,
- **UNESCO 2022 Bioethics Report:** urged global governance,
- Rise of “neurorights”:
  - Chile: constitutional protection of mental integrity,
  - California: legal protection of brain data.

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### What UNESCO’s Framework Includes

#### Three-Part Structure

- Definitions,
- Ethical principles,
- Sector-specific guidelines (health, education, etc.),
- Protections for vulnerable groups.

#### Core Principles

#### Protection Principles

- Mental autonomy and thought freedom,
- Mental integrity,
- Privacy and neural data rights,
- Ban on manipulation,
- Non-discrimination and fairness,

- Proportionality and harm prevention.

### **Innovation Principles**

- Beneficence,
- Accountability and transparency,
- Trustworthiness,
- Epistemic justice,
- Sustainability and future-generation protection.

### **Explicit Prohibitions**

- Political targeting using brain signals,
- Insurance decisions using neural markers,
- Mandatory employer neuro-screening,
- Manipulative neurostimulation,
- Hidden extraction of brain data.

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### **Innovation & IP Framework**

Encourages:

- Responsible research,
- Ethics-by-design,
- Open science (shared data and tools).

Highlights tension between open science and private IP rights; warns against commodifying the human brain.

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### **Implementation**

Countries expected to incorporate standards into:

- Health regulations,
- Education norms,
- Data protection laws,
- Employment policies.

Companies must adopt:

- Ethics boards,
- Neurodata transparency,
- Audits,

- Voluntary ethical codes.

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## Conclusion

UNESCO's framework marks the first global ethical code governing neurotechnology. It protects mental freedoms, prohibits exploitative uses of neural data, promotes responsible innovation, and establishes human dignity as the foundation of emerging neurotechnology.

19<sup>th</sup> November 2025: Daily MCQs

**Q1. With reference to the demands raised by Ladakh groups before the Ministry of Home Affairs, consider the following statements:**

1. Ladakh currently enjoys Sixth Schedule protection similar to areas in the Northeast.
2. Ladakh has an elected Legislative Assembly that controls land and resource decisions.
3. A key demand of Ladakhi groups is constitutional protection for tribal land through Sixth Schedule inclusion.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 3 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 1 and 3 only

**Answer: B**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is incorrect:** Ladakh *does not* fall under the Sixth Schedule.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** Ladakh is a UT *without* a Legislative Assembly.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Ladakhi groups demand Sixth Schedule status to safeguard tribal land and culture.

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**Q2. Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls is controversial because:**

1. It places the primary documentation burden on voters instead of electoral officials.
2. It has clear legal backing under detailed rules framed under the Representation of the People Act, 1950.
3. It risks excluding internal migrants, women, and minorities from electoral lists.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1 and 3 only
- B. 1 only
- C. 2 only
- D. 1, 2 and 3

**Answer: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statement 1 is correct:** SIR requires citizens to resubmit documents → heavy burden.
- **Statement 2 is incorrect:** SIR has *no specific rules* or well-defined legal framework.
- **Statement 3 is correct:** Bihar's case showed large removals of migrants, women, minorities.

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**Q3. Which of the following reforms was introduced *after* the Mathura rape case protests and the 1979 Open Letter?**

- A. Mandatory FIR registration in all rape cases
- B. Creation of custodial rape as an aggravated offence
- C. Gender-neutral definition of sexual offences
- D. Death penalty for rape of minors below 12

**Answer: B**

**Explanation:**

- The **1983 Criminal Law Amendment**—passed in response to the Mathura case—  
→ Recognised **custodial rape** as a separate aggravated offence  
→ Shifted burden of proof.
- Options A, C, D belong to 2013, 2023, and 2018 reforms respectively.

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**Q4. With reference to UNESCO's Global Ethics Framework on Neurotechnology, which of the following is *explicitly prohibited*?**

1. Using neural signals to target political persuasion
2. Mandatory neural screening of workers by employers
3. Insurance companies using brain data for premium decisions
4. Open-science sharing of anonymised neurodata

Select the correct answer using the code below:

- A. 1, 2 and 3 only
- B. 1 and 3 only
- C. 1, 2, 3 and 4
- D. 2 and 4 only

**Answer: A**

**Explanation:**

- UNESCO bans:  
✓ Political micro-targeting using neural data



- ✓ Employer-mandated neuro-screening
- ✓ Insurance discrimination using brain signals
- **Open-science sharing** is *encouraged*, not prohibited → eliminates option 4.

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**Q5. In the context of construction workers and recent digital initiatives, which of the following concerns were raised by the Construction Workers' Federation of India (CWFI)?**

1. Digital platforms may weaken trade unions and collective bargaining.
2. Digital Labour Chowk excludes many workers due to the digital divide.
3. Online cess portal may hide the problem of unspent welfare funds.
4. BOCW Act mandates online registration of workers.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A. 1, 2 and 3 only
- B. 1 and 3 only
- C. 2, 3 and 4 only
- D. 1, 2, 3 and 4

**Answer: A**

**Explanation:**

- **Statements 1, 2, 3 are correct:** CWFI argues digital tools bypass unions, exclude digitally illiterate workers, and shift focus from unused welfare funds.
- **Statement 4 is incorrect:** The BOCW Act (1996) does *not* mandate online registration—it is a new initiative.

*Mains: The demand for Statehood and Sixth Schedule status in Ladakh reflects deeper concerns about democratic representation, tribal autonomy, and ecological vulnerability. Critically analyse the constitutional, administrative, and socio-cultural dimensions of Ladakh's demands. What options does the Centre have to ensure both national security and local self-governance?*