**Context**

Former IAS officer has been detained under the **Public Safety Act (PSA)**.

**What is Public Safety Act in Jammu and Kashmir**

- The act brought into 1978, primary to adopt a tough measure against timber smuggling in the state. It was much later that the act was frequently used to control militancy-related incidents. Under this act, government can declare any area as ‘protected’ and exercise authority to regulate entry of any citizen in the protected area.
- The ‘PSA’ gives J&K government the power to detain anyone who acts in any manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order.
- The PSA allows for administrative detention for up to **two years** “in the case of persons acting in any manner prejudicial to the security of the State”, and for administrative detention **up to one year** where “any person is acting in any manner prejudicial to the maintenance of public order”.
- Detention orders under PSA can be issued by Divisional Commissioners or District Magistrates.

**Criticism of PSA**

Human rights group are almost unanimous in their stand - PSA result wrongful detentions. Amnesty International has been aggressively churning out reports on number of people detained over the past. Many innocent people become prey to politician because this act gives power to the ruling party.

According to the rights activist, Jammu and Kashmir uses PSA to keep people they can’t convict through proper legal channels locked up and out of the way. On the other side PSA has been criticized for denying citizen the right to fair trial and justice.