

**UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS paper 1 – Society – Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India & GS paper 3 – environment- climate change.**

**Building Social Bonds for Climate Action: Achieving Climate Targets Requires Strengthening Social Capital**

Social capital refers to the resources and benefits that individuals and groups can access through their social networks and relationships. It encompasses trust, shared norms, and cooperative behavior within a community.

**Social capital can be categorized into different forms:**

1. **Bonding Social Capital:** Involves connections and trust within close-knit groups, such as family and friends.
2. **Bridging Social Capital:** Relates to connections and cooperation between different social groups or communities.
3. **Linking Social Capital:** Involves connections with institutions, organizations, and authorities that can provide resources and support.

**Challenges in Tackling Climate Change in Diverse Indian Societies:**

1. **Cultural Diversity:** India is incredibly diverse in terms of languages, religions, and traditions. This diversity can make it challenging to create unified environmental policies that resonate with all communities.
2. **Economic Disparities:** Socio-economic disparities across regions and communities can impact the ability of certain groups to adopt sustainable practices or adapt to climate change.
3. **Limited Awareness:** In some communities, there might be a lack of awareness regarding the severity of climate change and the importance of sustainable practices.
4. **Infrastructure Variability:** Different regions in India have varying levels of infrastructure development, affecting their capacity to implement and benefit from environmentally friendly technologies.

**What Can Be Done:**

1. **Community Engagement:** Encourage community involvement and grassroots initiatives. Empower local leaders and influencers to promote environmentally friendly practices within their communities.
2. **Cultural Sensitivity:** Develop climate change policies that respect and integrate cultural values and practices. This increases the likelihood of acceptance and adoption by diverse communities.
3. **Education and Awareness:** Implement widespread educational campaigns to raise awareness about climate change, its impacts, and sustainable practices. This can be done through schools, community events, and media.
4. **Inclusive Policies:** Design policies that consider the diverse socio-economic conditions across different regions. Tailor solutions to meet the specific needs and challenges faced by various communities.

5. **Technology Transfer:** Facilitate the transfer of sustainable and eco-friendly technologies to different regions, considering the local context and resources available.
6. **Partnerships and Collaboration:** Foster collaboration between government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and local communities. This can enhance the overall social capital and collective effort toward climate resilience.
7. **Incentives for Sustainable Practices:** Provide incentives for adopting sustainable practices, especially in economically disadvantaged areas. This could include subsidies, tax benefits, or other forms of support.

By addressing these aspects, policymakers and community leaders can work towards building social capital and creating a more inclusive and effective approach to tackling climate change in diverse societies like India.

### UPSC Syllabus Topic: GS paper 1- Society – social empowerment & GS paper 2- polity- fundamental rights.

#### Reconsidering the Criminalization of Adultery

Adultery refers to a consensual sexual relationship between a married person and someone who is not their spouse. It is typically viewed as a violation of marital fidelity and can result in legal, social, and religious repercussions. In various societies and cultures, adultery is deemed a crime or a sin. In others, it may not be explicitly banned, but it is still regarded as morally objectionable.

#### Current Legal Status of Adultery in India:

Adultery was a criminal offense under Section 497 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) until September 2018. It was then decriminalized by the Supreme Court in a landmark judgment in the case of Joseph Shine v. Union of India.

**Supreme Court Ruling (2018):** The Supreme Court, led by Chief Justice Dipak Misra, removed adultery as a criminal offense in 2018. The ruling stated that adultery is a matter of personal privacy and should not be a criminal matter. The Court emphasized that criminalizing adultery infringes on personal freedoms and treats women as property. It should remain a civil issue (ground for divorce), not a criminal one.

#### Arguments in Favour of Criminalization:

1. **Protecting the Sanctity of Marriage:** Criminalising adultery in a gender-neutral manner is crucial for safeguarding the sanctity of marriage, which is considered sacred in Indian society and needs protection. This view is supported by the recent Parliamentary Committee, the Law Commission in its 42nd and 156th reports, and the Malimath Committee in 2003.
2. **Guardian of Moral Principles:** Criminal law everywhere in the world serves as a guardian of the moral principles of society, protecting a society's historical roots while leading it towards a progressive social order. If we start subjecting laws to our personal rationale, it will lead to chaos, as a counter-narrative would always exist.

#### Arguments Against Criminalization:

1. **Invasion of Privacy:** The 2018 Supreme Court ruling emphasized that criminalizing adultery intrudes on personal privacy, treating it as a matter between individuals, not the state.
2. **Treating Women as Property:** The Supreme Court noted that the adultery law (before 2018 SC ruling) treated women as their husbands' property, challenging the notion of gender equality.
3. **Marriage as a Personal Compact:** One of the Congress MPs argued that adultery should be a matter for civil law, not criminal law, as marriage is a personal agreement.
4. **Changing Social Norms:** Justice Indu Malhotra of the Supreme Court highlighted the need to

recognize individual autonomy in the private sphere, reflecting evolving social attitudes towards marriage and personal choices.

**Way Forward:**

Parliament has the authority to counteract judicial decisions, as seen in the Madras Bar Association versus Union of India (2021) case, provided it modifies the legal foundation of the judgment.

Therefore, Parliament could enact a gender-neutral adultery law, addressing the Supreme Court's issues regarding privacy and gender discrimination. This law should balance personal freedom with the societal importance of marriage. Consultation among legal professionals, the public, and legislators is key to creating a law that aligns with modern values and upholds individual liberties.

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