LAW PREP Tutorial

www.lawpreptutorial.com

MOST IMPORTANT TOPICS OF

APRIL 2024

CLAT EXPRESS

MONTHLY **GK** MAGAZINE FOR **LAW ENTRANCES** BY LAW PREP TUTORIAL

PADMA AWARDS 2024



- Iran – Israel Conflict
- India allows FIIs to Invest in Green Bonds
- Patent (Amendment) Rules 2024
- Global Forest Watch Report

IMPORTANT TOPICS of APRIL 2024

CONTENTS

Polity & Constitution

1. Demand of 6th Schedule for Ladakh 03
2. Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004 14
3. Disaster Relief Funds From the Centre 21
4. Siachen: 40 years of Operation Meghdoot 30
5. Supreme Court Rejects Demand for 100% Verification of VVPAT Slips 39

International Relation

6. India abstains from voting in HRC resolution. 48
7. Katchatheevu Islands 56
8. Expanding the OCI card scheme. 62
9. Iran – Israel Conflict 69
10. UK – Rwanda Asylum and Immigration Plan 79
11. India Delivers Bhramos to Philippines 86

Economics

12. India allows FIIs to Invest in Green Bonds 90
13. US Priority Watch List 96

Science & Technology

14. Goi Application To International Seabed Authority 102
15. Patent (Amendment) Rules 2024 112
16. India TB Report 2024 120
17. Total Solar Eclipse 127
18. ISRO's 'Zero Orbital Debris' Milestone 132

Environment & Ecology

19. Forests as National Asset: Supreme Court 138
20. Global Forest Watch Report 143
21. Dubai & Mumbai Extremely Harsh Climate Situations 149

Culture

22. Padma Awards 2024 155

Sports

23. D Gukesh wins 2024 FIDE Candidates Chess Tournament 161

24. News in Short 167
25. Important Dates 173
26. Just in One-Line 175

LAW PREP Tutorial

S-20, Nandkishore Parikh Marg, Bapu Nagar
JAIPUR- 302015 (M) 72400 60099

©Law Prep Tutorial

All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system. Any unauthorised use of reproduction of these materials shall attract all applicable civil and criminal law remedies.

Important **Note** for the Readers

How to use the magazine

The magazine consists of topics that hold relevance and importance in relation to CLAT. Each topic has following parts:

1. **News:** This section ensures that the readers know what part of the topic has made it to the headlines of a newspaper
2. **Explained:** This section helps the reader to know the context of the topic. Explanation that will help the reader understand about the topic is the motive of this section of the magazine. Before cramming the facts and details about the topic it is essential that you understand the topic. A little detail has never hurt anybody.
3. **Way to marks:** This section of the topic is your gateway to marks that will help you fetch selection in the CLAT. You memorize the points in such a way that they are backed by the understanding of each, and every word written in this section. You can always investigate the internet or take help from teacher for the points you do not understand. Blind rote-learning of the points is not advisable for an unpredictable exam such as CLAT.
4. **Pepper it with:** This section contains those topics which are related to the main topic discussed throughout the page. A little information on the periphery helps you answer those questions that are not part of the daily news but have crawled into the exam paper to fetch you another mark. Topics that are on the side of the main news have often helped in gaining that last mark which eventually puts you into the final selection list of the CLAT.
5. **Practice Questions:** This section has a set of questions to help you gauge your understanding of the topic. You should try and solve the questions once you have thoroughly done the topic. On some days, start with the questions to test yourself for that one situation in the CLAT when you know nothing about the topic, but you will have to guess the answers. On a side note, some questions might come across to you as a surprise but then when has the CLAT main exam not thrown us off our seats!

Happy Learning!

@CLAT_Wallah_CW (CW)

MAP OF UT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR AND UT OF LADAKH



Demand of 6th schedule for Ladakh

Why in News?

In recent times, Ladakh has seen significant protests regarding statehood and preserving its identity in the constitution. Protesters are calling for Ladakh's statehood to be reinstated after it was made a Union territory without a legislature in 2019.

Explained:

In the year 2019 the government of India had declared that the state of Jammu and Kashmir will be losing its statehood and will be given a status of a Union Territory. This was done along with amendment to Article 370 which took away its special rights. As the state was converted to a Union territory the norm of election for state assembly and other elections were also not applicable for them.

As such the Area of Ladakh faced a difficulty that it is not having a representation of its own in its governance. The problems widen with the fact that Ladakh is a fragile area which has difficult terrain vulnerable to Climate change. Due to Central Government policies the area has stated facing many difficulties due to increased tourism like the issue of water scarcity , depletion of glaciers etc. Thus , the people of the area are protesting for depletion of Lakh and wants to make it a part of 6th schedule of the constitution which provides exceptional for freedom to the respected areas to make laws for themselves and has no or minimal interference of the central government.

Way to marks:

Mr. Sonam Wangchuk

- Sonam Wangchuk, an engineer and education reformer from Ladakh, seeks to bring autonomy to Ladakh and highlight the damage to Himalayan region's fragile ecology and glaciers by industrialisation.
- He is also demanding for statehood and Sixth Schedule implementation for Ladakh. The Sixth Schedule ensures land protection and autonomy for tribal areas.
- Following the repeal of Article 370 in August 2019 and the subsequent enactment of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, Ladakh has been recognised as a separate Union Territory "without legislature". UTs like New Delhi and Puducherry have their own Legislative Assemblies.
  - Article 239 to 241 in Part VIII of the Constitution deals with Union Territories.
  - The region had four representatives in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly in the erstwhile state of J&K.
  - Currently, Ladakh has a single Lok Sabha constituency.



Brief about Mr. Sonam Wangchuk

Born	1 September 1966 (age 57) Alchi, Jammu and Kashmir (now in Ladakh, India)
Education	B.Tech (Mechanical Engineering) DSA (Earthen Architecture)
Alma mater	National Institute of Technology, Srinagar Craterre, France
Occupation(s)	Engineer, educator
Organization	Students' Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh
Known for	Ice Stupa, SECMOL, Ladags Melong, Operation New Hope
Parents	Sonam Wangyal (father) Tsering Wangmo (mother)
Awards	Global Award for Sustainable Architecture (2017)[1] Fred M. Packard Award (2016)[2] Rolex Awards for Enterprise (2016)[3] Real Heroes Award (2008) Ashoka Fellowship for Social Entrepreneurship (2002)[4] Ramon Magsaysay Award (2018)[4]

About Sixth Schedule:

- **Article 244:** The Sixth Schedule under Article 244 provides for the formation of autonomous administrative divisions — Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) — that have some legislative, judicial, and administrative autonomy within a state.
- **Current Status** : The Sixth Schedule contains special provisions for the administration of tribal areas in the four north-eastern states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.
- **Autonomous Districts:** The tribal areas in these four states have been constituted as autonomous districts. The governor is empowered to organize and reorganize the autonomous districts.
- **District Council:** Each autonomous district has a district council consisting of 30 members, of whom four are nominated by the Governor and the remaining 26 are elected on the basis of adult franchise.
- **Powers of the Council:** The district and regional councils administer the areas under their jurisdiction.
    - They can make laws on certain specified matters like land, forests, canal water, shifting cultivation, village administration, the inheritance of property, marriage and divorce, social customs and so on. But all such laws require the assent of the Governor.
    - They can constitute village councils or courts for trial of suits and cases between the tribes. They hear appeals from them. The jurisdiction of the high court over these suits and cases is specified by the governor.

- The district council can establish, construct or manage primary schools, dispensaries, markets, ferries, fisheries, roads and so on in the district.
- They are empowered to assess and collect land revenue and to impose certain specified taxes



Source: Indian Express

Extra Shots - Pangong Tso Lake:

- Pangong Tso is a 135-km long landlocked lake located at an altitude of over 14,000 feet i.e., 4350 m above sea level.
- It is one of the highest altitude lakes in the world that is filled with saline water.
- The lake is characterized by **mountain spurs that protrude into the water, known as "fingers".**
- The **fingers of Pangong Tso are numbered from 1 to 8,** with Finger 1 being the closest to the eastern end of the lake and Finger 8 the farthest.

Inclusion under this Schedule would allow Ladakh to

— Create Autonomous District and Regional Councils (ADCs and ARCs) — elected bodies with the power to administrate tribal areas.

— This would include the power to make laws on subjects such as forest management, agriculture, administration of villages and towns, inheritance, marriage, divorce and social customs.

  - A majority of the population in Ladakh belongs to Scheduled Tribes.

Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation ACT, 2019

It was passed on August 5, 2019, dividing the state of Jammu and Kashmir into two parts: the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. The Act also repealed Article 370, which had granted Jammu and Kashmir unique status.

- The special status given to Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 was repealed by the central government.
  - According to the Article 370, the power of Parliament to legislate with respect to Jammu and Kashmir was restricted to defence, external affairs, communications, and central elections. However, the President could extend other central laws, with the concurrence of the state government.
- Key Features:
  - **Lieutenant Governor:** The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir will be administered by the President through an Administrator appointed by him known as the Lieutenant Governor.
  - The Union Territory of Ladakh will be administered by the President, through a Lieutenant Governor appointed by him.
  - The Bill provides for a Legislative Assembly for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir
  - The Assembly may make laws for any part of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir related to:
  - Any matters specified in the State List of the Constitution, except "Police" and "Public Order", and
  - Any matter in the Concurrent List is applicable to Union Territories.
  - Further, Parliament will have the power to make laws on any matter for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Environment concern of Ladakh

- Ladakh and the Himalayas form the 'third pole' of the world and are among its few frozen freshwater sources but unfortunately, the glaciers in Ladakh have been melting at an alarming rate.
- Increase in tourist activities and vehicular pollution has also affected negatively to the fragile ecology of Ladakh.
- Increase in the number of industries has also deteriorated the pristine nature of Ladakh.

Government initiatives in this regard:

- **The National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE)**

It is one of eight missions outlined in the National Climate Change Action Plan (NAPCC). NMSHE was launched in June 2010 and formally approved by the Union Government in 2014.

- The National Mission For Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE) attempts to address the following serious concerns:

- Conservation and protection of Himalayan biodiversity.
- Himalayan Glaciers and their Hydrological Implications.
- Conservation & protection of wildlife in the Himalayan region.
- Planning for the sustainability of the Himalayan Ecosystem.
- Traditional knowledge societies and their livelihood.

SECURE Himalaya Project:

- It is a part of "Global Partnership on Wildlife Conservation and Crime Prevention for Sustainable Development" (Global Wildlife Program) funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).
- It promotes sustainable management of alpine pastures and forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems.

Border issues in Ladakh:

India and China have the ongoing issues in Ladakh regarding the demarcation of boundary between the two that resulted in the Galwan clash.

- **Demarcation Line:** The Line of Actual Control (LAC) is the demarcation that separates Indian-controlled territory from Chinese-controlled territory.



About Ladakh

- Ladakh is also known as "the Land of Passes" is the largest in area among the regions viz., Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh with an area of 95,876 km2. The region is administered by India as a union territory.
- **Bordering regions:** It is bordered by the Chinese Tibet Autonomous Region to the east, the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh to the south, both the Indian union territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the Pakistan-administered Gilgit-Baltistan to the west, and the southwest corner of Xinjiang across the Karakoram Pass in the far north.

- The largest town in Ladakh is Leh, followed by Kargil. The Leh district contains the Indus, Shyok and Nubra river valleys. The Kargil district contains the Suru, Dras and Zanskar river valleys.
- Ladakh is the highest plateau in India with most of it being over 3,000 m (9,800 ft). It extends from the Himalayan to the Kunlun Ranges .
- **Lakes in Ladakh:** Pangong Tso and Tso Moriri.

Extra Shots - Administration of UTs

- *The two new UTs, Ladakh and J&K, officially came into existence on the 144th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (31st October 2019), who is credited for the merger of over 560 princely states into the Union of India.*
- ***Articles 239 to 241 in Part VIII** of the Constitution deal with the union territories.*
- *Every union territory is **administered by the President** acting through an administrator appointed by him.*
- *The President can specify the designation of an administrator; it may be Lieutenant Governor or Chief Commissioner or Administrator.*
- *The **Parliament can make laws on any subject of the three lists** (i.e. Union, State and Concurrent) for the union territories.*

Pepper it With

- Ice Stupa in Ladakh
- Galwan valley issue
- 8 Fingers of Pangong Tso

Scan the code to download the answer key of this month's magazine.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. What is Sonam Wangchuk, an engineer and education reformer from Ladakh, seeking?
   (a) To bring autonomy to Ladakh
   (b) To highlight the damage to Himalayan region's fragile ecology and glaciers by industrialisation
   (c) To demand for statehood and Sixth Schedule implementation for Ladakh
   (d) All of the above

2. What does the Sixth Schedule ensure for tribal areas?
   (a) Land protection
   (b) Autonomy
   (c) Both land protection and autonomy
   (d) None of the above

3. Following the repeal of Article 370, what status has been given to Ladakh?
   (a) A separate Union Territory with legislature
   (b) A separate Union Territory without legislature
   (c) A state
   (d) None of the above

4. How many representatives did the region of Ladakh have in the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir Assembly?
   (a) 2
   (b) 3
   (c) 4
   (d) 5

5. Which article of the Indian Constitution provides for the formation of Autonomous District Councils (ADCs)?
   (a) Article 244
   (b) Article 370
   (c) Article 239
   (d) Article 241

6. How many members are there in each District Council under the Sixth Schedule?
   (a) 20
   (b) 25
   (c) 30
   (d) 35

7. Which of the following subjects can the District Councils make laws on?
   (a) Land
   (b) Forests
   (c) Marriage and divorce
   (d) All of the above

8. Whose assent is required for the laws made by the District Councils?
   (a) Chief Minister of the state
   (b) Governor
   (c) President
   (d) Prime Minister

9. Which of the following powers do the District Councils have?
   (a) Assess and collect land revenue
   (b) Impose certain specified taxes
   (c) Establish primary schools, dispensaries, markets, etc.
   (d) All of the above

10. What was the purpose of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019?
    (a) To divide the state of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories
    (b) To amend Article 370
    (c) To grant statehood to Ladakh
    (d) Both (a) and (b)

11. Who administers the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir?
    (a) The President through a Lieutenant Governor (b) The Governor
    (c) The Chief Minister (d) The Prime Minister

12. Which of the following is a concern for the fragile ecology of Ladakh?
    (a) Melting of glaciers (b) Increase in tourist activities and vehicular pollution
    (c) Increase in the number of industries (d) All of the above

13. What is the objective of the National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE)?
    (a) Conservation and protection of Himalayan biodiversity
    (b) Himalayan Glaciers and their Hydrological Implications
    (c) Conservation & protection of wildlife in the Himalayan region
    (d) All of the above

14. Which organization funds the SECURE Himalaya Project?
    (a) World Bank
    (b) Global Environment Facility (GEF)
    (c) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
    (d) None of the above

15. What is the purpose of the SECURE Himalaya Project?
    (a) To promote sustainable management of alpine pastures
    (b) To promote sustainable management of forests in the high range Himalayan ecosystems
    (c) Both (a) and (b)
    (d) None of the above

16. What is the ongoing issue between India and China in Ladakh?
    (a) Demarcation of boundary (b) Water sharing
    (c) Trade disputes (d) None of the above

17. What is the Line of Actual Control (LAC)?
    (a) The demarcation that separates Indian-controlled territory from Chinese-controlled territory
    (b) The border between India and Pakistan
    (c) The border between India and Nepal
    (d) None of the above

18. Which is the largest town in Ladakh?
    (a) Kargil (b) Leh (c) Srinagar (d) Jammu

19. Which lake is located in Ladakh?
    (a) Pangong Tso (b) Tso Moriri (c) Both (a) and (b) (d) None of the above

20. What is the highest plateau in India?
    (a) Deccan Plateau (b) Ladakh (c) Shillong Plateau (d) Chota Nagpur Plateau

Dear Lpt'ians

We create most inventive, authentic and valuable material by putting in lot of time, effort, energy and money to make you successful and it would **not** be fair if someone else get it by any unfair mean.

And they will create competition for you without being the part of Law prep. To prevent this unfair activity, be vigilant and inform us if you find anybody copying (in any form) it or teaching from it.

Unauthorised copying or usage of **Law Prep** material is illegal and punishable by imprisonment and fine under section 63 of the Indian Copyright Act of 1957.

Feel free to be in touch for
suggestions/feedback/complaints/compliments, at: 94141 43101

Article 244

About Sixth Schedule

The Sixth Schedule under Article 244 provides for the formation of autonomous administrative divisions — Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) — that have some legislative, judicial, and administrative autonomy within a state.

Powers of the Council

They can make laws on certain specified matters like land, forests, canal water, shifting cultivation, village administration, the inheritance of property, marriage and divorce, social customs and so on. But all such laws require the assent of the Governor.

They can constitute village councils or courts for trial of suits and cases between the tribes. They hear appeals from them. The jurisdiction of the high court over these suits and cases is specified by the governor.

The district council can establish, construct or manage primary schools, dispensaries, markets, ferries, fisheries, roads and so on in the district.

Current Status : The Sixth Scheule contains special provisions for the administration of tribal areas in the four north-eastern states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram.

Ladakh

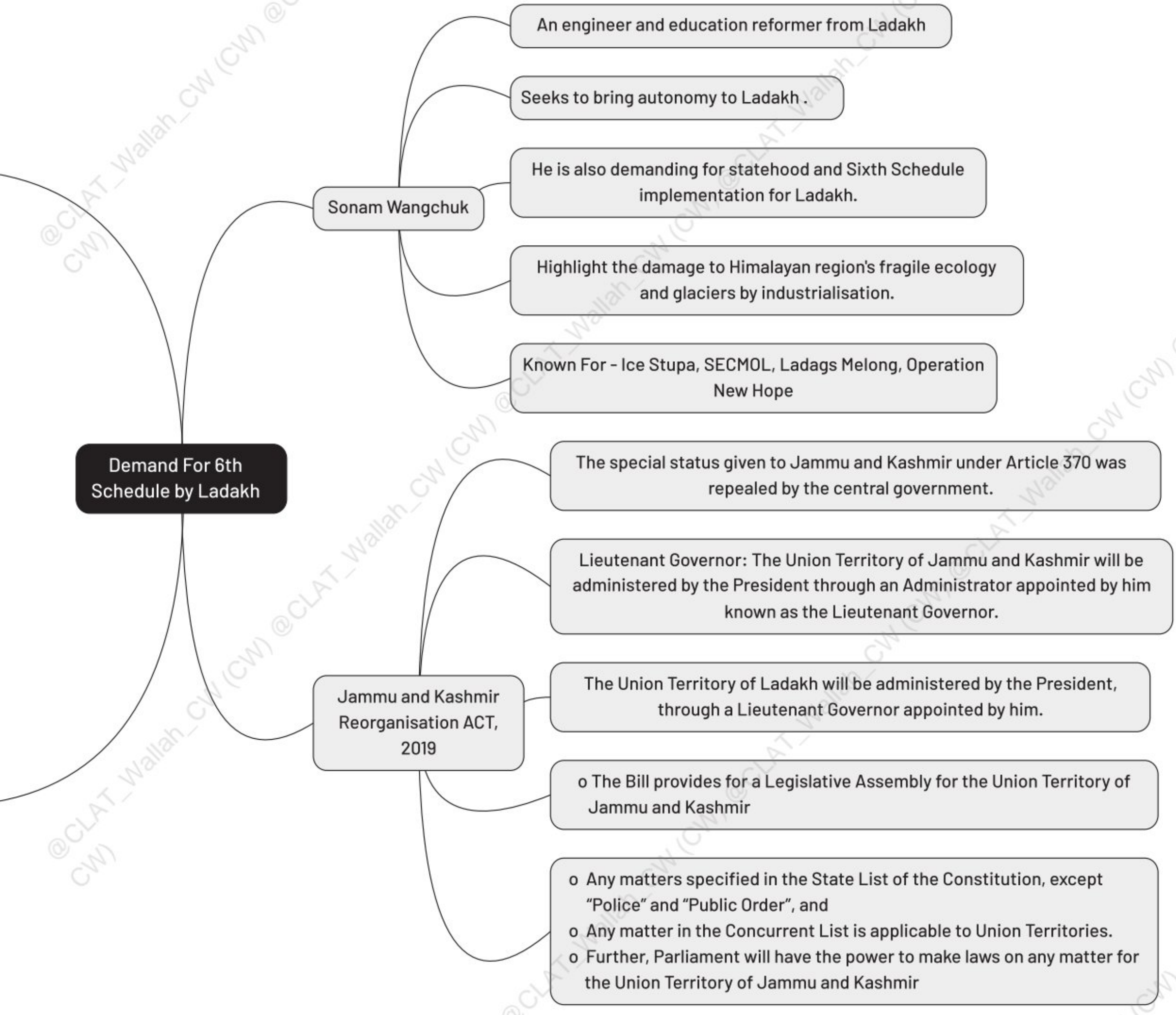
Ladakh is also known as “the Land of Passesfi is the largest in area among the regions viz., Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh with an area of 95,876 km^2.

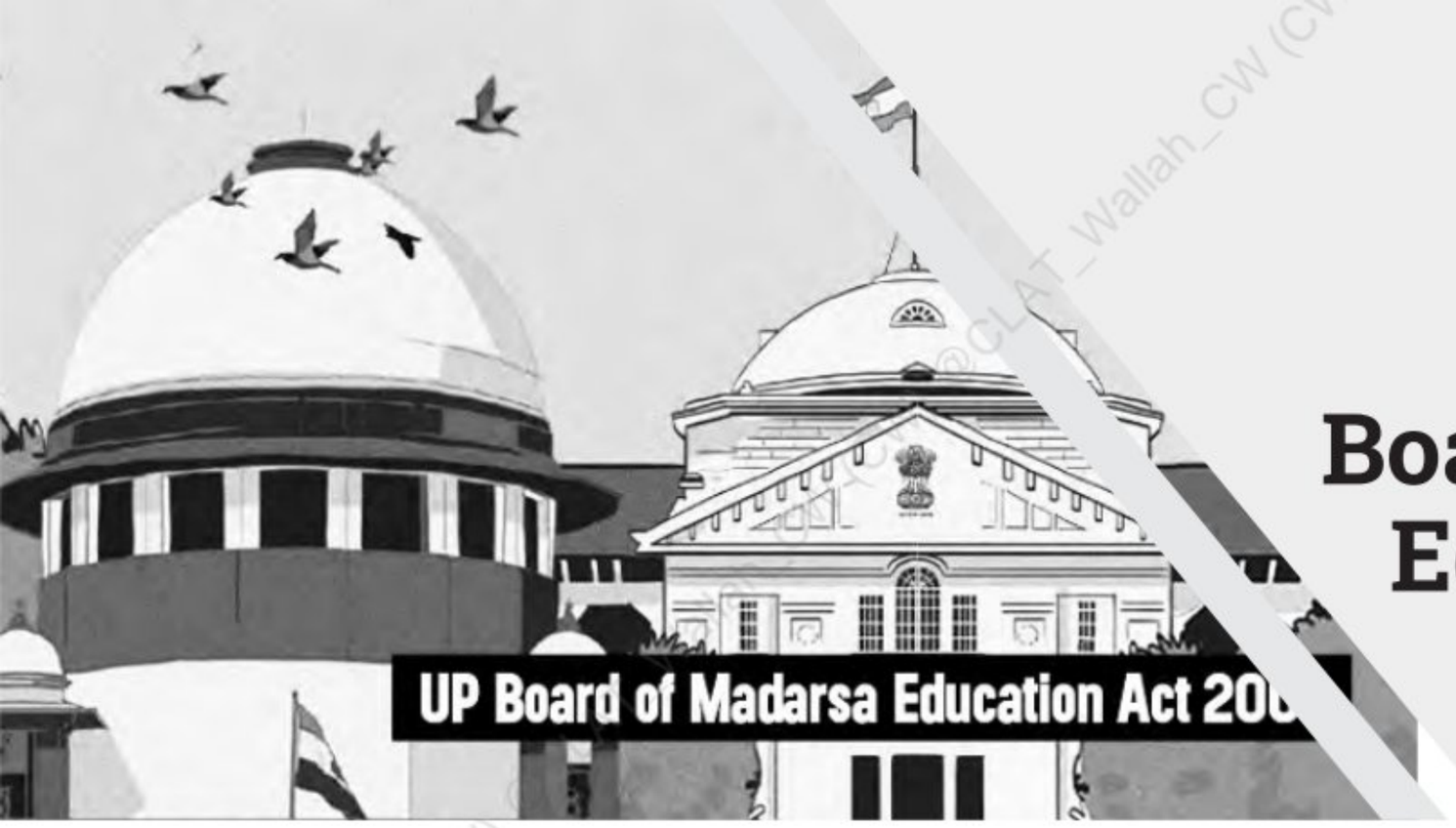
Bordering regions: It is bordered by the Chinese Tibet Autonomous Region to the east, the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh to the south, both the Indian union territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the Pakistan-administered Gilgit-Baltistan to the west, and the southwest corner of Xinjiang across the Karakoram Pass in the far north.

The largest town in Ladakh is Leh, followed by Kargil. The Leh district contains the Indus, Shyok and Nubra river valleys. The Kargil district contains the Suru, Dras and Zanskar river valleys.

Ladakh is the highest plateau in India with most of it being over 3,000 m (9,800 ft). It extends from the Himalayan to the Kunlun Ranges .

Lakes in Ladakh: Pangong Tso and Tso Moriri.


Demand For 6th Schedule by Ladakh
Sonam Wangchuk
An engineer and education reformer from Ladakh
Seeks to bring autonomy to Ladakh .
He is also demanding for statehood and Sixth Schedule implementation for Ladakh.
Highlight the damage to Himalayan region's fragile ecology and glaciers by industrialisation.
Known For - Ice Stupa, SECMOL, Ladags Melong, Operation New Hope
Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation ACT, 2019
The special status given to Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 was repealed by the central government.
Lieutenant Governor: The Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir will be administered by the President through an Administrator appointed by him known as the Lieutenant Governor.
The Union Territory of Ladakh will be administered by the President, through a Lieutenant Governor appointed by him.
o The Bill provides for a Legislative Assembly for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir
o Any matters specified in the State List of the Constitution, except "Police" and "Public Order", and
o Any matter in the Concurrent List is applicable to Union Territories.
o Further, Parliament will have the power to make laws on any matter for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir



Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004

Why in News?

The Supreme Court imposed an interim stay on an order of the Allahabad High Court that declared the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004, "unconstitutional" and violative of the principle of secularism.

Explained:

Madrasas are Islamic educational institutions that primarily focus on providing instruction in Islamic theology, religious studies, and Arabic language. These institutions have a long-standing tradition in the Indian subcontinent, catering to the educational needs of the Muslim community.

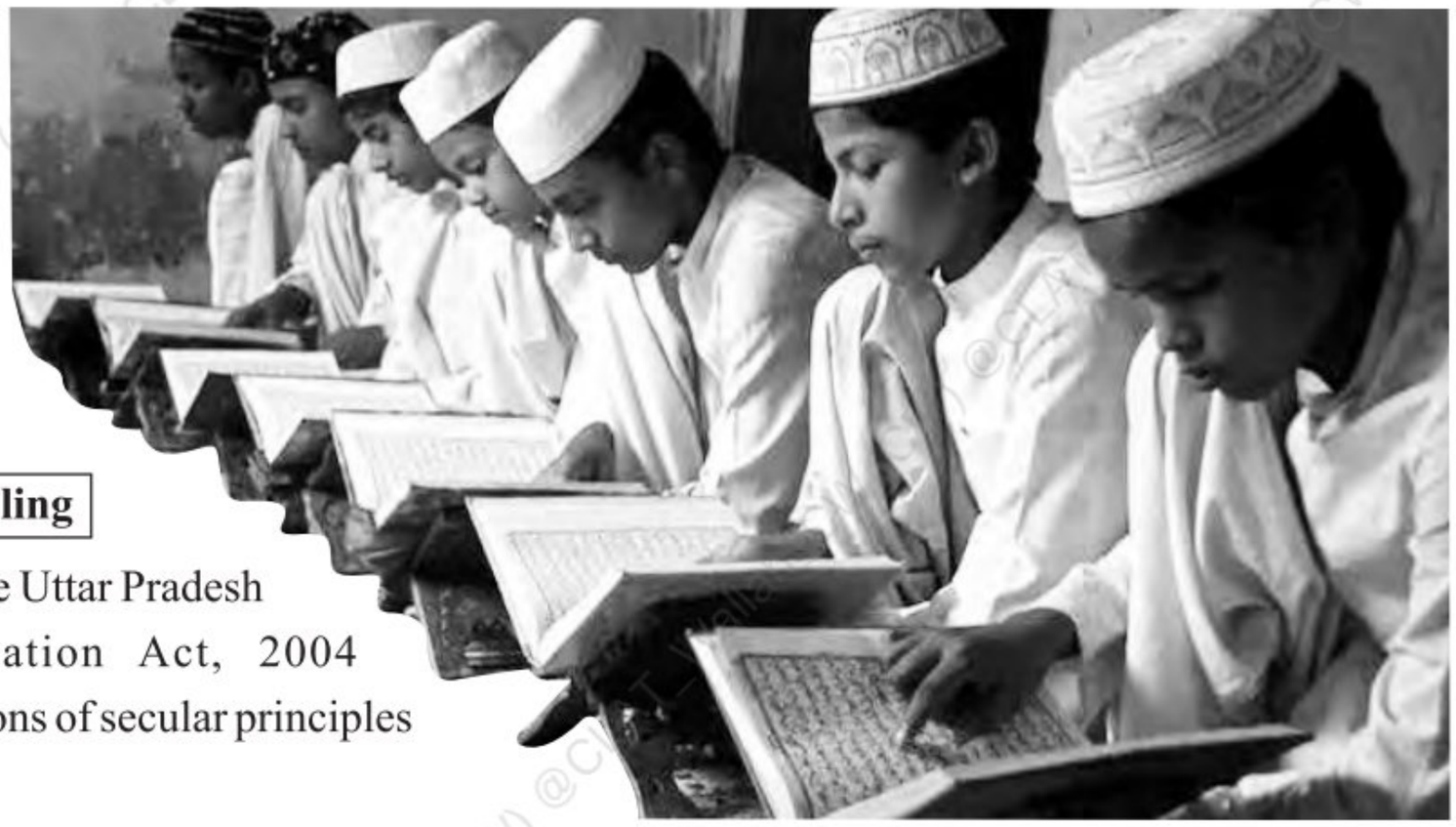
The issue revolves around the Allahabad High Court's ruling that declared the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004, as unconstitutional. This Act aimed to regulate and oversee the operations of madrasas in the state of Uttar Pradesh. It established the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education to supervise and administer the activities of these institutions.

The High Court found the Act to be in violation of the principles of secularism and fundamental rights enshrined in the Indian Constitution.. Additionally, concerns were raised regarding the madrasas' exclusion from the purview of the Right to Education Act, potentially denying students access to universal and quality school education. The curriculum's heavy emphasis on Islamic studies, with limited attention to modern subjects, was also scrutinized.

Furthermore,. The Supreme Court has now stayed the High Court's order and sought responses from the Centre and the Uttar Pradesh government on the matter, indicating its importance and the need for further deliberation.

Way to marks:

- A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud issued notices to the Centre, Uttar Pradesh government and others on the pleas against the high court order.
- The Allahabad High Court (HC) has struck down the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004, as unconstitutional.
- A division bench comprising Justice Vivek Chaudhary and Justice Subhash Vidyarthi of the Lucknow branch of the court declared the law ultra vires on a writ petition filed by a person named Anshuman Singh Rathore.
- The Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004, was enacted to oversee and regulate the operations of madrasas (Islamic educational institutions) within the state of Uttar Pradesh.
- This legislation set forth guidelines for the establishment, recognition, curriculum, and management of madrasas throughout Uttar Pradesh.



- The Act established the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education, tasked with the responsibility of supervising and administering the activities of madrasas across the state.

What was the High Court ruling

- The Allahabad HC declared the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004 unconstitutional due to violations of secular principles and fundamental rights.
    - The court said that Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004 is unconstitutional due to its promotion of educational segregation along religious lines, which is inconsistent with the principle of secularism enshrined in the Indian Constitution and fundamental rights.
    - The Act is also said to have breached the provisions of Article 21A of the Constitution. Additionally, concerns were raised about the exclusion of madrasas from the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009, potentially denying students access to universal and quality school education.
    - The curriculum of madrasas came under scrutiny, revealing a heavy focus on Islamic studies with limited attention to modern subjects.
- Furthermore, the Act was found to be in conflict with Section 22 of the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act, 1956.

S.No.	Provisions	Article
1.	Right of free and compulsory education	45
2.	Right to education	21A
3.	Education for women	15(1) (3)
4.	Promotion of education and economic interests of SC, ST and other weaker sections	46
5.	Religious education	25, 28(1)(2) (3)
6.	Education of minorities, protection of interests of minorities	29
7.	Right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions	30
8.	Instruction in mother-tongue at the primary stage	350-A
9.	Promotion of Hindi	351
10.	Education in union territories	239
11.	Fundamental duty to provide the opportunity for education	51(A)

Extra Shots

- *Minority institutions, as per Article 30 of the Constitution, have the fundamental right to establish and administer their educational institutions according to their choice. However, they are subject to state regulations.*
- *In the TMA Pai Foundation case (2002), the Supreme Court clarified that Article 30(1) is not absolute and must comply with the law.*
- *Under Section 2(c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jains, and Zoroastrians (Parsis) are recognized as minority communities.*
- *Article 15(5) of the Indian Constitution (93rd Amendment) allows the state to make special provisions for socially and educationally backward classes, Scheduled Castes, or Scheduled Tribes in educational institutions, including private ones (whether aided or unaided), except minority educational institutions.*

Dispute over Aligarh Muslim University's minority status:

- *In the Naresh Agarwal vs Union of India (2005) case, the Supreme Court (SC) has observed on the Aligarh Muslim University's (AMU) minority status that an educational institution does not lose its minority status merely on the ground that its administration is regulated by a statute.*
  - *The roots of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) can indeed be traced back to the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental (MOA) College, established by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in 1875.*

Key observations made until now:

- *Cour said that AMU does not Lose Minority Status if Regulated by Statute, emphasising Article 30 of the Constitution.*
- *A minority institution need not exclusively offer religious courses and can have a secular administration, admitting students from diverse communities.*

  Majority community in Administration does not affect the Minority Status. The presence of office-bearers from a majority community in some administrative wings of educational institutions does not necessarily dilute their minority character.

Secularism in India: Nurturing Diversity and Equality

- Secularism means the separation of religion from political, economic, social and cultural aspects of life, religion being treated as a purely personal matter.
- The term "Secular" means being "separate" from religion or having no religious basis.
- It is the principle of separation of government institutions and persons mandated to represent the state from religious institutions and religious dignitaries. Thus, religion should be separate from aspects of state and governance.
- With the 42nd Amendment Of the Constitution of India (1976), the Preamble to the Constitution asserted that India is a "secular" nation. Institutions started to recognize and accept all religions, enforce parliamentary laws instead of religious laws, and respect pluralism

- A secular person is one who does not owe his moral values to any religion. His values are the product of his rational and scientific thinking.
- In India, secularism means equal status to all religions. The Secular State is a state which guarantees individual and corporate freedom of religion, deals with the individual as a citizen irrespective of his religion, is not constitutionally connected to a particular religion nor does it seek either to promote or interfere with religion.

Minority Status in India: Religious and Linguistic Dimensions

- The term "Minority" is not defined in the Indian Constitution. However, the Constitution recognizes only religious and linguistic minorities.
- Section 2 (c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992 would be taken as Minority Communities.
- six communities namely:
- Muslims 14.2%
- Christians 2.3%
- Sikh 1.7%
- Buddhists 0.7%
- Jain 0.4%
- Zoroastrians (Parsis) .006%
- This order is according to Census 2011
- As per the Census 2011, the percentage of minorities in the country is about 19.3% of the total population of the country.

Pepper it With

- Minority rights in India
- Religious movements of Indian Society in India.



PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Which High Court struck down the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004?
   (a) Allahabad High Court
   (b) Delhi High Court
   (c) Bombay High Court
   (d) Calcutta High Court

2. Who filed the writ petition that led to the High Court's ruling?
   (a) Anshuman Singh Rathore
   (b) Uttar Pradesh government
   (c) Central government
   (d) A madrasa board

3. What was the primary purpose of the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004?
   (a) To regulate the operations of madrasas in Uttar Pradesh
   (b) To provide financial assistance to madrasas
   (c) To standardize the curriculum of madrasas
   (d) To promote Islamic education in the state

4. Which constitutional provision did the High Court cite as being breached by the Act?
   (a) Article 14 (b) Article 21A (c) Article 22 (d) Article 23

5. What was the High Court's primary concern regarding the Act?
   (a) It violated the principle of secularism
   (b) It infringed on the rights of minority educational institutions
   (c) It was inconsistent with the University Grants Commission Act
   (d) All of the above

6. Which of the following is NOT a recognized minority community under Section 2(c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992?
   (a) Muslims (b) Sikhs (c) Hindus (d) Buddhists

7. According to the 2011 Census, what is the approximate percentage of minorities in India?
   (a) 10% (b) 15% (c) 19.3% (d) 25%

8. Which Supreme Court case clarified that Article 30(1) of the Constitution, which grants rights to minority educational institutions, is not absolute?
   (a) Naresh Agarwal vs Union of India
   (b) TMA Pai Foundation case
   (c) Iravati Remedies vs Union of India
   (d) Ahmedabad St. Xavier's College vs Gujarat

9. What is the significance of Article 30 of the Indian Constitution?
   (a) It grants fundamental rights to minority educational institutions
   (b) It establishes the principle of secularism
   (c) It defines the term "minority"
   (d) It allows the state to regulate minority educational institutions

10. Which institution's minority status was addressed in the Naresh Agarwal vs Union of India case?
    (a) Aligarh Muslim University
    (b) Jamia Millia Islamia
    (c) Banaras Hindu University
    (d) Darul Uloom Deoband

11. What did the Supreme Court observe regarding Aligarh Muslim University's minority status?
    (a) It cannot be considered a minority institution
    (b) It loses its minority status if regulated by a statute
    (c) It does not lose its minority status merely because its administration is regulated by a statute
    (d) It needs to exclusively offer religious courses to retain its minority status

12. Which constitutional amendment asserted that India is a "secular" nation?
    (a) 40th Amendment (b) 42nd Amendment (c) 44th Amendment (d) 46th Amendment

13. What does the principle of secularism imply in the Indian context?
    (a) Complete separation of religion and state
    (b) Equal status to all religions
    (c) Promotion of a particular religion by the state
    (d) Prohibition of religious practices

14. According to the document, what is the meaning of the term "secular"?
    (a) Being separate from religion
    (b) Promoting a particular religion
    (c) Accepting all religions
    (d) Having a religious basis

15. Article 15(5) of the Indian Constitution (93rd Amendment) allows the state to make special provisions for which groups in educational institutions, except minority educational institutions?
    (a) Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes
    (b) Socially and educationally backward classes
    (c) Religious minorities
    (d) Both (a) and (b)

16. Which of the following was NOT a concern raised by the High Court regarding the curriculum of madrasas?
    (a) Heavy focus on Islamic studies
    (b) Limited attention to modern subjects
    (c) Exclusion of Sanskrit language
    (d) Exclusion from the Right to Education Act

17. The High Court found the Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act, 2004, to be in conflict with which other Act?
    (a) National Green Tribunal Act, 2010
    (b) University Grants Commission Act, 1956
    (c) National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992
    (d) Both (a) and (b)

18. What did the Supreme Court issue in response to the High Court's ruling?
    (a) A stay order
    (b) A notice to the Centre and Uttar Pradesh government
    (c) Both (a) and (b)
    (d) None of the above

19. Which Article of the Indian Constitution is related to the right to education?
    (a) Article 14 (b) Article 21A (c) Article 25 (d) Article 30

20. What is the correct sequence of minority communities in India based on their population percentage, according to the 2011 Census?
    (a) Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Zoroastrians
    (b) Sikhs, Muslims, Buddhists, Jains, Christians, Zoroastrians
    (c) Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Zoroastrians
    (d) Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Jains, Zoroastrians

Scan the code
to join our
Instagram Channel





Disaster Relief Funds From the Centre

Why in News?

Tamil Nadu Government has filed a suit at Supreme Court claiming that the Centre is withholding National Disaster Relief Funds (NDRF), after Cyclone Michaung and consequent Floods hit the State in Dec 2023.

Earlier, Karnataka Government had also filed a plea with Apex Court, claiming that the Centre is denying Disaster Relief Funds that are necessary to aid Drought-affected Areas in the State.

Explained:

The issue revolves around the denial of National Disaster Relief Funds (NDRF) by the Central government to states like Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, despite their requests for financial assistance in the aftermath of natural calamities like cyclones, floods, and droughts. This denial is being contested by these states, who have approached the Supreme Court, citing violations of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, and infringement of citizens' fundamental rights.

The states argue that the Centre's failure to provide timely relief funds has caused significant hardship to the affected populations and has violated provisions of the Disaster Management Act, which mandates the release of funds within a month. Additionally, they contend that the denial of assistance during crises violates the fundamental rights of citizens, including the right to life and equality. The Supreme Court's intervention has been sought to resolve this dispute between the states and the Centre and to ensure the immediate release of funds for disaster relief and rehabilitation efforts.

Way to marks:

The Issue

- **Denial of Disaster Relief Funds**
  - Tamil Nadu is urging for Allocation of about ₹37,000 Crore from NDRF Fund.
  - This covers around ₹19,692.69 crore for Destruction by Cyclone Michaung and another ₹18,214.52 for Rainfall of Never Experienced Intensity in Districts in the Southern Parts of India.
  - Karnataka's request for ₹18,171.44 Crore under NDRF for Drought Relief has been Pending for 6 months due to which a Crop of ₹35,162.05 crore has been damaged in the State.
- **Centre's Failure to Meet Obligations Under Disaster Management Laws**
  - Karnataka has also argued that the Centre has violated Disaster Management Act, 2005 and Not taking a decision on NDRF Assistance within a Month as mandated.
- **Violation of Fundamental Rights of Citizens**

- Karnataka argues the Centre's Inaction violates the Right to Life (Article 21) and Right to Equality (Article 14) of its Citizens by Not providing assistance during a crisis.

- **Centre exceeding its Authority**
  - Kerala has also accused the Centre of Interfering in its Net Borrowing Limits, pushing the State to a Financial Emergency.

- **Supreme Court Involvement**
  - Tamil Nadu has filed a suit under Article 131 of the Constitution, invoking the Supreme Court's Original Jurisdiction to Resolve Disputes between States and the Centre.
  - The state seeks a directive for the immediate release of funds and contends that the delay is causing hardship to the affected population.

Disaster Management Act, 2005

- Act defines Disaster as Any Significant Event, whether Natural or Man-Made, causing Substantial Loss of Life, Human Suffering, Property Damage or Environmental Degradation beyond Community's Coping Capacity.
- This Act established National Disaster Management Authority, along with State Disaster Management Authorities.
- States receive Assistance during Natural Disasters through various provisions established under Act of 2005.
- Funds for Disaster Relief are available to States from 2 Sources: State Disaster Relief Fund (SDRF) and National Disaster Relief Fund (NDRF).
  - These Funds were created with Enactment of Disaster Management Act, 2005 (DMA), following Tsunami of 2004.

National Disaster Relief Fund

- Established under Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005
- National Calamity Contingency Fund (11th Finance Commission) was renamed as National Disaster Response Fund.
- **Managed by:** Central Government
- **Purpose**: To meet Expenses for Emergency Response, Relief and Rehabilitation due to Any Threatening Disaster Situation or Disaster.
- It Supplements SDRF in case of a Disaster of a Severe Nature, provided Adequate Funds are Not Available in the SDRF.

Telegram-@CLAT_Wallah_CW

State Disaster Relief Fund

- Established under Section 48(1)(a) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005
- Based on Recommendations of 13th Finance Commission.
- Serves as the Primary Fund for State Governments to address Notified Disasters promptly.
- **Funded jointly by Central Government and State Governments in a ratio of 75:25 for General Category**

States/UTs and 90: 10 for Special Category States/UTs (North-Eastern and Himalayan States).

- States can also use up to 10% of the Funds for Local Disasters not included in the Notified List.

Fund Released to States

- **NDRF Funding:** Operational guidelines from Jan 2022 allocate funding for NDRF from 2021-22 to 2025-26.
- **Assistance Request:** States lacking Sufficient SDRF Funds for a National Calamity beyond their capacity can seek aid from the NDRF.
- **Evaluation Process:** MHA or Ministry of Agriculture assesses the situation, potentially forming an Inter-Ministerial Central Team (IMCT) to recommend Additional Funds.
- **Central Committee Review:** Sub-Committee of National Executive Committee determines available funding, leading to a high-level committee chaired by the Home Minister authorising NDRF releases.

Related Facts

SDRF Allocation includes both State Disaster Response Fund (80% of SDRMF) and State Disaster Mitigation Fund (20% of SDRMF), as recommended by 15th Finance Commission.

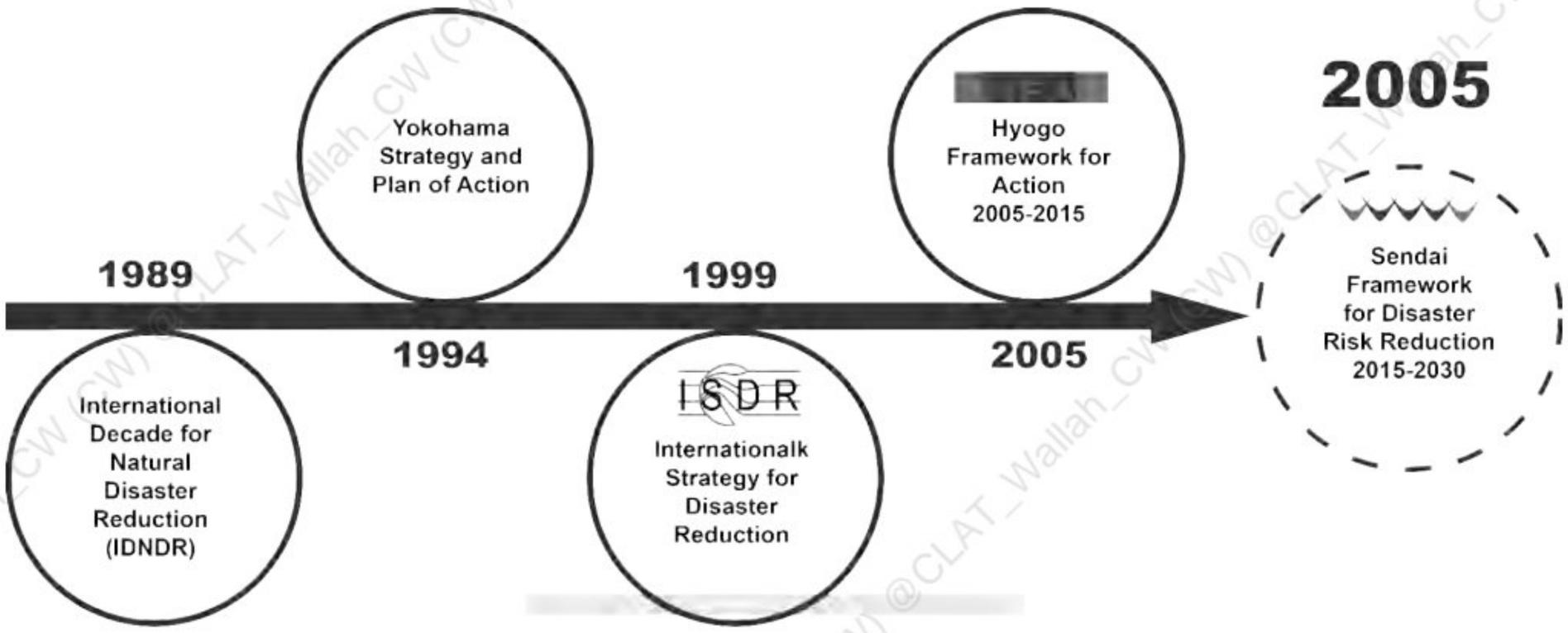
- 40%: Response and Relief Works.
- 30%: Recovery and Reconstruction Efforts.
- 10%: Preparedness and Capacity-building Initiatives.

Centre's Constitutional Responsibilities in Disaster Times

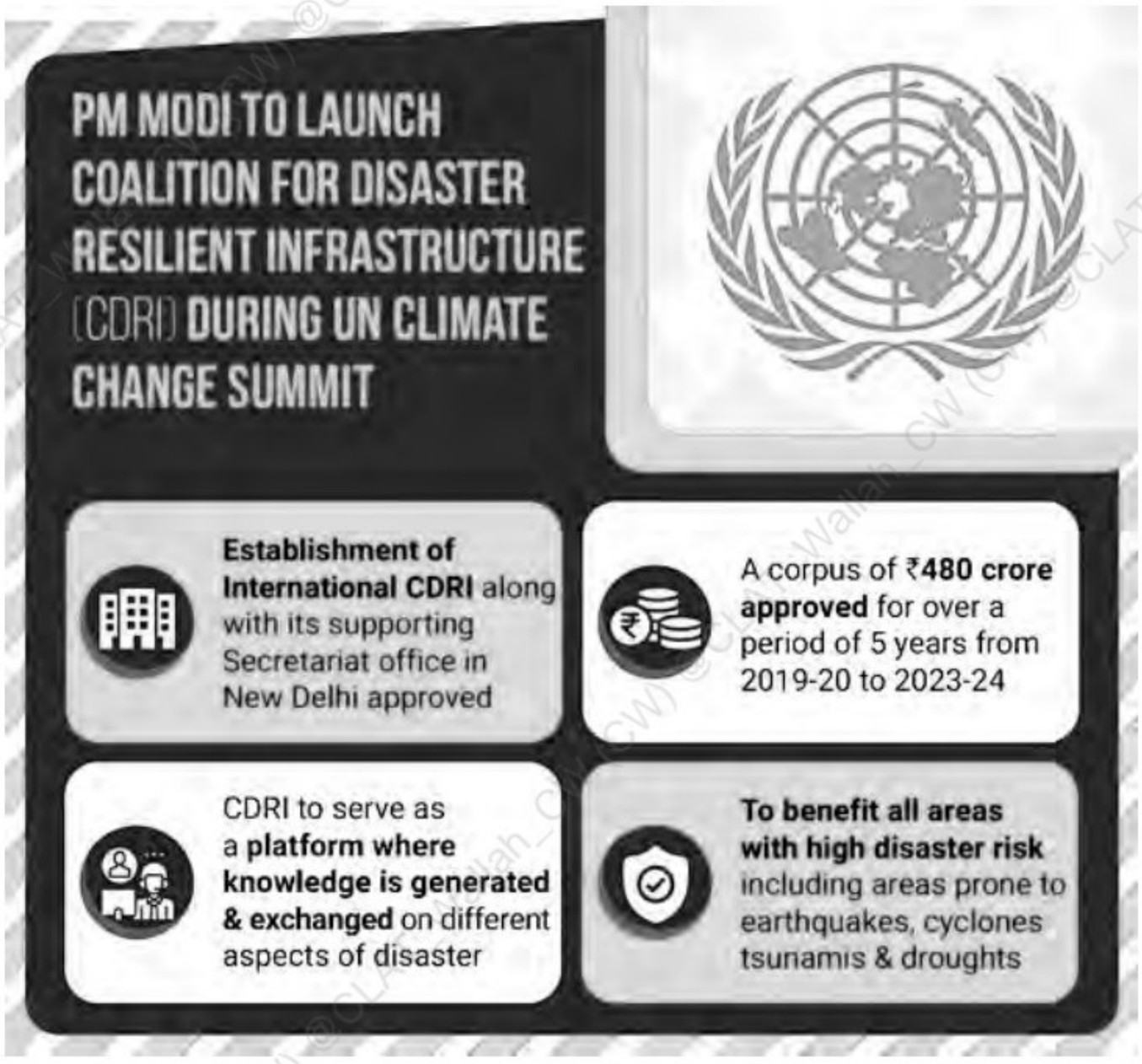
- Disaster Management is Not explicitly outlined in 7th Schedule of the Constitution.
  - It falls under Residuary Powers of Union Government as per Article 248 of the Constitution.
- Disaster Management Act, 2005 was enacted by Union Government by tracing its legislative competence to Concurrent List entry on "Social Security and Social Insurance; Employment and Unemployment."
  - Primary Responsibility for Disaster Management rests with the States.
  - The Centre plays a supportive role by providing financial assistance, technical expertise, and coordination between multiple states during disasters, as mandated by the Act
  - **Funding of the NDRF:** Funded through a National Calamity Contingent Duty levied on Pan Masala, Chewing Tobacco and Cigarettes and with Budgetary Provisions as and when needed.
  - A provision exists to encourage Any Person or Institution to make a contribution to the NDRF.

NDMA & SDMA

- NDMA stands for National Disaster Management Authority
  - Apex Body for Disaster Management in India
  - **Chairman:** Prime Minister
- SDMA stands for State Disaster Management Authorities
  - **Headed by:** Chief Ministers


1989
International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR)
1994
Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action
1999
ISDR
Internationalk Strategy for Disaster Reduction
2005
Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015
2005
Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030


SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE
A. Global disaster mortality
B. Number of affected people
C. Economic loss in relation to GDP
D. Damage to critical infrastructure and services disruption
SEVEN TARGETS TO ACHIEVE BY 2030
SENDAI FRAMEWORK
FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 2015-2030
E. Number of countries with national and local DRR strategies by 2020
F. International cooperation to developing countries
G. Availability and access to early warning systems and DRR information
SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE

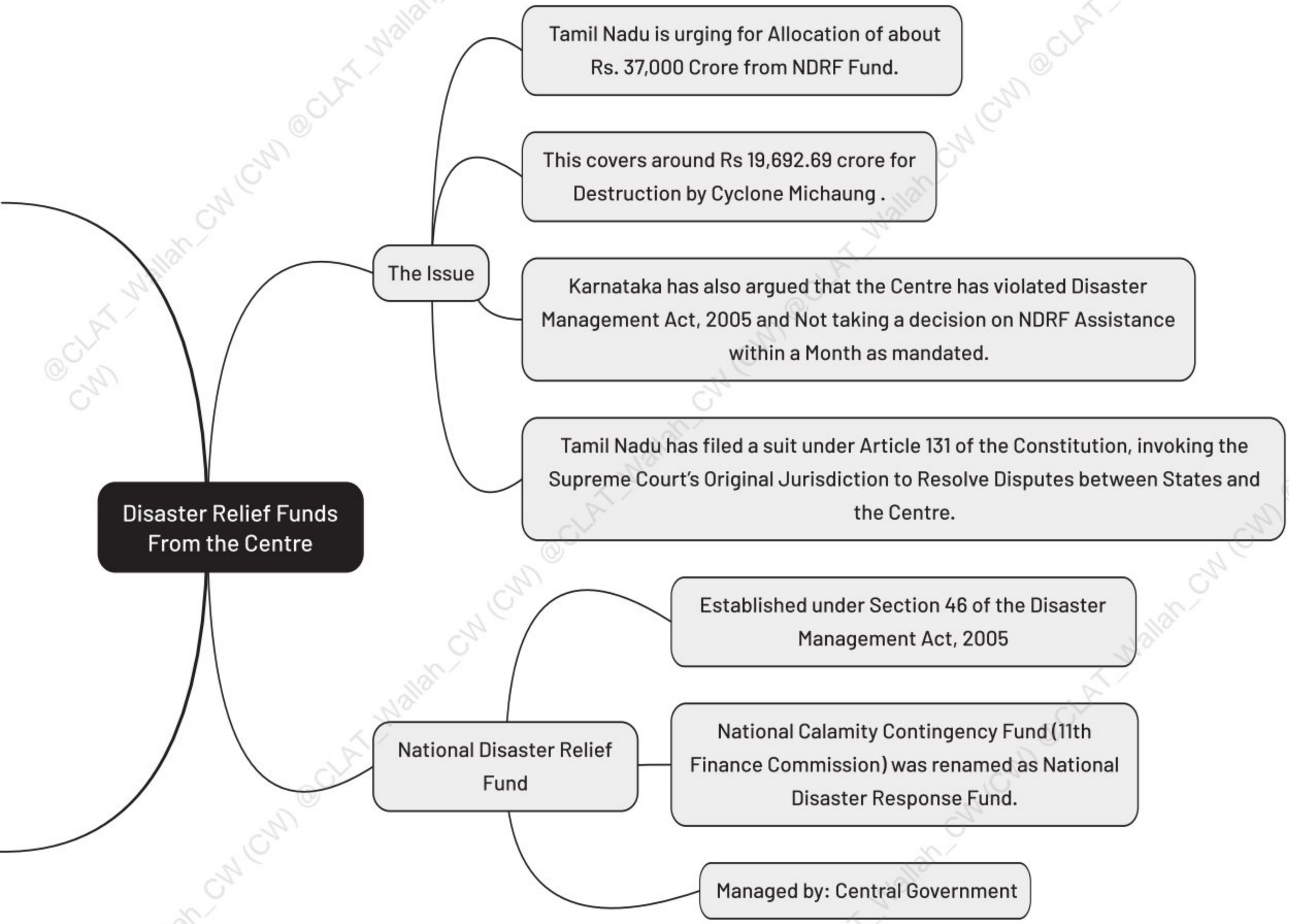




Pepper it With

- Other Notified Disasters in India, heatwaves and severe heatwaves in India.

- Disaster Management Act, 2005
  - This Act established National Disaster Management Authority, along with State Disaster Management Authorities.
  - States receive Assistance during Natural Disasters through various provisions established under Act of 2005.
  - Funds for Disaster Relief are available to States from 2 Sources: State Disaster Relief Fund (SDRF) and National Disaster Relief Fund (NDRF).
    - o These Funds were created with Enactment of Disaster Management Act, 2005 (DMA), following Tsunami of 2004.
- State Disaster Relief Fund
  - Established under Section 48(1)(a) of the Disaster Management Act, 2005
  - Based on Recommendations of 13th Finance Commission.
  - Serves as the Primary Fund for State Governments to address Notified Disasters promptly.
  - Funded jointly by Central Government and State Governments in a ratio of 75:25 for General Category States/UTs and 90:10 for Special Category States/UTs (North-Eastern and Himalayan States).
  - States can also use up to 10% of the Funds for Local Disasters not included in the Notified List.


Disaster Relief Funds From the Centre
The Issue
Tamil Nadu is urging for Allocation of about Rs. 37,000 Crore from NDRF Fund.
This covers around Rs 19,692.69 crore for Destruction by Cyclone Michaung .
Karnataka has also argued that the Centre has violated Disaster Management Act, 2005 and Not taking a decision on NDRF Assistance within a Month as mandated.
Tamil Nadu has filed a suit under Article 131 of the Constitution, invoking the Supreme Court's Original Jurisdiction to Resolve Disputes between States and the Centre.
National Disaster Relief Fund
Established under Section 46 of the Disaster Management Act, 2005
National Calamity Contingency Fund (11th Finance Commission) was renamed as National Disaster Response Fund.
Managed by: Central Government

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Which states have approached the Supreme Court regarding the denial of National Disaster Relief Funds (NDRF) by the Central government?
   (a) Tamil Nadu and Karnataka
   (b) Kerala and Andhra Pradesh
   (c) Maharashtra and Gujarat
   (d) Odisha and West Bengal

2. What is the primary reason cited by Tamil Nadu for seeking NDRF funds?
   (a) Cyclone Michaung and consequent floods
   (b) Drought conditions
   (c) Earthquake damages
   (d) Industrial accidents

3. How much NDRF funds has Tamil Nadu requested for the destruction caused by Cyclone Michaung?
   (a) ₹19,692.69 crore (b) ₹18,214.52 crore (c) ₹37,000 crore (d) ₹35,162.05 crore

4. What is the reason cited by Karnataka for seeking NDRF funds?
   (a) Floods (b) Cyclone (c) Drought (d) Earthquake

5. How much NDRF funds has Karnataka requested for drought relief?
   (a) ₹18,171.44 crore (b) ₹35,162.05 crore (c) ₹19,692.69 crore (d) ₹37,000 crore

6. According to Karnataka, what fundamental rights of citizens are being violated by the Centre's inaction?
   (a) Right to life and right to equality
   (b) Right to freedom of speech and expression
   (c) Right to education and right to work
   (d) Right to privacy and right to religion

7. Which state has accused the Centre of interfering in its net borrowing limits, pushing it to a financial emergency?
   (a) Tamil Nadu (b) Karnataka (c) Kerala (d) Andhra Pradesh

8. Under which article of the Constitution has Tamil Nadu filed a suit in the Supreme Court?
   (a) Article 131 (b) Article 142 (c) Article 32 (d) Article 226

9. What is the primary purpose of the National Disaster Relief Fund (NDRF)?
   (a) To meet expenses for emergency response, relief, and rehabilitation due to any threatening disaster situation or disaster
   (b) To provide funds for disaster prevention and mitigation measures
   (c) To finance the National Disaster Management Authority
   (d) To compensate individuals for losses incurred during disasters

10. Under which section of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 was the NDRF established?
    (a) Section 46 (b) Section 48 (c) Section 35 (d) Section 24

11. What was the name of the fund that was renamed as the National Disaster Response Fund?
    (a) National Calamity Contingency Fund
    (b) National Emergency Response Fund
    (c) National Disaster Management Fund
    (d) National Disaster Relief Fund

12. Which authority manages the NDRF?
    (a) National Disaster Management Authority
    (b) Central Government
    (c) State Governments
    (d) Ministry of Home Affairs

13. In case of a severe disaster, the NDRF can supplement which fund?
    (a) State Disaster Relief Fund (SDRF)
    (b) National Emergency Fund
    (c) Prime Minister's Relief Fund
    (d) Chief Minister's Relief Fund

14. Under which section of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 was the State Disaster Relief Fund (SDRF) established?
    (a) Section 46 (b) Section 48(1)(a) (c) Section 35 (d) Section 24

15. In what ratio is the SDRF funded by the Central Government and State Governments for general category states/UTs?
    (a) 75:25 (b) 90:10 (c) 50:50 (d) 60:40

16. What percentage of the SDRF funds can be used by states for local disasters not included in the notified list?
    (a) 5% (b) 10% (c) 15% (d) 20%

17. Which ministry assesses the situation and may form an Inter-Ministerial Central Team (IMCT) to recommend additional funds from the NDRF?
    (a) Ministry of Home Affairs
    (b) Ministry of Finance
    (c) Ministry of Agriculture
    (d) Both (a) and (c)

18. Who chairs the high-level committee that authorizes the release of funds from the NDRF?
    (a) Prime Minister (b) Home Minister (c) Finance Minister (d) Agriculture Minister

19. Under which entry of the Constitution's Concurrent List was the Disaster Management Act, 2005 enacted?
    (a) Social Security and Social Insurance; Employment and Unemployment
    (b) Public Order
    (c) Economic and Social Planning
    (d) Population Control and Family Planning

20. What is the source of funding for the NDRF?
    (a) National Calamity Contingent Duty levied on specific goods and budgetary provisions
    (b) Contributions from states
    (c) Foreign aid and grants
    (d) Corporate social responsibility funds



Siachen: 40 years of Operation Meghdoot

Why in News?

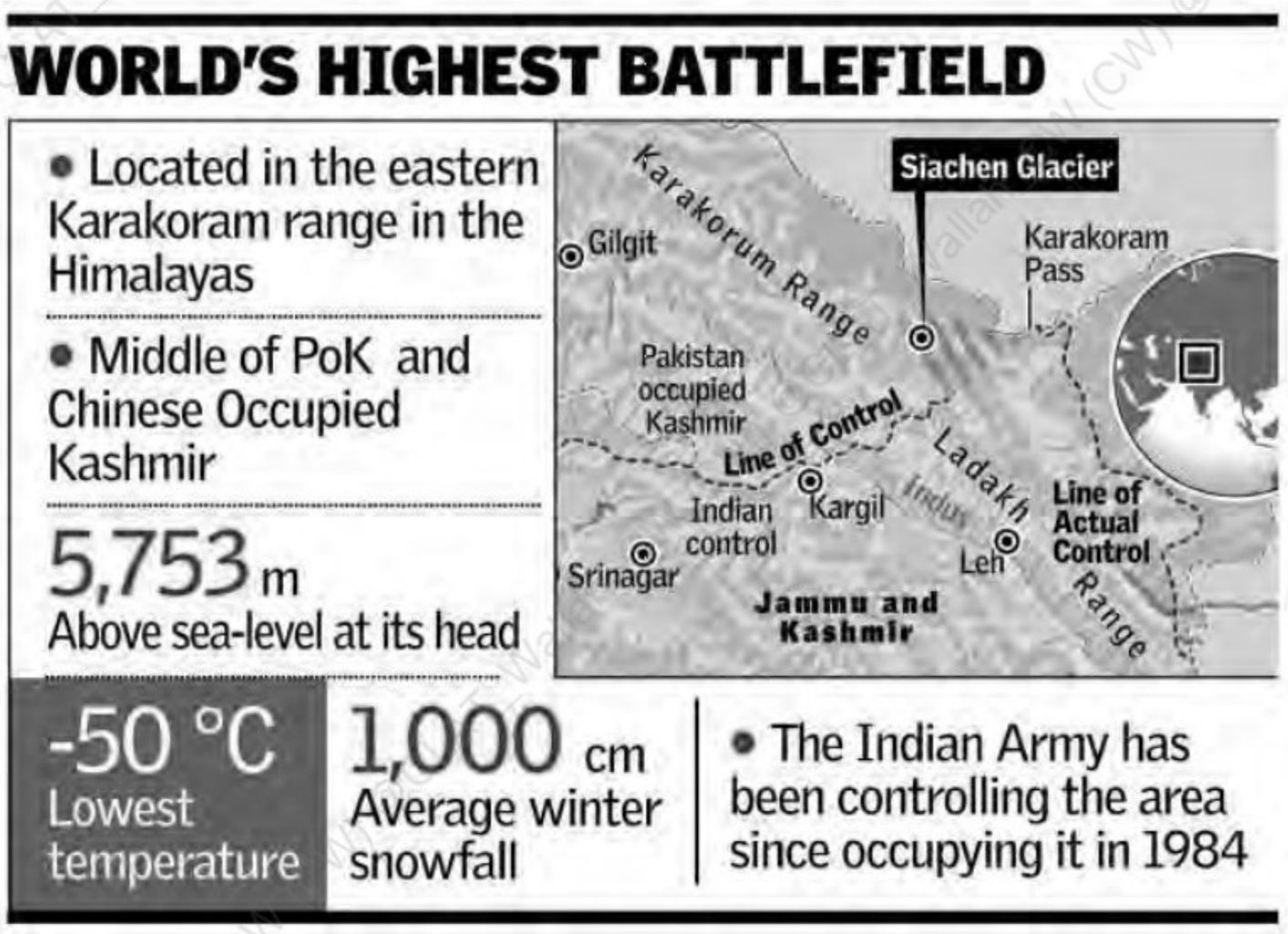
April 13, 2024, marks the 40th anniversary of Operation Meghdoot, which was launched by the Indian Army to pre-empt Pakistan and occupy the Siachen Glacier in the Karakoram ranges.

Explained:

Operation Meghdoot was a daring military operation launched by the Indian Army on April 13, 1984, to secure control over the strategically important Siachen Glacier in the Karakoram ranges. The operation aimed to pre-empt Pakistan's plans to occupy the glacier, which was located in an undemarcated region between the two countries.

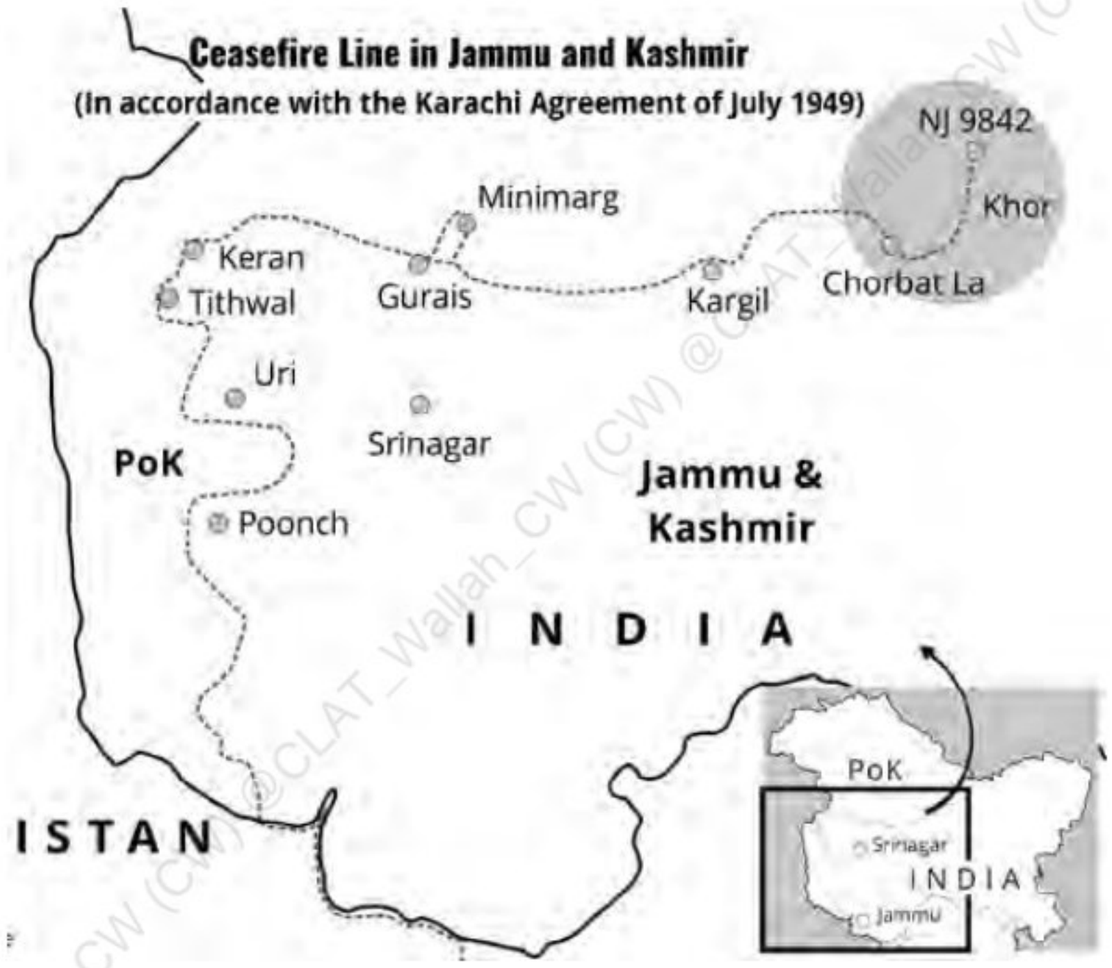
The Indian troops, led by Lieutenant General P.N. Hoon, braved extreme weather conditions and treacherous terrain to reach the glacier and establish India's presence. The operation was a resounding success, and India gained a crucial strategic advantage by securing control over the Siachen Glacier, which is known as the world's highest battleground. Operation Meghdoot demonstrated the Indian Army's resolve and capabilities in defending the nation's territorial integrity, even in the harshest of environments.

Way to marks:



Operation Meghdoot

- "Code Name" for "Indian Armed Forces Operation" to capture Siachen Glacier.
- Objective: Pre – empt Seizure of Sia La and Bilafond La passes by Pakistan Army.
- Siachen has been one of Contention between India and Pakistan ever since the "Karachi Agreement 1949", when Area was left Undivided due to "Hostile Terrain & Extremely Rough Weather".





Extraa Shots

- *In a boundary agreement in 1963, Pakistan ceded the Shaksgam Valley to China. The Shaksgam Valley or the Trans Karakoram Tract is part of the Hunza-Gilgit region of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and is a territory claimed by India but controlled by Pakistan.*
- *The agreement laid the foundation of the Karakoram highway, built jointly by China and Pakistan in the 1970s*

Simla Agreement was signed on July 2, 1972

A BLUEPRINT FOR PEACE





Signed between Indira Gandhi & Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in Simla after the 1971 Bangladesh war

It was more than a peace treaty; **laid the groundwork for good neighbourly relations** between India & Pakistan

Agreed to convert the ceasefire line of December 17, 1971 into the Line of Control (LoC) between the two nations although it was never put in writing

Large tract of Pakistan's land captured during the war by India was returned as goodwill gesture

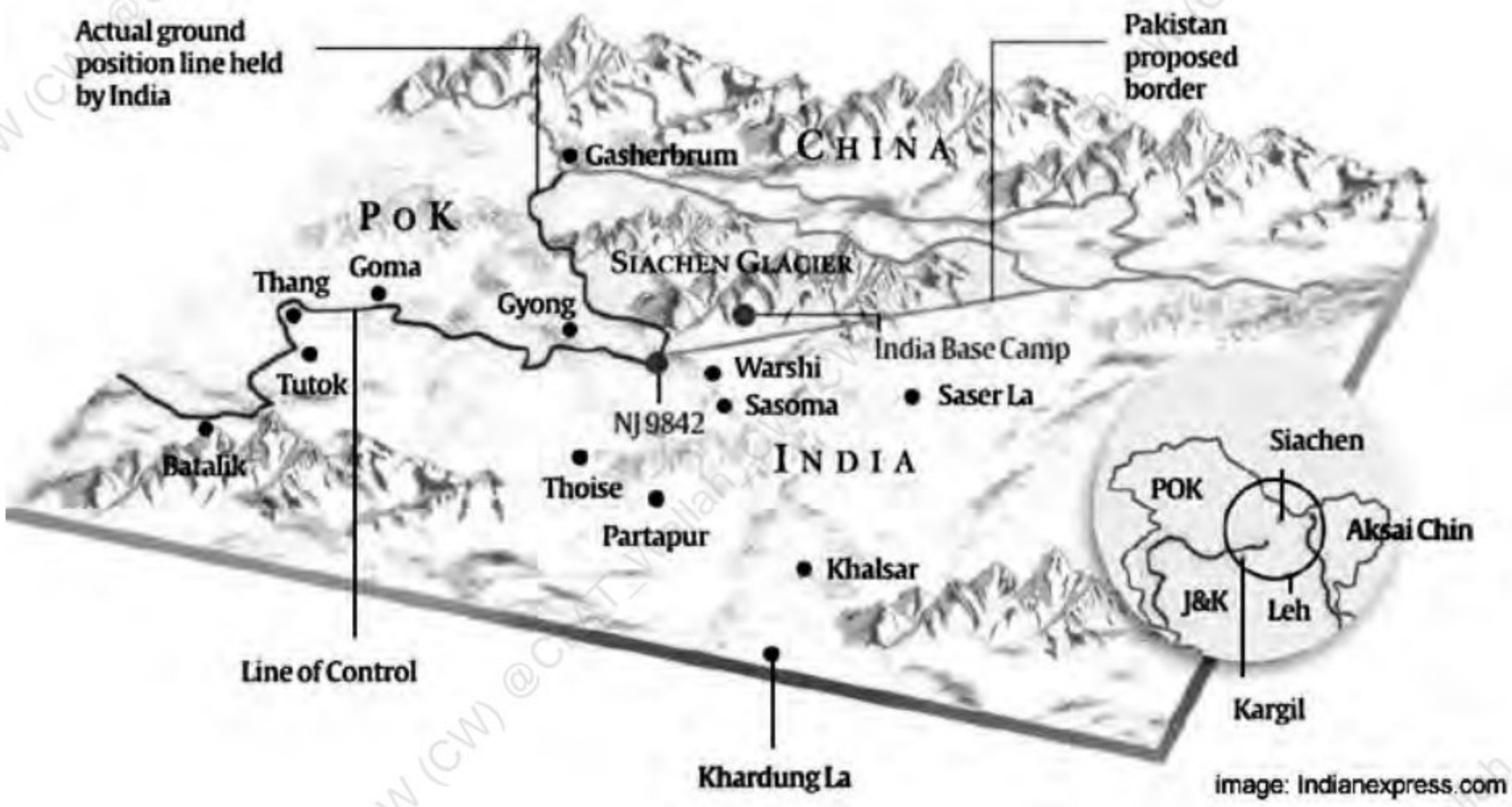


image: Indianexpress.com

- By 1984, Pakistan's Cartographic Aggression in the Uncharted Territory of Ladakh, Allowing Foreign Mountaineering Expeditions in Siachen, was becoming a Cause of Concern.
- Launched on 13 April 1984, this Military Operation was unique as the 1st Assault launched on World's Highest Battlefield.
- Operation involved Airlifting of Indian Army Soldiers by IAF and dropping them on Glacial Peaks.
- **Leadership:** Lieutenant General Manohar Lal Chibber, Lieutenant General PN Hoon, Major General Shiv Sharma.

Siachen Glacier

- ***Location:*** *Eastern Karakoram Range (Himalayas)*
- *Just North – East of Point NJ9842 where the Line of Control between India and Pakistan ends.*
- *Longest Glacier in Karakoram*
- *2nd Longest in World's Non – Polar Areas after Fedchenko Glacier in Tajikistan.*



Pepper it With

- Kargil War and Operation Vijay , Galvan Valley dispute.

Siachen: 40 years of Operation Meghdoot

By 1984, Pakistan's Cartographic Aggression in the Uncharted Territory of Ladakh, Allowing Foreign Mountaineering Expeditions in Siachen, was becoming a Cause of Concern.

- Launched on 13 April 1984, this Military Operation was unique as the 1st Assault launched on World's Highest Battlefield.
- Operation involved Airlifting of Indian Army Soldiers by IAF and dropping them on Glacial Peaks.
- Leadership: Lieutenant General Manohar Lal Chibber, Lieutenant General PN Hoon, Major General Shiv Sharma.

- "Code Name" for "Indian Armed Forces Operation" to capture Siachen Glacier.
- Objective: Pre – empt Seizure of Sia La and Bilafond La passes by Pakistan Army.
- Siachen has been one of Contention between India and Pakistan ever since the "Karachi Agreement 1949", when Area was left Undivided due to "Hostile Terrain & Extremely Rough Weather".

Siachen Glacier

- Location: Eastern Karakoram Range (Himalayas)
- Just North – East of Point NJ9842 where the Line of Control between India and Pakistan ends.
- Longest Glacier in Karakoram
- 2nd Longest in World's Non – Polar Areas after Fedchenko Glacier in Tajikistan.

Shaksgam Valley

- In a boundary agreement in 1963, Pakistan ceded the Shaksgam Valley to China.
- The Shaksgam Valley or the Trans Karakoram Tract is part of the Hunza-Gilgit region of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and is a territory claimed by India but controlled by Pakistan.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. What was the code name for the Indian Armed Forces operation to capture the Siachen Glacier?
   (a) Operation Meghdoot
   (b) Operation Vijay
   (c) Operation Cactus
   (d) Operation Parakram

2. What was the objective of Operation Meghdoot?
   (a) To pre-empt the seizure of Sia La and Bilafond La passes by Pakistan Army
   (b) To capture the entire Siachen Glacier region
   (c) To establish a military base in the Karakoram range
   (d) To counter Chinese aggression in the region

3. The Siachen Glacier has been a area of contention between India and Pakistan since which agreement?
   (a) Tashkent Agreement
   (b) Simla Agreement
   (c) Karachi Agreement 1949
   (d) Lahore Declaration

4. Why was the Siachen Glacier area left undivided in the Karachi Agreement 1949?
   (a) Due to hostile terrain and extremely rough weather
   (b) Due to disagreement over the territorial claims
   (c) Due to the presence of Chinese troops in the region
   (d) Due to the lack of resources for demarcation

5. What was the cause of concern for India that led to the launch of Operation Meghdoot?
   (a) Pakistan's cartographic aggression in the uncharted territory of Ladakh
   (b) Chinese incursions in the Siachen region
   (c) Threat of terrorism in the region
   (d) All of the above

6. What made Operation Meghdoot unique?
   (a) It was the first military operation launched by India in the Siachen region
   (b) It was the first assault launched on the world's highest battlefield
   (c) It involved the use of advanced military technology
   (d) It was a joint operation between India and Pakistan

7. How were Indian Army soldiers deployed during Operation Meghdoot?
   (a) They were airlifted and dropped on glacial peaks by the Indian Air Force
   (b) They trekked through the treacherous terrain
   (c) They were transported by helicopters
   (d) All of the above

8. Who led the Indian forces during Operation Meghdoot?
   (a) Lieutenant General Manohar Lal Chibber, Lieutenant General PN Hoon, Major General Shiv Sharma
   (b) General Bipin Rawat, Lieutenant General Devraj Anbu, Major General Akash Kaushik
   (c) General K.V. Krishna Rao, Lieutenant General P.K. Singh, Major General Rajat Sharma
   (d) General Dalbir Singh Suhag, Lieutenant General Ranbir Singh, Major General Satish Dua

9. Which of the following events is related to the Siachen Glacier conflict?
   (a) Kargil War (b) Operation Vijay
   (c) Galwan Valley dispute (d) Karachi Agreement 1949

10. What was the approximate altitude of the Siachen Glacier at its head?
   (a) 4,753 meters (b) 5,753 meters (c) 6,753 meters (d) 7,753 meters

11. What was the average winter snowfall in the Siachen Glacier region?
   (a) 500 cm (b) 800 cm (c) 1,000 cm (d) 1,200 cm

12. What was the lowest temperature recorded in the Siachen Glacier region?
   (a) -30°C (b) -40°C (c) -50°C (d) -60°C

13. Which of the following passes were controlled by India after Operation Meghdoot?
   (a) Sia La (b) Bilafond La (c) Gyong La (d) All of the above

14. Operation Megdoot Started on _____ .
   (a) 1st April 1984 (b)13th April 1984 (c) 3rd May 1984 (d) None of the above

15. Which agreement laid the groundwork for good neighborly relations between India and Pakistan after the 1971 Bangladesh war?
   (a) Tashkent Agreement (b) Simla Agreement (c) Karachi Agreement (d) Lahore Declaration

16. What was agreed upon in the Simla Agreement regarding the ceasefire line?
   (a) To convert it into the Line of Control (LoC) between India and Pakistan
   (b) To demilitarize the region
   (c) To establish a buffer zone
   (d) To involve the United Nations as a mediator

17. What was the goodwill gesture made by India after the Simla Agreement?
   (a) Returning a large tract of Pakistan's land captured during the war
   (b) Providing economic aid to Pakistan
   (c) Releasing Pakistani prisoners of war
   (d) Establishing diplomatic relations with Pakistan

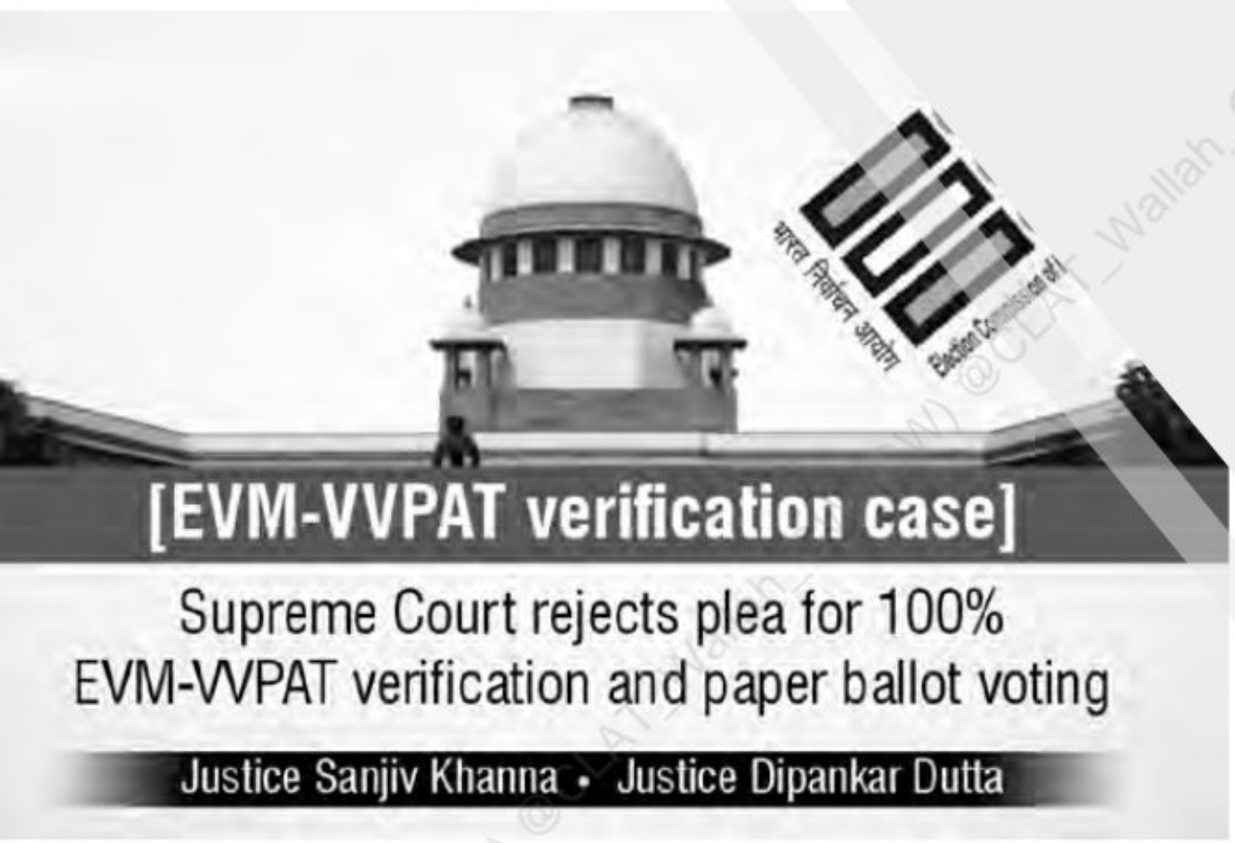
18. Which of the following is located in the eastern Karakoram range of the Himalayas?
    (a) Siachen Glacier (b) Kargil
    (c) Jammu and Kashmir (d) Gilgit

19. Since which year has the Indian Army been controlling the Siachen Glacier area?
    (a) 1982 (b) 1984 (c) 1986 (d) 1988

20. Which of the following regions is located in the middle of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and Chinese-occupied Kashmir?
    (a) Siachen Glacier (b) Kargil (c) Ladakh (d) Gilgit-Baltistan

For more exam related material, scan the code to join our Telegram Channel





April 2024
TOPIC in NEWS

Supreme Court Rejects Demand for 100% Verification of VVPAT Slips

Why in News?

The Supreme Court rejected the demand for 100% Voter Verified Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs) in Indian Elections.

Explained:

In a move to enhance transparency and bolster public trust in the electoral process, the Supreme Court addressed the issue of Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs) and the demand for a complete overhaul of the existing voting system. VVPAT stands for Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail. It is a device attached to Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) that prints a paper slip containing the voter's choice, allowing them to verify their vote before the slip drops into a sealed box. The Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) had filed a petition seeking 100% verification of VVPAT slips with the corresponding Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) data[currently only 5 VVPATs are checked in one constituency], the implementation of barcodes on VVPAT slips for efficient machine counting, and a reversion to the previous ballot paper system for conducting elections.

While rejecting the demands for complete VVPAT verification and a return to the ballot paper system, the Supreme Court issued guidelines for the Election Commission of India (ECI). These included storing symbol load units for 45 days after results and enabling candidates to obtain EVM certification by checking the burnt memory if they suspect tampering. The court also recommended exploring machine counting of VVPAT slips using barcodes for efficiency. Despite concerns raised by the petitioner and opposition parties, the existing EVM-VVPAT system was upheld, with the court suggesting improvements to strengthen the electoral process and address concerns about potential vulnerabilities.

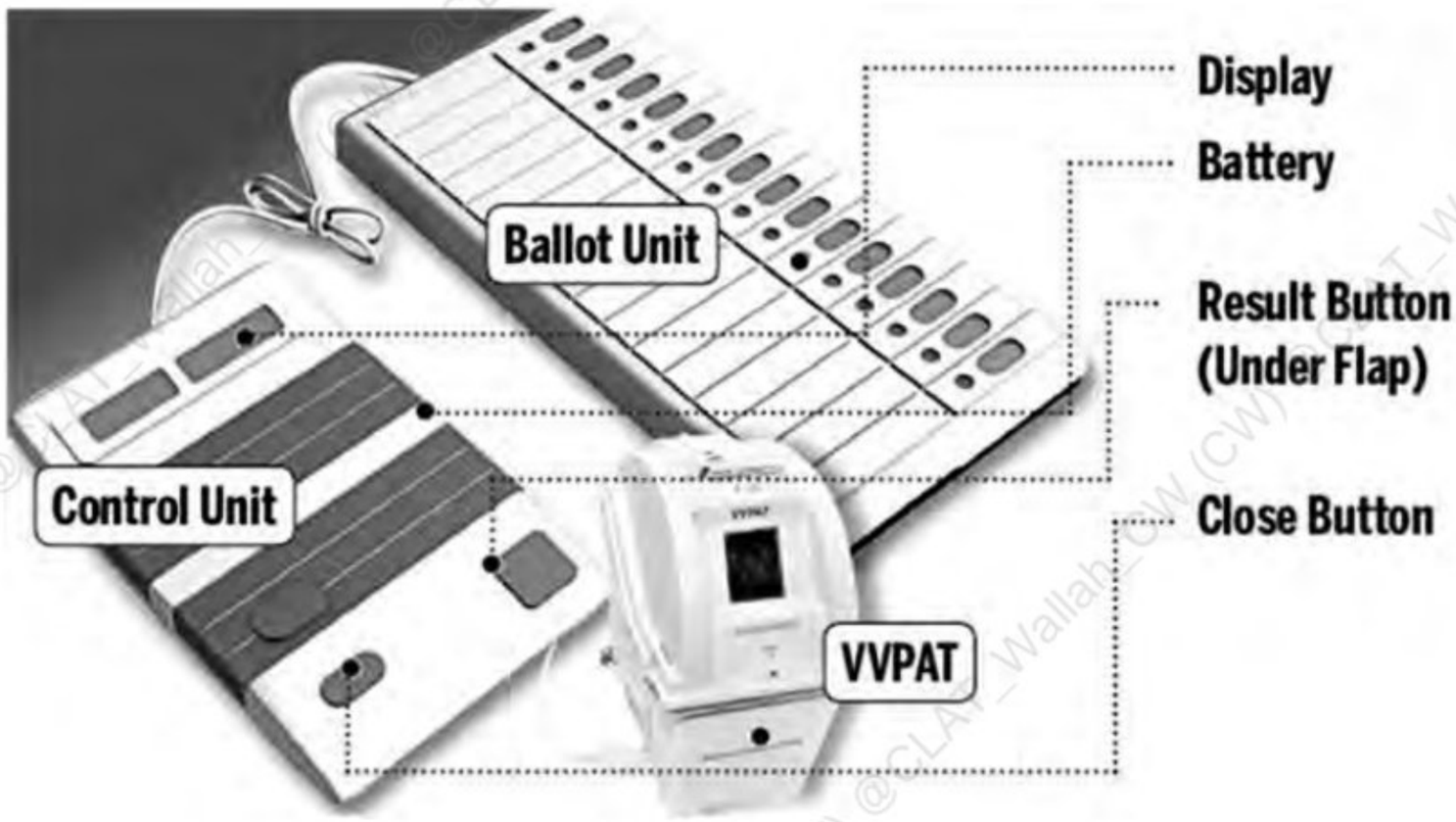
The Supreme Court also refused to revert to previous electoral system for elections - something opposition parties have demanded in recent years.

Way to marks:

The verdict was delivered by a bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta.

VVPAT – EVM Tally Case

- In 2023, ADR had filed a petition demanding the tally from Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) / Data on Votes Cast, should be Cross-Verified with the VVPATs.
- The petition demands 100% verification of VVPAT voting with EVMs.
- To speed up this process as much as possible, ADR suggested the use of barcodes on VVPAT cards.



SC Ruled in VVPAT – EVM Tally Case

- The SCs rejected the demand for 100% verification of VVPATs in Indian Elections and Return to Earlier Ballot Paper System for Elections.
- SC refused to hand over Paper Slips from VVPAT Units to Electors to take a leisurely look before inserting them into the Ballot Boxes.
- However, the SC issued 2 guidelines and recommendations to the ECI in this regard.
  - 1st Direction: ECI seals and stores symbol load units (SLUs) for 45 days after the results are reported.
  - 2nd Direction: Voters were enabled to obtain EVM certification.
- A team of engineers should check the Burnt Memory of the EVM Micro-Controller - after the announcement of the results - if the candidates (ranked 2nd and 3rd in the results) submit such a request after 7 days since the results have been reported.
- The fee for this certification has to be paid by the candidate and will be refunded if the EVM is found to have been tampered with.
  - **Recommendations for VVPAT:** ECI can ensure that VVPAT Slips can be counted by Counting Machine, not Humans. VVPAT Slips could have a Barcode Printed on them, making it easier for Machine Counting.

SLU

- *It is used to load candidates' symbol on VVPAT.*
- *Candidate-Setting takes place Anytime from 5 to 2 Days before Voting on Seat.*
- *After loading Symbols onto VVPAT, SLU is of No Relevance to Actual Voting Process.*
- *Once symbol-loading is completed, SLUs are handed over to concerned District Election Officer for safekeeping.*
- *They remain in Officer's Custody until the day after election.*

Voter Verified Paper Audit Trail

- The term "VVPAT" stands for "Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail".
- It is a separate system connected to EVMs, allowing voters to confirm that their votes are properly recorded.

- The main purpose of VVPAT is to increase trust in the voting process by enabling physical verification of electronically cast votes.
    - This provides reassurance to voters and political parties regarding the accuracy of the voting results.
- When a vote is cast, a slip is printed with the candidate's serial number, name, and symbol
    - This information is visible through a transparent window for seven seconds.
    - The printed slip is then automatically cut and placed into the sealed drop box of the VVPAT, which can only be accessed by polling officers.
- Currently, the "M3 Model" of EVMs is in use.

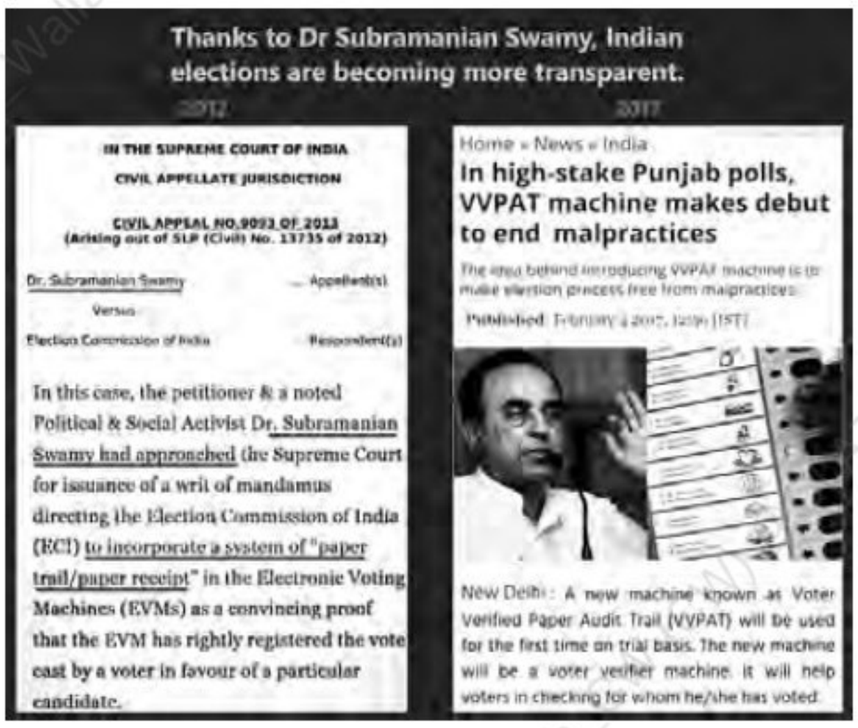


Introduction of VVPATs in India

- The idea of VVPAT Machine 1st came up in 2010.
- In 2011, field trials were conducted in Ladakh, Thiruvananthapuram, Cherapunji, East Delhi and Jaisalmer.
- The plan was approved in 2013 by the ECI's Expert Committee.
    - In 2013, Conduct of Elections Rules 1961 was amended to allow printers with drop boxes to be attached to the EVM.
- In 2013, it was implemented for the first time in Nagaland's Noksen Assembly Constituency.
    - As of June 2017, VVPATs had 100% Adoption.
    - 2019 Lok Sabha Elections became 1st General Election where 100% of EVMs have been linked to VVPATs.



Legal Issues related to VVPAT



- **Subramanian Swamy vs ECI (2013):** The SC ruled that the Paper Trail is necessary for free and fair elections, and directed the government to provide gunding for implementation of VVPAT.
- **Chandrababu Naidu Case (2019):** He moved the SC pleading for counting of at least 50% random VVPAT slips.
    - This will delay the election polling by 5 to 6 days, as it takes about an hour for the poll officials to match the VVPAT cards with the 1 EVM counts at polling booth, the ECI said
    - The EC also highlighted infrastructure challenges

including availability of staff as constraints to increasing the number of polling stations counting VVPATs.

- Opposition parties have argued that the sanctity of a fair election outweighs concerns about delayed results in the announcement of results.
- SC ordered counting of VVPATS at 5 polling stations instead of ECI.

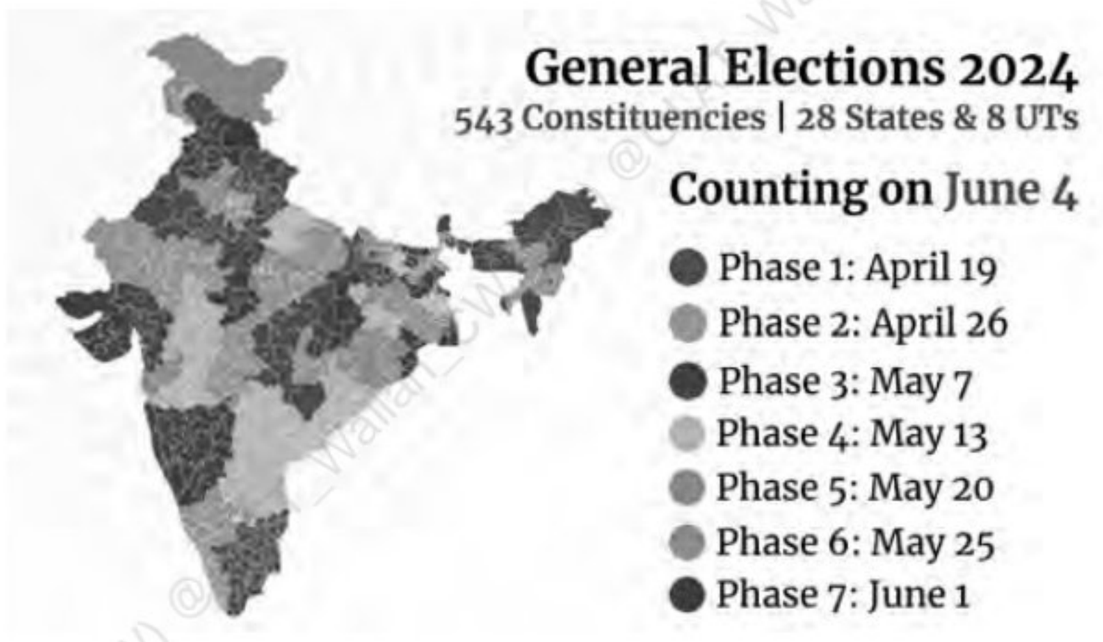
Electronic Voting Machine



- An Electronic Voting Machine, also known as EVM, is a device used for recording votes instead of traditional paper ballots and boxes.
- It was first introduced in the Paravur Assembly Constituency of Kerala in 1982 and gradually became the norm for all state elections and by-elections by 2003.
- The use of EVMs was further expanded to the 2004 Lok Sabha elections.
- The EVM was jointly developed by Bharat Electronics Ltd in Bangalore and Electronic Corporation of India Ltd in Hyderabad.
- It consists of two main parts: Control Unit, which is operated by the polling officer and Balloting Unit, located inside the voting booth.
- Typically, EVMs have a lifespan of about 15 years.

Important Facts related to ECI

- **CEC:** Rajiv Kumar (25th)
- **Other ECs:** Gyanesh Kumar, Sukhbir Singh Sandhu
- **1st CEC:** Sukumar Sen
- **1st Woman CEC:** VS Ramadevi
- Last CEC having Tenure of 6 years
  TN Seshan (1990-96)



What the new bill proposes

WHAT THE LAW IS RIGHT NOW

CEC, ECs are appointed by the PM and council of ministers, under the seal of the President.

WHAT DID SC SAY ON MARCH 2?

A bench headed by justice KM Joseph said ECs and CECs will be chosen by a panel comprising PM, LoP and CJI, till Parliament passes a law.



THE PLAN AHEAD

The government tabled the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Bill, 2023 that says:



- Search panel, led by the law minister with 2 secy as members, to shortlist five names.
- Selection committee – comprising PM, LoP and a Union cabinet minister – to review names and recommend appointments; the panel can also consider other names.
- President to ratify appointments.

"Functioning of ECI was and will remain impartial and transparent, and the govt is committed to ensuring that."
— Arjun Ram Meghwal, Union law minister

Key highlights of the Bill

- It replaces the **Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act 1991**.
- It outlines the **appointment, salary, and removal** of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs).
- The CEC and ECs will be **appointed by the President** based on a Selection Committee.
- **The Selection Committee** will consist of the Prime Minister, a Union Cabinet Minister, and the leader of the largest opposition party in Lok Sabha.
  - The Selection Committee's recommendations will be valid even when there is a vacancy in this Committee.
- **A Search Committee** headed by the Cabinet Secretary will propose a panel of names to the Selection Committee.
  - **Eligibility** for the posts includes holding (or having held) a post equivalent to the Secretary to the central government.
  - **The salary and conditions of service** for the CEC and ECs will be equivalent to that of the Cabinet Secretary.
- Under the 1991 Act, it was equivalent to the salary of a Supreme Court Judge.

Election Commission of India (ECI)

Established on ***January 25, 1950***
As a ***constitutional body***
Provided for under Article 324
In Part XV of the Indian constitution



- ***Article 324*** vests the power of superintendence, direction and control of all the
- ***elections to Parliament, State Legislative Assemblies*** and to the offices of ***President*** and ***Vice-President*** in the ***Election Commission of India.***

Composition

- As per ***Article 324*** it shall consist of the ***Chief Election Commissioner and such number of other Election Commissioners as the President may from time-to-time fix.***

After the ***Election Commissioner Amendment Act 1989,*** it has been made a ***multi-member body.***
At present, the commission consists of ***one Chief Election Commissioner*** and two ***Election Commissioners.***



Appointment and Service Conditions

Subject to the provisions of any Parliamentary law:

- The Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners are ***appointed by the President.***
- The ***conditions of service*** and ***tenure of office*** of the Election Commi ssioners ***is determined by the President*** by rule.

Fixed tenure of six years, or up to the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.
Status, salary and ***perks*** as available to ***Judges of the Supreme Court of India.***
The conditions of service ***shall not be varied*** to their disadvantage after the appointment.

Pepper it With

- NOTA and related laws in India , RPA act and criminals in Politics..

For more exam related videos and guidance, scan the code to join our YouTube Channel

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Who currently appoints the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs)?
   (a) The Prime Minister
   (b) The President
   (c) The Prime Minister Council of Ministers & LOP
   (d) The Parliament

2. What did the Supreme Court say on March 27 regarding the appointment of ECs and CECs?
   (a) They will be chosen by a panel comprising PM, LoP and CJI, till Parliament passes a law
   (b) They will be chosen by the President
   (c) They will be chosen by the Election Commission
   (d) They will be chosen by a search committee

3. According to the proposed bill, who will lead the search panel to shortlist five names for the CEC and ECs?
   (a) The Prime Minister
   (b) The law minister with two secretaries as members
   (c) The Chief Justice of India
   (d) The Leader of Opposition

4. What will be the role of the Selection Committee in the proposed bill?
   (a) Review the shortlisted names and recommend appointments
   (b) Appoint the CEC and ECs directly
   (c) Ratify the appointments to be made by the President
   (d) Both (a) and (c)

5. Who will ratify the appointments of the CEC and ECs according to the proposed bill?
   (a) The Prime Minister
   (b) The President
   (c) The Selection Committee
   (d) The Chief Justice of India

6. Which Act does the proposed bill replace?
   (a) The Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act 1991
   (b) The Representation of the People Act, 1950
   (c) The Constitution of India
   (d) The Election Commission Act, 1976

7. Who will be part of the Selection Committee according to the proposed bill?
   (a) The Prime Minister, the Union Cabinet Minister, and the Leader of the largest Opposition party in Lok Sabha
   (b) The Prime Minister, the Chief Justice of India, and the Leader of the largest Opposition party in Lok Sabha
   (c) The President, the Vice President, and the Chief Election Commissioner
   (d) The Prime Minister, the Union Law Minister, and the Chief Justice of India

8. What will be the validity of the Selection Committee's recommendations according to the proposed bill?
   (a) They will be valid only when there is no vacancy in the Committee
   (b) They will be valid even when there is a vacancy in the Committee
   (c) They will be valid only if the Prime Minister approves them
   (d) They will be valid only if the President approves them

9. Who will propose a panel of names to the Selection Committee according to the proposed bill?
   (a) The Chief Justice of India
   (b) The Union Law Minister
   (c) A Search Committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary
   (d) The Election Commission

10. What is the eligibility criteria for the posts of CEC and ECs according to the proposed bill?
   (a) Holding (or having held) a post equivalent to the Secretary to the central government
   (b) Being a retired Supreme Court judge
   (c) Having at least 20 years of experience in the field of elections
   (d) Being a member of a recognized political party

11. What will be the salary and conditions of service for the CEC and ECs according to the proposed bill?
   (a) Equivalent to that of the Chief Justice of India (b) Equivalent to that of the Cabinet Secretary
   (c) Equivalent to that of the Prime Minister (d) Equivalent to that of a Supreme Court Judge

12. Under the 1991 Act, what was the salary of the CEC and ECs equivalent to?
   (a) The Prime Minister (b) The Chief Justice of India
   (c) A Supreme Court Judge (d) The President of India

13. Who said: "Functioning of ECI was and will remain impartial and transparent, and the govt is committed to ensuring that"?
   (a) The Prime Minister (b) The Chief Justice of India
   (c) Arjun Ram Meghwal, Union Law Minister (d) The President of India

14. What did the Supreme Court bench headed by Justice KM Joseph say regarding the appointment of ECs and CECs?
   (a) They will be chosen by the Prime Minister
   (b) They will be chosen by the President
   (c) They will be chosen by a panel comprising PM, LoP and CJI, till Parliament passes a law
   (d) They will be chosen by the Election Commission

15. What is the name of the proposed bill mentioned in the image?
    (a) The Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (Appointment Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Bill, 2023
    (b) The Election Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2023
    (c) The Electoral Reforms Bill, 2023
    (d) The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2023

16. Salary of Election commissioner is equal to _____ .
    (a) Prime Minister
    (b) Cabinet Minister
    (c) Supreme Court Judge
    (d) None of the above

17. What is the current system for appointing the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs)?
    (a) They are appointed by the President
    (b) They are appointed by the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers along with LOP under the seal of the President
    (c) They are appointed by the Chief Justice of India
    (d) They are elected by the people

18. According to the proposed bill, how many members will the Search panel have?
    (a) Prime Minister
    (b) Cabinet Secretary
    (c) Home Minister
    (d) The information is not provided

19. Who will head the Search panel according to the proposed bill?
    (a) The Prime Minister
    (b) The Union Law Minister
    (c) The Cabinet Secretary
    (d) The Chief Justice of India

20. What is the purpose of introducing the proposed bill?
    (a) To replace the existing system of appointing the CEC and ECs
    (b) To increase the salary of the CEC and ECs
    (c) To change the eligibility criteria for the posts of CEC and ECs
    (d) Both (a) and (c)



India Abstains From Voting in HRC Resolution

Why in News?

Recently, India abstained on a resolution at the Human Rights Council that called upon Israel for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, and the states to implement an arms embargo, which was adopted by the 47-member Council.

Explained:

The issue revolves around India's abstention on a resolution at the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) concerning the Israel-Palestine conflict. While India supported three resolutions critical of Israel's actions, it abstained from one that called for an immediate ceasefire and arms embargo against Israel over the Gaza situation.

India's stance reflects a delicate balancing act, acknowledging Palestinian rights and criticizing Israeli occupation, while simultaneously maintaining strategic ties with Israel. By abstaining on the resolution demanding an arms embargo, India avoided directly confronting Israel, a crucial ally. However, India's support for the other resolutions underscores its commitment to upholding human rights and promoting a just resolution to the long-standing conflict. This nuanced approach highlights India's attempt to navigate the complex geopolitical landscape while advocating for peace and justice.

> ***Extra Shots***
>
> *The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is the collective voice of the muslim world, headquartered in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. It is the second largest organization after the United Nations with a membership of 57 states spread over four continents.*

Way to marks:

- India voted in favour of three other resolutions that criticised Israel for human rights violations against Palestinians, Israel's occupation of Syrian Golan, and called for the Palestinian right to self-determination.
    - All four resolutions were introduced at the HRC in Geneva by Pakistan on behalf of the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation.
- The U.S., Germany and four other countries voted against the resolution, titled "Human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the obligation to ensure accountability and justice"
- India joined France and Japan among 13 countries that abstained. However, a signi□cant majority, 28 members, including Bangladesh, China, Maldives, the UAE, Indonesia, Brazil and South Africa, voted in favour

UN resolution for ceasefire in Gaza

Recently, the UN Security Council on passed a resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire for the month of Ramadan, the immediate and unconditional release of hostages and "the urgent need to expand the flow" of aid into

Gaza. There were 14 votes in favour with the United States abstaining.

The Geneva Conventions (1949)

- The conventions and their Additional Protocols are international treaties that contain the most important rules limiting the barbarity of war.
- They protect people who do not take part in the fighting (civilians, medics, aid workers) and those who can no longer fight (wounded, sick and shipwrecked troops, prisoners of war).
- The first Geneva Convention protects wounded and sick soldiers on land during war.
- The second Geneva Convention protects wounded, sick and shipwrecked military personnel at sea during war.
- The third Geneva Convention applies to prisoners of war.
- The fourth Geneva Convention affords protection to civilians, including in occupied territory.

Human Rights Council

- It is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the world.
- It was created by the United Nations General Assembly in 2006. It replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights.
- The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) serves as the Secretariat of the Human Rights Council.





- **Headquarters :** Geneva, Switzerland.
- **Members:** It consists of 47 United Nations Member States which are elected by the UN General Assembly (UNGA).

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights [UDHR] is a global document that establishes the freedom and rights of humans all around the world.
  - The United India took an active part in the drafting of the UDHR.

- United Nations General Assembly adopted the document during the session in 1948 as per Resolution 217.
  - The 10th December is celebrated worldwide as Human Rights Day to commemorate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) on this day in 1948
- The UDHR consists of 30 articles that are applicable to all humans belonging to different nationalities, religions, and races.
  - The 30 rights and freedoms include civil and political rights, like the right to life, liberty, free speech and privacy and economic, social and cultural rights, like the right to social security, health and education, etc.
- The UDHR is not a treaty, so it does not directly create legal obligations for countries.
- The UDHR, together with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its two Optional Protocols (on the complaints procedure and on the death penalty) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and its Optional Protocol, form the so-called International Bill of Human Rights

NHRC

- *National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) , established under the Protection of Human Rights Act,1993 includes enquiry into complaints of violation of human rights or negligence in the prevention of such violation by a public servant.*
- *The Commission also studies treaties and international instruments on human rights and makes recommendations for their effective implementation to the Government.*

The Israel Palestine issue

The Israel-Palestine conflict arises from interconnected historical assertions, nationalist aspirations, and religious significance in the , centered on territory and identity struggles. Main regions where the conflict persists :

- **Gaza Strip:** The Gaza Strip is a coastal Palestinian region along the Mediterranean Sea, bordered by Israel and Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. Together with the West Bank, it forms the State of Palestine
- **West Bank:** This territory is landlocked and is bordered by Israel and Jordan, with the Dead Sea marking part of its boundary.
- **Jerusalem:** It holds profound significance for three major world religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.



National Human Rights Commission

- *National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) , established under the Protection of Human Rights Act,1993 includes enquiry into complaints of violation of human rights or negligence in the prevention of such violation by a public servant.*
- *The Commission also studies treaties and international instruments on human rights and makes recommendations for their effective implementation to the Government.*
- ***Chairperson:** Arun Kumar Mishra*

Pepper it With

- Iran and Israel Issue
- India's stance for Permanent Membership.

To download
the other important
exam related material,
scan the QR Code

- UN resolution for ceasefire in Gaza
  - the UN Security Council on passed a resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire for the month of Ramadan, the immediate and unconditional release of hostages and "the urgent need to expand the fiow" of aid into Gaza.
  - There were 14 votes in favour with the United States abstaining.
- The Geneva Conventions (1949)
  - The conventions and their Additional Protocols are international treaties that contain the most important rules limiting the barbarity of war.
  - They protect people who do not take part in the fighting (civilians, medics, aid workers) and those who can no longer fight (wounded, sick and shipwrecked troops, prisoners of war).
  - The first Geneva Convention protects wounded and sick soldiers on land during war.
  - The second Geneva Convention protects wounded, sick and shipwrecked military personnel at sea during war.
  - The third Geneva Convention applies to prisoners of war.
  - The fourth Geneva Convention affords protection to civilians, including in occupied territory.
- Human Rights Council
  - It is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the world.
  - It was created by the United Nations General Assembly in 2006. It replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights.
  - The Ofice of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) serves as the Secretariat of the Human Rights Council.
  - Headquarters : Geneva, Switzerland.
  - Members: It consists of 47 United Nations Member States which are elected by the UN General Assembly (UNGA).
- Main regions where the confiict persists :
  - Gaza Strip: The Gaza Strip is a coastal Palestinian region along the Mediterranean Sea, bordered by Israel and Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. Together with the West Bank, it forms the State of Palestine
  - West Bank: This territory is landlocked and is bordered by Israel and Jordan, with the Dead Sea marking part of its boundary.
  - Jerusalem: It holds profound significance for three major world religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Scan the code to download the answer key of this month's magazine.

INDIA ABSTAINS FROM VOTING IN HRC RESOLUTION.

- India voted in favour of three other resolutions that criticised Israel for human rights violations against Palestinians.
- The U.S., Germany and four other countries voted against the resolution, titled "Human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the obligation to ensure accountability and justice"
- India joined France and Japan among 13 countries that abstained. However, a signicant majority, 28 members, including Bangladesh, China, Maldives, the UAE, Indonesia, Brazil and South Africa, voted in favour
- NHRC
  - National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) , established under the Protection of Human Rights Act,1993 includes enquiry into complaints of violation of human rights or negligence in the prevention of such violation by a public servant.
  - The Commission also studies treaties and international instruments on human rights and makes recommendations for their effective implementation to the Government.
  - Chairperson: Arun Kumar Mishra

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following is NOT one of the Geneva Conventions?
   (a) First Geneva Convention
   (b) Second Geneva Convention
   (c) Third Geneva Convention
   (d) Fifth Geneva Convention

2. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in which year?
   (a) 1945 (b) 1948 (c) 1950 (d) 1955

3. How many articles are there in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)?
   (a) 20 (b) 25 (c) 30 (d) 35

4. Which of the following countries voted against the resolution titled "Human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the obligation to ensure accountability and justice"?
   (a) India (b) United States (c) Germany (d) Both (b) and (c)

5. Which of the following organizations introduced the resolutions related to Israel-Palestine at the Human Rights Council in Geneva?
   (a) Arab League
   (b) Organization for Islamic Cooperation
   (c) United Nations Security Council
   (d) United Nations General Assembly

6. How many resolutions did India vote in favor of that were critical of Israel's actions?
   (a) 1 (b) 2 (c) 3 (d) 4

7. Which of the following countries abstained from the resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire and arms embargo against Israel over the Gaza situation?
   (a) India (b) France (c) Japan (d) All of the above

8. The Human Rights Council is headquartered in which city?
   (a) New York (b) Geneva (c) Vienna (d) The Hague

9. How many United Nations Member States are elected to the Human Rights Council?
   (a) 37 (b) 42 (c) 47 (d) 52

10. Which of the following is NOT one of the regions where the Israel-Palestine conflict persists?
    (a) Gaza Strip (b) West Bank (c) Jerusalem (d) Sinai Peninsula

11. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) was established under which Act?
    (a) Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993
    (b) Human Rights Act, 1998
    (c) National Human Rights Commission Act, 2000
    (d) Human Rights Protection Act, 2005

12. Who is the current Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)?
    (a) Arun Kumar Mishra (b) Ranjan Gogoi (c) Dipak Misra (d) T.S. Thakur

13. Which of the following countries voted in favor of the resolution calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza?
    (a) Bangladesh (b) China (c) Brazil (d) All of the above

14. The United Nations Security Council passed a resolution demanding an immediate ceasefire for which month?
    (a) Ramadan (b) Eid (c) Muharram (d) Rabi' al-awwal

15. The Geneva Conventions are international treaties that contain rules limiting the barbarity of which situation?
    (a) War (b) Natural disasters (c) Political unrest (d) Epidemics

16. Which of the following is NOT one of the rights or freedoms included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)?
    (a) Right to life (b) Right to liberty (c) Right to free speech (d) Right to bear arms

17. Which of the following countries is NOT a member of the United Nations Security Council?
    (a) United States (b) Russia (c) India (d) China

18. The International Bill of Human Rights includes which of the following documents?
    (a) Universal Declaration of Human Rights
    (b) International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
    (c) International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
    (d) All of the above

19. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) serves as the Secretariat of which body?
    (a) United Nations General Assembly (b) United Nations Security Council
    (c) Human Rights Council (d) International Court of Justice

20. Which of the following countries borders the West Bank?
    (a) Israel (b) Jordan (c) Egypt (d) Both (a) and (b)



Katchatheevu Islands

Why in News?

Recently, Katchatheevu island is in news because of the sovereign claims made by both India and Sri Lanka and also due to the prevailing fishermen rights around the island.

Explained:

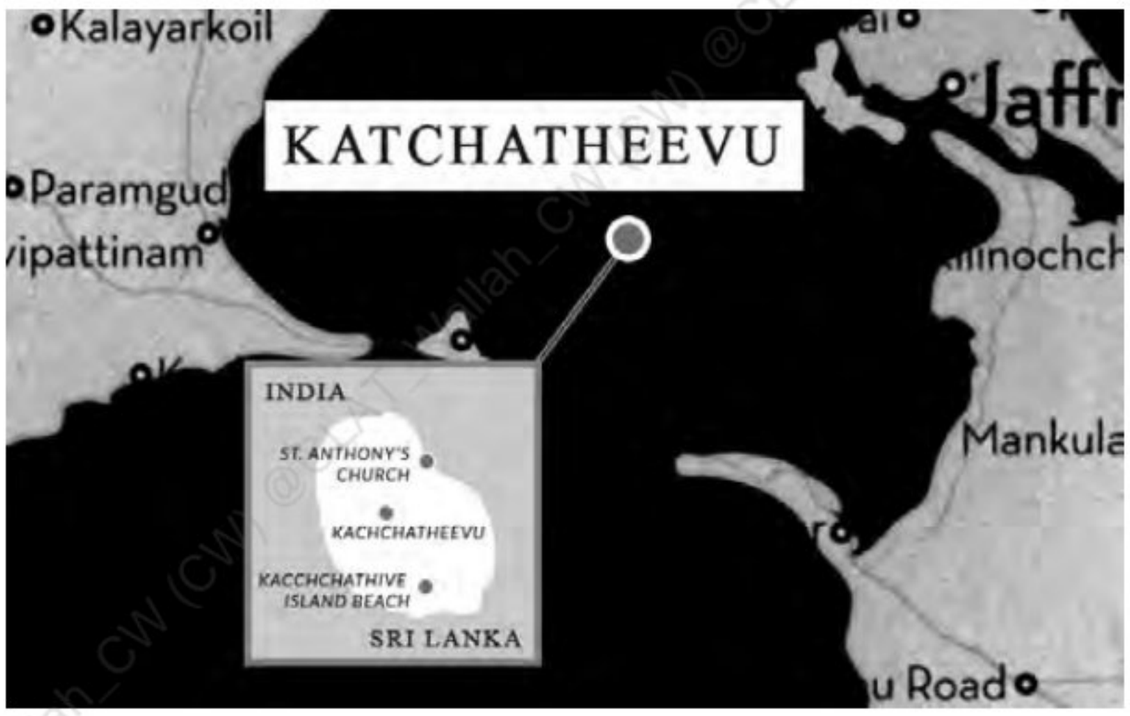
Katchativu is a small uninhabited island located in the Palk Strait between Sri Lanka and India. Despite its tiny size, it has been the subject of a long-standing maritime territorial dispute between the two countries. The island falls within Sri Lanka's territorial waters, but India claims it based on the conviction that it belonged to the erstwhile Madras Presidency.

The disagreement over Katchativu's sovereignty has persisted since the 1970s, with both nations asserting their historical claims and rights over the strategically located islet. The dispute remains unresolved, causing occasional tensions in the bilateral relations between India and Sri Lanka, as they navigate the complexities of maritime boundaries, fishing rights, and security concerns in the region.

Way to marks:

History of Katchatheevu Island

- Katchatheevu belonged to the Ramnad Zamindari, which was established in 1605 by the Nayak dynasty of Madurai. It consisted of 69 coastal villages and 11 islets, including Katchatheevu.
- Katchatheevu was a source of revenue for the Sethupathi dynasty as it leased the island first to the Dutch in 1767 and to the British East India Company in 1822.

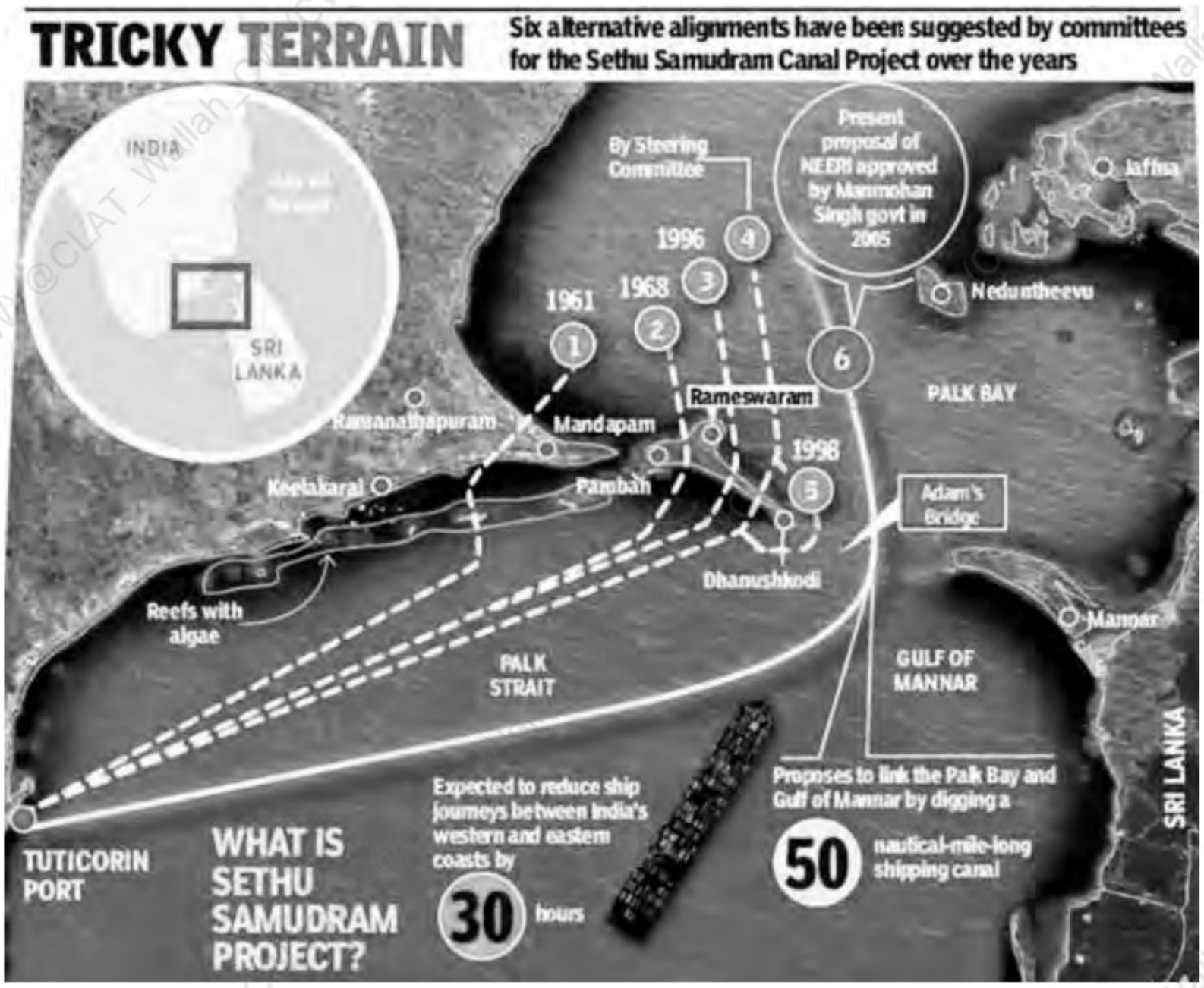


Oct 21, 1921	During the talks of delimitation of Palk Strait and the Gulf of Mannar, between the governments of Madras and Ceylon, both the governments claimed the island. **Ceylon's (Sri Lanka) claim-** It claimed sovereignty on the ground that the Portuguese who had occupied the island during 1505-1658 CE had exercised jurisdiction over the islet. **Madras (India's) Claim-** India's contention was that the erstwhile Raja of Ramnad [Ramanathapuram] had possession of it as part of his zamin. The British, citing the traditional claims of the Ramnad zamindari of Ramanathapuram, attached it to the Madras Presidency.
Till Independence	The zamin of Ramanathapuram collected taxes till 1947. The island was taken over by the State government following the Zamindari Abolition Act
Post-Independence	The dispute over the control of the island broke out again after Independence over fishing rights around the island.
June 28, 1974	Under the 1974 'Indo-Sri Lankan Maritime agreement', the government headed by Indira Gandhi agreed to cede the Katchatheevu island to Sri Lanka. It was aimed to settle the discord and strengthen ties with Sri Lanka. However, most of the Opposition including the DMK, AIADMK, Jan Sangh, Swatantara and the Socialist Party, opposed the agreement and staged walk outs in the two Houses.
August 15,1991	In her Independence Day address, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Jayalalitha, urged the centre to retrieve Katchatheevu and restore the fishing rights for Tamil Fishermen.
Oct 31, 1991	Tamil Nadu Assembly adopted a resolution demanding retrieval of Katchatheevu
2001	CM Jayalalitha met the Indian PM A.B. Vajpayee and urged India to obtain the island on lease-in-perpetuity.
2008, 2013	Both the major political parties, AIADMK and DMK, approached the SC to declare the Katchatheevu agreements of 1974 and 1976, as null and void.
July 2014	Central Government informed the SC that the Katchatheevu islet is a sovereign property of Sri Lanka. The 1974 and 1976 agreements between India and Sri Lanka do not confer any fishing rights on fishermen from India
December 2022	The Union government, while referring to the two agreements of 1974 and 1976, pointed out in its reply in the Rajya Sabha that Katchatheevu lies on the Sri Lankan side of the India-Sri Lanka International Maritime Boundary Line. It added that the matter was sub-judice in the Supreme Court.

- This is how India has a historical claim to the barren island.
- During British rule, the maritime boundary between India and Sri Lanka (then Ceylon) was not demarcated, and Kachatheevu Island was not explicitly addressed in colonial agreements.
- The issue of the island's sovereignty emerged more prominently after both countries gained independence; India in 1947 and Sri Lanka in 1948.

About the dispute:

- *The dispute over Katchatheevu has been primarily centred on fishing rights and the access it grants to the fertile fishing grounds in the surrounding waters. Fishermen from both countries have traditionally used these waters, leading to occasional conflicts*
- *The issue of the island's sovereignty emerged more prominently after both countries gained independence; India in 1947 and Sri Lanka in 1948 because the island was not explicitly addressed in colonial agreements.*
- *Resolution attempts*
- *In 1974, then Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi accepted Katchatheevu as a Sri Lankan area under the "Indo-Sri Lankan Maritime Agreement" aimed at resolving the maritime boundaries in the Palk Strait.*
  - *Kachatheevu remains under Sri Lankan sovereignty following the 1974 agreement.*
- *A further agreement in 1976 attempted to demarcate the maritime boundaries more clearly. It divided the Sethusamudram region between the two neighbours, ending the Indian fishermen's visits to the island.*
  - *A Sethsamudram ship canal project is under consideration to reduce the time for travelling between India and Sri lanka, but the project is under dispute.*
- *The agreement was never ratified by the Indian Parliament, and this has been a basis for the ongoing dispute.*



India Sri Lanka Relation at a glance

- ***Assistance from India:*** *During an unprecedented economic crisis in Sri Lanka, India extended approximately USD 4 billion in aid, which played a crucial role in helping the country weather the crisis, marked by a severe shortage of foreign exchange reserves.*
  - *India also signed $400 million currency swap agreement with Sri Lanka in 2022*
- *India has actively collaborated with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other creditors to assist Sri Lanka in restructuring its debt. India was also the first among India, China, and Japan to pledge support for financing and debt restructuring in Sri Lanka.*
- *Agreement on a Multi-Project Petroleum Pipeline:*
- *India and Sri Lanka have agreed to establish a multi-product petroleum pipeline from southern India to Sri Lanka, aiming to ensure a reliable and affordable supply of energy resources to Sri Lanka, thereby recognizing the critical role of energy in economic development.*
- *Sri Lanka has adopted India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) service, enhancing fintech connectivity between the two countries.*
- *India is a significant export destination for Sri Lanka, and more than 60% of Sri Lanka's exports benefit from the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement. India is also a major investor in Sri Lanka, with bilateral merchandise trade reaching USD 5.45 billion in 2021.*
- ***Hambantota Port:*** *This port was given to China by Sri Lanka on a 99-year lease after Sri Lanka failed to repay Chinese loans.*
  - *Recently, Sri Lanka denied the permission to the Chinese research ships from entering it's Exclusive Economic Zone for a period of One year.*
- ***Triconomalee oil deal:*** *India's Indian Oil Corporation(IOC) signed the strategic deal in 2022 to develop oil farms in the north eastern coast of Sri Lanka*
- *It comprises 99 storage tanks, with a capacity of 12,000 kilolitres each, spread across Lower Tank farm and Upper Tank Farm.*

Extra Shots

Defence Exercise between India and Sri Lanka : Mitra Shakti and Naval exercises :SLINEX,

Other maritime disputes of India with Neighbouring Nations

- **With Pakistan:** Over demarcation of boundary along Sir Creek.
- **With Bangladesh:** New Moore Island in Bay of Bengal (Permanent Court of Arbitration ruled in favour of Bangladesh).

Extra Shots

The Sethusamudram ship canal which is proposed to stretch for some 84km was to cut through the Ram Setu (Adam's Bridge). This was first conceived of in 1860 by A D Taylor, a naval officer who was instrumental in setting the Marine Survey of India in 1875.

Pepper it With

- India Maldives issue
- Coco island issue with India, Myanmar and China.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. What was the primary reason for the dispute over Katchatheevu island between India and Sri Lanka?
   (a) Territorial sovereignty
   (b) Fishing rights and access to surrounding waters
   (c) Oil and natural resources
   (d) Strategic military importance

2. Which dynasty established the Ramnad Zamindari, which included Katchatheevu island?
   (a) Chola dynasty
   (b) Pandya dynasty
   (c) Nayak dynasty of Madurai
   (d) Vijayanagar Empire

3. Which colonial power did the Sethupathi dynasty lease Katchatheevu island to initially?
   (a) Portuguese (b) Dutch (c) French (d) British East India Company

4. During which year did the issue of Katchatheevu's sovereignty emerge more prominently?
   (a) 1947 (b) 1948 (c) 1974 (d) 1976

5. Which government agreed to cede Katchatheevu island to Sri Lanka under the 1974 Indo-Sri Lankan Maritime agreement?
   (a) Lal Bahadur Shastri (b) Indira Gandhi (c) Morarji Desai (d) Rajiv Gandhi

6. Which political party in Tamil Nadu opposed the 1974 agreement and staged walkouts in Parliament?
   (a) DMK
   (b) AIADMK
   (c) Both DMK and AIADMK
   (d) None of the above

7. In which year did Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalitha urge the center to retrieve Katchatheevu and restore fishing rights for Tamil fishermen?
   (a) 1991 (b) 1995 (c) 1999 (d) 2001

8. Which year did the Tamil Nadu Assembly adopt a resolution demanding the retrieval of Katchatheevu?
   (a) 1989 (b) 1991 (c) 1995 (d) 1999

9. Which Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu met the Indian PM A.B. Vajpayee and urged India to obtain Katchatheevu on lease-in-perpetuity?
   (a) M.G. Ramachandran (b) Jayalalitha (c) M. Karunanidhi (d) Edappadi K. Palaniswami

10. In which year did the Central Government inform the Supreme Court that Katchatheevu islet is a sovereign property of Sri Lanka?
    (a) 2008 (b) 2010 (c) 2012 (d) 2014

11. Which agreement divided the Sethusamudram region between India and Sri Lanka, ending Indian fishermen's visits to Katchatheevu?
    (a) 1974 Indo-Sri Lankan Maritime Agreement (b) 1976 Agreement on Maritime Boundaries
    (c) Both (a) and (b) (d) Neither (a) nor (b)

12. What is the proposed Sethusamudram ship canal project aimed at achieving?
    (a) Reducing the time for traveling between India and Sri Lanka
    (b) Connecting the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea
    (c) Providing a shorter route for international shipping
    (d) All of the above

13. Which country extended approximately USD 4 billion in aid to Sri Lanka during its economic crisis in 2022?
    (a) India (b) China (c) Japan (d) United States

14. Which country was the first among India, China, and Japan to pledge support for financing and debt restructuring in Sri Lanka?
    (a) India (b) China
    (c) Japan (d) All three pledged support simultaneously

15. Which payment interface has Sri Lanka adopted from India, enhancing fintech connectivity between the two countries?
    (a) PayPal (b) Unified Payments Interface (UPI)
    (c) Google Pay (d) Apple Pay

16. Which port in Sri Lanka was given to China on a 99-year lease after Sri Lanka failed to repay Chinese loans?
    (a) Colombo Port (b) Hambantota Port (c) Trincomalee Port (d) Galle Port

17. Which Indian company signed a strategic deal in 2022 to develop oil farms in the northeastern coast of Sri Lanka?
    (a) Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) (b) Reliance Industries Limited
    (c) Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (d) Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited

18. What is the name of the bilateral naval exercise conducted between India and Sri Lanka?
    (a) Mitra Shakti (b) SLINEX (c) Indra (d) Both (a) and (b)

19. Which dynasty's traditional claims were cited by the British for attaching Katchatheevu to the Madras Presidency?
    (a) Chola dynasty (b) Pandya dynasty
    (c) Nayak dynasty (d) Ramnad zamindari of Ramanathapuram

20. Which year did the Zamindari Abolition Act lead to the takeover of Katchatheevu by the State government?
    (a) 1947 (b) 1948 (c) 1974 (d) 1976



Expanding the OCI Card Scheme

Why in News?

Recently, a Total Solar Eclipse will cross North America, passing over Mexico, United States and Canada.

Explained:

Many people of Indian Origin meaning thereby that there ancestors were from India but they shifted to other country in some phrase of history [e.g. Britishers transported tea plantation workers from India to work in China, Sri Lanka and other colonial states]. GOI has facilitated the diaspora population with OCI and PIO cards initially in 2002 and 2005. Both cards were meant for people of Indian origin living abroad, but with some differences. The PIO card was more like a long-term visa, while the OCI card offered stronger rights and privileges akin to dual citizenship, though not actual Indian citizenship.

Initially, both schemes ran in parallel causing confusion. So in 2015, the government merged the PIO and OCI schemes into a single OCI card scheme. This merged scheme retained the more beneficial aspects of the OCI card.

The OCI card allows holders to live, work, study and own property in India indefinitely. However, they cannot vote, hold constitutional offices or take certain government jobs. It facilitates a long-term connection to India for the Indian diaspora while allowing them to retain foreign citizenship. The merger simplified the process and enhanced facilities for applicants of Indian origin abroad under one streamlined scheme.

Way to marks:

Overseas Citizens of India

- In 2000, the Union Ministry of External Affairs under the Chairmanship of L.M. Singhvi set up a High-Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora.
- The Committee was asked to make a comprehensive study of the global Indian Diaspora and to recommend measures for a constructive relationship with them.
- The committee recommended the amendment of the Citizenship Act (1955) to provide for the grant of dual citizenship to Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) belonging to certain specified countries.
- The Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2003, made provision for the acquisition of Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) by the PIOs of 16 specified countries other than Pakistan and Bangladesh.
- The Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2005 expanded the scope of the grant of OCI for PIOs of all countries except Pakistan and Bangladesh as long as their home countries allow dual citizens under their local laws.

- The OCI is not dual citizenship as the Indian Constitution under Article 9 forbids dual citizenship or dual nationality.
- The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2015, has introduced a new scheme called "Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder" by merging the PIO card scheme and the OCI card scheme.

Why the OCI and PIO merged?

The PIO card scheme was introduced in 2002 and thereafter the OCI card scheme was introduced in 2005. Both the schemes were running in parallel even though the OCI card scheme had become more popular.

This was causing unnecessary confusion in the minds of applicants. The government accepted the problems being faced by applicants and to provide enhanced facilities to them, the Indian Government formulated one single scheme after merging the PIO and OCI schemes, containing positive attributes of both.

For achieving the above objective, the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, of 2015, was enacted.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, of 2015, replaced the nomenclature of "Overseas Citizen of India" with that of "Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder".



Registration of Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder

The Central Government may register as an overseas citizen of India cardholder;

Any person of full age and capacity;

- Who is a citizen of another country but was a citizen of India at the time of or at any time after the commencement of the Constitution; or
- Who is a citizen of another country, but was eligible to become a citizen of India at the time of the commencement of the Constitution; or
- Who is a citizen of another country, but belonged to a territory that became part of India after the 15th August 1947; or

- Who is a child or a grandchild or a great-grandchild of such a citizen; or
    - A person, who is a minor child, and whose both parents are citizens of India or one of the parents is a citizen of India; or
    - Spouse of foreign origin of a citizen of India or spouse of foreign origin of an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder and whose marriage has been registered and subsisted for a continuous period of not less than two years immediately preceding the presentation of the application.
- No person, who or either of whose parents or grandparents or great grandparents is or had been a citizen of Pakistan, Bangladesh or such other country as the Central Government may specify, shall be eligible for registration as an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder.
- The Union Government may specify the date from which the existing persons of Indian origin cardholders shall be deemed to be overseas citizens of India cardholders.
- The Union Government may if it is satisfied that special circumstances exist, after recording the circumstances in writing, register a person as an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder.

Rights of Overseas Citizens of India Cardholder

- An overseas citizen of India cardholder shall be entitled to such rights, as the Central Government may specify.
- An overseas citizen of India cardholder shall not be entitled to the following rights (which are conferred on a citizen of India);
- He shall not be entitled to the right to equality of opportunity in matters of public employment.
- He shall not be eligible for election as President.
- He shall not be eligible for election as Vice-President.
- He shall not be eligible for appointment as a Judge of the Supreme Court.
- He shall not be eligible for appointment as a Judge of the High Court.
- He shall not be entitled to register as a voter.
- He shall not be eligible for being a member of the House of the People or the Council of States.
- He shall not be eligible for being a member of the State Legislative Assembly or the State Legislative Council.
- He shall not be eligible for appointment to public services and posts in connection with affairs of the Union or of any State except for appointment in such services and posts as the Central Government may specify.

Renunciation of Overseas Citizen of India Card

- If any overseas citizen of India cardholder makes a declaration renouncing the Card registering him as an overseas citizen of India cardholder, the declaration shall be registered by the Central Government, and upon such registration, that person shall cease to be an overseas citizen of India cardholder.
- Where a person ceases to be an overseas citizen of India cardholder, the spouse of foreign origin of that person, who has obtained an overseas citizen of India card and every minor child of that person registered as an overseas citizen of India cardholder shall subsequently cease to be an overseas citizen of India cardholder.

Cancellation of Registration as an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder

- The Union Government may cancel the registration of a person as an overseas citizen of India cardholder if it is satisfied that;
- The registration as an overseas citizen of India cardholder was obtained through fraud, false representation or the concealment of any material fact; or
- The overseas citizen of India cardholder has shown disaffection towards the Constitution of India; or
- The overseas citizen of India cardholder has, during any war in which India may be engaged, unlawfully traded or communicated with an enemy; or
- The overseas citizen of India cardholder has, within five years after registration, been sentenced to imprisonment for a term of not less than two years; or
- It is necessary so to do in the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of India, friendly relations of India with any foreign country, or in the interests of the general public.



WHO IS A CITIZEN OF INDIA?

According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, there are four ways in which Indian citizenship can be acquired

[BY BIRTH]

- Every person born in India on or after January 26, 1950, and before July 1, 1987, is an Indian citizen irrespective of the nationality of their parents
- Every person born in India between July 1, 1987 and December 2, 2004, is an Indian citizen if either of their parents is a citizen of India at the time of their birth
- Every person born in India on or after December 3, 2004, is an Indian citizen if both their parents are Indians, or at least one parent is a citizen and the other is not an illegal migrant at the time of birth

[BY REGISTRATION]

- A person of Indian origin who has been a resident of India for seven years can apply
- A person of Indian origin who is a resident of any country outside undivided India can apply for citizenship
- A person who is married to an Indian citizen and is ordinarily resident for seven years may apply
- Minor children of persons who are citizens of India may also apply

[BY DESCENT]

- A person born outside India on or after January 26, 1950, is a citizen of India if their father was a citizen of India by birth
- A person born outside India on or after December 10, 1992, but before December 3, 2004, if either of their parents was a citizen of India by birth
- If a person born outside India on or after December 3, 2004, is to acquire citizenship through descent, their parents must declare that the minor does not hold a passport issued by another country and must ensure that the birth is registered at an Indian consulate within one year

[BY NATURALISATION]

A person can acquire Indian citizenship through naturalisation if they are ordinarily resident in India for 12 years (through the 12 months preceding the date of application with 11 years in aggregate) and fulfil all the qualifications in the third schedule of the Citizenship Act, 1955

WHAT PROVES MY CITIZENSHIP?

Ironically, there is no single document that can conclusively support a claim to citizenship. Only Indian citizens can have passports and voter IDs, but the government can seek verification of these documents too.

Aadhaar cards, PAN cards and driving licences are no indicator or proof of citizenship either. That's one reason the government suggested providing national ID card, based on the National Register of Citizens.

Pepper it With

- Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas
- Indian Diaspora's Success in the recent time.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Who set up the High-Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora in 2000?
   (a) Ministry of Home Affairs
   (b) Ministry of External Affairs
   (c) Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs
   (d) Ministry of Law and Justice

2. What was the objective of the High-Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora?
   (a) To study the global Indian Diaspora and recommend measures for a constructive relationship with them
   (b) To grant dual citizenship to Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs)
   (c) To introduce the Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) card scheme
   (d) To merge the PIO and OCI card schemes

3. Which Act made provision for the acquisition of Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) by the PIOs of 16 specified countries other than Pakistan and Bangladesh?
   (a) The Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2003
   (b) The Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2005
   (c) The Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2015
   (d) The Citizenship Act 1955

4. Which Act expanded the scope of the grant of OCI for PIOs of all countries except Pakistan and Bangladesh, as long as their home countries allow dual citizens under their local laws?
   (a) The Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2003
   (b) The Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2005
   (c) The Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2015
   (d) The Citizenship Act 1955

5. Is the OCI considered as dual citizenship under the Indian Constitution?
   (a) Yes
   (b) No
   (c) It depends on the country of origin
   (d) It is not specified in the document

6. Which Act introduced the new scheme called "Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder" by merging the PIO card scheme and the OCI card scheme?
   (a) The Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2003
   (b) The Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2005
   (c) The Citizenship (Amendment) Act 2015
   (d) The Citizenship Act 1955

7. Why were the PIO and OCI card schemes merged?
   (a) To simplify the process and provide enhanced facilities to applicants
   (b) To grant dual citizenship to PIOs
   (c) To comply with the Indian Constitution's prohibition on dual citizenship
   (d) To expand the scope of the OCI card scheme

8. Which of the following is NOT a criterion for registration as an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder?
   (a) Being a citizen of another country but was a citizen of India at the time of or at any time after the commencement of the Constitution
   (b) Being a citizen of another country but was eligible to become a citizen of India at the time of the commencement of the Constitution
   (c) Being a citizen of another country but belonged to a territory that became part of India after the 15th August 1947
   (d) Being a citizen of India

9. Can a person whose parents or grandparents were citizens of Pakistan or Bangladesh be eligible for registration as an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder?
   (a) Yes
   (b) No
   (c) It depends on the circumstances
   (d) It is not specified in the document

10. Which of the following is NOT a right that an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder is entitled to?
   (a) Right to travel in India
   (b) Right to study in India
   (c) Right to work in India
   (d) Right to vote in Indian elections

11. Can an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder be eligible for election as the President of India?
   (a) Yes
   (b) No
   (c) It depends on certain conditions
   (d) It is not specified in the document

12. Can an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder be appointed as a Judge of the Supreme Court or High Court?
   (a) Yes
   (b) No
   (c) It depends on certain conditions
   (d) It is not specified in the document

13. Can an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder be a member of the House of the People or the Council of States?
   (a) Yes
   (b) No
   (c) It depends on certain conditions
   (d) It is not specified in the document

14. Can an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder be a member of the State Legislative Assembly or the State Legislative Council?
   (a) Yes
   (b) No
   (c) It depends on certain conditions
   (d) It is not specified in the document

15. Can an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder be appointed to public services and posts in connection with affairs of the Union or of any State?
   (a) Yes, without any restrictions
   (b) No
   (c) Yes, but only for certain services and posts as specified by the Central Government
   (d) It is not specified in the document

16. What happens if an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder makes a declaration renouncing the Card?
    (a) The declaration is registered, and the person ceases to be an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder
    (b) The declaration is rejected, and the person retains the status of an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder
    (c) The declaration is reviewed by the Central Government, and a decision is made accordingly
    (d) It is not specified in the document

17. What happens to the spouse of foreign origin and minor children of an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder if the person ceases to be an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder?
    (a) They retain their Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder status
    (b) They automatically cease to be Overseas Citizens of India Cardholders
    (c) Their status is reviewed by the Central Government, and a decision is made accordingly
    (d) It is not specified in the document

18. On which of the following grounds can the Union Government cancel the registration of a person as an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder?
    (a) The registration was obtained through fraud, false representation, or concealment of material facts
    (b) The Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder has shown disaffection towards the Constitution of India
    (c) The Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder has been sentenced to imprisonment for a term of not less than two years within five years after registration
    (d) All of the above

19. Can the Union Government cancel the registration of a person as an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder in the interests of the sovereignty and integrity of India?
    (a) Yes
    (b) No
    (c) It depends on certain conditions
    (d) It is not specified in the document

20. Can the Union Government cancel the registration of a person as an Overseas Citizen of India Cardholder in the interests of friendly relations of India with any foreign country?
    (a) Yes
    (b) No
    (c) It depends on certain conditions
    (d) It is not specified in the document

To download the other important exam related material, scan the QR Code





Iran – Israel Conflict

Why in News?

Israel retaliated on April 19, six days after the Iranian attack. Israel destroys Iran's nuclear repository city of Isfahan.

Explained:

The conflict between Iran and Israel has escalated into a full-fledged war. It began with proxy attacks, with Iran supporting groups like Hezbollah and Hamas against Israel. Tensions rose after incidents like the attack on Iran's embassy in Syria and the killing of an Iranian commander. Iran retaliated with a massive drone and missile strike on Israel, leading to Israeli airstrikes destroying Iran's nuclear facilities. The war has drawn in other Shia militias backed by Iran, with attacks occurring in Lebanon, Yemen, and elsewhere.

The roots of the conflict lie in the severing of ties after Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution. Previously, Iran had recognized Israel. However, the new regime under Ayatollah Khomeini viewed Israel as an enemy The reason being that Khomeini doesn't wanted USA's interference in the west Asia. Therefore it has made enmity with all the countries with which USA had control or Influence. Israel was having a deep connection with USA and so it generated a sense of Anger for Iran and resulted in birth of conflict. For both Iran and Israel Iran built a network of proxy groups, the "Axis of Resistance," to fight Israel and its allies. This laid the groundwork for the proxy war that has now escalated into direct military confrontation between the two nations, with potentially grave consequences for the region.

Way to marks:

- On April 14, 2024, Iran attacked Israel with more than 300 Drones and Missiles (Operation True Promise).
- This was a Counter – Attack to the Israeli Airstrike on Iran's Embassy in Syria on April 1.
- With this, a face-to-face war broke out between Iran and Israel. Under the leadership of Iran, Many Shia Countries or Shia Militia Groups have also openly opened a front against Israel.

How did the face-to-face war between Iran and Israel start?

- On October 7, 2023, Hamas entered Israel and killed 1200 people and took 234 hostage. A few hours later the Israeli Army attacked Gaza.
- After attack in Gaza, Iran intensified Proxy Attacks. In response, Israel intensified attacks on Iranian Targets in Syria.
- Lebanon's fundamentalist Shia Muslim organization Hezbollah,

Related Facts

- *Rafah Border Crossing: Only way between Egypt and Palestine's Gaza Strip.*
- *Houthis hijacked Israeli Galaxy Leader Cargo Ship passing through Red Sea.*

which is backed by Iran, has been firing rockets at Israel since the war began.

- Houthi Rebels in Yemen are targeting Commercial Ships bound for Israel.
- In Dec 2023, Israel was also accused of the Death of Seyed Razi Mousavi, a Senior Adviser to Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, in a Missile Attack in Syria.
- In Feb 2024, a Natural Gas Pipeline was attacked which Iran's Oil Minister Javad Ovji had described as an Israeli Conspiracy.
- The war was triggered by Israel's Attacks on Iranian Targets in Syria in April.



Friendship Era

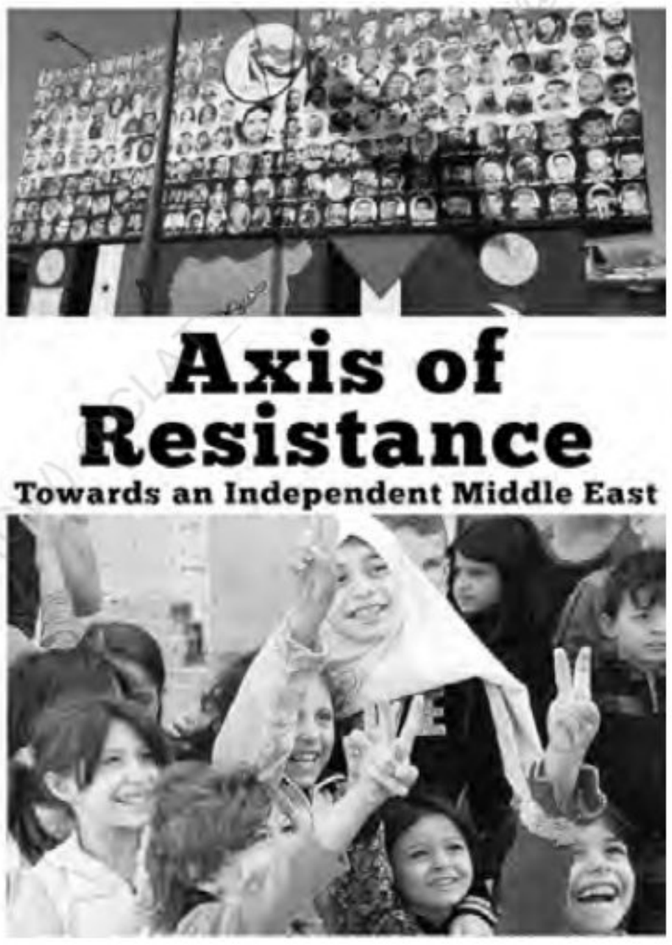
- On May 14, 1948, Israel became the New Jewish State by separating from Palestine.
- At that time, Iran was 2nd Islamic Countries to recognize Israel, after Turkiye.
- In 1948, Arab Countries started war with Israel (1st Arab – Israeli War). Iran did Not become part of this war.
- Both remained Allies of Each Other during the Reign of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (Pahlavi Dynasty) in Iran.

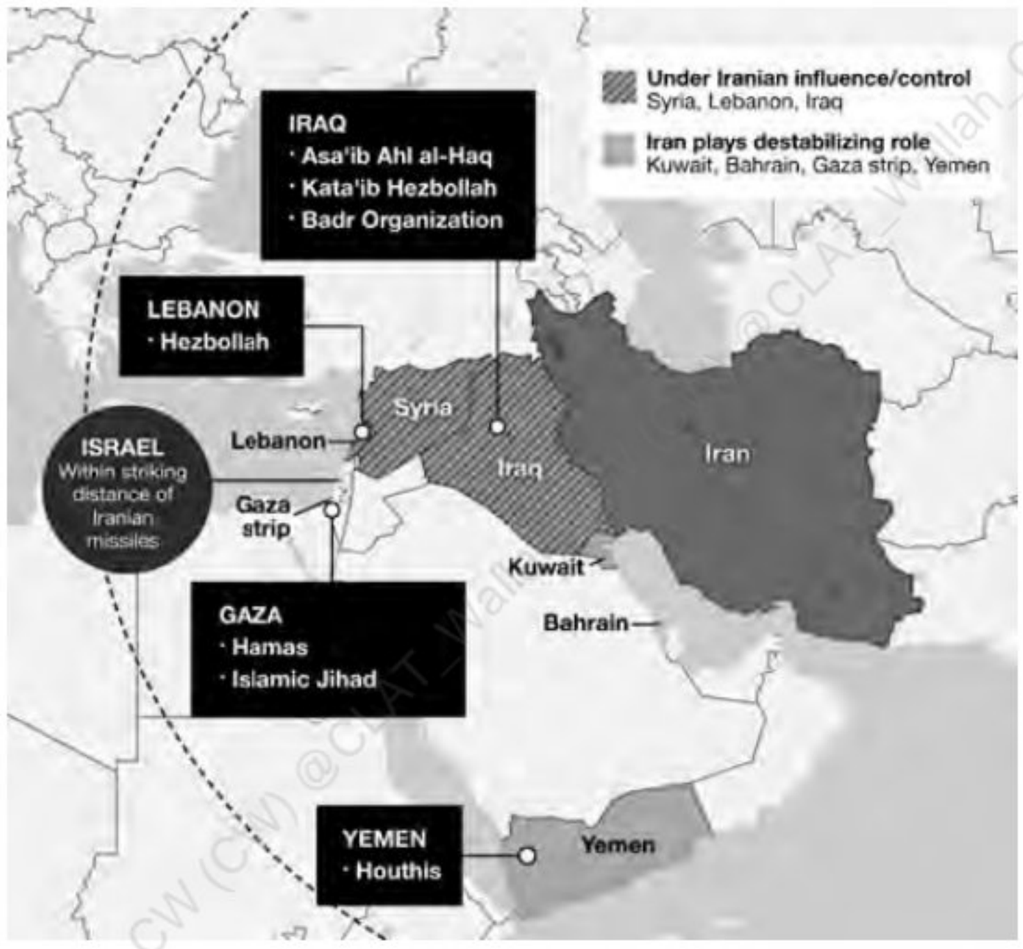
Era of Deterioration

- Demand for an Islamic Nation in Iran intensified and relations between the 2 Deteriorated.
- In the 1960s, Iran's Religious Leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was loudly demanding to make Iran a Muslim Country.
- Therefore, Shah of Iran ordered Khomeini to leave Iran in 1964.
- Khomeini started the Islamic Revolution while living in Iraq.
- Khomeini considered Israel as "Little Devil" & America as "Big Devil".
- With time, Khomeini started getting the Support of Iranian People.
- In 1979, Shah Pahlavi was ousted from power. He had to flee the country.
- With this, Islamic State was established in Iran and Sharia Law was implemented.
- With the change of power in Iran, relations with Israel began to deteriorate.
- The Khomeini government broke all relations with the Jewish country Israel. The air route between the two countries was completely closed.









Era of Proxy War

- Iran created a Network of Armed Groups called "Axis of Resistance" to fight Israel, America and Other Sunni-dominated Countries in the Middle East.
- Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has an important role in preparing it.
- This includes Hamas in Palestine, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Houthi in Yemen and Various Shia
  Armed Groups in Iraq and Syria.

Stuxnet Cyberattack, 2010

- *Rafah Border Crossing: Only way between Egypt and Palestine's Gaza Strip.*
- *Houthis hijacked Israeli Galaxy Leader Cargo Ship passing through Red Sea.*

- **Entire Middle East is divided into 2 Segments:** 1st Shia Dominated and 2nd Sunni Dominated.
- Populations of Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia are 90% or more Sunni.
- Whereas in Yemen, Israel, Lebanon and Gaza, 20 to 40% of Population is Sunni. Shia Muslims are Majority in Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon.
- Shia Majority Countries / Shia Militias led by Iran have openly opened a front against Israel.
- Through these, Proxy War has been going on between the two for the last 4 decades.

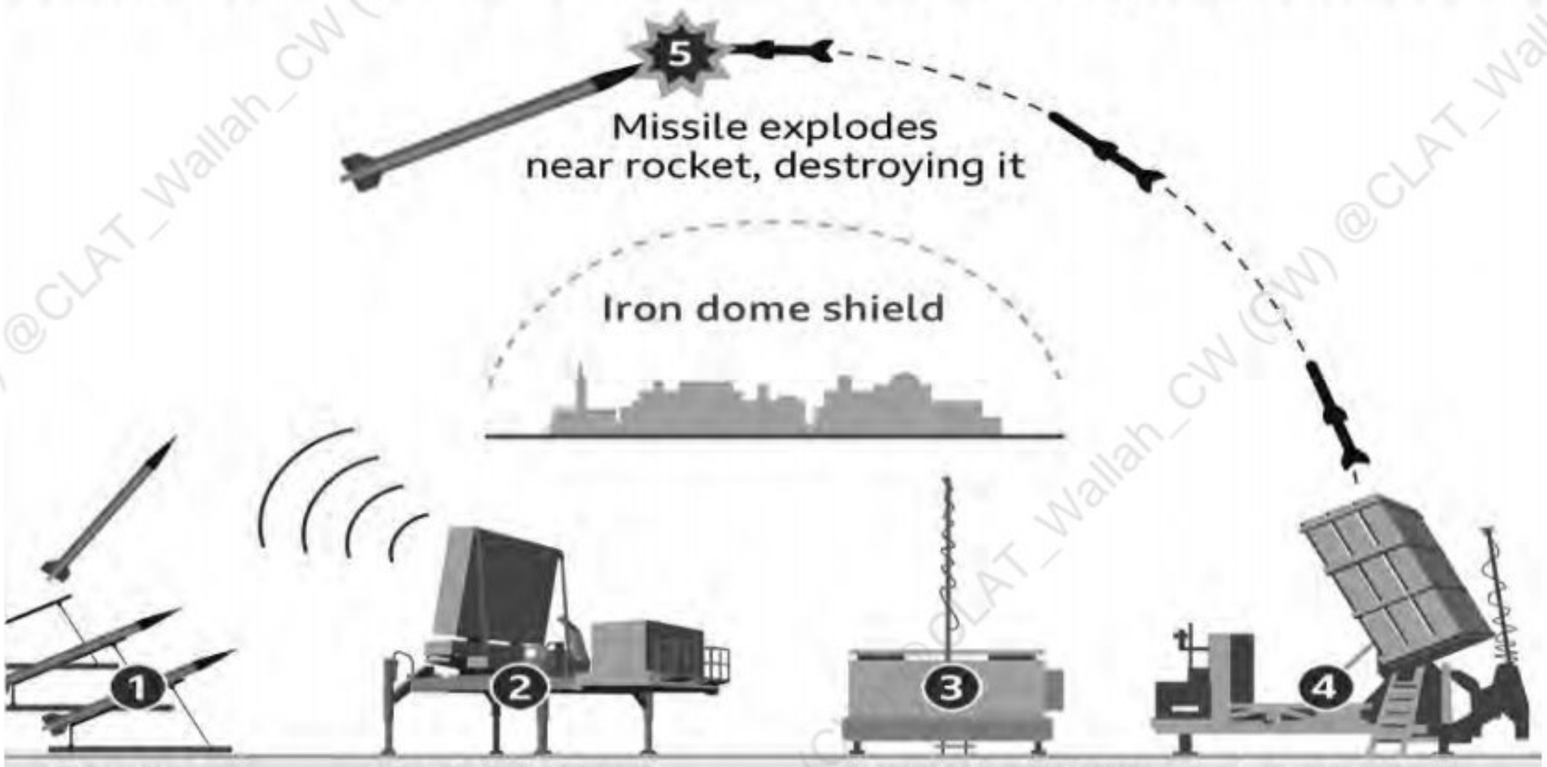
Iron Dome

- **Type:** Short – Range and Ground – to – Air, Air Defence System
- **Developed By:** Israel
- **3 Main Systems:** Radar, Weapon Control, Missile Fire
- Used for Countering Rockets, Artillery and Mortars as well as Aircraft, Helicopters and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles.

C – Dome

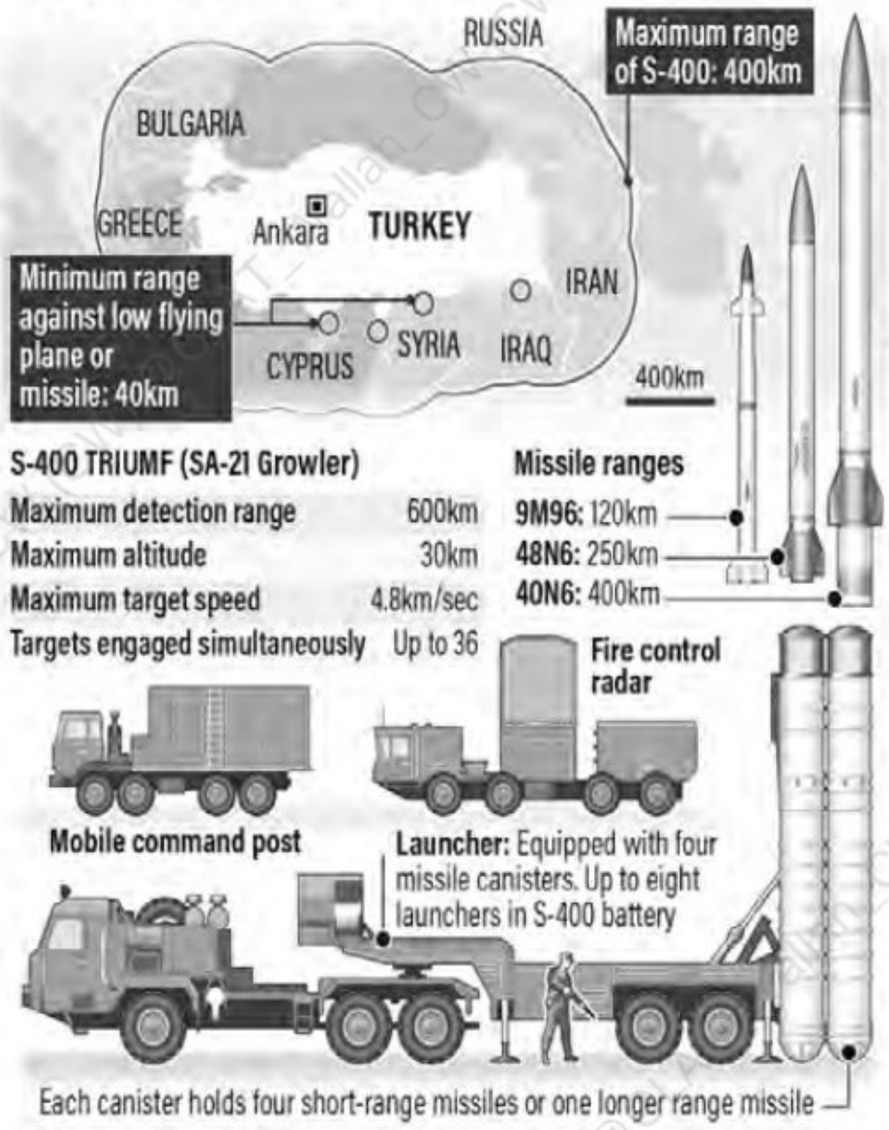
- *Naval Version of Israel's Iron Dome*
- *1st unveiled in 2014 and declared operational in 2022.*

How Israel's Iron Dome defence system works



Iron Dome system ignores incoming threats it determines will land in uninhabited areas

S-400 SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSLIE SYSTEM



S-400 TRIUMF (SA-21 Growler)	
Maximum detection range	600km
Maximum altitude	30km
Maximum target speed	4.8km/sec
Targets engaged simultaneously	Up to 36

- Can shoot down up to 80 target simultaneously
- Cannot yet accurately target low-flying aircraft and missiles (altitude below 30,000 ft) at great distances

S-400 MISSILE SHIELD DEAL

5 SQUADRONS
of S-400 Triumf anti-aircraft, anti-missile systems

COST
$5.43 BN
(₹ 40,000 crore)

CHARACTERISTICS

- Can destroy hostile strategic bombers, stealth fighters, missiles and drone up to 380km range
- 4 kinds of missiles to intercept targets in different ranges
- Radars (primary acquisition one has 600 meter range) can track hundreds of missiles simultaneously
- Russia says S-400 can radar-lock and shoot down 5th Gen stealth fighters like US F-35 jets

PLAN

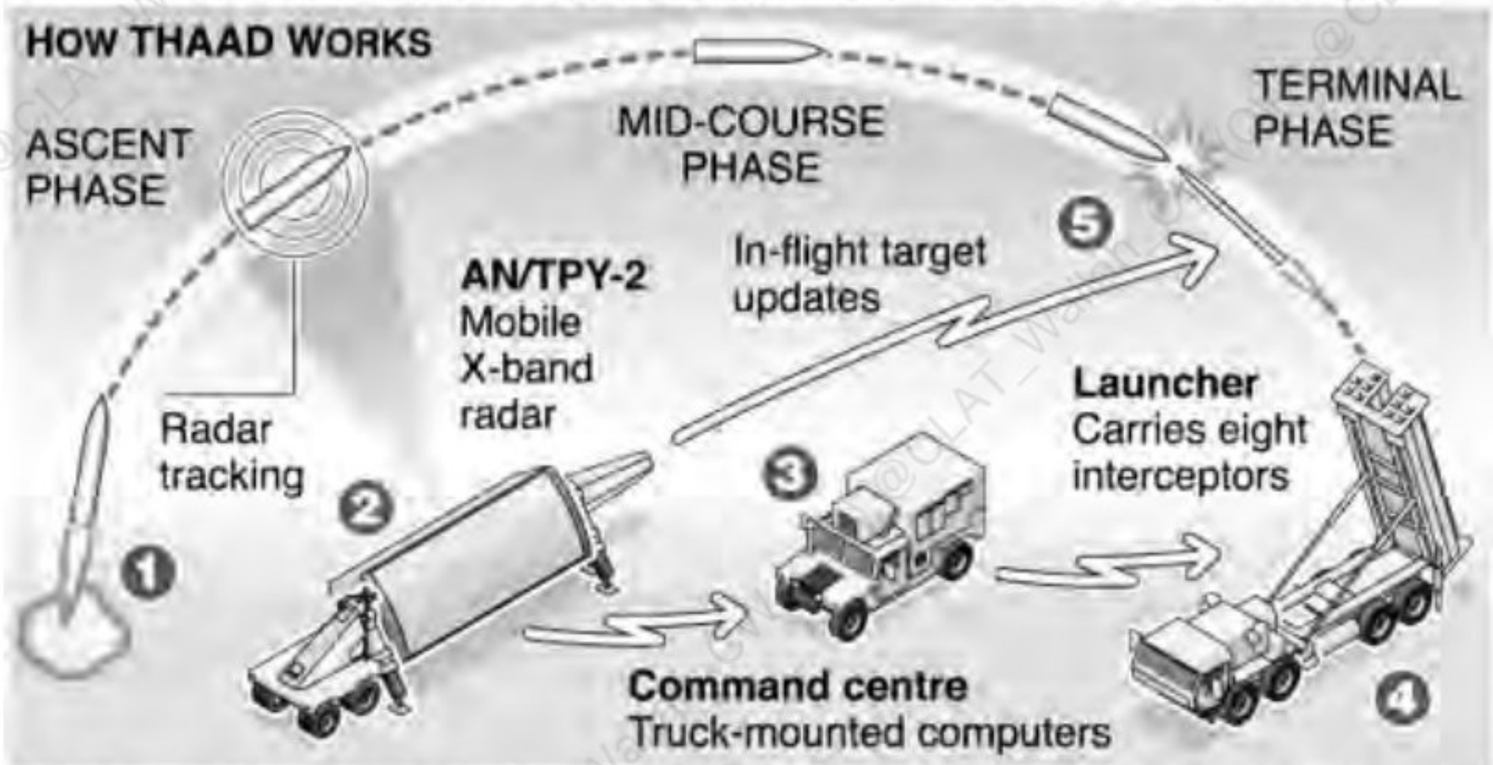
- Induct 1 squadron of S-400 in 2 years after the contract is signed, and the remaining in 5 years
- IAF will integrate S-400 with IACCS (integrated air command and control system) network of sensors and weapons

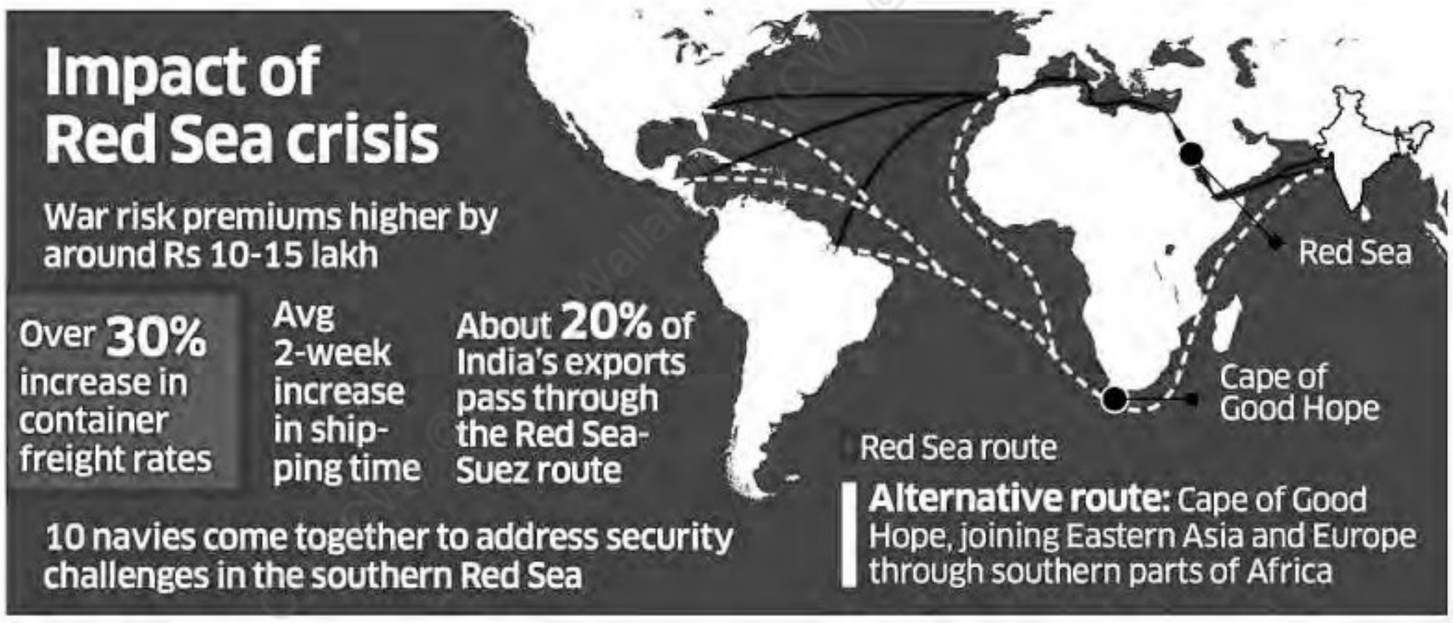
CHINA
Signed a $3 billion deal for integrating six S-400 batteries in 2014



U.S. deploys THAAD to South Korea

The U.S. military has begun installing a controversial missile defence shield in South Korea. The Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system is designed to protect against threats from North Korea



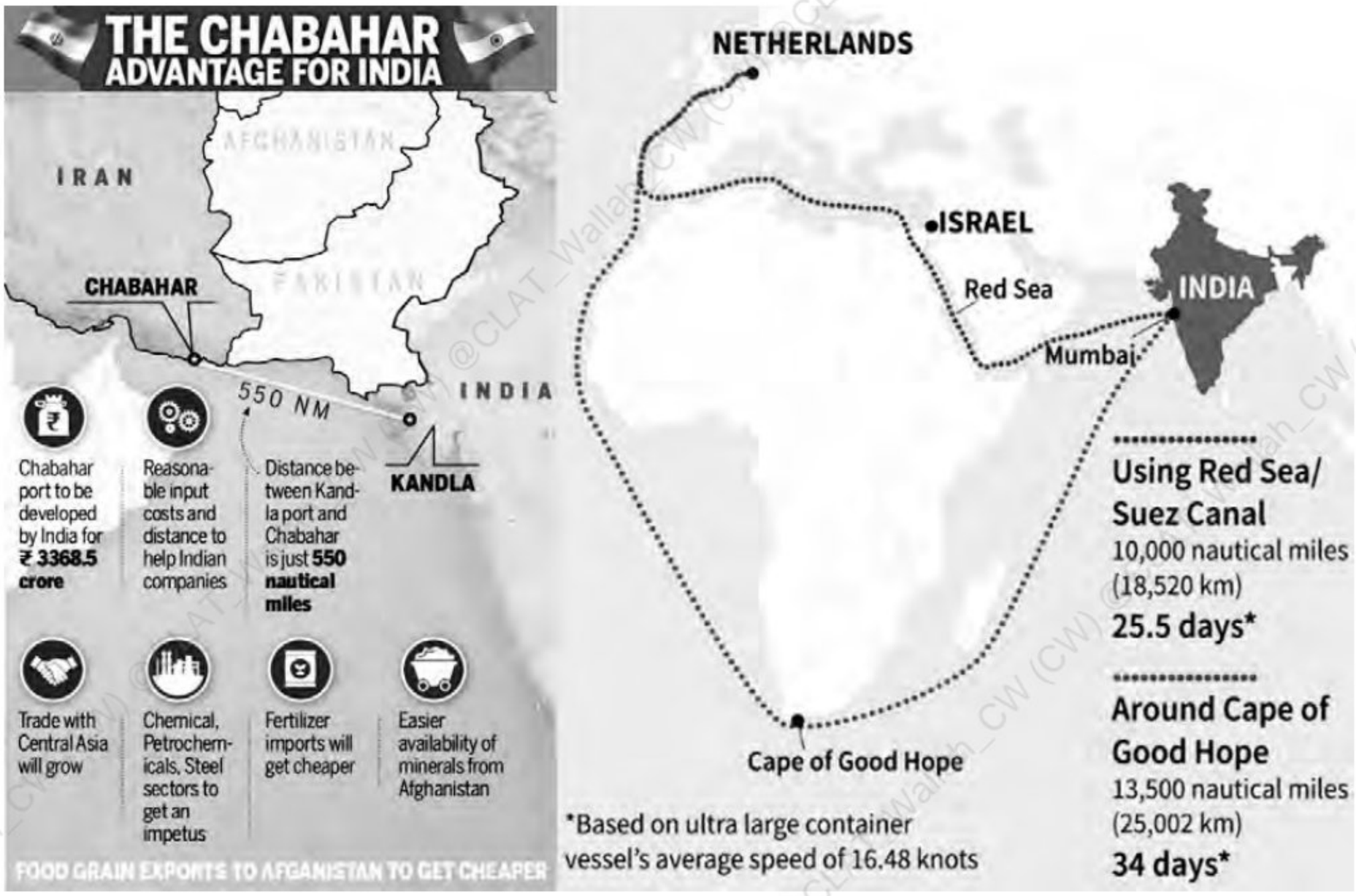


Related Facts

- *Red Sea accounts for 50% of India's Exports (18 Lakh Crore) and 30% of Imports (17 Lakh Crore) in FY 2022–23.*
- *India's Imports: 30% of DAP from Saudi Arabia, 60% of Rock Phosphate from Jordan and Egypt, and 30% of Phosphoric Acid from Jordan.*

Related Facts

- *Indrajaal*
  - *India's 1st indigenous Drone Defence Dome*
  - ***Developed by:*** *Grene Robotics (Hyderabad)*
- ***Iran's Intelligence Agency:*** *SAVAK*
- ***Israeli Intelligence Agency:*** *Mossad*



Pepper it With

- Recent warming of relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia , India and Iran Relations.
- Based on the given content, here are 20 MCQ questions with answers:

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. When did Iran attack Israel with drones and missiles in Operation True Promise?
   (a) April 14, 2024 (b) April 1, 2024 (c) October 7, 2023 (d) May 14, 1948

2. What was the reason for Iran's attack on Israel in Operation True Promise?
   (a) Counter-attack to Israeli airstrike on Iran's embassy in Syria
   (b) Demand for an Islamic Nation in Iran
   (c) Hamas attack on Israel
   (d) Deterioration of relations between Iran and Israel

3. Which organization backed by Iran has been firing rockets at Israel since the war began?
   (a) Hamas (b) Hezbollah (c) Houthi Rebels (d) IRGC

4. Who was accused of the death of Seyed Razi Mousavi, a senior adviser to Iran's IRGC, in a missile attack in Syria?
   (a) Iran (b) Israel (c) Hamas (d) Hezbollah

5. In which year did Israel become the new Jewish state by separating from Palestine?
   (a) 1948 (b) 1964 (c) 1979 (d) 2023

6. Which country was the second Islamic country to recognize Israel after Turkiye in 1948?
   (a) Iran (b) Saudi Arabia (c) Egypt (d) Lebanon

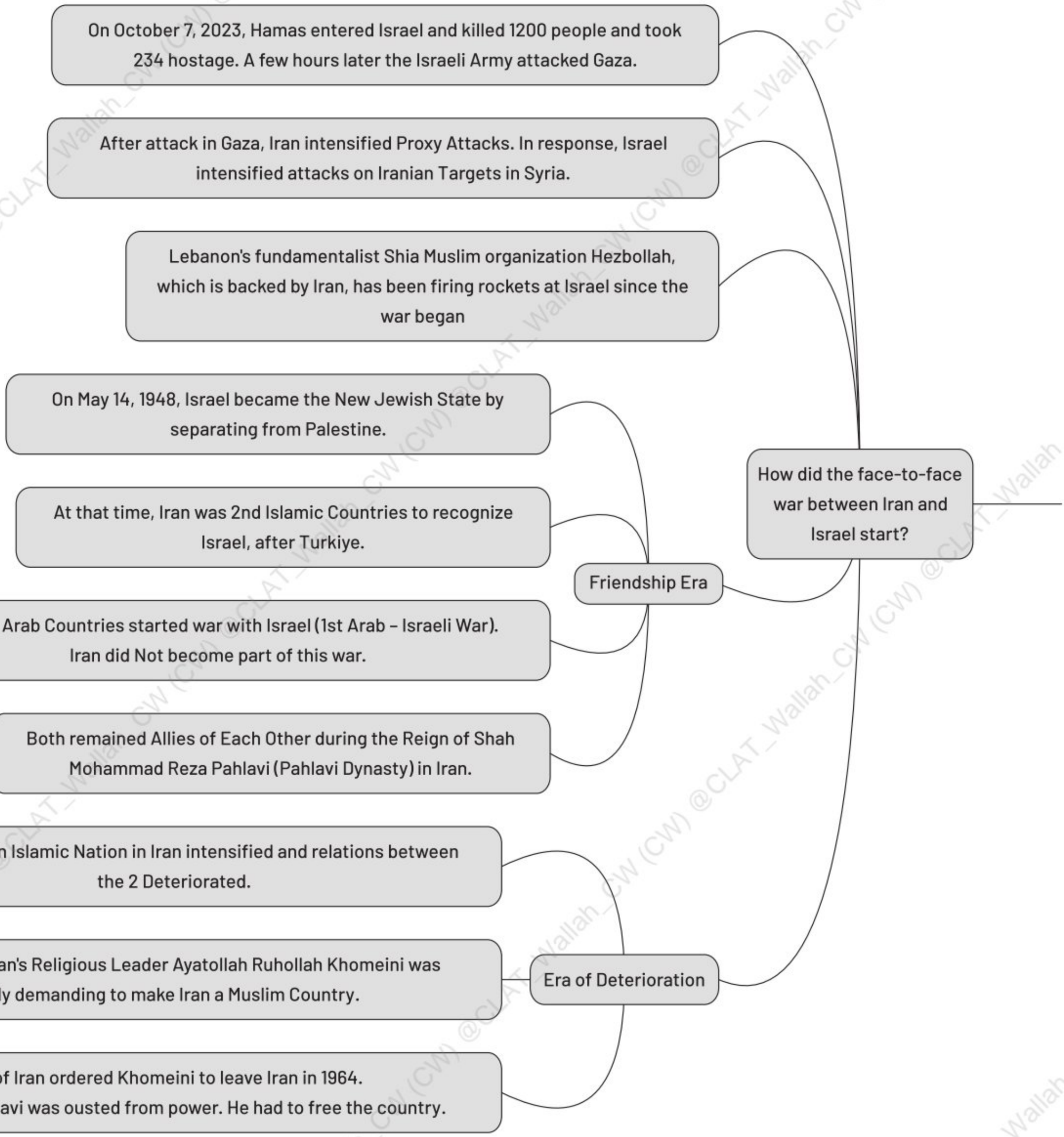
7. Who demanded to make Iran a Muslim country in the 1960s?
   (a) Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (b) Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini
   (c) Hosni Mubarak (d) Saddam Hussein

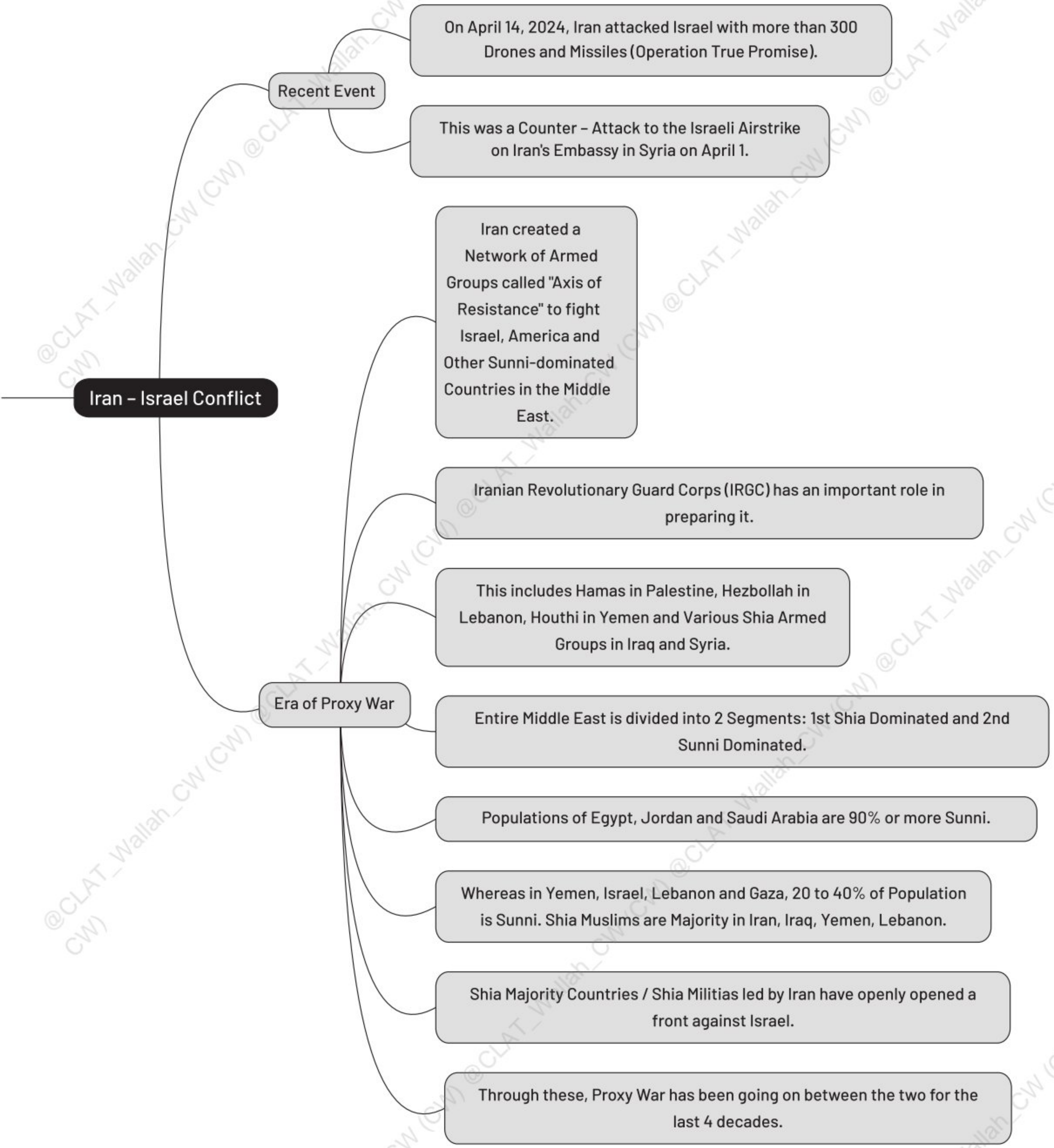
8. In which year was the Islamic State established in Iran, and Sharia Law was implemented?
   (a) 1948 (b) 1964 (c) 1979 (d) 2023

9. What did Ayatollah Khomeini consider Israel and America as?
   (a) Little Devil and Big Devil (b) Big Devil and Little Devil
   (c) Allies (d) Enemies

10. What is the name of the network of armed groups created by Iran to fight Israel, America, and other Sunni-dominated countries in the Middle East?
    (a) Axis of Resistance (b) Hezbollah (c) Hamas (d) IRGC

11. Which of the following is NOT a part of Iran's "Axis of Resistance"?
    (a) Hamas (b) Hezbollah (c) Al-Qaeda (d) Houthi


How did the face-to-face war between Iran and Israel start?
Friendship Era
On May 14, 1948, Israel became the New Jewish State by separating from Palestine.
At that time, Iran was 2nd Islamic Countries to recognize Israel, after Turkiye.
In 1948, Arab Countries started war with Israel (1st Arab – Israeli War). Iran did Not become part of this war.
Both remained Allies of Each Other during the Reign of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (Pahlavi Dynasty) in Iran.
Era of Deterioration
Demand for an Islamic Nation in Iran intensified and relations between the 2 Deteriorated.
In the 1960s, Iran's Religious Leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was loudly demanding to make Iran a Muslim Country.
• Therefore, Shah of Iran ordered Khomeini to leave Iran in 1964.
• In 1979, Shah Pahlavi was ousted from power. He had to free the country.
On October 7, 2023, Hamas entered Israel and killed 1200 people and took 234 hostage. A few hours later the Israeli Army attacked Gaza.
After attack in Gaza, Iran intensified Proxy Attacks. In response, Israel intensified attacks on Iranian Targets in Syria.
Lebanon's fundamentalist Shia Muslim organization Hezbollah, which is backed by Iran, has been firing rockets at Israel since the war began


Iran – Israel Conflict
Recent Event
On April 14, 2024, Iran attacked Israel with more than 300 Drones and Missiles (Operation True Promise).
This was a Counter – Attack to the Israeli Airstrike on Iran's Embassy in Syria on April 1.
Era of Proxy War
Iran created a Network of Armed Groups called "Axis of Resistance" to fight Israel, America and Other Sunni-dominated Countries in the Middle East.
Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) has an important role in preparing it.
This includes Hamas in Palestine, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Houthi in Yemen and Various Shia Armed Groups in Iraq and Syria.
Entire Middle East is divided into 2 Segments: 1st Shia Dominated and 2nd Sunni Dominated.
Populations of Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia are 90% or more Sunni.
Whereas in Yemen, Israel, Lebanon and Gaza, 20 to 40% of Population is Sunni. Shia Muslims are Majority in Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Lebanon.
Shia Majority Countries / Shia Militias led by Iran have openly opened a front against Israel.
Through these, Proxy War has been going on between the two for the last 4 decades.

12. Which country's population is 90% or more Sunni?
(a) Iran (b) Egypt (c) Yemen (d) Lebanon

13. Which country has a Shia Muslim majority?
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) Jordan (c) Iran (d) Israel

14. What is the name of Israel's short-range and ground-to-air air defense system?
(a) Patriot (b) Iron Dome (c) THAAD (d) Aegis

15. Which of the following is NOT one of the main systems of Israel's Iron Dome?
(a) Radar (b) Weapon Control (c) Missile Fire (d) Stealth Technology

16. What is the purpose of Israel's Iron Dome?
(a) Countering rockets, artillery, and mortars (b) Defending against aircraft and helicopters
(c) Both (a) and (b) (d) None of the above

17. What is Indrajaal?
(a) 1st Indigenous Drone Defence System (b) 1st Indigenous Missile Defence System
(c) 1st Indigenous Nuclear Defence System (d) None of the above

18. What is the name of Iran's Intelligence agency?
(a) MOSSAD (b) RAW
(c) SAVAK (d) None of the above

19. What is the name of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps?
(a) IRGC (b) IRCG (c) IRCC (d) IGRC

20. Red Sea account's for _____ % of India's exports.
(a) 10% (b) 30% (c) 50% (d) 70%

Scan the code
to join our
Instagram Channel





April 2024

TOPIC in NEWS

UK – Rwanda Asylum and Immigration Plan

Why in News?

The UK Parliament has passed the Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Bill, granting Britain's immigration authorities the power to deport any asylum seeker entering the UK "illegally" after January 2022 to Rwanda.

Explained:

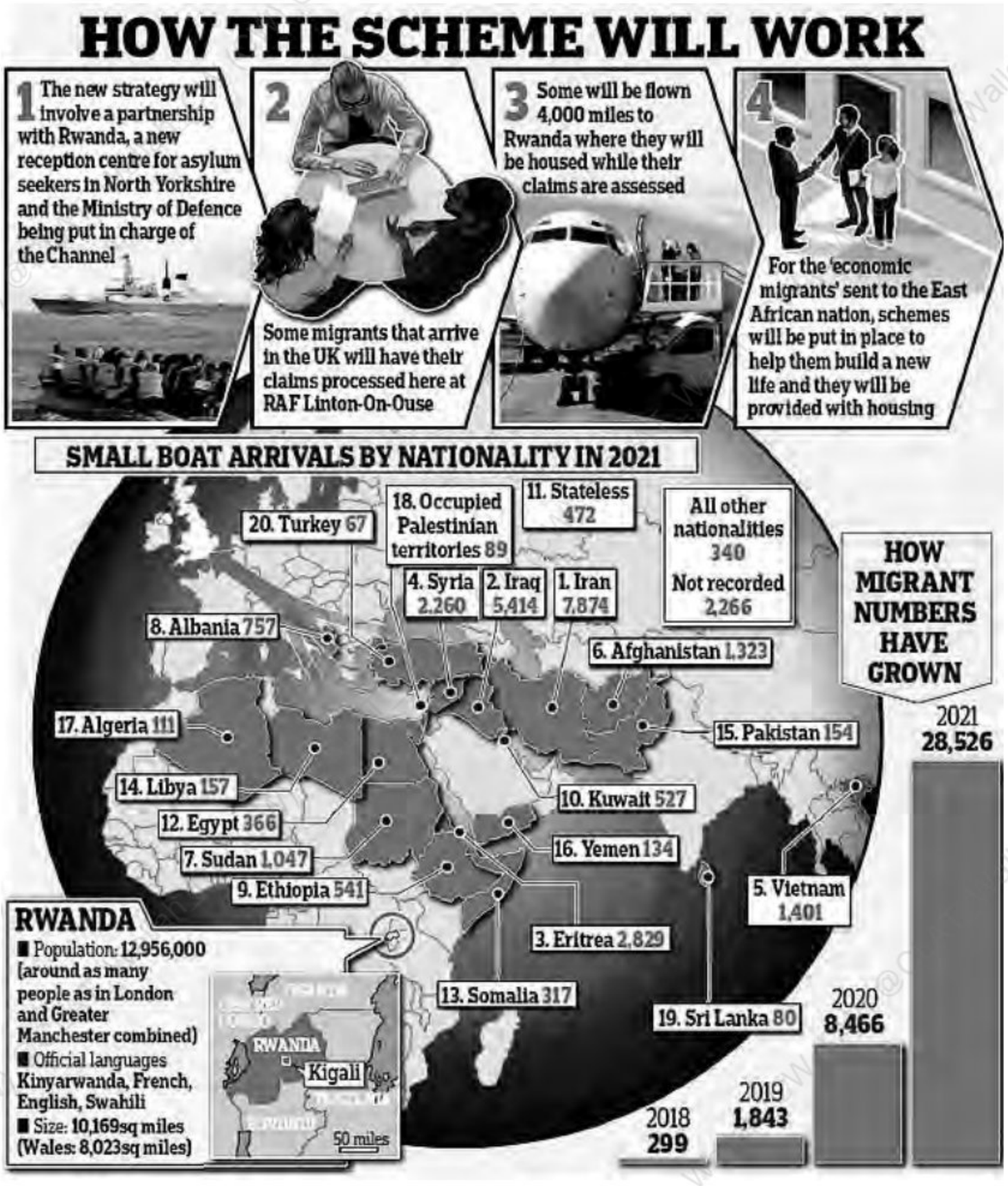
The UK Parliament has passed the Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Bill, allowing the deportation of asylum seekers who entered the UK illegally after January 2022 to Rwanda. This bill designates Rwanda as a "safe third country" despite concerns raised by the Supreme Court regarding Rwanda's human rights record. The bill aims to circumvent the court's ruling that Rwanda cannot be relied upon to refrain from mistreating asylum seekers due to instances of enforced disappearances and torture.

The bill has faced criticism for potentially violating the rule of law, exposing asylum seekers to inhumane treatment, and contravening the principle of non-refoulement, which prohibits the transfer of refugees to a country where they may face persecution or danger. Human rights groups have condemned Rwanda's track record, raising concerns about the potential human rights abuses and lack of due process for deported asylum seekers.

Way to marks:

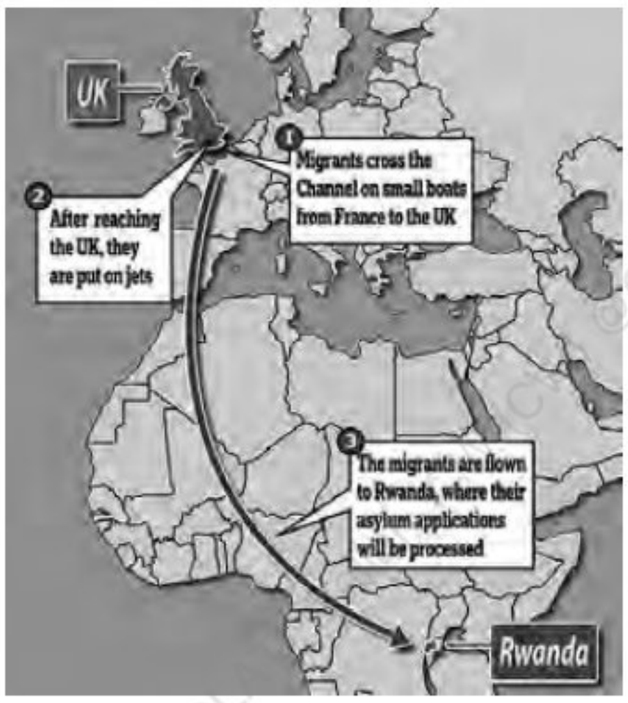
This applies to anyone who arrives in the UK without prior permission, regardless of their intention to claim asylum on legitimate grounds.

For more exam related material, scan the code to join our Telegram Channel



The Bill

- The House of Lords, the Upper House of the UK Parliament, has passed the Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Bill.
  - This bill designates Rwanda as a "Safe 3rd Country" for the purpose of deporting individuals.
  - Under this legislation, any asylum seekers who arrive in Britain illegally will be sent to Rwanda.
- The Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Bill is viewed as an attem pt to circumvent a Supreme Court ruling by designating Rwanda as a "Safe Destination" for asylum seekers.



- In the Supreme Court's ruling in 2023, it was determined that Rwanda could not be relied upon to refrain from mistreating asylum seekers due to its abysmal human rights record, which includes enforced disappearances and torture.
    - In response to this ruling, the UK government signed a new treaty with Rwanda in December 2023 to strengthen protections for migrants.
- The Safety of Rwanda Bill was subsequently passed to facilitate the deportation of asylum seekers to Rwanda, despite the concerns raised by the Supreme Court regarding Rwanda's human rights record.

UK Government's Policy on Rwanda

- In April 2022, former UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson signed a deal with the Rwandan Government, allowing the UK to send some asylum-seekers to Rwanda.
    - This move was hailed by the government as a measure to save countless lives from human trafficking, considering the dangerous circumstances in which migrants attempt to enter the UK.
- Under this scheme, individuals arrivin g in Britain as undocumented stowaways in trucks or boats would be transported 6,400 km to Rwanda.
    - Upon arrival, they would be assessed for eventual resettlement there.
    - As part of the pilot scheme, UK Government paid its Rwandan counterpart millions of pounds for housing and integrating migrants.
- Initially intended to last for five years, this scheme aimed to alleviate pressure on the UK's immigration system and provide alternative pathways for asylum-seekers.

Criticism of UK's Rwanda Plan

- **Violation of the Rule of Law**: The bill potentially overrides any existing laws preventing the deportation of migrants identified for removal, compelling

Need of the Bill

- *The need arises from the significant increase in the number of migrants arriving in Britain on small boats, which surged to 45,774 in 2022 from just 299 four years earlier.*
    - *This rise is attributed to Individuals seeking refuge who pay criminal gangs substantial sums of money to transport them across the Channel.*
- *The bill aims to address this situation by granting immigration authorities the power to deport any asylum seeker entering the UK "illegally" to Rwanda, irrespective of their reasons for seeking asylum.*

Rwandan Genocide

- *In Rwanda, about 85% of Population used to comprise of Hutus and 14% consisted of the Tutsi Minority (before the Genocide) and 1% of Other Communities.*
- *On 7 April 1994, President Juvenal Habyarimana (Hutu) was assassinated.*
    - *His murder was followed by Large Scale Violence against Minority Community of Tutsi's and Political Opponents.*
    - *In just 100 days in 1994, about 800,000 people were slaughtered in Rwanda by ethnic Hutu Extremists.*
    - *They were targeting Members of the Minority Tutsi Community as well as their Political Opponents, irrespective of their Ethnic Origin.*

courts and tribunals to treat Rwanda as a "safe country" for deportation.

- This could be seen as undermining the rule of law and due process.

- **Inhumane Treatment**: Amnesty International and other human rights groups have criticized Rwanda's human rights record, citing instances of ill-treatment of dissidents, journalists, and refugees.
- Sending asylum seekers to Rwanda could expose them to the risk of further human rights abuses and inhumane treatment.
- **Violation of the Principle of Non-Refoulement**: The bill may also violate the principle of non-refoulement, which is a core principle of international refugee law.
  - This principle prohibits the transfer of refugees to a country where they may face persecution or danger.
  - If asylum seekers are deported to Rwanda despite the risk of persecution or danger, it would contravene this fundamental principle of refugee protection.

India's stand on Refugee Convention

- India has chosen not to become a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, and it does not have a national refugee protection framework in place.
- Despite this, India continues to grant asylum to a large number of refugees, particularly those fleeing persecution and conflict in neighboring states.
  - While India does not have a formal refugee protection framework, it respects the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and provides assistance and protection to refugees under its auspices.
  - This includes refugees primarily from countries like Afghanistan and Myanmar.

1951 Refugee Convention

- *1951 Refugee Convention, along with its 1967 Protocol, serves as one of the key legal instruments governing refugee protection worldwide.*
- *With 149 state parties to either the Convention or Protocol, or both, these agreements outline the rights of refugees and the legal obligations of states to protect them.*

- In cases involving asylum seekers from non-neighboring countries, India conducts Refugee Status Determination (RSD) procedures before granting asylum.
- These procedures help determine whether individuals meet the criteria for refugee status and are in need of international protection.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

- The UN General Assembly approved the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, on 10th December 1948, at a meeting in Paris. This year marks the Seventy-five years of UDHR.
- It is a document that acts like a global road map for freedom and equality. It protects the rights of every individual, everywhere.
- The declaration is not a treaty and is not legally binding in itself. The principles set out in the Declaration have been incorporated into many countries' laws. It is viewed as the basis for international human rights law.

Human Rights Day

- *UDHR was given by United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 Dec 1948.*
- *The day originated in 1950 to adopt 10 December of each year as Human Rights Day.*
- ***Theme 2023:** Freedom, Equality and Justice for All*

World Refugee Day

- *Celebrated each year on 20 June.*
  - *1st time held on 20 June 2001.*
  - *Commemorating 50th anniversary of 1951 Convention.*
- *Originally known as Africa Refugee Day, before officially designated as International Day in Dec 2000.*
- ***Theme 2023**: Hope Away from Home*



National Human Rights Commission

ABOUT

It is a statutory body established on 12 October 1993 (in conformity with the Paris Principles), under the Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA) 1993 [Amended in 2019].

OBJECTIVES

The PHRA characterizes Human rights as the privileges connecting with life, freedom, fairness and poise of the individual ensured by the Constitution or typified in the International Covenants and enforceable by courts in India.



COMPOSITION

1 member, who is, or has been, a Judge of the SC. 2 member, who is, or has been, the Chief Justice of an HC. 3 Members, out of which at least one shall be a woman to be appointed from amongst persons having knowledge or practical experience in matters relating to human rights. 7 ex officio members – NCSC, NCST, NCBC, NCW, National Commission for Minorities, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights and the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities.

APPOINTMENT

By the President of India, on the recommendation of a committee consisting of – The PM (Chairperson), The Union Home Minister, The LoP in the Lok Sabha, The LoP in the Rajya Sabha, The Speaker of the Lok Sabha, The Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha.

FUNCTION

- Enquiry into complaints of violation of human rights or negligence in the prevention of such violation by a public servant.
- Studies treaties and international instruments and makes recommendations for their effective implementation to the GoI.
- Review factors that inhibit the enjoyment of human rights and recommend appropriate remedial measures.
- Undertake and promote research in the field of human rights.

Pepper it With • Syrian Crisis and refugees in Europe , Bhasan char Island and issues with it.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. What is the name of the bill passed by the House of Lords, the Upper House of the UK Parliament?
   (a) Safety of Rwanda (Asylum and Immigration) Bill
   (b) Immigration Reform Bill
   (c) UK-Rwanda Refugee Agreement
   (d) Refugee Protection Act

2. According to the bill, where will asylum seekers who arrive in Britain illegally be sent?
   (a) France (b) Rwanda (c) Italy (d) Germany

3. Which principle of international refugee law could the Safety of Rwanda Bill potentially violate?
   (a) Non-refoulement (b) Freedom of movement
   (c) Family reunification (d) Right to work

4. In which year did former UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson sign a deal with the Rwandan Government to send asylum-seekers to Rwanda?
   (a) 2020 (b) 2021 (c) 2022 (d) 2023

5. What is the approximate distance between the UK and Rwanda, where asylum-seekers will be transported?
   (a) 4,000 km (b) 5,000 km (c) 6,400 km (d) 7,500 km

6. According to Amnesty International and other human rights groups, what is one of the concerns about sending asylum seekers to Rwanda?
   (a) Risk of inhumane treatment (b) Language barriers
   (c) Cultural differences (d) Lack of job opportunities

7. Which country has the highest number of small boat arrivals in the UK in 2021?
   (a) Iran (b) Afghanistan (c) Eritrea (d) Vietnam

8. What is the population of Rwanda?
   (a) Around 10 million (b) Around 12.95 million
   (c) Around 15 million (d) Around 20 million

9. Which of the following is NOT one of the official languages of Rwanda?
   (a) Kinyarwanda (b) French (c) Swahili (d) English

10. What is the size of Rwanda in square miles?
    (a) 8,023 sq miles (b) 10,169 sq miles (c) 12,956 sq miles (d) 15,000 sq miles

11. Which country has not become a party to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol?
    (a) United Kingdom (b) India (c) Rwanda (d) France

12. How does India handle asylum seekers from non-neighboring countries? -
    (a) Conducts Refugee Status Determination (RSD) procedures
    (b) Automatically grants asylum
    (c) Deports them to their country of origin
    (d) Sends them to a third country

13. World Refugee Day was first time celebrated in the year.
    (a) 2002 (b) 2001 (c) 2004 (d) 2011

14. Which nationality had the second-highest number of small boat arrivals in the UK in 2021?
    (a) Iraq (b) Syria
    (c) Occupied Palestinian territories (d) Turkey

15. How many nationalities are listed under "All other nationalities" in the given data?
    (a) 340 (b) 472
    (c) 2,266 (d) Cannot be determined from the image

16. According to the information provided, which organization's mandate does India respect when providing assistance and protection to refugees?
    (a) United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
    (b) International Organization for Migration (IOM)
    (c) United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC)
    (d) Amnesty International

17. Which of the following countries is NOT listed among the top nationalities for small boat arrivals in the UK in 2021?
    (a) Sudan (b) Ethiopia (c) Egypt (d) Morocco

18. According to the information provided, what was one of the reasons cited by the UK government for the Rwanda scheme?
    (a) To save lives from human trafficking (b) To provide job opportunities for migrants
    (c) To strengthen cultural ties with Rwanda (d) To reduce overpopulation in the UK

19. World Refugee Day is celebrated is on?
    (a) 20th June (b) 21st June (c) 22th June (d) 23rd June

20. According to the information provided, how long was the UK's scheme with Rwanda initially intended to last?
    (a) 3 years (b) 5 years (c) 7 years (d) 10 years



India Delivers Bhramos to Philippines

Why in News?

India recently delivered the first batch of BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles to the Philippines, making it the first export order for the supersonic cruise missile.

Explained:

India's export of BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles to the Philippines marks a significant milestone, being the first export order for this advanced missile system. The delivery of three batteries of shore-based, anti-ship variants of the BrahMos enhances India's strategic influence in the Indo-Pacific region and strengthens defense ties with the Philippines. This export deal boosts India's defense manufacturing sector, showcasing its technological prowess and innovation in defense technology. It also underscores India's emergence as a key player in the global defense market while contributing to regional stability and security in the Indo-Pacific.

Way to marks:

India sends first batch of BrahMos to Philippines

- Philippines is acquiring the systems under the **Horizon 2** of the Revised Armed Forces of the **Philippines Modernization Programme.**
- It is a $375-million deal with India to deliver **three batteries of shore-based, anti-ship variants** of the BrahMos, becoming the first export customer for the **joint venture missile between India and Russia.**

About BrahMos

- **Introduction:** BrahMos is a joint venture between **DRDO and Russia's NPO Mashinostroyeniya** and the missile derives its name from **Brahmaputra and Moskva rivers**.
- **Launch Capability:** The missile is capable of being **launched from land, sea, sub-sea and air** against surface and sea-based targets and has been long inducted by the Indian armed forces.
- **Range**: The range of the missile was originally capped at **290 km** as per obligations of the **Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)**.

Following India's entry into the MTCR in 2016, the range has been extended

- **Technology**: BRAHMOS is a Two-Stage Missile with the first stage being solid-propellant booster engine and the second stage being liquid ramjet.
    - The missile has **stealth technology and guidance system** with advanced embedded software that provides the missile with special features.
- **Speed**: Up to 3 Mach speed in cruise phase.

- **Altitude:** Cruising up to 15 km and Terminal altitude is as low as 10 meters.
- **Warhead Capacity**: It carries a conventional warhead weighing 200 to 300 kgs.

About Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR):

- **Introduction:** It is an **informal and voluntary** political understanding among states that seek to limit the **proliferation of missiles and missile technology**.
  - It also includes **unmanned aerial vehicle technology** capable of carrying greater than **500 kg payload** for more than 300 km.
- **Members:** Currently **35 countries** are members of the MTCR.
- **Establishment**: **April 1987** by G-7 countries

The members are thus **prohibited from supplying such missiles and UAV systems** that are controlled by the MTCR to non-members.

Current Multilateral Control Regimes

Nuclear Suppliers Group	• Established: 1975 • Nuclear-related items
Australia Group	• Established: 1985 • Items related to chemical and biological weapons
Missile Technology Control Regime	• Established: 1985 • Missile-related items
Wassenaar Arrangement	• Established: 1996 • Conventional military-related items

Pepper it With

- India and its stand on NSG , Recent accidents of Tejas aircraft.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Under which program is the Philippines acquiring BrahMos missile systems?
   (a) Horizon 1 (b) Horizon 2 (c) Horizon 3 (d) Horizon 4

2. How much is the deal between India and the Philippines for the BrahMos missile systems?
   (a) $275 million (b) $350 million (c) $375 million (d) $400 million

3. What is the launch capability of the BrahMos missile?
   (a) Land only (b) Sea only (c) Sub-sea only (d) Land, sea, sub-sea, and air

4. The BrahMos missile is a joint venture between which two countries?
   (a) India and China (b) India and Russia
   (c) India and the United States (d) India and France

5. What is the origin of the name "BrahMos"?
   (a) It is named after two rivers (b) It is an acronym for "Ballistic Rocket Mosquito"
   (c) It is derived from ancient Sanskrit texts (d) It is named after two Russian scientists

6. What was the original range of the BrahMos missile as per the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)?
   (a) 200 km (b) 250 km (c) 290 km (d) 350 km

7. When did India enter the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)?
   (a) 2012 (b) 2014 (c) 2016 (d) 2018

8. How many countries are currently members of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)?
   (a) 25 (b) 30 (c) 35 (d) 40

9. What is the technology used in the BrahMos missile?
   (a) Single-stage engine (b) Two-stage engine (c) Three-stage engine (d) Four-stage engine

10. What is the speed of the BrahMos missile in the cruise phase?
    (a) Mach 1 (b) Mach 2 (c) Mach 3 (d) Mach 4

11. What is the altitude at which the BrahMos missile cruises?
    (a) Up to 10 km (b) Up to 15 km (c) Up to 20 km (d) Up to 25 km

12. What is the terminal altitude of the BrahMos missile?
    (a) 5 meters (b) 10 meters (c) 15 meters (d) 20 meters

13. What is the warhead capacity of the BrahMos missile?
(a) 100 to 200 kgs (b) 200 to 300 kgs (c) 300 to 400 kgs (d) 400 to 500 kgs

14. What is the primary purpose of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)?
(a) To promote missile proliferation
(b) To limit the proliferation of missiles and missile technology
(c) To increase missile production
(d) To encourage missile testing

15. When was the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) established?
(a) April 1977 (b) April 1987 (c) April 1997 (d) April 2007

16. What is the primary technology covered by the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)?
(a) Nuclear technology (b) Chemical weapons technology
(c) Missile technology (d) Space technology

17. What type of engine does the BrahMos missile have?
(a) Solid-propellant booster engine (b) Liquid-propellant booster engine
(c) Hybrid-propellant booster engine (d) Nuclear-propellant booster engine

18. What is the name of the first stage of the BrahMos missile engine?
(a) Booster engine (b) Ramjet engine
(c) Solid-propellant booster engine (d) Liquid-propellant booster engine

19. Missile Technology Control regime was established in the year?
(a) 1975
(b) 1985
(c) 1995
(d)1996

20. What is the range of the BrahMos missile after India's entry into the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR)?
(a) 300 km (b) 350 km (c) 400 km (d) 450 km



April 2024
TOPIC in NEWS

India allows FIIs to Invest in Green Bonds

Why in News?

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has allowed investments in the country's Sovereign Green Bonds (SGrBs) by Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIS).

This decision will expand the available capital for the country's ambitious objectives, as committed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the 2021 COP26 in Glasgow.

Explained:

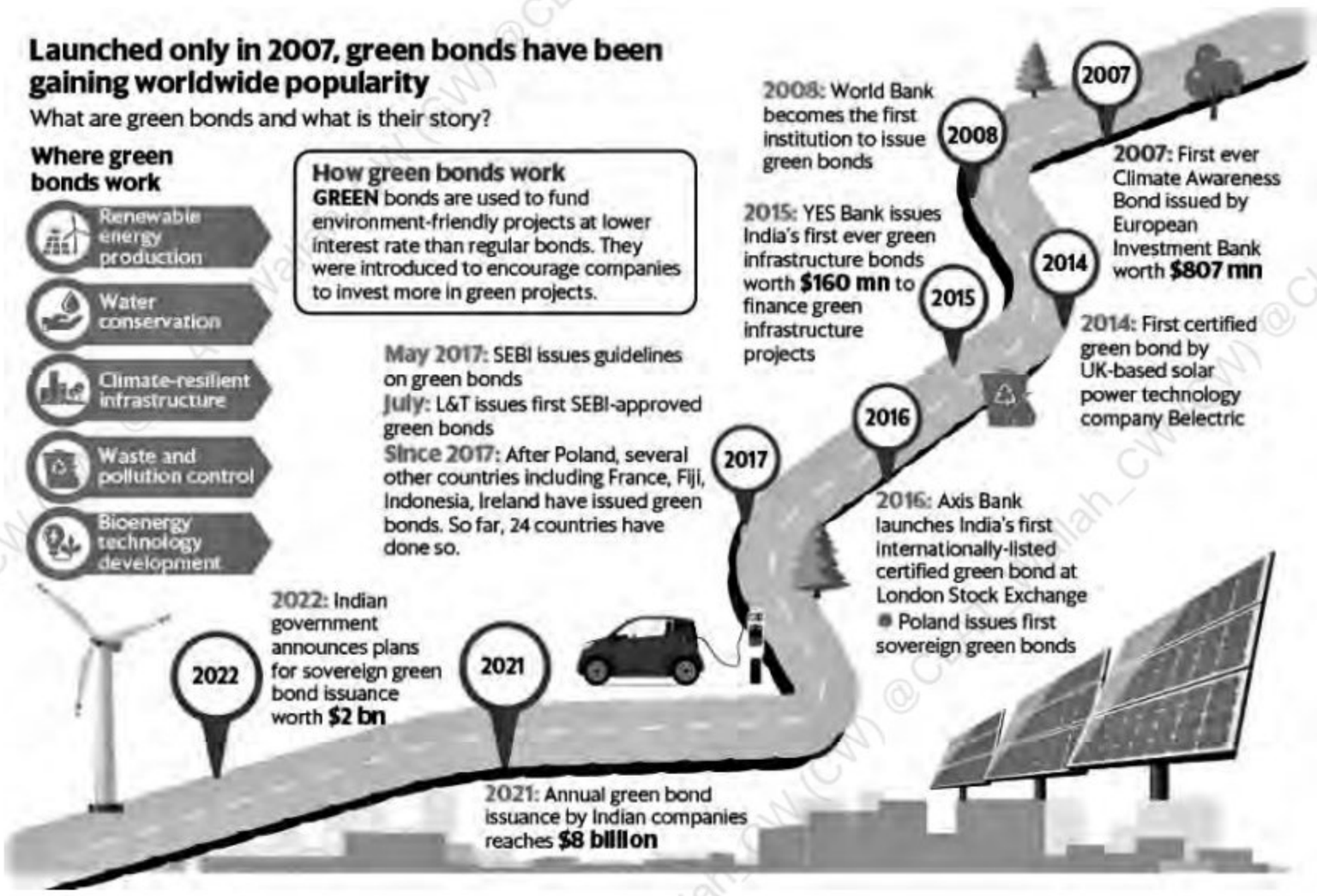
Green bonds are debt instruments issued to finance environmentally-friendly projects. India announced the issuance of Sovereign Green Bonds (SGrBs) in the 2022-23 budget to fund green projects and accelerate the transition to a low-carbon economy. Recently, the Reserve Bank of India allowed Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) to invest in SGrBs, aiming to attract more foreign capital for India's climate goals committed at COP26.

The proceeds from SGrBs are deposited in the Consolidated Fund of India and allocated to eligible green projects. SGrBs typically yield lower interest rates compared to conventional bonds, with the difference termed "greenium." The implementing agency is the Green Finance Working Committee, headed by the Chief Economic Advisor. By enabling FII investment in SGrBs, India hopes to diversify its investor base, increase liquidity in the green bond market, and mobilize additional funds for sustainable development projects.

Way to marks:

Green Bonds

- Issued by Companies, Countries and Multilateral Organisations to Exclusively Fund Projects that have Positive Environmental or Climate Benefits and provide Investors with Fixed Income Payments.
- The projects can include Renewable Energy, Clean Transportation and Green Buildings.
- The World Bank is a Major Issuer of Green Bonds.
- 1st ever Green Bond was issued by the World Bank in 2008.



Sovereign Green Bonds

- 1st announced in Union Budget 2022 – 23.
- **Type:** Government Debt
  - SGrBs yield Lower Interest than Conventional G – Secs.
  - Amount Foregone by a Bank by investing in SGrBs is called a "Greenium".
  - The Proceeds from SGrBs Issuance will be Deposited in Consolidated Fund of India.
- Specifically Funds Projects attempting to accelerate India's Transition to a Low Carbon Economy.
  - **Eligible Projects:** Green Projects, Assets and Expenditures that contribute to Environmental Sustainability and Climate Objectives.
- Aim: To mobilise Rs 16,000 crore through Issuance of Green Bonds in FY 2022 – 23.
  - RBI had issued SGrBs worth ₹16,000 crore in 2 Tranches in Jan and Feb (2023) with Maturities in 2028 & 2033.
- **Implementing Agency:** Green Finance Working Committee (Headed by: Chief Economic Advisor)

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs)

- Organizations or Entities that invest Money in the Financial Markets of a Country Other than their Own.
- Investors such as Insurance Companies, Pension Funds and Nation – States' Sovereign Wealth Funds.
- Investments by FIIs in India are Regulated by: Securities and Exchange Board of India
- **Ceilings on such invest ments are Maintained by:** Reserve Bank of India (RBI)

Why has RBI allowed FIIs to invest in its Green Bonds?

- Attracting Foreign Investments
- Widening Pool of Capital for India's Climate Goals

FPI- Foreign Portfolio Investment

- Investment by non-residents in Indian securities, such as shares, bonds, etc.
- Includes FII, QFI, and other small investors
- Less stable and more volatile
- Short-term investment horizon

FII- Foreign Institutional Investment

- A subset of FPI that involves investment by institutions, such as pension funds, mutual funds, etc.
- A part of the FPI category
- More active and influential
- Long-term investment horizon

Foreign Direct Investment	VS	Foreign Portfolio Investment
FDI refers to the investment made by foreign investors to obtain a substantial interest in the enterprise located in a different country.	Definition	FPI refers to investing in the financial assets of a foreign country, such as stocks or bonds available on an exchange.
Active investor	Role of Investors	Passive investor
Direct investment	Type	Indirect investment
High control	Degree of Control	Very low control
Long term investment	Term	Short term investment
Physical assets of the foreign country	Investment is Done on	Financial assets of the foreign country
Difficult	Entry, and Exit	Relatively easy
Stable	Risks Involved	Volatile



Pepper it With

- Masala Bond and European Market , Issue with Forest , CAMPA Fund Issue.

For more exam related videos and guidance, scan the code to join our YouTube Channel

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. What are Green Bonds used for?
   (a) Funding environmentally-friendly projects
   (b) Funding traditional infrastructure projects
   (c) Funding defense projects
   (d) Funding social welfare schemes

2. Which institution issued the first ever Green Bond in 2008?
   (a) World Bank
   (b) International Monetary Fund
   (c) Asian Development Bank
   (d) European Investment Bank

3. In which year did YES Bank issue India's first ever green infrastructure bonds?
   (a) 2013 (b) 2014 (c) 2015 (d) 2017

4. Which bank launched India's first internationally-listed green bond at the London Stock Exchange in 2016?
   (a) State Bank of India (b) ICICI Bank (c) Axis Bank (d) HDFC Bank

5. In which year did Poland issue the world's first sovereign green bonds?
   (a) 2015 (b) 2016 (c) 2017 (d) 2018

6. What is the term used for the amount foregone by a bank by investing in Sovereign Green Bonds compared to conventional government bonds?
   (a) Green premium (b) Greenium (c) Green discount (d) Green subsidy

7. Where will the proceeds from India's Sovereign Green Bonds issuance be deposited?
   (a) National Green Fund
   (b) Consolidated Fund of India
   (c) PM Green Fund
   (d) RBI Green Bond Fund

8. Which agency is implementing India's Sovereign Green Bonds program?
   (a) NITI Aayog
   (b) Green Finance Working Committee
   (c) Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change
   (d) Reserve Bank of India

9. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) are allowed to invest in which type of Indian bonds as per RBI?
   (a) Government Securities
   (b) Corporate Bonds
   (c) Sovereign Green Bonds
   (d) All of the above

10. What type of investors are categorized as FIIs?
    (a) Individual foreign investors
    (b) Foreign companies
    (c) Foreign institutional investors like pension funds
    (d) Both (b) and (c)

11. Which regulatory body oversees FII investments in India?
    (a) Reserve Bank of India
    (b) Securities and Exchange Board of India
    (c) Ministry of Finance
    (d) Ministry of Corporate Affairs

12. Green Bonds were first launched in which year?
    (a) 2005 (b) 2007 (c) 2009 (d) 2011

13. Which Indian government entity issues guidelines on green bonds?
    (a) Reserve Bank of India
    (b) Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)
    (c) Ministry of Finance
    (d) Green Finance Working Committee

14. As of 2022, how many countries have issued green bonds?
    (a) 12 (b) 18 (c) 24 (d) 30

15. What was the target amount for India's Sovereign Green Bonds issuance in FY 2022-23?
    (a) Rs.8,000 crore (b) Rs.12,000 crore (c) Rs.16,000 crore (d) Rs.20,000 crore

16. Who heads the Green Finance Working Committee in India?
    (a) Finance Minister
    (b) RBI Governor
    (c) Chief Economic Advisor
    (d) SEBI Chairperson

17. What is the purpose of Sovereign Green Bonds?
    (a) To fund renewable energy projects
    (b) To accelerate India's transition to a low-carbon economy
    (c) To fund infrastructure projects
    (d) Both (a) and (b)

18. What is the difference between FPI and FII?
    (a) FII is a subset of FPI involving institutional investors
    (b) FPI is a subset of FII involving institutional investors
    (c) There is no difference between FPI and FII
    (d) FPI refers to investments by individuals, while FII refers to institutional investments

19. Which type of investment is considered more volatile and short-term?
    (a) Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)
    (b) Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI)
    (c) Both are equally volatile
    (d) Both are equally stable

20. Which type of investment provides higher control to the investor?
    (a) Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)
    (b) Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI)
    (c) Both provide equal control
    (d) Neither provides control



US Priority Watch List

Why in News?

USTR Special Report 301 in the United States adds India to the "Priority Watch List" (PWL) of countries along with China, Russia and Venezuela due to concerns over the protection and enforcement of Intellectual Property (IP).

Explained:

The United States Trade Representative (USTR) has consistently listed India in its annual Special 301 Report, including in 2020 and 2021, due to concerns over the protection and enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). IPR refers to legal rights granted to creators and owners of intellectual works, such as inventions, literary and artistic works, symbols, names, images, and designs, protecting them from unauthorized use. Examples include patents, copyrights, trademarks, and trade secrets.

India's inclusion in the Priority Watch List (PWL) of the Special 301 Report, along with countries like China and Russia, indicates serious allegations of IPR violations and poor regulatory enforcement. The Indian government has taken steps to address these concerns, implementing the National IPR Policy 2016, establishing the Cell for IPR Promotion and Management (CIPAM), and launching initiatives like the National Intellectual Property Awareness Mission (NIPAM) and the Scheme for Facilitating Startups Intellectual Property Protection (SIPP). However, the USTR's decision suggests that more efforts are needed to strengthen India's IPR regime, address regulatory barriers, and enhance enforcement mechanisms to safeguard the interests of domestic and foreign innovators.

Way to marks:

- For the years including 2020 and 2021, India is listed in the USTR Special 301 Report.
- USTR removed the Dominican Republic and Uzbekistan from its monitoring list.
- Due to a full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Special 301 research in Ukraine has been suspended.

Special 301 Report

- An annual review of the global status of IP protection and enforcement.
- Identifies Trading Partners that Lack Effective Protection and Enforcement of Intellectual Property (IP) Rights or Prevent Market Access for US Innovators and Creators reliant on IP Protection.
- Mandated by Section 182 of US Trade Act of 1974.
- Released By: The United States Trade Representative
- Although the USA does not take immediate action against countries on the "priority watchlist" though, if the country's IP status deteriorates further, it is placed in the "Priority Country".

Priority Watch List (PWL)

- Countries involved in PWL face very serious allegations of IP protection and poor regulatory enforcement.
- If substantial improvement cannot be demonstrated, the USTR may initiate a formal trade investigation or impose sanctions.
- 7 Trading Partners on Priority Watch List: Argentina, Chile, China, India, Indonesia, Russia, Venezuela

Watch List (WL)

- Countries placed on Watch List have some concerning IP Practices, but the issues may Not be as Severe as those on PWL.
- USTR uses the Watch List to monitor and encourage countries to strengthen their IP Governance.
- 20 Trading Partners on Watch List: Algeria, Barbados, Belarus, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Ecuador, Egypt, Guatemala, Mexico, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Vietnam.

Concerns Raised Related to India

- Inadequate IP Enforcement
- High Rates of Online Piracy
- Backlog in Trademark Opposition Cases
- Insufficient Legal Mechanisms for Protecting Trade Secrets
- High Customs Duties on IP-Intensive Products
- Less Effective

Indian Policy on IPR Protection

- National IPR Policy 2016: Encompasses all IPR in a single process document that sets out an institutional framework for the implementation, monitoring and review of IP legislation
- Cell for IPR Promotion and Management (CIPAM): Established to ensure the implementation of the National IPR Policy.
- National Intellectual Property Awareness Mission (NIPAM): Special program for IP awareness and basic training in educational institutions.

  Scheme for Facilitating Startups Intellectual Property Protection (SIPP): To foster innovation and entrepreneurship by providing a supportive ecosystem for start-ups to protect and manage their IP assets.



What is IPR ?

- Intellectual property rights(IPR) are the rights granted to individuals over their original creative works such as inventions, literary and artistic work, designs and symbols, names, and images in commerce

TRIPS Agreement

- It is the most comprehensive multilateral intellectual property agreement (IP).
- It came into force in 1995.
- It is binding to all the signatories.

Types of Intellectual property rights

- Copyright
- Trademark
- Geographical Indications
- Patents
- Plant variety protection
- Design
- Semiconductor and layouts

Copyright

- Copyright is granted to books, music, paintings, sculpture and films, computer programs, databases, advertisements, maps and technical drawings.
- Legal Provisions : **Copyright Act 1957**
- Administered by : **Copyrights Office, Ministry of Commerce and Industry**
- Period : **60 years**

Trademark

- Trademark is granted to a name, word, phrase, logo, symbol, design, image, or combination of these elements.
- Legal Provisions : **Trademark act, 1999**
- Administered by : **DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce & Industry**
- Period : **10 years**

Geographical Indications

- It is a sign used on products that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities that are due to that specific geographical origin.
- Legal Provisions : **Geographical Indication of Goods (Registration & protection) Act, 1999.**
- Administered by : **DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce and Industry**
- Period : **10 years**

Patents

- It is given to new products and processes.
- Legal Provisions : **Patent acts, 1970**
- Administered by : **DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce & Industry**
- Period : **20 years**

Plant variety protection

- These rights are given to the farmers and plant breeders to encourage the development of new varieties of plants.
- Legal Provisions : **Protection of Plant varieties and Farmers' right act, 2001.**
- Administered by : **Ministry of Agriculture**
- Period : **15 years to field Crops & 18 years to trees and vines**

Design

- Design may consist of 3D features such as shape of an article or 2D features such as Patterns, lines, or color.
- Legal Provisions : **Design Act,2000**
- Administered by : **DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce & Industry**
- Period : **10 Years (5 Grace years)**

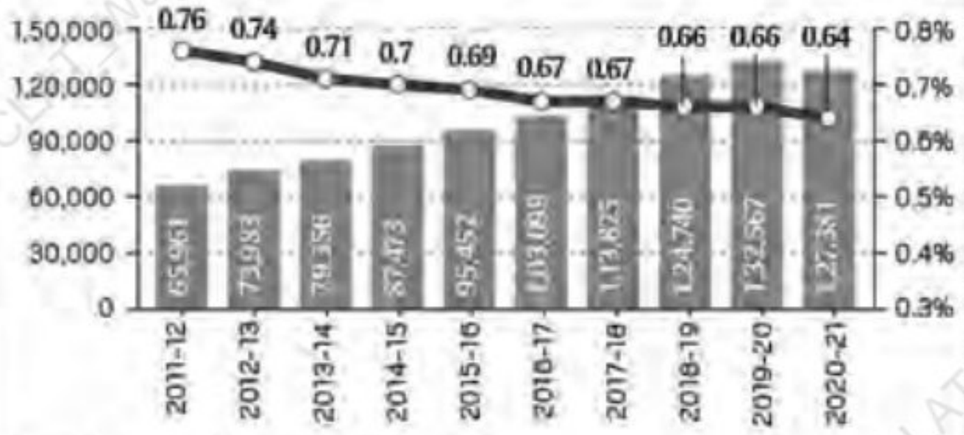
Semiconductor and layouts

- It means a layout of transistors and other circuitry elements and expressed in any manner in semiconductor integrated circuits.
- Legal Provisions : **Semi- conductors and Integrated Layouts design act, 2000**
- Administered by : **Department of electronics and IT, Ministry of Communication, and IT.**
- Period : **10 years**

Key indicators: How India compares with others

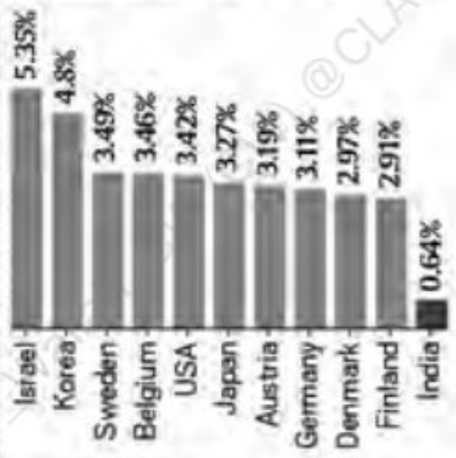
India compares unfavourably with the world's best on R&D expenditure as percentage of GDP — and the number has trended downward over the past decade. India has far fewer researchers per million population compared with China, Brazil, or the US

EXPENDITURE ON R&D (ALL PUBLIC PLUS PRIVATE)



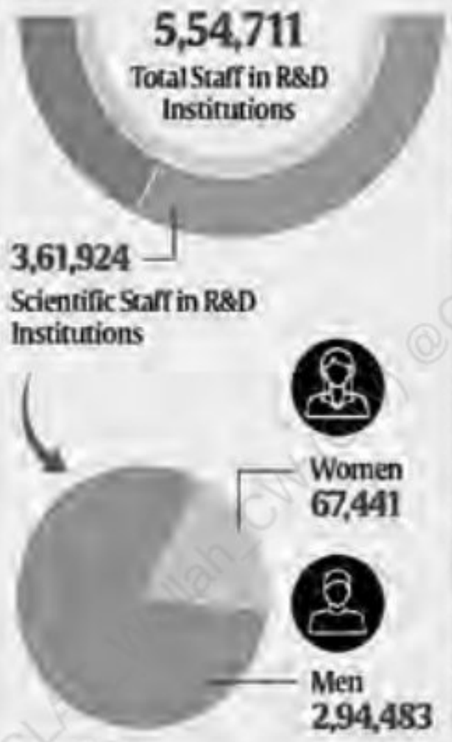
Source: Department of Science and Technology (DST)

TOP TEN COUNTRIES WITH MAXIMUM EXPENDITURE ON R&D AS % OF GDP



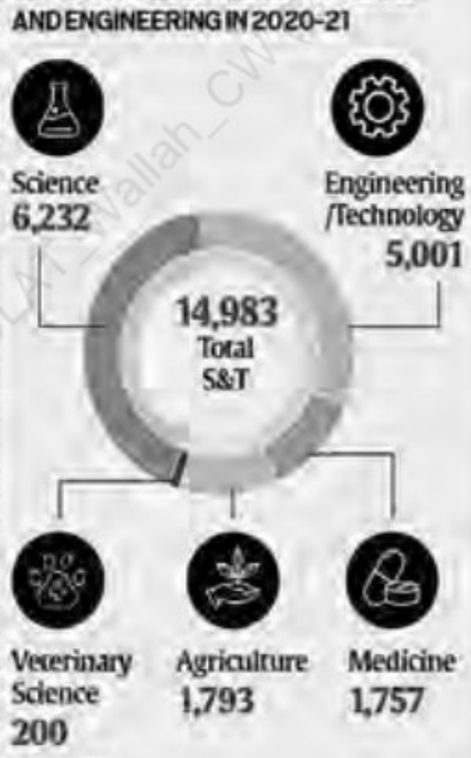
Source: UNESCO Science Report 2021

WOMEN IN SCIENCE (2021)



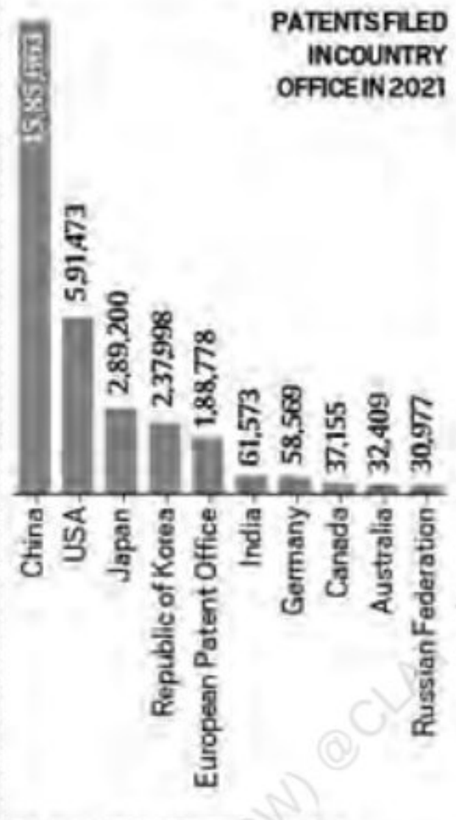
Source: DST

DOCTORATES AWARDED IN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING IN 2020-21



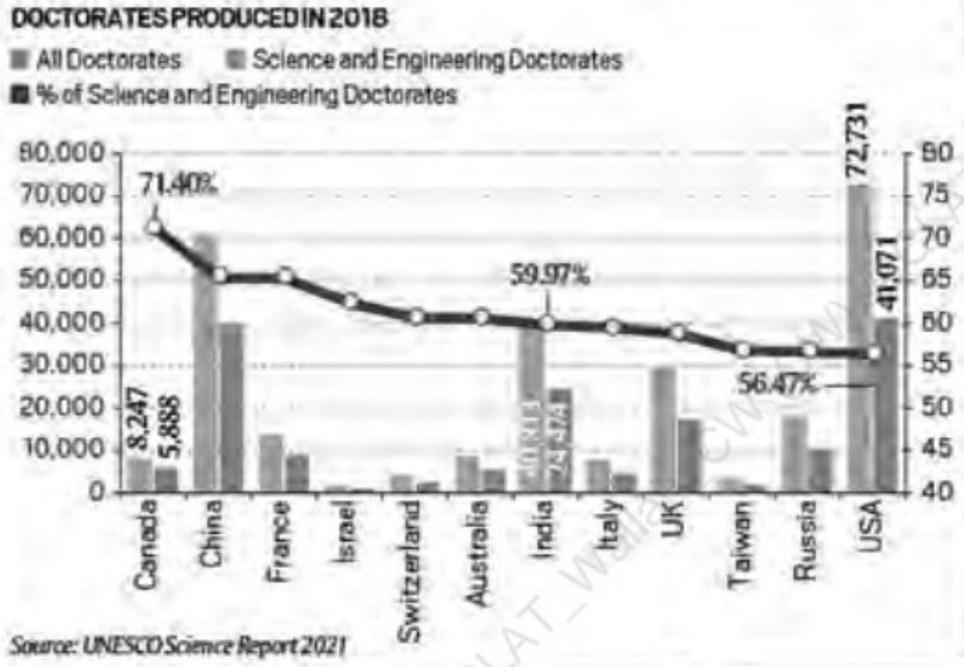
Source: DST

PATENTS FILED IN COUNTRY OFFICE IN 2021



Source: UNESCO Science Report 2021

DOCTORATES PRODUCED IN 2018



Source: UNESCO Science Report 2021

RESEARCHERS PER MILLION POPULATION

Israel	8,342
Singapore	7,287
Japan	5,455
USA	4,821
United Kingdom	4,684
Australia	4532
Canada	4516
Russian Federation	2,722
China	1585
Brazil	888
South Africa	484
Mexico	349
India	262

Source: UNESCO Science Report 2021

Graphic: Ritesh Kumar

Pepper it With

- Recent GI tags in India, COVID and Waiver for IPRs

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. What is the Special 301 Report?
   (a) A review of global economic status
   (b) An annual review of IP protection and enforcement worldwide
   (c) A report on environmental protection
   (d) A report on global health issues

2. Who releases the Special 301 Report?
   (a) World Trade Organization (WTO) (b) United Nations (UN)
   (c) The United States Trade Representative (d) European Union (EU)

3. What is the main purpose of the Special 301 Report?
   (a) To identify countries lacking effective IP protection
   (b) To promote global trade agreements
   (c) To monitor environmental regulations
   (d) To assess global health standards

4. Which section of the US Trade Act of 1974 mandates the Special 301 Report?
   (a) Section 182 (b) Section 301 (c) Section 401 (d) Section 501

5. What action does the USTR take if a country's IP status deteriorates further after being placed on the Priority Watch List?
   (a) Immediate sanctions (b) Formal trade investigation
   (c) Removal from the list (d) No action taken

6. How many countries are on the Priority Watch List in the Special 301 Report?
   (a) 10 (b) 5 (c) 7 (d) 15

7. Which of the following is NOT one of the countries on the Priority Watch List?
   (a) Argentina (b) China (c) Turkey (d) Venezuela

8. What action may the USTR take against countries on the Watch List?
   (a) Initiate a formal trade investigation (b) Impose sanctions
   (c) Issue a warning letter (d) Monitor and encourage improvement

9. How many countries are on the Watch List in the Special 301 Report?
   (a) 15 (b) 20 (c) 25 (d) 30

10. Which of the following countries is NOT on the Watch List?
    (a) Brazil (b) Canada (c) France (d) Mexico

11. What is the purpose of the National IPR Policy 2016 in India?
    (a) To promote global trade agreements (b) To implement, monitor, and review IP legislation
    (c) To monitor environmental regulations (d) To assess global health standards

12. What is CIPAM?
    (a) A global IP protection agency
    (b) A program for IP awareness
    (c) A special task force for environmental protection
    (d) A trade promotion organization

13. What does NIPAM stand for?
    (a) National Intellectual Property Awareness Mission
    (b) National Industrial Policy and Management
    (c) National Investment Promotion and Management
    (d) National Innovation Program for Advanced Manufacturing

14. What is the purpose of the Scheme for Facilitating Startups Intellectual Property Protection (SIPP)?
    (a) To promote global trade agreements
    (b) To foster innovation and entrepreneurship by providing a supportive ecosystem for start-ups
    (c) To monitor environmental regulations
    (d) To assess global health standards

15. TRIPS Agreement was started in the year?
    (a) 1994 (b) 1995 (c) 1996 (d) None of the above

16. Legal Provisions regarding copyright are provided under?
    (a) Copyrights Act 1957 (b) IPR Act 1958 (c) TRIPS Act 1959 (d) None of the above

17. Patent is having a lifespan of?
    (a) 20 (b) 10 (c) 15 (d) 20

18. Copyright is having a lifespan of?
    (a) 30 Years
    (b) 40 Years
    (c) 50 Years
    (d) 60 Years

19. Which of the following is NOT a function of the National IPR Policy 2016?
    (a) Implementation of IP legislation
    (b) Monitoring of IP regulations
    (c) Review of global trade agreements
    (d) Setting an institutional framework for IP legislation

20. GI Tags are given by_____ ministry?
    (a) Minister of Home affairs
    (b) DPIIT, Minister of Commerce & Industry
    (c) Ministry of Culture
    (d) None of the above

GOI Application to International Seabed Authority

Why in News?

- India has applied with International Seabed Authority for rights to explore two vast tracts in Indian Ocean seabed.
- These rights are specific to areas that are part of open ocean, where no countries can claim sovereignty.

Explained:

India has applied to the International Seabed Authority for exploration rights over two vast areas in the Indian Ocean seabed. These areas are located in international waters, beyond the exclusive economic zones of any country, where no nation can claim sovereignty. The areas in question are the Carlsberg Ridge and the AN Seamount, spanning hundreds of thousands of square kilometers. India seeks to explore these regions for polymetallic sulphides, which are mineral-rich deposits formed near hydrothermal vents on the ocean floor. If granted exploration rights, India would be able to conduct resource assessments and potentially exploit these deep-sea mineral resources in the future, in accordance with international laws and regulations.

Way to marks:

Applied regions are:

- For exploration of polymetallic sulfides in Indian Ocean Ridge (Carlsberg Ridge), located in Central Indian Ocean.
- For exploration of cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts of Afanasy-Nikitin(AN) Seamount in Central Indian Ocean.

  Currently, India holds two contracts for exploration in Indian Ocean. These are
  - For exploration for polymetallic nodules in Central Indian Ocean Basin.
  - Polymetallic nodules contain manganese, iron, nickel, copper, cobalt, and lead. These metals are of economic and
- Seabed exploration outside of territorial limits are decided by United Nations Convention on Law of Sea(UNCLOS).



About UNCLOS :

- *The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982 is an international agreement that establishes the legal framework for marine and maritime activities.*
- *It is the only international convention which stipulates a framework for state jurisdiction in maritime spaces. It provides a different legal status to different maritime zones.*
- *168 nations have ratified the agreement and India is also a party to this.*
- ***Headquarters:** Jamaica*
- *Bodies established under UNCLOS are:*
  - *International Seabed Authority,*
  - *International Tribunal for Law of the Sea and*
  - *Commission on Limits of the Continental Shelf.*

Several countries, including India, France, Russia, Germany, China, Singapore, and the UK, have sought licenses for mineral exploration in international waters.

Licenses have been granted for exploration in four areas:

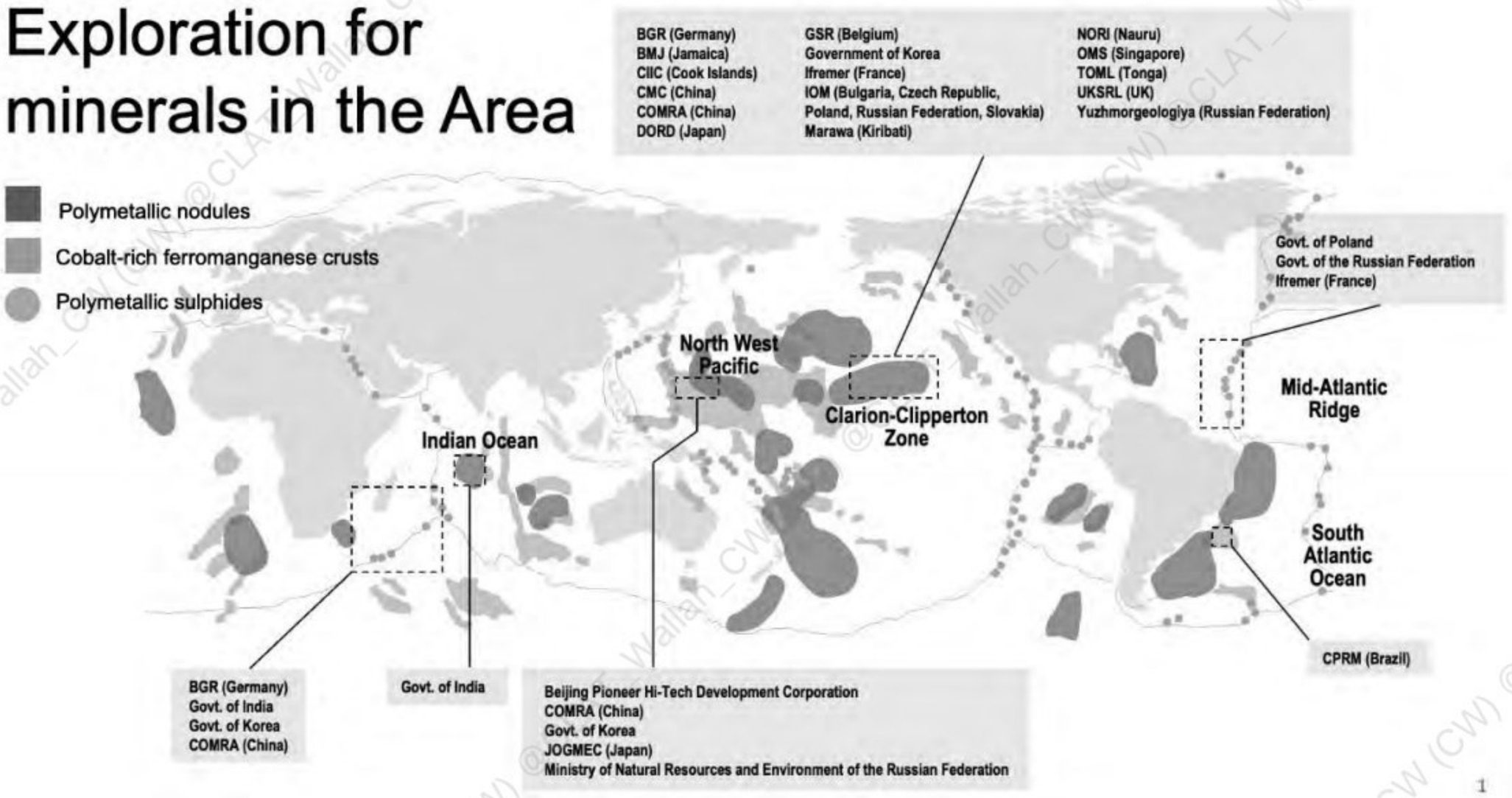
- The Pacific Ocean's Clarion Clipperton Zone between Hawaii and Mexico
- The Magellan Seamount in the northwest Pacific
- Two sites in the Indian Ocean Ridge
- The Rio Grande Rise in the southern Atlantic Ocean

- India has applied for licenses to explore two additional areas - the AN Seamount, and a 300,000 square km region called the Carlsberg Ridge in the central Indian Ocean, which may contain polymetallic sulphides rich in copper, zinc, gold and silver near hydrothermal vents.
- India has previously secured rights to explore two other basins in the central Indian Ocean. It has been studying the seabed and conducting test mining for around two decades through organizations like the National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) and National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), demonstrating its commitment to marine exploration and resource assessment.

Extra Shots

Sagarmala Programme

The Sagarmala Programme was approved by the Union Cabinet in 2015 which aims at holistic port infrastructure development along the 7,516-km long coastline through modernisation, mechanisation and computerisation.



What is India's Deep Ocean Mission?

- *Deep Ocean Mission seeks to develop the technologies required for exploring and then, extracting minerals in the deep seabed.*
- *Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) will be the nodal Ministry implementing this multi-institutional ambitious mission.*
- *It would develop a manned submersible (MATSYA 6000) that can carry three people to a depth of 6,000 meters in the ocean with a suite of scientific sensors and tools.*
- *It will pursue technological innovations for exploration and conservation of deep-sea biodiversity through "bioprospecting of deep-sea flora and fauna and studies on sustainable utilization of deep-sea bio-resources.*
- *The mission will seek to explore the prospects of deriving energy and freshwater from the ocean through "studies and detailed engineering design for offshore ocean thermal energy conversion (OTEC)-powered desalination plants.*

Samudrayaan

- *A crewed expedition to reach a depth of 6,000 meters to the ocean bed in the central Indian Ocean. The mission is expected to be launched in 2026*

Important International Organisations

Commission of Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)

- It was established by international convention in 1982, with the objective of conserving Antarctic marine life.
- Secretariat is based in Hobart, Tasmania.
- Currently, CCAMLR has 25 Members and 11 Acceding States.
- India is one of the members of CCAMLR.

Extra Shots

The scheme encompasses a total of 16 sub-projects addressing ocean development activities such as Services, Technology, Resources, Observations and Science.

Implementation period is from 2017-18 to 2019-20.

The project will be implemented by Ministry of Earth Sciences.

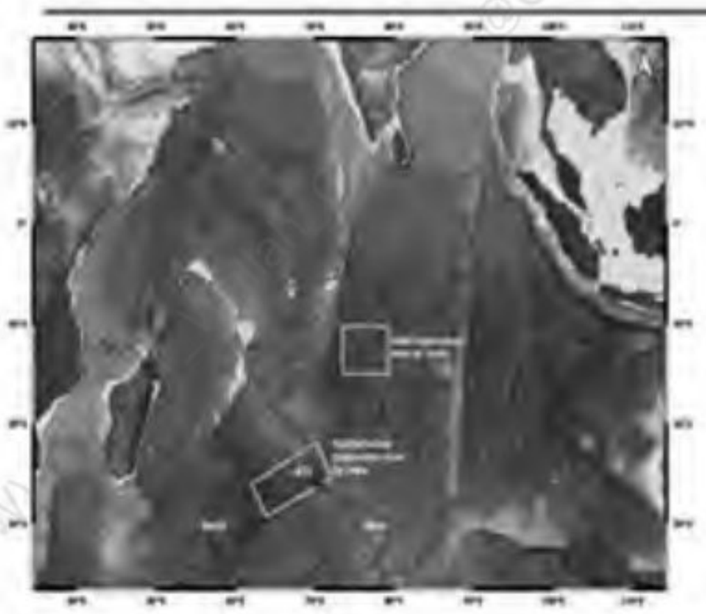
International Seabed Authority [ISBA]

- It was established under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea ,to organize, regulate and control all mineral-related activities in the international seabed area beyond the limits of national jurisdiction
- It is based in Kingston, Jamaica.
- It has 168 members.
- India is one of the member countries.

Extra Shots

UN Decade of Ocean Science:

The UN General Assembly has declared the decade of 2021-2030 as the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development ('the Ocean Decade'), which aims to stimulate ocean science and knowledge generation to produce new opportunities and create public awareness on the usefulness of ocean for its sustainable use.



Exploration of Deep Sea Minerals Polymetallic Nodules

Estimated Quantity: 380 MMT, Copper, Nickel, Cobalt and Manganese

Estimated Economic Benefits: 116 Billion US Dollars

India has the on-going contract with the International Seabed Authority (ISBA) for exploration of Polymetallic Nodules



Exploration of Hydrothermal Sulphides

India has a 15-year contract on exploration of hydrothermal sulphides over the South Indian Ocean.

However, exploration is a major challenge as temps hover around 400-500 °C.

Pepper it With

- Oceangate Tragedy
- Titanic 2 in Making

For more exam related videos and guidance, scan the code to join our YouTube Channel

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following regions has India applied for exploration of polymetallic sulfides?
   (a) Central Indian Ocean Basin
   (b) Indian Ocean Ridge (Carlsberg Ridge)
   (c) Afanasy-Nikitin (AN) Seamount
   (d) Both (b) and (c)

2. For which mineral has India applied for exploration rights in the Afanasy-Nikitin (AN) Seamount?
   (a) Polymetallic nodules
   (b) Polymetallic sulfides
   (c) Cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts
   (d) Manganese nodules

3. How many contracts for exploration does India currently hold in the Indian Ocean?
   (a) One
   (b) Two
   (c) Three
   (d) Four

4. Which of the following metals are typically found in polymetallic nodules?
   (a) Manganese, iron, nickel, copper
   (b) Cobalt, lead, zinc, silver
   (c) Manganese, iron, nickel, copper, cobalt, lead
   (d) Gold, silver, platinum, palladium

5. Which international convention establishes the legal framework for marine and maritime activities?
   (a) United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
   (b) United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)
   (c) International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships
   (d) Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal

6. How many nations have ratified the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)?
   (a) 150
   (b) 168
   (c) 185
   (d) 193

7. Where is the headquarters of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) located?
   (a) New York, USA
   (b) Geneva, Switzerland
   (c) Kingston, Jamaica
   (d) The Hague, Netherlands

8. Which of the following bodies is NOT established under UNCLOS?
   (a) International Seabed Authority
   (b) International Tribunal for Law of the Sea
   (c) Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf
   (d) International Maritime Organization

9. Which country has sought licenses for mineral exploration in international waters, according to the given information?
   (a) India
   (b) France
   (c) Russia
   (d) All of the above

10. In which ocean is the Clarion Clipperton Zone located, where exploration licenses have been granted?
    (a) Indian Ocean (b) Pacific Ocean (c) Atlantic Ocean (d) Arctic Ocean

11. Which of the following is NOT one of the areas where exploration licenses have been granted?
    (a) Magellan Seamount (b) Indian Ocean Ridge
    (c) Mariana Trench (d) Rio Grande Rise

12. What is the objective of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)?
    (a) To regulate fishing activities in the Antarctic region
    (b) To conserve Antarctic marine life
    (c) To explore mineral resources in the Antarctic seabed
    (d) To monitor climate change in the Antarctic region

13. Where is the secretariat of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) based?
    (a) Hobart, Tasmania (b) Canberra, Australia
    (c) Wellington, New Zealand (d) Cape Town, South Africa

14. How many member countries does the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) currently have?
    (a) 20 (b) 25 (c) 30 (d) 35

15. Is India a member of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)?
    (a) Yes (b) No
    (c) Information not provided (d) India is an acceding state

16. What is the primary objective of the International Seabed Authority (ISBA)?
    (a) To regulate fishing activities in international waters
    (b) To organize, regulate and control mineral-related activities in the international seabed area
    (c) To monitor environmental pollution in the oceans
    (d) To facilitate maritime trade and transportation

17. Under which international convention was the International Seabed Authority (ISBA) established?
    (a) United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
    (b) United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
    (c) International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships
    (d) Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal

18. Where is the headquarters of the International Seabed Authority (ISBA) located?
    (a) New York, USA
    (b) Geneva, Switzerland
    (c) Kingston, Jamaica
    (d) The Hague, Netherlands

19. How many member countries does the International Seabed Authority (ISBA) have?
    (a) 150
    (b) 168
    (c) 185
    (d) 193

20. Is India a member country of the International Seabed Authority (ISBA)?
    (a) Yes
    (b) No
    (c) Information not provided
    (d) India is an observer state

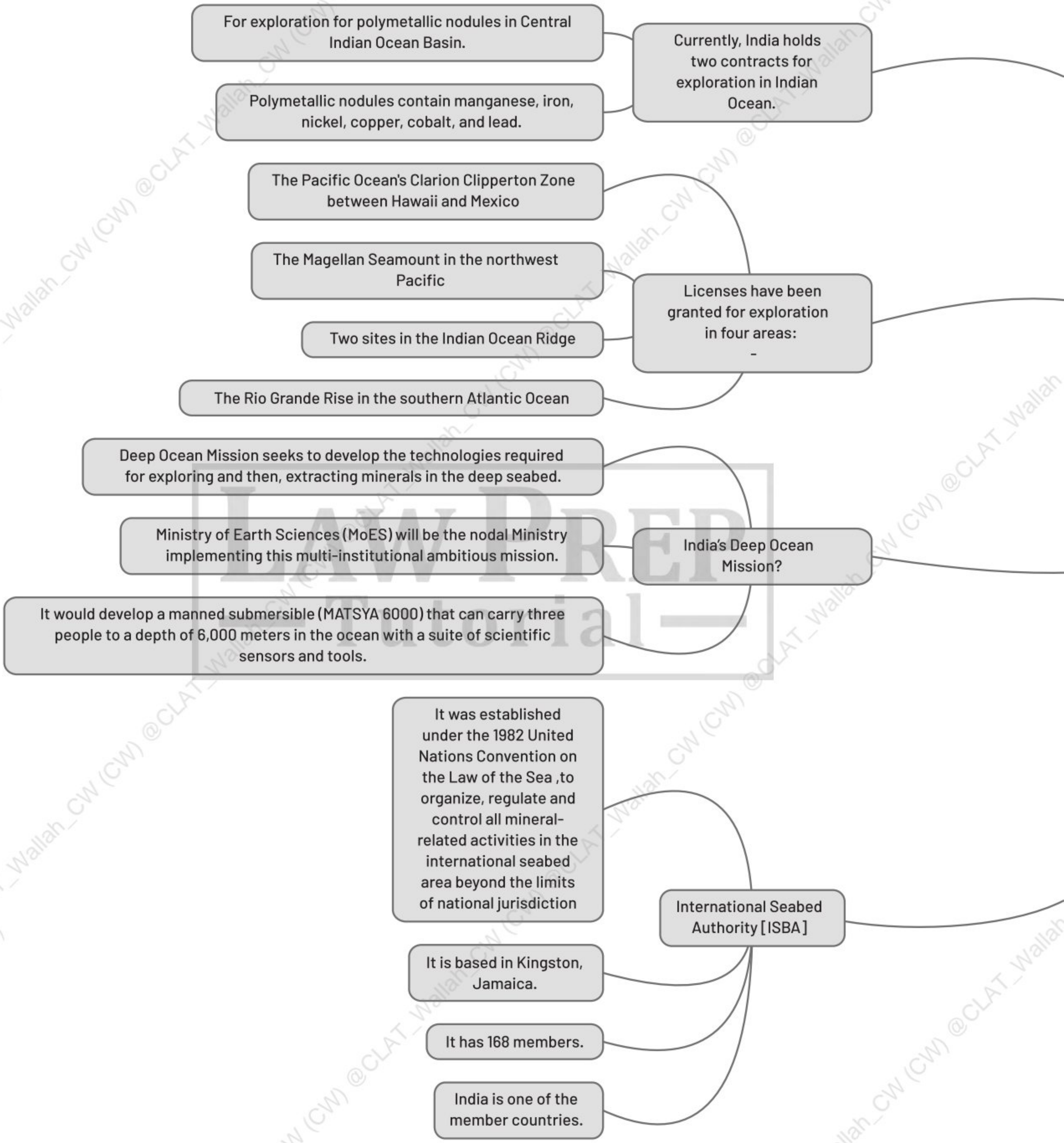
Dear Lpt'ians

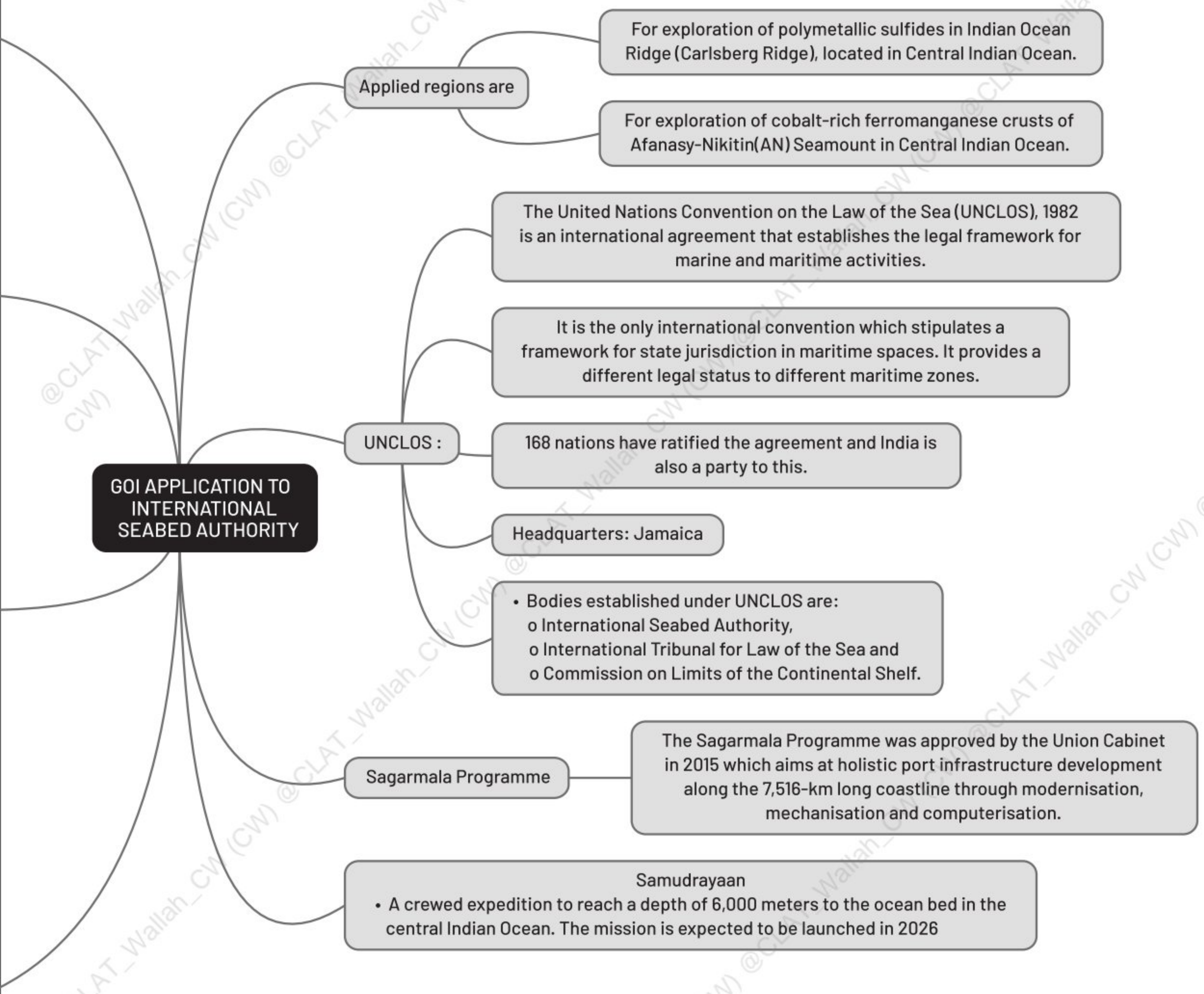
We create most inventive, authentic and valuable material by putting in lot of time, effort, energy and money to make you successful and it would **not** be fair if someone else get it by any unfair mean.

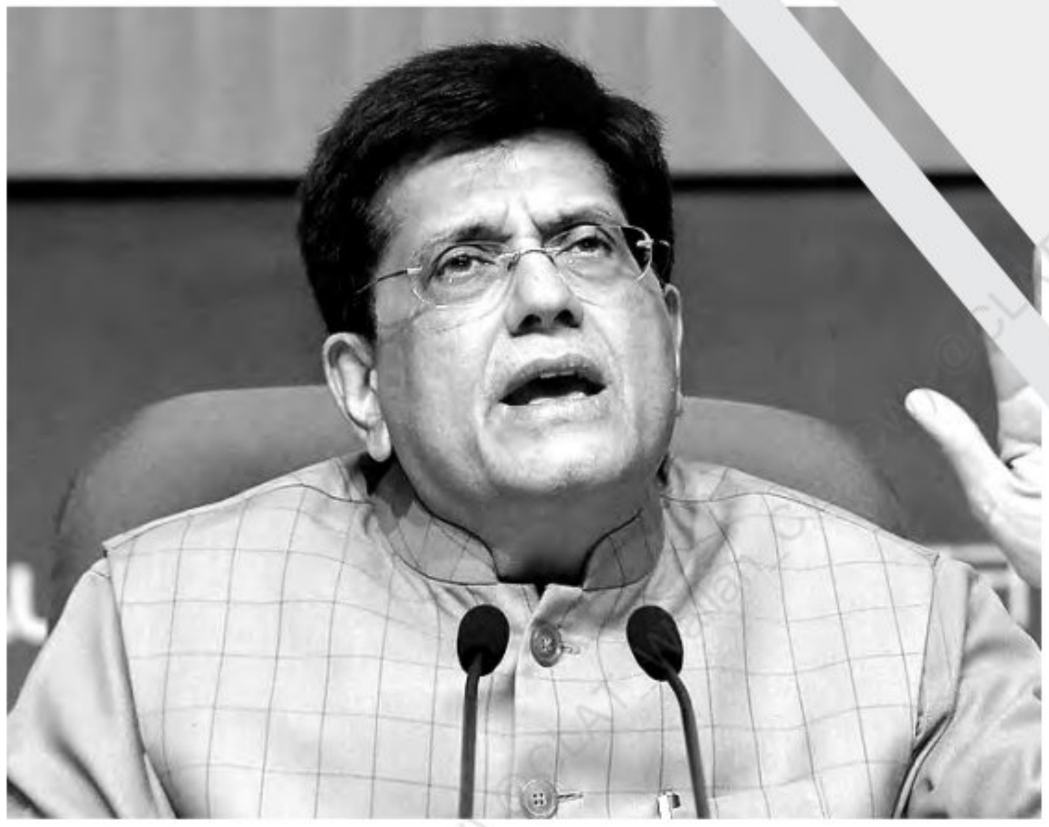
And they will create competition for you without being the part of Law prep. To prevent this unfair activity, be vigilant and inform us if you find anybody copying (in any form) it or teaching from it.

Unauthorised copying or usage of **Law Prep** material is illegal and punishable by imprisonment and fine under section 63 of the Indian Copyright Act of 1957.

Feel free to be in touch for
suggestions/feedback/complaints/compliments, at: 94141 43101


Currently, India holds two contracts for exploration in Indian Ocean.
For exploration for polymetallic nodules in Central Indian Ocean Basin.
Polymetallic nodules contain manganese, iron, nickel, copper, cobalt, and lead.
Licenses have been granted for exploration in four areas:
-
The Pacific Ocean's Clarion Clipperton Zone between Hawaii and Mexico
The Magellan Seamount in the northwest Pacific
Two sites in the Indian Ocean Ridge
The Rio Grande Rise in the southern Atlantic Ocean
India's Deep Ocean Mission?
Deep Ocean Mission seeks to develop the technologies required for exploring and then, extracting minerals in the deep seabed.
Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) will be the nodal Ministry implementing this multi-institutional ambitious mission.
It would develop a manned submersible (MATSYA 6000) that can carry three people to a depth of 6,000 meters in the ocean with a suite of scientific sensors and tools.
International Seabed Authority [ISBA]
It was established under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea ,to organize, regulate and control all mineral-related activities in the international seabed area beyond the limits of national jurisdiction
It is based in Kingston, Jamaica.
It has 168 members.
India is one of the member countries.


GOI APPLICATION TO INTERNATIONAL SEABED AUTHORITY
Applied regions are
For exploration of polymetallic sulfides in Indian Ocean Ridge (Carlsberg Ridge), located in Central Indian Ocean.
For exploration of cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts of Afanasy-Nikitin(AN) Seamount in Central Indian Ocean.
UNCLOS :
The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982 is an international agreement that establishes the legal framework for marine and maritime activities.
It is the only international convention which stipulates a framework for state jurisdiction in maritime spaces. It provides a different legal status to different maritime zones.
168 nations have ratified the agreement and India is also a party to this.
Headquarters: Jamaica
• Bodies established under UNCLOS are:
o International Seabed Authority,
o International Tribunal for Law of the Sea and
o Commission on Limits of the Continental Shelf.
Sagarmala Programme
The Sagarmala Programme was approved by the Union Cabinet in 2015 which aims at holistic port infrastructure development along the 7,516-km long coastline through modernisation, mechanisation and computerisation.
Samudrayaan
• A crewed expedition to reach a depth of 6,000 meters to the ocean bed in the central Indian Ocean. The mission is expected to be launched in 2026



Patent (AMENDMENT) Rules 2024

Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry has notified the Patents Amendment Rules, 2024 making significant changes to Indian patent practice and procedure.

Explained:

IPR, or Intellectual Property Rights, refers to the legal rights granted to creators and owners of inventions, literary and artistic works, symbols, names, images, and designs used in commerce. These rights protect the intellectual efforts and investments made by individuals and organizations.

The recent changes in Indian patent rules aim to streamline the patent application process and acknowledge the contributions of inventors. The timeframe for filing a Request for Expedited Examination (RFE) has been reduced from 48 to 31 months from the priority date. Applicants can now file a single updated Form 3 after receiving the First Examination Report (FER). Additionally, the introduction of the 'Certificate of Inventorship' recognizes inventors' contributions to patented inventions, as the Indian patent certificate does not identify them. Furthermore, the frequency of filing working patents has been reduced from once in a financial year to once in every three financial years.

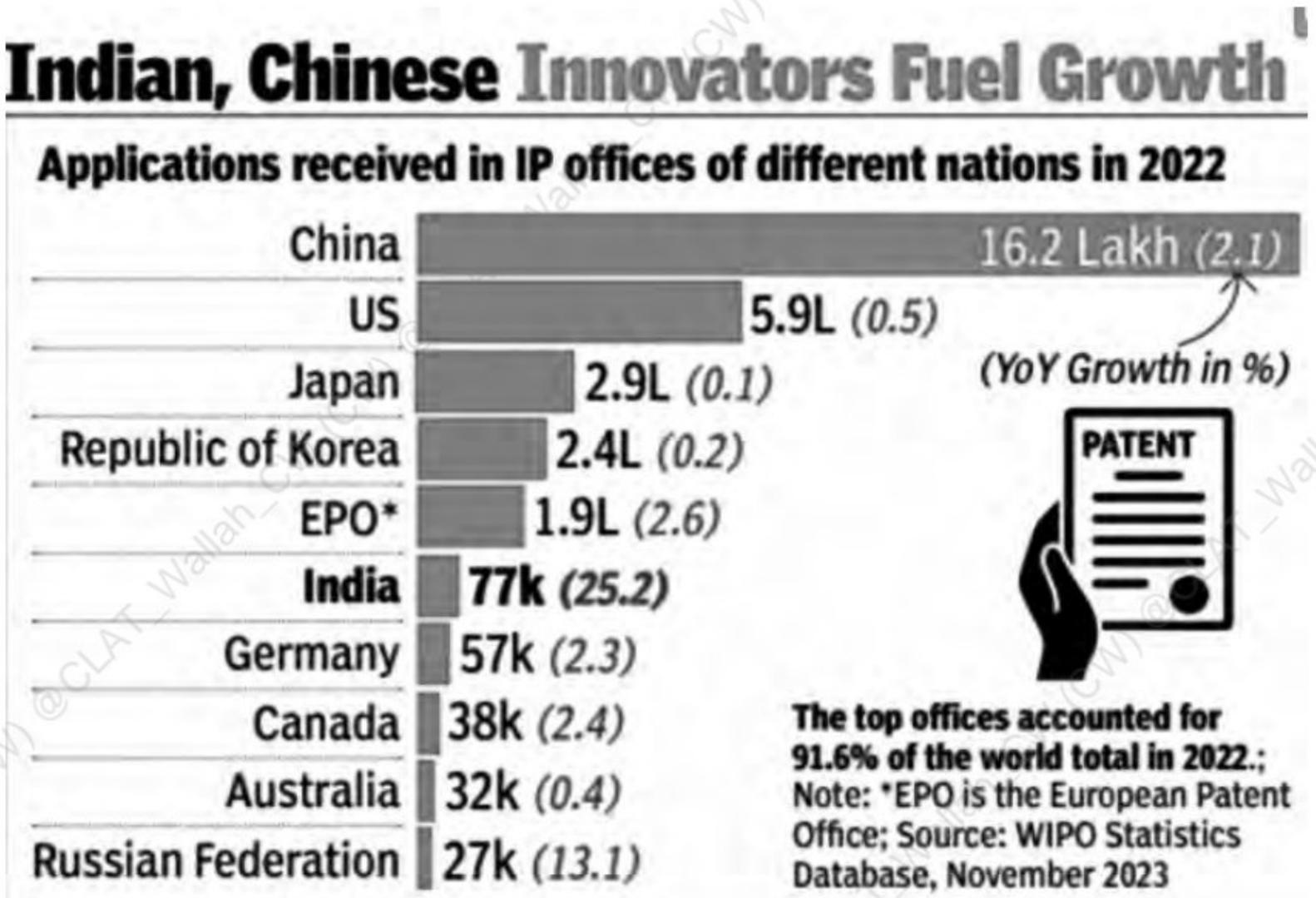
Way to marks:

Key Highlights of the Patents (Amendment) Rules, 2024:

- The timeframe for filing the RFE has been shortened from 48 months to 31 months from the priority date.
- Applicants can now file a single updated Form 3 after receiving the First Examination Report (FER).
    - The Patent office issues an examination report to the applicant, commonly known as FER.
- **Introduction of 'Certificate of Inventorship':** This aims to acknowledge inventors' contributions to patented inventions.
    - Since the Indian patent certificate doesn't identify the inventors, this provision allows inventors to be recognized for their inventions.
- **Frequency of Filing Statements:** The frequency of filing working patents has been reduced from once in a financial year to once in every three financial years.
- **Amendments in Pre-grant and Post-grant Opposition Procedures:** The timeframe for submission of recommendations by an Opposition Board and the response time for applicants have been adjusted.
    - This amendment aligns with the recent decision of the Delhi High Court in Syngenta Limited v. Controller of Patents and Designs Case, 2023.

- The court clarified that divisional applications may be filed concerning parent applications where the complete or provisional specification (and not necessarily the claims) of the parent application disclose a plurality of inventions.

IP rights applications	2021	2022	% Growth 2021-2022
Patents	3,400,500	3,457,400	+1.7
Trademarks	18,182,300	15,543,300	–14.5
Industrial designs	1,513,800	1,482,600	–2.1
Plant variety rights	25,200	27,260	+8.2



What is a Patent?

- A Patent is a statutory right for an invention granted for a limited period to the patentee by the Government, in exchange of full disclosure of his invention for excluding others, from making, using, selling, importing the patented product or process for producing that product for those purposes without his consent.
- The patent system in India is governed by the Patents Act, 1970 which was amended in 2003 and 2005.

Term of a Patent:

- The term of every patent granted is 20 years from the date of filing of the application.
- However, for applications filed under the national phase of the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), the accorded term will be 20 years from the international filing date.

- PCT is an international treaty with more than 150 contracting states, making it possible to seek patent protection for an invention simultaneously in each of a large number of countries by filing an international patent application.
- Such an application may be filed by anyone who is a national or resident of a PCT contracting State, and generally be filed with the national patent office of the contracting State with the International Bureau of World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) in Geneva.

About WIPO:

- WIPO is one of the oldest specialised agencies of United Nations.
- WIPO was created in 1967 "to encourage creative activity, to promote the protection of intellectual property throughout the world".
- WIPO currently administers 26 international treaties.
- It is headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.
- Every year World Intellectual Property Day is being celebrated on 26th April.
- WIPO currently has 193 member states.
- India joined WIPO in 1975.
- Director General: Daren Tang
- India retains 40th rank out of 132 economies in the Global Innovation Index 2023 rankings published by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

What is Intellectual Property?

- Intellectual property (IP) is a category of property that includes intangible creations of the human intellect, and primarily encompasses copyrights, patents and trademarks.
- It also includes other types of rights, such as trade secrets, publicity rights, moral rights, and rights against unfair competition.
- Besides 281 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and 47 intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) 17 UN system of organizations and 10 IP organizations have official observer status at WIPO meetings.

Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights:

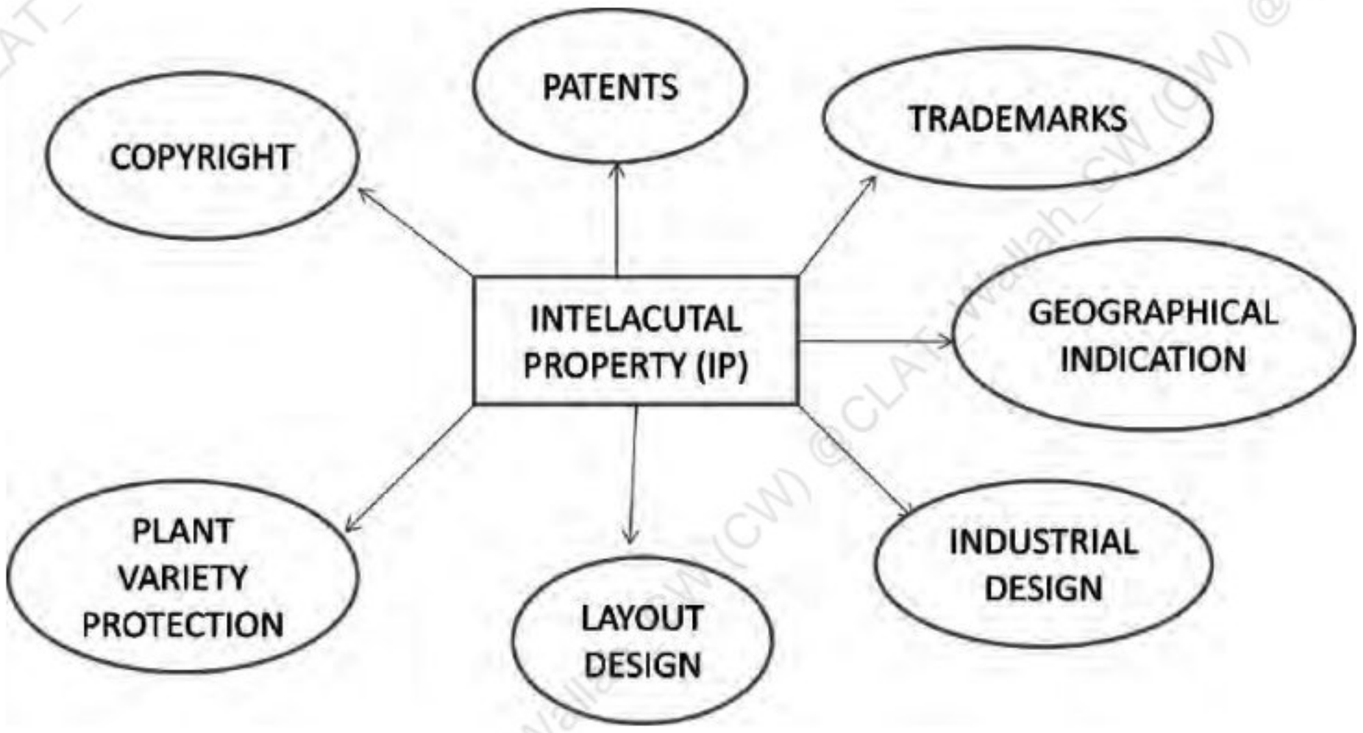
- TRIPS came into force in 1995, as part of the agreement that established the World Trade Organisation (WTO).
- TRIPS establishes minimum standards for the availability, scope, and use of seven forms of intellectual property namely, trademarks, copyrights, geographical indications, patents, industrial designs, layout designs for integrated circuits, and undisclosed information or trade secrets.
- It applies basic international trade principles regarding intellectual property to member states.
- It is applicable to all WTO members.

Related Terms:

Evergreening of Patents:

- The evergreening of patents is a practice of tweaking drugs in order to extend their patent term and thus their profitability.

- The Indian Patents Act 1970 introduced many provisions to prevent the mischievous practice of "evergreening" of patents.
  - The Indian Patent Office rejected U.S. pharmaceutical giant Johnson & Johnson's (J&J) attempt for Evergreening of Patent on manufacturing of the anti-tuberculosis drug Bedaquiline in India beyond July 2023.



Do you Know ?

Pepsico was having IPR rights for Potato variety for making its Chips. It means that no one can grow these kind of Potatoes without the approval of Pepsico..

Right (IPR) granted on the potato variety in a PVP certificate in February 2016

The Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights (PPV&FR) Authority December 3, 2021 revoked a PVP (plant variety protection) certificate granted to PepsiCo India Holding (PIH) on a potato variety (FL-2027) on multiple grounds.

GOI Schemes for Research in India

- **Impacting Research Innovation and Technology (IMPRINT) India:** Launched by the Ministry of Education, IMPRINT India is a national initiative to address major engineering challenges in selected domains, including research and development.
- **Uchchatar Avishkar Yojana (UAY):** This scheme by the Ministry of Education aims to promote industry-specific need-based research and development in higher educational institutions.
- **Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC):** Launched by the Ministry of Education, SPARC aims to promote international research collaboration between Indian institutions and leading foreign institutions.
- **Scientific and Applied Research (SAR) Alliance:** This is an initiative by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) to promote research and development in the MSME sector.

- **Technology Development Programme (TDP):** Implemented by the Department of Science and Technology (DST), TDP provides financial assistance for the development of indigenous technologies, including research and development activities.
- **Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC):** BIRAC is a non-profit company under the Department of Biotechnology, which promotes and supports research and development in the biotechnology sector.
- **Prime Minister's Fellowship Scheme for Doctoral Research:** This scheme by the Ministry of Education aims to attract talented students to pursue doctoral research in cutting-edge science and technology domains.

Dear Lpt'ians

We create most inventive, authentic and valuable material by putting in lot of time, effort, energy and money to make you successful and it would **not** be fair if someone else get it by any unfair mean.

And they will create competition for you without being the part of Law prep. To prevent this unfair activity, be vigilant and inform us if you find anybody copying (in any form) it or teaching from it.

Unauthorised copying or usage of **Law Prep** material is illegal and punishable by imprisonment and fine under section 63 of the Indian Copyright Act of 1957.

Feel free to be in touch for
suggestions/feedback/complaints/compliments, at: 94141 43101

International Conventions for IPRs-

- **Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property (1883):** In its broadest sense, this convention covers all forms of industrial property, including patents, trademarks, industrial designs, utility models, service marks, trade names, geographical indications, and the stifling of unfair competition.
- It was the first significant action taken to assist creators in making sure that their intellectual property was protected in other nations.
- The provision of national treatment was established by this convention.
- **Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (1886):** It is a convention that governs copyright internationally. The Convention covers the rights of authors as well as the protection of works.
- **Budapest Treaty:** On the International Recognition of the Deposit of Microorganisms for the Purposes of Patent Procedure.
- The Marrakesh Treaty, which is overseen by WIPO, facilitates the creation and international transfer of books that have been specially adapted for those who are blind or have visual impairments.
- It accomplishes this by defining a set of restrictions and exclusions from conventional copyright law.
- **Patent Cooperation Treaty (1970):** It offers a standardised process for submitting patent applications to safeguard inventions in all of its signatory states.
- It focuses on making the world accessible, streamlining the process of meeting various formality requirements, delaying the significant costs related to international patent protection, and providing a solid basis for patenting decisions.

Pepper it With

- National Science Congress and controversy
- India's expense on Research and Development
- Global innovation Index.

To download the other important exam related material, scan the QR Code



PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. What is the term of a patent granted in India?
   (a) 10 years (b) 15 years (c) 20 years (d) 25 years

2. For applications filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), the term of patent is:
   (a) 15 years from the international filing date (b) 20 years from the international filing date
   (c) 25 years from the international filing date (d) 30 years from the international filing date

3. Which of the following is the headquarters of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)?
   (a) Paris, France (b) Geneva, Switzerland
   (c) New York, USA (d) Vienna, Austria

4. When is World Intellectual Property Day celebrated every year?
   (a) 26th March (b) 26th April (c) 26th May (d) 26th June

5. How many member states does WIPO currently have?
   (a) 173 (b) 183 (c) 193 (d) 203

6. Who is the current Director General of WIPO?
   (a) Francis Gurry (b) Daren Tang (c) Tedros Adhanom (d) António Guterres

7. What is India's rank in the Global Innovation Index 2023 rankings published by WIPO?
   (a) 30th (b) 35th (c) 40th (d) 45th

8. In which year did India join WIPO?
   (a) 1965 (b) 1970 (c) 1975 (d) 1980

9. What is the full form of TRIPS?
   (a) Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
   (b) Trade-Related Aspects of International Property Rights
   (c) Trade-Related Aspects of Industrial Property Rights
   (d) Trade-Related Aspects of Intangible Property Rights

10. In which year did TRIPS come into force?
    (a) 1990 (b) 1993 (c) 1995 (d) 1997

11. Which of the following is NOT included in the seven forms of intellectual property covered by TRIPS?
    (a) Trademarks (b) Copyrights
    (c) Geographical indications (d) Franchise rights

12. What is the timeframe for filing the Request for Expedited Examination (RFE) after the recent changes in Indian patent rules?
    (a) 24 months from the priority date
    (b) 31 months from the priority date
    (c) 36 months from the priority date
    (d) 48 months from the priority date

13. After receiving the First Examination Report (FER), how many updated Form 3 can an applicant file now?
    (a) One
    (b) Two
    (c) Three
    (d) Unlimited

14. What is the purpose of introducing the 'Certificate of Inventorship' in the recent changes?
    (a) To acknowledge inventors' contributions to patented inventions
    (b) To expedite the patent application process
    (c) To reduce the frequency of filing working patents
    (d) To align with international patent standards

15. How often do applicants need to file working patents now, according to the recent changes?
    (a) Once in a financial year
    (b) Once in every two financial years
    (c) Once in every three financial years
    (d) Once in every four financial years

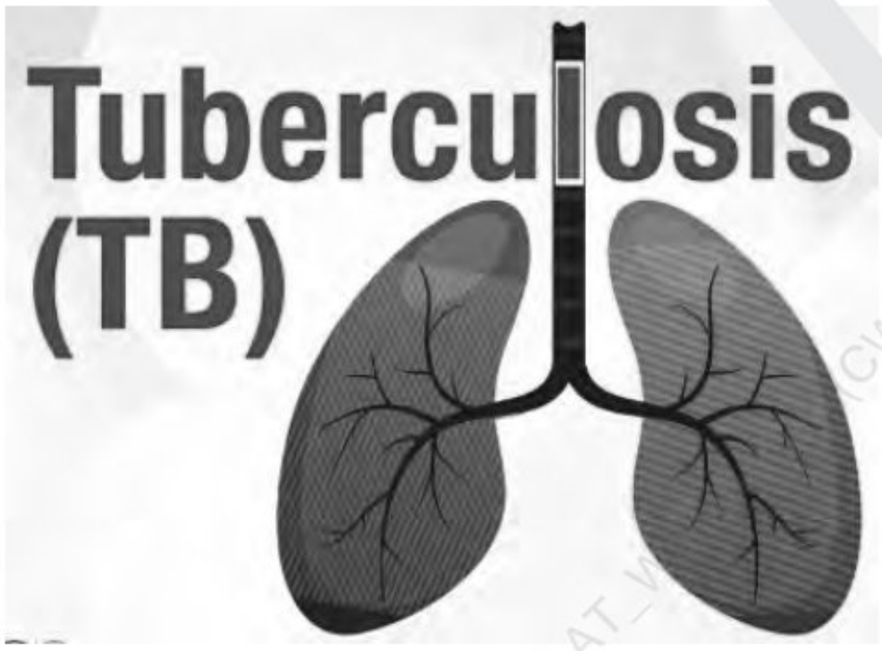
16. Which case led to the amendment in pre-grant and post-grant opposition procedures?
    (a) Novartis AG v. Union of India
    (b) Syngenta Limited v. Controller of Patents and Designs
    (c) Glivec v. Union of India
    (d) Bilcare Limited v. Controller of Patents

17. What is the purpose of evergreening of patents?
    (a) To extend the patent term and profitability
    (b) To introduce new innovations in the patented product
    (c) To comply with international patent standards
    (d) To acknowledge the contributions of inventors

18. How many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have official observer status at WIPO meetings?
    (a) 181
    (b) 231
    (c) 281
    (d) 331

19. How many intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) have official observer status at WIPO meetings?
    (a) 37
    (b) 42
    (c) 47
    (d) 52

20. How many organizations from the UN system have official observer status at WIPO meetings?
    (a) 12
    (b) 15
    (c) 17
    (d) 20



India TB Report 2024

Why in News?

According to the India TB Report 2024 released by the Union Health Ministry, the gap between the estimated number and actual cases of tuberculosis (TB) is closing.

Explained:

The India TB report highlights the progress and challenges in tackling tuberculosis (TB) in the country. It underscores the increasing role of the private sector in case notification and the reduction in missing cases, thanks to initiatives like the Ni-kshay portal. Notably, India achieved its target of initiating treatment for 95% of diagnosed patients in 2023. Additionally, drug resistance testing coverage improved, with 58% of diagnosed cases being offered tests. This report is significant as it provides insights into India's efforts to combat TB, a major public health concern, and guides future strategies to eliminate the disease.

Way to marks:

About Tuberculosis (TB):

World TB day is celebrated on 24th March every year

- Tuberculosis (TB) is an infectious disease, primarily caused by Mycobacterium tuberculosis (MTB) bacteria. It predominantly affects the lungs (Pulmonary TB) but can also impact other parts of the body (Extrapulmonary).
- It can easily be transmitted through the air when individuals with active TB in their lungs cough, spit, speak, or sneeze.
- Many infections exhibit no symptoms, referred to as latent tuberculosis, during which individuals do not spread the disease.
- TB prevention involves screening high-risk individuals, early detection, treatment of cases, and vaccination with the Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine.
- Drug-resistant TB occurs when the TB bacteria are unresponsive to at least one of the main TB drugs.
- **There are two primary types:** MDR (multidrug-resistant) TB and XDR (extensively drug-resistant) TB.
  - MDR TB is characterized by resistance to at least isoniazid and rifampicin, two key TB drugs.
  - XDR TB is defined by resistance to isoniazid and rifampin, along with any fluoroquinolone and at least one of three injectable second-line drugs.

WHO's END TB Strategy:

- Adopted in 2014, the END TB Strategy aims to eliminate the TB epidemic globally by 2035.

- Goals include a 95% reduction in TB deaths, a 90% reduction in TB incidence rates, and zero TB-affected families facing catastrophic costs due to TB by 2035.

India TB Report:

- The annual India TB Report, published under the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP), is prepared by the Central TB Division of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.
- First published in 2001, the report encompasses policy updates, program implementation details, and state and district-wise performance indicators.
- **Minister of Health and Family Welfare:** Shri Mansukh L. Mandviya

Highlights of the India TB Report 2024

TB CASES IN INDIA OVER THE YEARS

	India TB Report 2020	2023	2024
Estimated TB cases	26.9 lakh	27.4 lakh	27.8 lakh
Number of cases reported	24.04 lakh	24.2 lakh	25.5 lakh
Reporting from private sector	6.8 lakh	7.3 lakh	8.4 lakh
% cases from private sector	28.20%	30%	32.90%
Estimated mortality	4.36 lakh	3.2 lakh	3.2 lakh

Reporting of the cases:

- The majority of the TB cases are still reported by the government health centres, even as there has been an uptick in notifications by the private sector.
- Nearly 33% or 8.4 lakh of the 25.5 lakh cases reported in 2023 came from the private sector (only 1.9 lakh cases in 2015).
- The mortality due to the infection: It remained the same at 3.2 lakh as per the data. India's TB mortality dropped from 4.94 lakhs in 2021 to 3.31 lakhs in 2022.

Missing cases:

- There were only 2.3 lakh missing cases in 2023, as compared to 3.2 lakh the year before, the report states.
- This gap has been reducing over the years, especially with the government's Ni-kshay portal tracking all TB patients.

Recommendations:

- The report shows that India reached its 2023 target of initiating treatment in 95% of patients diagnosed with the infection.
- It says 58% of those diagnosed were offered a test to check whether their infection was resistant to the first line drugs, an increase from 25% in 2015.
- The report suggests drug susceptibility treatment to ensure that persons with drug-resistant TB have access to medicines from the start, rather than being treated with first-line medication immediately.

Vital intervention

Bedaquiline, manufactured by J&J, is a crucial anti-TB drug



- India has rejected J&J's appeal to extend its patent beyond July 2023
- Currently priced at around $400 for a six-month treatment regimen, the prices are likely to fall
- After July, generic producers like Lupin and Macleods are likely to manufacture the drug
- Over 55,000 patients, in whom other drugs have stopped working, may benefit from Bedaquiline access
- Till March 2020, only a little over 10,000 patients received the drug

DRUG RESISTANCE, GROWING PROBLEM

WHAT IS ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE (AMR)?

➢ It occurs when microbes mutate or adapt in a manner that can render treatments ineffective

➢ AMR has been increasing in past few years due to overuse and misuse of antimicrobials, including antibiotics, among people and animals

LATEST ICMR NATIONAL SURVEY

In 2020, culture samples from 30 tertiary care hospitals across the country were collected

Total number **65,561**

5 common microbes found in culture

- Escherichia coli | **25.1%**
- Klebsiella pneumoniae | **18%**
- Pseudomonas aeruginosa | **12%**
- Acinetobacter baumannii | **10.4%** &
- Staphylococcus aureus | **9.6%**



CONCERNS

➢ Colistin, known as last resort drug, still has overall susceptibility of 96% with Ecoli and over 90% with Klebsiella, but colistin resistance is growing

➢ Resistance to carbapenem, the mainstay in many ICUs, is increasing with 47% in treatment of Klebsiella pneumoniae

ICMR GRID

Group I pathogens | Microbes resistant to last-resort antibiotics such as carbapenems. Cause severe infections such as ventilator-associated or hospital-acquired pneumonia, bloodstream and urinary tract infections

Group II pathogens | Multidrug-resistant bacteria, high risk, mainly prevalent in hospital-acquired infections; associated with serious multidrug-resistant infections, ventilator-associated pneumonia, complicated UTI

Group III pathogens | Drug-resistant bacteria responsible for only a small number of infections but detection can help

Global Tb Report 2023

Recently, the World Health Organization (WHO) has released the Global Tuberculosis (TB) report 2023, highlighting the high burden of TB worldwide in 2022.

Key Findings of the Global TB Report 2023:

TB was the world's second leading cause of death from a single infectious agent in 2022, following Covid-19.

Box 1. Definitions drug-resistant tuberculosis.

- **Multidrug-resistant (MDR)-TB:** TB caused by strains of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* that are resistant *in vitro* to rifampicin and isoniazid.
- **Extensively drug-resistant (XDR)-TB:** TB caused by strains of *M tuberculosis* that are resistant *in vitro* to isoniazid, rifampicin and at least one injectable agent (ie amikacin, kanamycin or capreomycin) and any of the fluoroquinolones (totally drug-resistant [TDR]-TB is not official terminology).
- **Monoresistant TB:** TB caused by strains of *M tuberculosis* that are resistant to just one anti-TB drug.
- **Polyresistant TB:** TB caused by strains of *M tuberculosis* that are resistant to more than one drug, but not isoniazid and rifampicin together.

MDR = mult-drug resistant; TB = tuberculosis.

- TB caused almost twice as many deaths as Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome stage (AIDS). More than 10 million people continue to fall ill with TB every year.
- 30 high burden TB countries collectively accounted for 87% of the world's TB cases in 2022.
- Among the top eight high burden countries, in addition to India, are Indonesia, China, the Philippines, Pakistan, Nigeria, Bangladesh, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

What are the Findings Related to India?

- India accounted for the highest number of TB cases in the world in 2022, with 2.8 million TB cases, representing 27% of the global burden.

TB Case Fatality Ratio in India:

- India reported a case fatality ratio of 12%, indicating that 12% of TB cases in the country resulted in death.
- The report estimates that 3,42,000 TB-related deaths occurred in India in 2022, with 3,31,000 among HIV-negative individuals and 11,000 among those with HIV.

Initiatives for Elimination of TB

National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP):

- The NTEP [earlier known as the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme (RNTCP)] was launched in 2017 by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, GoI, to outline the government's plan for eliminating tuberculosis in India.
- Programme is aimed to meet the goal of ending the TB epidemic by 2025 from the country, five years ahead of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) for 2030.

Ni-kshay portal:

- NI-KSHAY (Ni=End, Kshay=TB) is the web enabled patient management system for TB control under the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP).

One World TB summit

- On 24 March 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the One World TB Summit - 2023 at the Rudraksha Convention Center in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.
- One World TB Summit is organised by the Ministry of Health to take forward the Indian vision of 'One Earth, One Health' .
- To achieve the goal of elimination Of TB by 2025 the PM announced TB-Mukt Panchayat, and shorter TB Preventive Treatment (TPT).

Stop Tb Partnership

- The Stop TB Partnership was established in 2001 to eliminate tuberculosis as a public health problem. Its 2000 partner organizations include international, nongovernmental and governmental organizations and patient groups.
- The secretariat is based in Geneva, Switzerland, and, since 2015, has been administered by UNOPS. Previously it was hosted by the World Health Organization.

About WHO:

- World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations' specialized agency for Health was founded in 1948.
- Its headquarters are situated in Geneva, Switzerland.
- There are 194 Member States, 150 country offices, six regional offices.
- It is an inter-governmental organization and works in collaboration with its member states usually through the Ministries of Health.
- It began functioning on April 7, 1948 – a date now being celebrated every year as World Health Day.
- **Head :** Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus (Director-General)

Pepper it With

- HIV and India's work to eliminate,
- Antimicrobial resistance.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. What is the primary cause of Tuberculosis (TB)?
   (a) Bacteria (b) Virus (c) Fungus (d) Parasite

2. Which part of the body is primarily affected by Tuberculosis?
   (a) Brain (b) Lungs (c) Liver (d) Heart

3. What is the name of the vaccine used for TB prevention?
   (a) Polio vaccine
   (b) Hepatitis B vaccine
   (c) Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine
   (d) Influenza vaccine

4. What is MDR TB?
   (a) Multidrug-resistant TB
   (b) Maximum drug-resistant TB
   (c) Mild drug-resistant TB
   (d) Moderate drug-resistant TB

5. What is XDR TB?
   (a) Extensively drug-resistant TB
   (b) Extra drug-resistant TB
   (c) Extreme drug-resistant TB
   (d) Excessive drug-resistant TB

6. In which year was the END TB Strategy adopted by WHO?
   (a) 2010 (b) 2012 (c) 2014 (d) 2016

7. What is the goal of the END TB Strategy for reducing TB deaths by 2035?
   (a) 90% reduction (b) 95% reduction (c) 80% reduction (d) 85% reduction

8. Who publishes the annual India TB Report?
   (a) WHO
   (b) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India
   (c) NITI Aayog
   (d) Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)

9. What percentage of TB cases in India were reported by the private sector in 2023?
   (a) 25% (b) 30% (c) 33% (d) 40%

10. What was the number of missing TB cases in India in 2023?
    (a) 1.3 lakh (b) 2.3 lakh (c) 3.3 lakh (d) 4.3 lakh

11. What percentage of diagnosed TB patients were offered a drug resistance test in 2023?
    (a) 48% (b) 53% (c) 58% (d) 63%

12. What is the name of the web-enabled patient management system for TB control in India?
(a) TB-Mukt (b) Ni-kshay (c) Stop TB (d) TB-Free

13. When was the Stop TB Partnership established?
(a) 1998 (b) 2000 (c) 2001 (d) 2003

14. Which country accounted for the highest number of TB cases in the world in 2022, according to the Global TB Report 2023?
(a) India (b) China (c) Indonesia (d) Nigeria

15. What percentage of the global TB burden did India account for in 2022?
(a) 22% (b) 25% (c) 27% (d) 30%

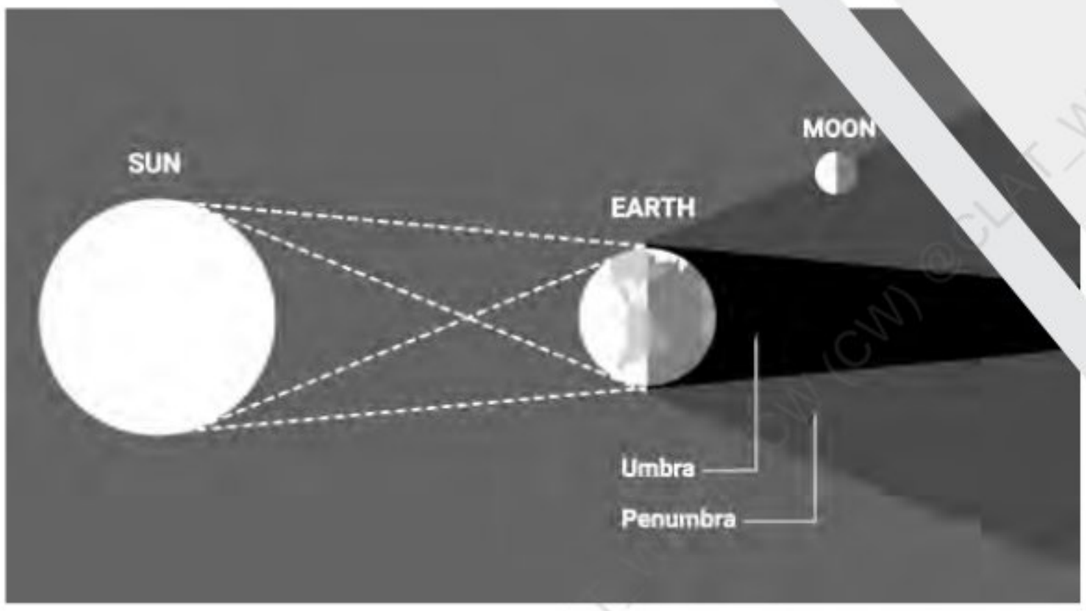
16. What was the TB case fatality ratio in India, as reported in the Global TB Report 2023?
(a) 8% (b) 10% (c) 12% (d) 15%

17. Where are the headquarters of the World Health Organization (WHO) located?
(a) New York, USA (b) Geneva, Switzerland
(c) London, UK (d) Paris, France

18. How many Member States are part of the WHO?
(a) 184 (b) 194 (c) 204 (d) 214

19. When did the WHO begin functioning?
(a) April 7, 1945 (b) April 7, 1947 (c) April 7, 1948 (d) April 7, 1949

20. Who is the current Director-General of the WHO?
(a) Margaret Chan (b) Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
(c) Gro Harlem Brundtland (d) Hiroshi Nakajima



Total Solar Eclipse

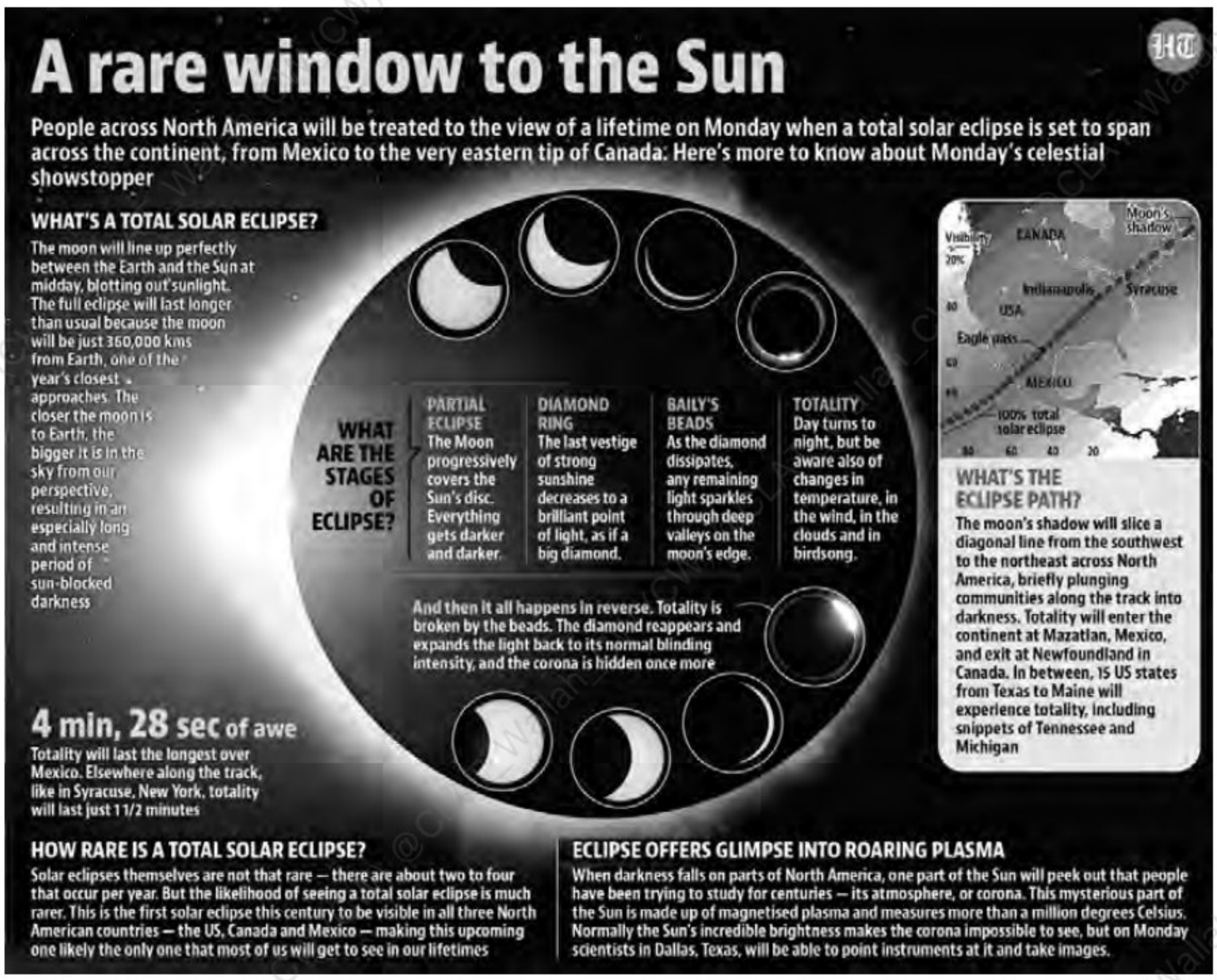
Why in News?

Recently, a Total Solar Eclipse will cross North America, passing over Mexico, United States and Canada.

Explained:

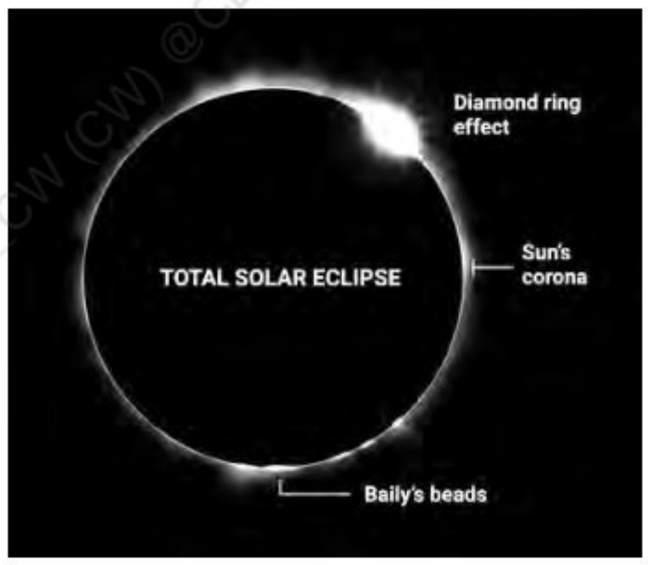
A total solar eclipse is a celestial phenomenon that occurs when the Moon passes directly between the Earth and the Sun, completely obscuring the Sun's visible disk from a specific region on Earth. During this event, the Moon's apparent size in the sky matches the Sun's apparent size, casting a lunar umbra (shadow) onto a small area on Earth's surface.

Way to marks:



The total phase of the eclipse, when the Sun's disk is entirely covered by the Moon, is a fleeting and awe-inspiring sight. The Sun's outer atmosphere, the corona, becomes visible, creating a stunning celestial display. This phenomenon can only be observed from a narrow path on Earth's surface, known as the path of totality, which varies with each eclipse. Total solar eclipses are rare and profound experiences that have captivated humans for centuries.

SOLAR ECLIPSE



- A solar eclipse happens when the Moon and Sun line up during the new moon phase, blocking the Sun's light either completely or partially and creating a shadow on parts of the Earth.
- When a solar eclipse occurs, the Moon's shadow falls on the Earth. Conversely, during a lunar eclipse, the Earth's shadow falls on the Moon.
- Solar eclipses occur on average 2 to 5 times a year.

Related News

Umbra: *This is the darker part of the shadow where the light source is completely blocked.*

An umbra eclipse leads to a total solar or lunar eclipse, where the entire Sun or Moon is covered.

Penumbra: *This is the lighter area around the umbra where the light source is only partially blocked.*

A penumbra eclipse leads to a partial solar or lunar eclipse, where only a portion of the Sun or Moon is covered.

Total Solar Eclipse: This event occurs when the Moon moves in front of the Sun, blocking it completely from sight.

TYPES OF SOLAR ECLIPSE

- A solar eclipse happens when the Moon and Sun line up during the new moon phase, blocking the Sun's light either completely or partially and creating a shadow on parts of the Earth.
- When a solar eclipse occurs, the Moon's shadow falls on the Earth. Conversely, during a lunar eclipse, the Earth's shadow falls on the Moon.
- Solar eclipses occur on average 2 to 5 times a year.



- **Annual Solar Eclipse:** In an annual solar eclipse, the Moon passes between the Earth and the Sun, but doesn't fully cover the Sun, creating a ring of sunlight.
- These events occur when the Moon is near its farthest point from Earth in its elliptical orbit, causing it to appear smaller and not fully cover the Sun's disk.
- **Partial Solar Eclipse**: During a partial solar eclipse, the Moon partially covers the Sun's disk, casting a partial shadow on Earth.

  Partial solar eclipses are more common than total or annular eclipses and can be observed from a wider geographical area.
- **Hybrid Solar / Annular Total Eclipse:** A rare type of eclipse that transitions between an annular and total solar eclipse along its path.

Proba - 3 Mission

- *The European Space Agency (ESA) is currently leading the world's first precision formation flying mission, set to be launched by India's PSLV – XL Rocket in September 2024.*
- *This groundbreaking Proba-3 mission is focused on deploying a 144-meter-long solar coronagraph that will create an artificial eclipse to provide unprecedented views of the Sun's faint corona.*
- ***This mission consists of two main components :** Coronagraph Spacecraft and Occulter Spacecraft.*
  - *The coronagraph spacecraft is equipped with instruments specifically designed to observe the elusive corona of the Sun.*
  - *The occulter spacecraft will fly in close formation around 150 meters apart. Its main task is to accurately position itself to cast a shadow on the coronagraph's telescope, effectively blocking direct sunlight.*
- *"With this method, the coronagraph can take pictures of the dim solar corona in visible, ultraviolet, and polarized light for long | periods, providing valuable information about the Sun's behavior."*





Pepper it With

- Summer and winter Solstice
- Moon rotational Cycle.

Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle

- *The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has introduced its third-generation indigenous Expendable Launch System.*
- *This launch vehicle is the first of its kind in India to feature liquid stages, which will improve its flexibility and performance.*
- *The Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) had its successful debut launch in 1994, leading to the success of several groundbreaking missions.*
- *Notable milestones achieved by the PSLV include the launches of "Chandrayaan-1" in 2008, India's inaugural lunar exploration mission, and the "Mars Orbiter Spacecraft" in 2013, which marked India's victorious entry into Martian exploration.*

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. When is the total solar eclipse of 2024 scheduled to take place?
   (a) April 8, 2024 (b) April 9, 2024 (c) April 10, 2024 (d) April 11, 2024

2. Over which geographical region can viewers witness totality or the complete darkening of the sky during the 2024 solar eclipse?
   (a) South America (b) Europe
   (c) Mexico, the US, and Canada (d) Australia

3. In how many US states will the 2024 total solar eclipse be viewed?
   (a) 10 (b) 14 (c) 18 (d) 20

4. Can skywatchers in India witness the 2024 total solar eclipse?
   (a) Yes (b) No
   (c) Partially (d) Not mentioned in the document

5. What is the approximate time when the 2024 total solar eclipse will reach totality in Indian Standard Time (IST)?
   (a) 9:12 p.m. (b) 10:08 p.m. (c) 11:07 p.m. (d) 2:22 a.m.

6. Which of the following is NOT part of the path of totality for the 2024 solar eclipse in the United States?
   (a) Texas (b) Oklahoma (c) California (d) Illinois

7. What is the first location on continental North America to witness totality during the 2024 solar eclipse?
   (a) Mexico's Pacific coast (b) Texas
   (c) Maine (d) Nova Scotia

8. Which of the following Canadian provinces/territories will NOT witness the 2024 total solar eclipse?
   (a) Ontario (b) Quebec (c) British Columbia (d) New Brunswick

9. Where does the 2024 total solar eclipse conclude its journey across continental North America?
   (a) Newfoundland, Canada (b) Maine, USA
   (c) Nova Scotia, Canada (d) Quebec, Canada

10. What happens during a solar eclipse?
    (a) The Moon passes between the Sun and Earth, temporarily blocking the Sun's light
    (b) The Earth passes between the Sun and Moon, temporarily blocking the Moon's light
    (c) The Sun passes between the Earth and Moon, temporarily blocking the Moon's light
    (d) The Sun and Moon collide, creating a temporary eclipse

11. Why is it important to view solar eclipses safely?
    (a) To avoid permanent eye damage from looking directly at the Sun
    (b) To ensure accurate observation of the phenomenon
    (c) To comply with local laws and regulations
    (d) Both (a) and (b)

12. What is an annular solar eclipse?
    (a) When the Moon completely blocks the Sun's light
    (b) When the Moon partially blocks the Sun's light, leaving a ring of sunlight visible
    (c) When the Moon passes between the Earth and Sun but does not block any light
    (d) When the Earth's shadow falls on the Moon

13. During which type of solar eclipse is the Moon's shadow cone completely covering the Sun?
    (a) Annular (b) Partial (c) Total (d) Hybrid

14. What is the penumbra in the context of a solar eclipse?
    (a) The darkest part of the Moon's shadow (b) The lighter shadow surrounding the Moon's shadow
    (c) The area where the Sun is completely blocked (d) The area where the Sun is partially blocked

15. What is the maximum duration that a total solar eclipse can last?
    (a) 3 minutes (b) 5 minutes (c) 7 minutes (d) 9 minutes

16. What is a hybrid solar eclipse?
    (a) A combination of a total and annular eclipse
    (b) A partial eclipse that occurs during a new moon
    (c) A solar eclipse that is visible from only one location
    (d) A solar eclipse that occurs during a lunar eclipse

17. How often does a new moon occur?
    (a) Every 14 days (b) Every 29.5 days (c) Every 6 months (d) Every year

18. Why do eclipses not occur every month, despite a new moon happening every 29.5 days?
    (a) The Moon's orbit is tilted relative to Earth's orbit
    (b) The Sun and Moon are not always perfectly aligned
    (c) Earth's atmosphere blocks the alignment
    (d) Both (a) and (b)

19. What is the average frequency of total solar eclipses?
    (a) Every 6 months (b) Every 18 months (c) Every 2 years (d) Every 5 years

20. Why are total solar eclipses considered rare for a specific location on Earth?
    (a) The umbral path covers less than 1% of Earth's surface
    (b) The Moon's orbit is constantly changing
    (c) Total eclipses last for a very short duration
    (d) All of the above

ISRO's 'Zero Orbital Debris' Milestone

Why in News?

ISRO's PSLV – C58/XPoSat mission successfully deployed the XPoSat Satellite and converted PSLV's last stage into the POEM-3 module, leaving no debris in Earth's orbit.

Explained:

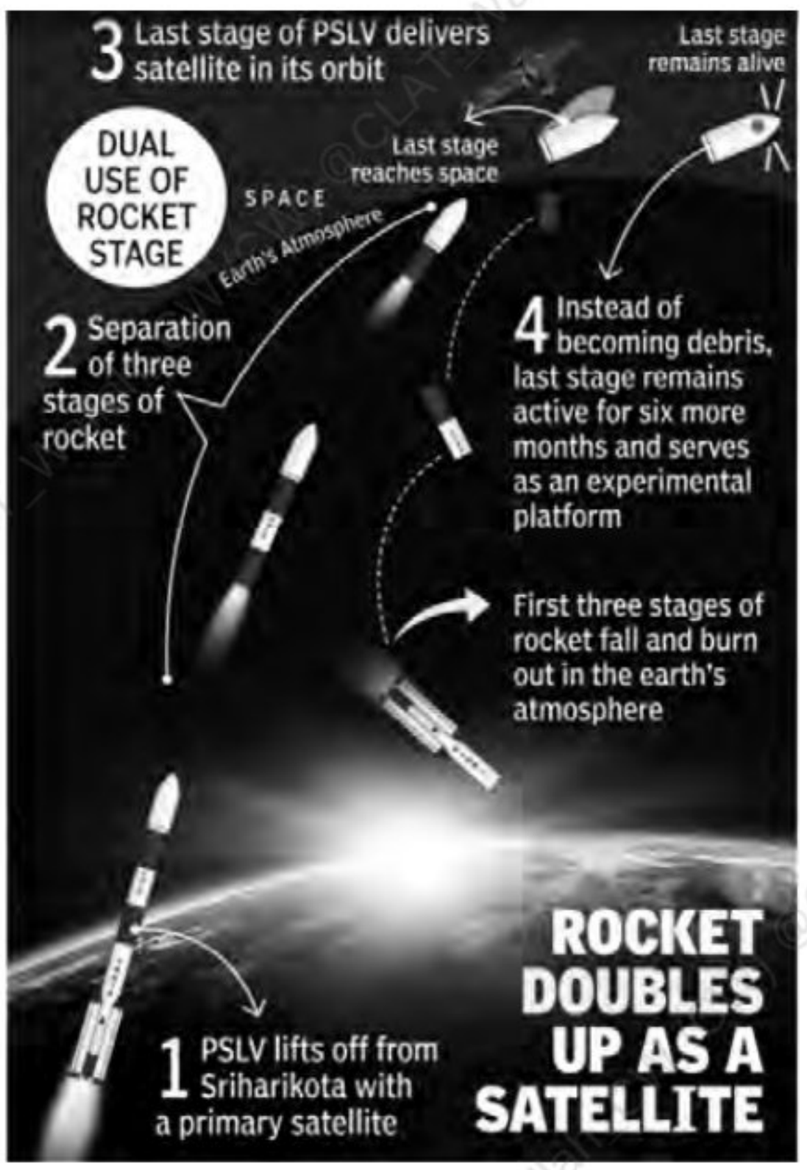
Space debris refers to the man-made objects orbiting the Earth that are no longer functional or serving any purpose. These objects can range from spent rocket stages, defunct satellites, and fragments from collisions or explosions.

Space debris poses a significant threat to active satellites, spacecraft, and even manned missions. The high velocities at which these objects travel can cause severe damage upon impact, potentially leading to mission failures or the creation of more debris. Additionally, the accumulation of space debris increases the risk of collisions, creating a cascading effect known as the Kessler syndrome, which could render certain orbits unusable. Mitigating space debris is crucial for ensuring the sustainability of space activities and preserving the space environment for future generations.

Way to marks:

PSLV Orbital Experimental Module (POEM)

- Launched as part of PSLV C – 58 Mission on Jan 1st Jan 2024.
- **Primary Mission:** To deploy XPoSAT Satellite into the intended orbit of 650 km
  - After deploying, Leftover Part of PSLV Rocket, Terminal Stage (4th Stage), repurposed into Stabilised Platform named POEM – 3.
- **Developed by:** Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (Trivandrum (Kerala)
- It was used for the 1st time in PSLV – C53 mission in June 2022.
  - ISRO demonstrated Reuse of Spent 4th Stage in PSLV C – 44 mission in 2019, that injected Microsat – R and Kalamsat – V2 Satellites.
- **3 – Axis Altitude Controlled Platform:** Experimental Mission or Space Platform that will help perform In – Orbit Experiments using Final Stage of Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV).
  - After completing 400 Orbits, POEM – 3 Re – entered Earth's Atmosphere after 73 days in Space.



Major Debris Contributor Event

- **March 2022**: Intentional Destruction of Russia's Cosmos 1048 in an Anti – Satellite Test adding 1408 Fragments of Debris.
- **July 2022**: Break-up of Upper Stage of Japanese H – 2A while deploying GOSAT – 2 Satellite adding 52 Fragments of Debris.
- **Nov 2022**: Accidental Explosion of Upper Stage of China's Yunhai – 3 adding 533 Pieces of Debris.
- **Nov 2022**: Break up of Japanese H – 2A Upper Stage for deployment of GCOM Datellite adding 30 pieces of Debris.

Kessler Syndrome

Theoretical Scenario in which a Cascade of Collisions between Artificial Objects in Low Earth Orbit leads to a rapidly increasing Amount of Space Debris, making Use of Near – Earth Space impossible for Extended Period of Time.

Is Space Debris a Problem?

- Low Earth Orbit (LEO) is crucial for applications like Navigation & Communication.
- Growing Space Debris in LEO poses a Collision Risk to Operational Satellites.
- Collisions can create even more Debris, triggering a Domino Effect.

Space Debris

All Non-Functional, Man-made Objects, including Fragments and Elements, in Earth Orbit or Re-entering into Earth's Atmosphere.

ISRO's Project NETRA

- NETRA stands for Network for space object Tracking and Analysis
- Early Warning System that would help detect Space Hazards to Indian Satellites.
- It is expected to give India its Own Capability in Space Situational Awareness (SSA).

Steps Taken by Other Countries

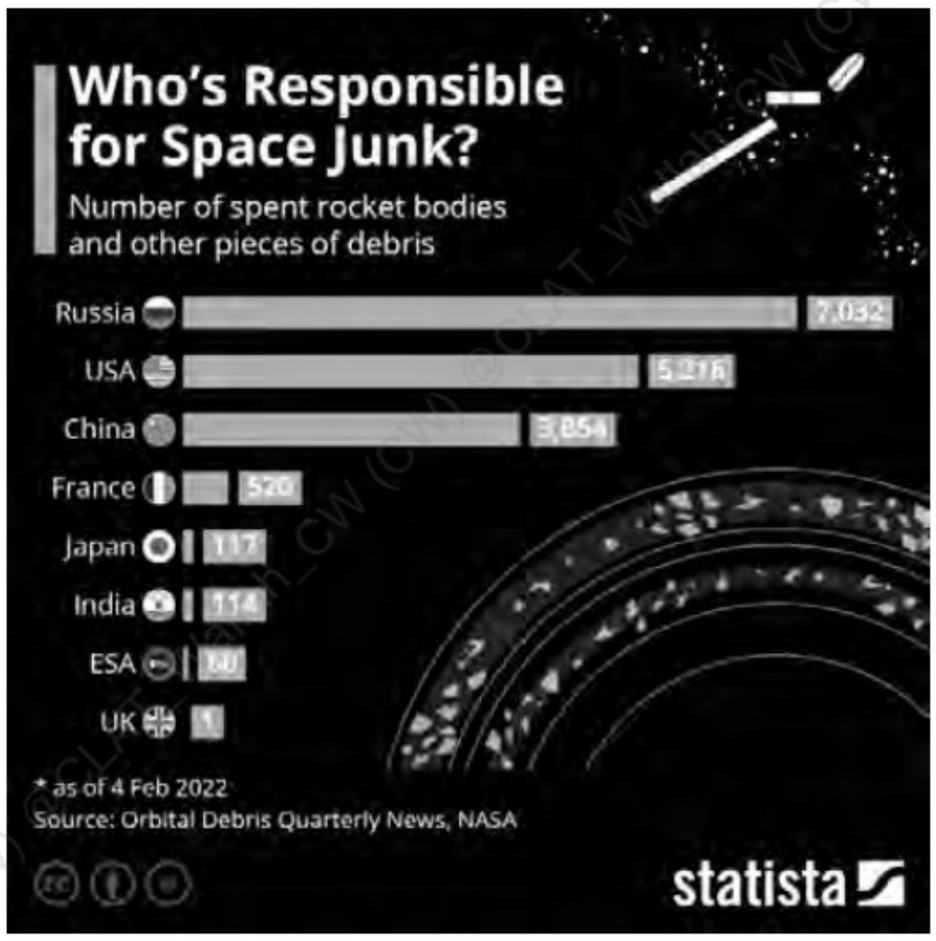
- **Orbital Debris Program**: NASA's initiative since 1979, focusing on Reducing Orbital Debris Creation, Tracking Existing Debris and Exploring Debris Removal Technologies.
- **Zero Debris Charter**: Adopted by European Space Agency with goal of achieving Zero Space Debris by 2030.
- **Japanese CRD2 Demonstration**: Partnership between Japan's Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and Astroscale to develop Debris Removal Technologies.
- **Space Force Tracking System**: Implemented by US Space Force to monitor Space Debris and assess Collision Risks in Low Earth Orbit.
- **Chinese Debris Removal Initiatives**: China's efforts include Deploying Spacecraft for Debris Removal with Innovative Technologies like Solar Sails.

Regulations to control Space Debris

- **Space Liability Convention of 1972**
  - Defines Responsibility in case a Space Object causes harm.

- As per treaty, "A Launching State shall be Absolutely Liable to Pay Compensation for Damage caused by its Space Objects on the Surface of the Earth or to Aircraft, and liable for damage due to its faults in Space".

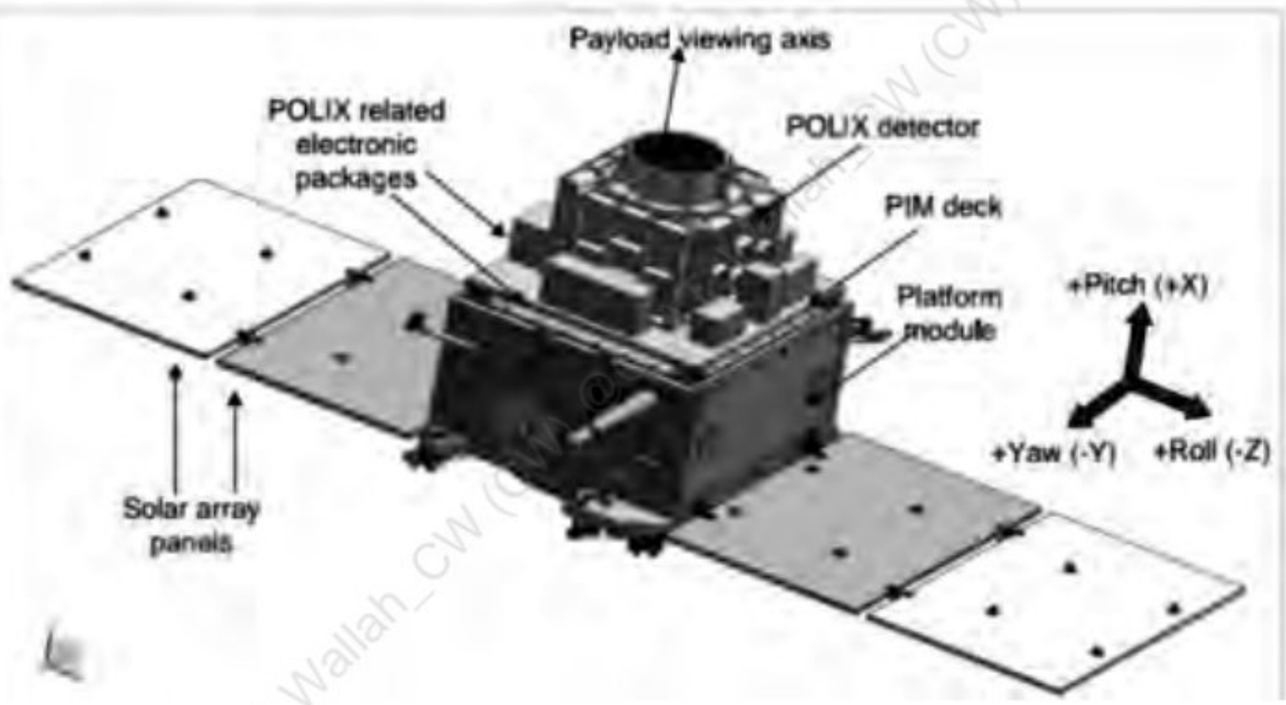
- **Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines 2002**
  - **Specified by:** Inter – Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee
  - Outline Methods to limit Accidental Collisions in Orbit, Break-ups during Operations, Intentional Destruction, and Post-Mission Break-ups.
  - Endorsed by UN in 2007.

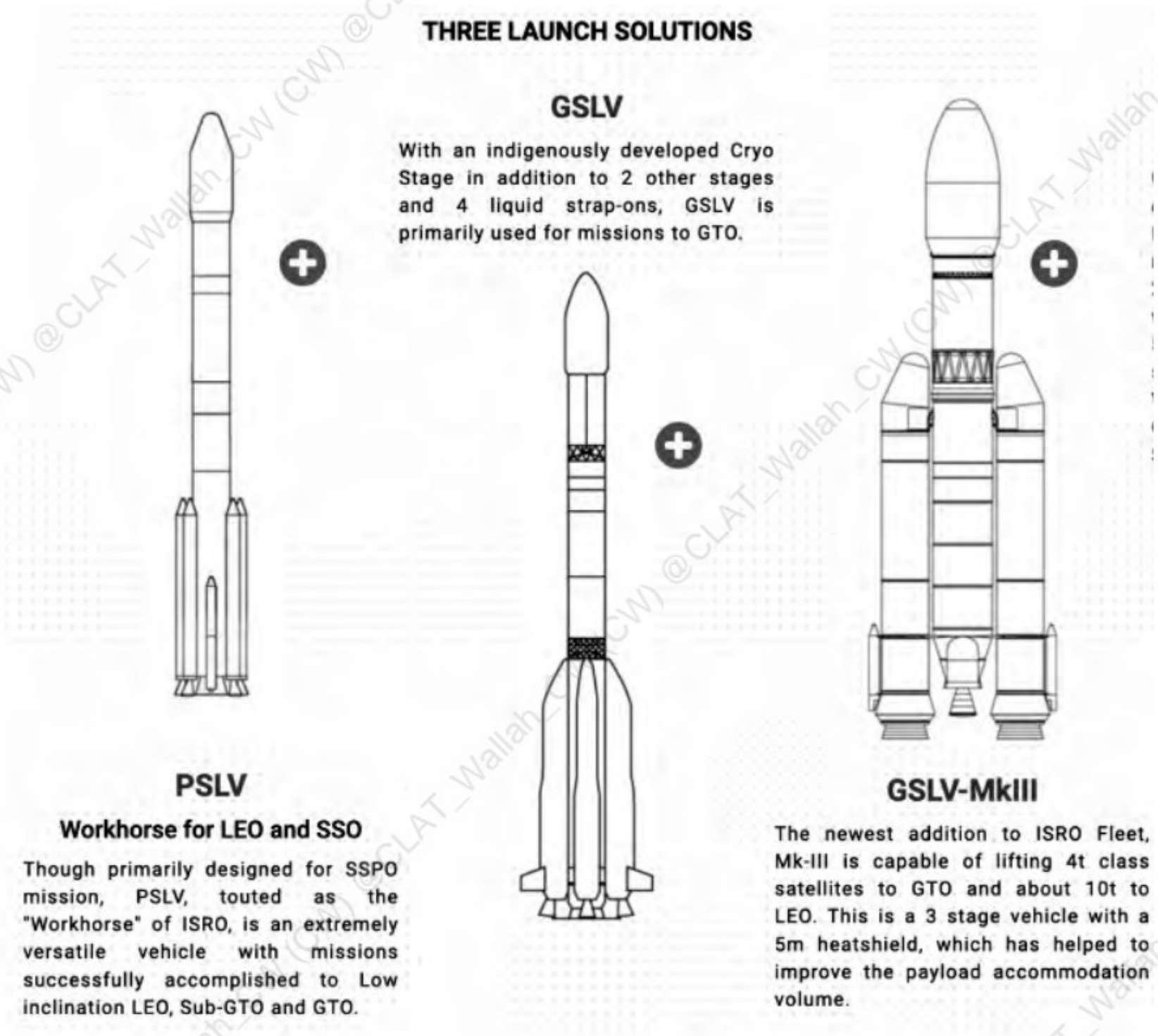


XPoSat Mission Objectives

- To measure polarization (degree and direction) of X-ray photons from ~50 potential celestial sources of interest in the energy band of 5-30 keV.
- Mission Life – 5 years, Platform – Modified IMS-2 Bus
- Payload – Polarimeter Instrument in X-rays (POLIX) from Raman Research Institute
- Orbit – Circular LEO (500-700 km), Inclination ≤ 30°

Deployed View of XPoSat





Pepper it With

- International Space station and its working , India's Gaganyaan Mission

For more exam related videos and guidance, scan the code to join our YouTube Channel

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. What was the primary mission of PSLV C-58 launched on January 1st, 2024?
   (a) To deploy POEM-3
   (b) To deploy XPoSAT satellite
   (c) To test the reusability of the 4th stage
   (d) To perform in-orbit experiments

2. What is the name of the stabilized platform repurposed from the leftover part of the PSLV C-58 rocket's terminal stage?
   (a) POEM-3 (b) XPoSAT (c) PSLV C-58 (d) Kalamsat-V2

3. Which organization developed POEM-3?
   (a) Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO)
   (b) National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)
   (c) Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (Trivandrum, Kerala)
   (d) European Space Agency (ESA)

4. In which PSLV mission did ISRO first demonstrate the reuse of the spent 4th stage?
   (a) PSLV C-44 (b) PSLV C-53 (c) PSLV C-58 (d) PSLV C-22

5. What is the purpose of POEM-3?
   (a) To deploy satellites
   (b) To perform in-orbit experiments
   (c) To test rocket propulsion systems
   (d) To study space debris

6. Which event in March 2022 was a major contributor to space debris?
   (a) Intentional destruction of Russia's Cosmos 1048 in an anti-satellite test
   (b) Accidental explosion of China's Long March 5B rocket
   (c) Collision between two defunct satellites
   (d) Breakup of the International Space Station

7. Which country's satellite launch in July 2022 added 52 fragments of debris?
   (a) Russia (b) China (c) Japan (d) India

8. How many pieces of debris were added due to the accidental explosion of China's Yunhai-3 upper stage in November 2022?
   (a) 52 (b) 533 (c) 1408 (d) 30

9. What is the crucial orbit for applications like navigation and communication?
   (a) Geostationary orbit (GEO)
   (b) Low Earth orbit (LEO)
   (c) Medium Earth orbit (MEO)
   (d) Highly elliptical orbit (HEO)

10. What is the name of ISRO's early warning system to detect space hazards to Indian satellites?
(a) NETRA (b) POEM (c) INSAT (d) GSLV

11. Which program has NASA been running since 1979 to reduce orbital debris creation and track existing debris?
(a) Orbital Debris Program (b) Debris Mitigation Initiative
(c) Space Situational Awareness (d) Zero Debris Charter

12. What is the goal of the Zero Debris Charter adopted by the European Space Agency?
(a) To achieve zero space debris by 2030 (b) To develop debris removal technologies
(c) To monitor space debris (d) To assess collision risks in LEO

13. Which country's aerospace exploration agency is partnering with Astroscale to develop debris removal technologies?
(a) United States (b) Russia (c) Japan (d) China

14. Which organization implemented a tracking system to monitor space debris and assess collision risks in Low Earth Orbit?
(a) NASA (b) US Space Force
(c) European Space Agency (d) ISRO

15. Which innovative technology is being used by China for debris removal efforts?
(a) Solar sails (b) Harpoon capture (c) Ion beam shepherd (d) Laser ablation

16. According to the Space Liability Convention of 1972, who is responsible for paying compensation if a space object causes harm on Earth or to aircraft?
(a) The launching state (b) The state that owns the space object
(c) The state that manufactured the space object (d) The state that operates the space object

17. Which organization specified the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines in 2002?
(a) United Nations
(b) Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee
(c) International Telecommunication Union
(d) World Meteorological Organization

18. When were the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines endorsed by the United Nations?
(a) 2002 (b) 2007 (c) 2010 (d) 2015

19. What is the name of the Indian human spaceflight mission mentioned?
(a) Chandrayaan (b) Mangalyaan (c) Gaganyaan (d) Aditya

20. Which international space station is mentioned in the context of the given information?
(a) Mir (b) Skylab (c) Tiangong (d) International Space Station



Forests as National Asset: Supreme Court

Why in News?

Recently, Supreme Court of India has asserted in a judgement that "Forests" in India are "National Asset" and "Major Contributor to Nation's Financial Wealth".

Judgement was based on an appeal filed by "Telangana" against a "High Court Decision", Graciously Gifting Forest Land to a Private Person.

Explained:

The recent Supreme Court's judgment in favor of the Forest department over the ownership of 106 acres of land worth ₹380 crore at Kompelli village has prompted the Telangana government to investigate cases of forest land encroachment by private individuals. The government suspects that during the previous BRS government, forest lands worth hundreds of crores were obtained illegally with the connivance of officials and BRS party leaders across the state.

The Chief Minister, A. Revanth Reddy, has taken serious note of the involvement of the then District Collector, Joint Collector, and AD, Survey and Lands Record, Bhupalpally, in helping a private party get a favorable judgment in the High Court regarding the ownership of the Kompelli land. There are allegations of collusion between the then District Collector and revenue officials with encroachers under pressure from a former BRS MLA, leading to the submission of false affidavits and manipulation of reports in the Kompelli land case. The government plans to probe the 'Haritha Haram' program aimed at enhancing forest cover, launched under the BRS rule, for any irregularities.

Way to marks:

Forest as Financial Wealth and National Asset

- Supreme Court observed that India's Forests serve as a Major Sink of Carbon Dioxide (CO_2).
- Value of Mitigation has put a Conservative Value of US$ 5 per tonne of CO_2 locked in Our Forests (24,000 mt of CO_2 is worth $120 billion or ₹6 lakh crores).
- **According to "India's Forest and Tree Cover:** Contribution as a Carbon Sink" (2009), from "1995 to 2005", the Carbon Stocks stored in our forests and trees have increased from 6,245 million tonnes (mt) to 6,662 mt, registering an annual increment of "38 mt of carbon" or "138 mt of CO_2 equivalent".



Supreme Court ruling on right against Climate Change

Right against Climate Change is a fundamental right- Right to a healthy environment**, which is** safe from the ill-effects of climate change**, is a fundamental right.**

Expansive view of the Fundamental rights under Art 14 and 21- SC has held that right to life **(**Art 21**) and** right to equality **(**Art 14**) c**ould not be fully realised without a clean, stable environment. **SC has expanded the scope of Art 14 and Art 21 to underline the need to protect lives and livelihoods in the face of climate change.**

Impact on the right to health (Art 21) due to Climate Change- The right to health (which is a part of the right to life under Article 21) **is** impacted due to factors such as air pollution, vector-borne diseases, rising temperatures, droughts**. These factors are exacerbated due to climate change.**

Impact on the right to equality (Art 14) due to Climate Change- Climate change and environmental degradation lead to acute food and water shortages in a particular area where the poorer communities suffer more than richer ones**.** Forest dwellers, tribal and indigenous communities have a higher risk of losing their homes and culture **due to climate change as compared to other communities.**

Interconnection between climate change and human rights- SC in its judgement has held that climate change impacts various human rights such as the right to health, indigenous rights, gender equality, and the right to development**.**

Forest Cover in India

- The FSI's reports identify 63 million hectares of potential areas for restoration across different categories.
- Forests in India cover about 24.62% of Land Area (including Tree Cover).
- National Forest Policy of India (1988) envisaged a goal of achieving 33% of Geographical Area of Country under Forest & Tree Cover.

Forest Survey of India (FSI)

- Established in 1981
- Succeeded "Pre-Investment Survey of Forest Resources" (PISFR), a project initiated in 1965 by India along with Food and Agriculture Organisation / United Nations Development Programme.
- Works under Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)
- Responsible for Survey and Assessment of Forest Resources in India.
- **Head:** Anoop Singh
- **HQ:** Dehradun (Uttarakhand)

INDIA'S GREEN COVER INCREASES

Change in forest & tree cover

Class	Area (sq km) 2021	Area (sq km) 2019	% of GA* 2021	% of GA* 2019	Net increase (in 2021 compared to 2019)	% increase
Forest Cover	7,13,789	7,12,249	21.71	21.67	1,540	0.22
Tree Cover**	95,748	95,027	2.91	2.89	721	0.76
Total	**8,09,537**	**8,07,276**	**24.62**	**24.56**	**2,261**	0.28

*GA - geographical area ; **Tree Cover (patches of size less than 1 hectare outside recorded forest area)

States/UTs showing gain/loss in forest cover in 2021

Gain in sqkm		Loss in sqkm	
Andhra Pradesh	647	257	Arunachal Pradesh
Telangana	632	249	Manipur
Odisha	537	235	Nagaland
Karnataka	155	186	Mizoram
Jharkhand	110	73	Meghalaya

Forest cover in major mega cities in 2021

Cities	Area (sq km)	Decadal change**
Delhi	194	(+11%)
Mumbai	111	(+9%)
Bengaluru	89	(-5%)
Hyderabad	82	(+15%)
Chennai	23	(+26%)
Ahmedabad	9	(-48%)
Kolkata	2	(-30%)

** Decadal change between 2011 and 2021 in %

What can amended Forest (Conservation) Act change?

What is the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Bill 2023? Did the States comply by the SC's directive to undertake an exercise to identify their own deemed forests? Did the JPC flag any concerns with the Bill?

Rishika Pardikar

The story so far:

The controversial Forest (Conservation) Amendment Bill 2023, passed by the Lok Sabha with limited debate, awaits discussion in the Rajya Sabha. The bill aims to restrict conservation scope, exempt border lands for strategic projects, and allow some non-forest activities. The Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha in March. Thereafter, it was referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) comprising 32 members from both Houses of Parliament and across party lines.

How does the Bill restrict the scope of the Act?

The Bill stipulates that only those lands that were notified as 'forest' under the Indian Forest Act 1927, any other relevant law or were recorded as 'forests' in government records will be acknowledged as 'forests' under this Act as well. This revision stands in stark contrast to the wide applicability of the extant Act at present. A Supreme Court judgement in 1996 had reiterated such a broad application. It said, that a 'forest' includes all land recorded as such in government records regardless of ownership as well as "deemed forests", which are not officially classified as 'forests' but satisfy the dictionary meaning of the word: any large area with significant tree cover and undergrowth. The court had also asked States to undertake an exercise to identify and notify their own deemed forests. But even after almost 30 years, many States are yet to complete this exercise and in some cases, we don't know how scientific the process of identification was. As such, the amendment opens up all land that hasn't been officially classified as 'forests' to commercial activity. It also removes the checks and balances the Act currently includes, in the form of forest clearance permissions and the informed consent of the local community.

Why is the exemption for border infrastructure controversial?

The Bill seeks to exempt linear infrastructure projects like roads and highways from seeking forest clearance permissions if they are located within 100 km of the national border. Experts have raised concerns because "strategic linear projects of national importance" is an undefined term and can thus be misused to push through infrastructure projects that are devastating for the local ecology.

This Bill was not referred to the relevant Parliamentary Standing Committee, which in this case would have been the Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change, headed by Congress MP Jairam Ramesh. As per the Pre-legislative Consultation Policy, it is considered good practice to refer Bills to Standing Committees for review. But the government bypassed this oversight function in this case.

Did the JPC flag any concerns with the Bill?

The JPC did not propose a single change to the Bill in its report despite receiving objections from tribal groups, conservationists, environmental lawyers, activists, and citizen groups. Six members of the JPC itself wrote dissent notes. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs also raised concerns about the amendment's implications on community rights enshrined in the Forest Rights Act 2006.

The Bill got a free pass in the Lok sabha as most Opposition MPs were preoccupied with highlighting human rights issues in Manipur. Irrespective of whether Rajya Sabha members seriously debate the Bill, its a drastic break from the legal definition of 'forests', its focus on creating carbon sinks and the uncertainty over its coverage don't bode well.

(Rishika Pardikar is a freelance environment reporter based in Bengaluru)

THE GIST

The highly controversial Forest (Conservation) Amendment Bill 2023 is awaiting debate in the Rajya Sabha after having been passed by the Lok Sabha with almost no debate in June.

Broadly, the Bill seeks to restrict the conservation scope of the Act to only certain forest lands. It also exempts border lands from the obligation to seek permissions to clear forests in order to construct "strategic linear projects of national importance".

Verdict on woods

Some of the observations made by the SC over the pleas challenging the 2023 amendments to the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980



- The "all-encompassing" dictionary meaning will continue to hold field until the States and Union Territories prepare a consolidated record of forest lands
- Environment Ministry should issue a circular in this regard to the States and Union Territories
- Establishment of "zoos or safaris" must have the final approval of the top court

Understanding the forest bill

1 Contentious clauses

Covers land declared forest under the Indian Forest Act, 1927 or any other law; those not recorded under the laws but notified as forest in govt records as on or after Oct 25, 1980, except such land whose land use was changed from forest to non-forest purpose on or before Dec 12, 1996, also to be covered

2 No prior forest clearance required in cases where:

a) Forest land within 100km of IB, and used for construction of projects of national importance
b) For work on strip forests alongside a rail line
c) For activity in up to 5 ha in LWE areas

Potential impact of bill

- Northeast states worry that exempting nod for work along international borders would subject ecologically fragile forest areas to a change in land use
- Dilution of SC's 1996 Godavarman judgment that widened the scope of Forest Conservation Act
- Experts say bill violates Forest Rights Act – a claim dismissed by Centre

Centre's defence on exemptions

- Unclear government records
- Need to provide connectivity to roadside amenities, habitation, railway lines
- Plantation on non-forest land
- Security-related projects of national importance

Pepper it With

- Forest Rights Act and Supreme court issue , Classification of forests in India.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. According to the Supreme Court, what is the conservative value assigned per tonne of CO2 locked in India's forests?
   (a) $2 per tonne (b) $5 per tonne (c) $10 per tonne (d) $20 per tonne

2. What is the approximate value of 24,000 million tonnes of CO2 locked in India's forests, as per the Supreme Court's valuation?
   (a) ₹3 lakh crores (b) ₹6 lakh crores (c) ₹9 lakh crores (d) ₹12 lakh crores

3. According to the report "India's Forest and Tree Cover: Contribution as a Carbon Sink" (2009), what was the annual increment of carbon stocks stored in India's forests and trees from 1995 to 2005?
   (a) 18 million tonnes (mt) of carbon or 66 mt of CO2 equivalent
   (b) 28 mt of carbon or 102 mt of CO2 equivalent
   (c) 38 mt of carbon or 138 mt of CO2 equivalent
   (d) 48 mt of carbon or 176 mt of CO2 equivalent

4. What is the approximate percentage of land area covered by forests in India (including tree cover)?
   (a) 18.62% (b) 21.62% (c) 24.62% (d) 27.62%

5. According to the National Forest Policy of India (1988), what is the target for the geographical area of the country to be under forest and tree cover?
   (a) 25% (b) 30% (c) 33% (d) 40%

6. In which year was the Forest Survey of India (FSI) established?
   (a) 1965 (b) 1975 (c) 1981 (d) 1988

7. Which project did the Forest Survey of India (FSI) succeed?
   (a) National Forest Policy (b) Pre-Investment Survey of Forest Resources (PISFR)
   (c) Forest Resources Assessment (d) United Nations Environment Programme

8. Under which ministry does the Forest Survey of India (FSI) work?
   (a) Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
   (b) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
   (c) Ministry of Rural Development
   (d) Ministry of Tribal Affairs

9. Who is the current head of the Forest Survey of India (FSI)?
   (a) Anoop Singh (b) Siddhanta Das (c) Prakash Javadekar (d) Bhupender Yadav

10. What is the headquarters of the Forest Survey of India (FSI)?
(a) New Delhi (b) Mumbai (c) Dehradun (d) Bengaluru

11. Which Act recognizes the rights of forest-dwelling communities over land and resources?
(a) National Forest Policy (b) Forest Rights Act
(c) Forest Conservation Act (d) Indian Forest Act

12. In which year was the Forest Rights Act enacted?
(a) 2002 (b) 2006 (c) 2008 (d) 2010

13. According to the Forest Rights Act, which communities are eligible to claim rights over forest land?
(a) Scheduled Tribes
(b) Other Traditional Forest Dwellers
(c) Both Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers
(d) None of the above

14. Which category of forests in India is considered the most valuable and protected?
(a) Reserved Forests (b) Protected Forests (c) Unclassed Forests (d) Village Forests

15. Which authority has the power to declare an area as a Reserved Forest?
(a) State Government (b) Central Government
(c) Forest Survey of India (d) Supreme Court

16. Which category of forests in India allows the collection of minor forest produce and grazing of cattle?
(a) Reserved Forests (b) Protected Forests (c) Unclassed Forests (d) Village Forests

17. Which category of forests in India is managed by the local village community?
(a) Reserved Forests (b) Protected Forests (c) Unclassed Forests (d) Village Forests

18. What is the total area identified by the Forest Survey of India (FSI) as potential areas for forest restoration across different categories?
(a) 43 million hectares (b) 53 million hectares (c) 63 million hectares (d) 73 million hectares

19. According to the Supreme Court's observation, India's forests serve as a major sink for which greenhouse gas?
(a) Methane (b) Nitrous Oxide (c) Carbon Dioxide (d) Chlorofluorocarbons

20. Which former government's 'Haritha Haram' program aimed at enhancing forest cover is being probed by the current Telangana government?
(a) Indian National Congress
(b) Bharatiya Janata Party
(c) Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS)
(d) All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)



Global Forest Watch Report

Why in News?

According to the Global Forest Watch, India has experienced a significant loss of tree cover, amounting to 2.33 million hectares since 2000, which translates to a 6% decrease in tree cover during this period. Global Forest Watch monitors forest changes in near real-time using satellite data and other sources.

Explained:

Forests are vital for sustaining life on Earth, playing a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance, conserving biodiversity, regulating climate, and supporting livelihoods. However, the Global Forest Watch report highlights alarming deforestation trends globally and in India. India has lost 2.33 million hectares of tree cover since 2000, a 6% decrease, including 414,000 hectares of humid primary forest. Five Indian states contributed to 60% of the tree cover loss between 2001 and 2023.

Globally, the world witnessed a net decline of 28.3 million hectares of forest lands between 2010 and 2023, with a 12% decrease in total tree cover since 2000. Despite these losses, India's forests still serve as a net carbon sink. The Indian government has initiated programs like the Nagar Van Yojana and the Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAMPA) to boost forest cover and achieve the target of 33% of the geographical area under forest and tree cover.

Way to marks:

Key Findings

- **Primary Forest Loss**: India witnessed the loss of 414,000 hectares of humid primary forest (4.1%) from 2002 to 2023, constituting 18% of its total tree cover loss during the same period.
- **Tree Cover Loss**: From 2001 to 2023, India lost 2.33 million hectares of tree cover, marking a 6.0% decrease since 2000.
    - Notably, 95% of this tree cover loss occurred within natural forests.
    - Five states accounted for 60% of all tree cover loss between 2001 and 2023, with Assam leading, followed by Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and Manipur.
- **Tree Cover Gain**: In India, the top six regions contributed to 54% of all tree cover gain between 2000 and 2020, with Karnataka leading in tree cover gain.
    - India accounted for 1.4% of the global total tree cover gain from 2000 to 2020.
- **All Tree Cover**: As of 2010, the top seven regions represented 55% of all tree cover in India.
    - Arunachal Pradesh had the highest tree cove r, followed by Assam, Chhattisgarh, Kerala, and Odisha.

- **Loss Due to Forest Fires**: India lost 35,900 hectares of tree cover due to fires from 2002 to 2022, with the highest loss recorded in 2008.
    - Odisha experienced the highest rate of tree cover loss due to fires from 2001 to 2022, followed by Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Assam, and Meghalaya.
- **Carbon Sink**: Betw een 2001 and 2022, forests in India emitted 51 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year and removed 141 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year.
    - This indicates a net carbon sink of 89.9 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year.

Global Forest Status

In 2010, the tree cover across all the world was approximately 3.92 billion hectares or 30% of Earth's surface. During the time between 2010 and 2023 there was a massive deforestation of the world leading to a 28.3 Mha net decline in forest lands.

- Between 2002 to 2023, there has been a net reduction of 76.3 million hectares (Mha) of moist primary woodland which represents 16% of overall decline in tree canopies during same period.
- Between years 2001 up to 2023, 488 Mha of forests were lost worldwide, which is equivalent to a 12% decline in total tree cover since 2000.
- From 2001 to 2022, globally, 23 percent of all forest cover loss took place in the regions where the leading factors were responsible for deforestation.
- By 2010, just 5 nations were responsible for more than half of the total forest cover on earth.
    - It is Russia that has the highest area under forest cover with 755 mha, then comes Brazil, Canada, United Sates and lastly Democratic Republic of Congo.
- A cumulative total of 126 Mha globally was lost due to fire during this period whereas another 333 Mha disappeared due to other causes.

Forest Cover in India

- Forests in India cover about 24.62% of Land Area (including Tree Cover).
- National Forest Policy of India (1988) envisaged a goal of achieving 33% of Geographical Area of Country under Forest & Tree Cover.

Boosting Forest Cover through Government Initiatives

- In 2020, the **Nagar Van Yojana** was started.
    - The target is to set up 600 Nagar Vans and 400 Nagar Vatika by 2024-25 in the towns.
- The allocation ratio of 90% to states and 10% in the Centre is applicable to the funds set up by the government known as **Complementary Compensatory Afforestation Fund or CAMPA**.
    - CAMPA helps States and Union Territories counterbalance forest land diversion for developmental projects by enabling them to undertake compensatory afforestation.
- In 2019, a **Draft National Policy** on Forests was made known, which stressed on maintaining forests through conservation, protection and sustainable management, as well as protecting the rights of communities that live near or in forests.

National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)

Launch Date

It was launched in June 2008.

Implementing Body

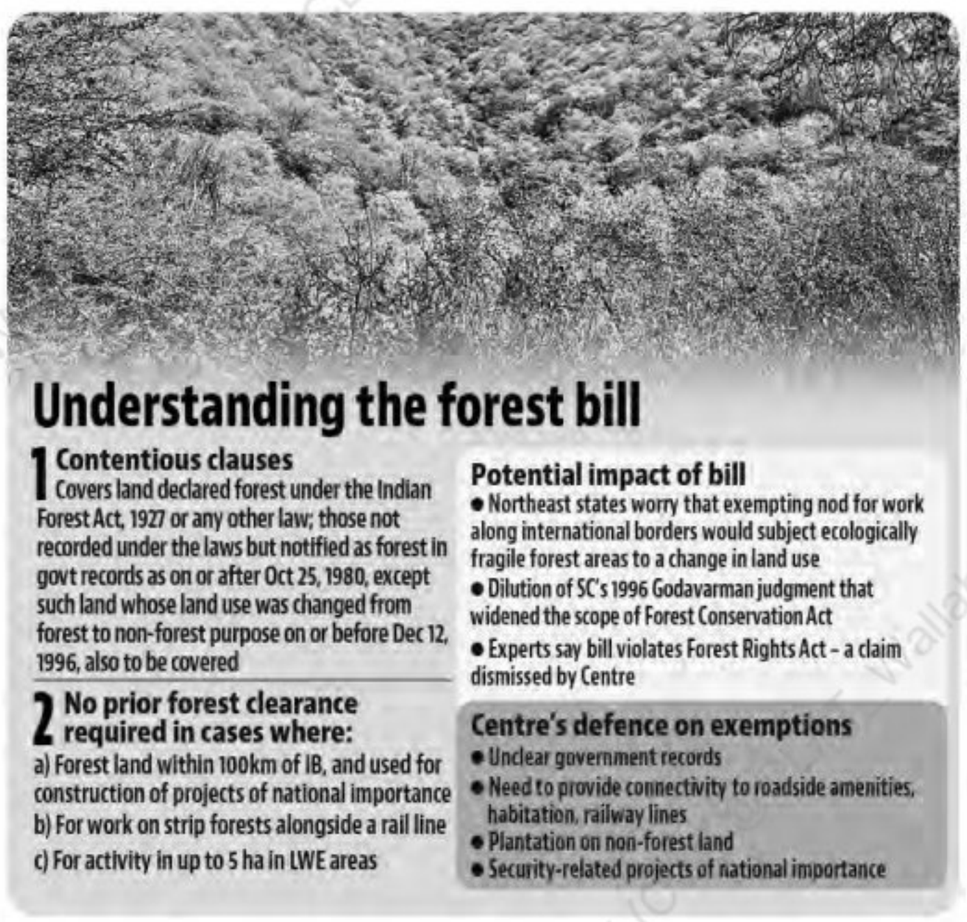
The Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change is in charge of the overall implementation of the plan.

Details

- There are eight "National Missions" which form the core of the National action plan.
  - They focus on promoting understanding of climate change, adaptation and mitigation, energy efficiency and natural resource conservation.
- The Eight missions are:
  1. National Solar Mission
  2. National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency
  3. National Mission on Sustainable Habitat
  4. National Water Mission
  5. National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem
  6. National Mission for a Green India
  7. National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture
  8. National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change

सत्यमेव जयते
Goverment Of India





Understanding the forest bill

1 Contentious clauses
Covers land declared forest under the Indian Forest Act, 1927 or any other law; those not recorded under the laws but notified as forest in govt records as on or after Oct 25, 1980, except such land whose land use was changed from forest to non-forest purpose on or before Dec 12, 1996, also to be covered

2 No prior forest clearance required in cases where:
a) Forest land within 100km of IB, and used for construction of projects of national importance
b) For work on strip forests alongside a rail line
c) For activity in up to 5 ha in LWE areas

Potential impact of bill
- Northeast states worry that exempting nod for work along international borders would subject ecologically fragile forest areas to a change in land use
- Dilution of SC's 1996 Godavarman judgment that widened the scope of Forest Conservation Act
- Experts say bill violates Forest Rights Act – a claim dismissed by Centre

Centre's defence on exemptions
- Unclear government records
- Need to provide connectivity to roadside amenities, habitation, railway lines
- Plantation on non-forest land
- Security-related projects of national importance

Verdict on woods

Some of the observations made by the SC over the pleas challenging the 2023 amendments to the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980



- The "all-encompassing" dictionary meaning will continue to hold field until the States and Union Territories prepare a consolidated record of forest lands
- Environment Ministry should issue a circular in this regard to the States and Union Territories
- Establishment of "zoos or safaris" must have the final approval of the top court

Bonn Challenge and Trillion Trees

Bonn Challenge

- Worldwide, launched 2011
- Restore degraded and deforested landscape by 2030



To date: 210m hectares (pledged)
27m hectares (tree cover in 2020)

Target: 350m hectares

Trillion Trees

- Worldwide, launched 2016
- Ensure one trillion trees are saved, protected or restored by 2050



To date: 38.6 billion trees

Target: Achieve global trillion-tree vision

Pepper it With

- Amazon forest and its degradation , Shifting pattern of Rainfall in India.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. According to the Global Forest Watch report, what percentage of India's tree cover loss occurred within natural forests between 2001 and 2023?
   (a) 80% (b) 90% (c) 95% (d) 100%

2. Which Indian state led in tree cover loss between 2001 and 2023?
   (a) Mizoram (b) Arunachal Pradesh (c) Assam (d) Nagaland

3. As per the report, what percentage of the global total tree cover gain from 2000 to 2020 did India account for?
   (a) 1.2% (b) 1.4% (c) 1.6% (d) 1.8%

4. Which Indian state had the highest tree cover as of 2010?
   (a) Kerala (b) Chhattisgarh (c) Arunachal Pradesh (d) Assam

5. Which Indian state experienced the highest rate of tree cover loss due to fires from 2001 to 2022?
   (a) Odisha (b) Arunachal Pradesh (c) Nagaland (d) Assam

6. Between 2001 and 2022, were forests in India a net carbon sink or source?
   (a)Net carbon sink (b)Net carbon source (c) Partly A&B (D) None of the above

7. According to the report, what percentage of the world's land area was covered by tree cover in 2010?
   (a) 25% (b) 30% (c) 35% (d) 40%

8. Which country had the highest area under forest cover by 2010?
   (a) Russia (b) Brazil (c) Canada (d) United States

9. What percentage of the total forest cover loss globally took place in regions where the leading factors were responsible for deforestation between 2001 and 2022?
   (a) 18% (b) 21% (c) 23% (d) 25%

10. What is India's target for achieving the percentage of its geographical area under forest and tree cover, as per the National Forest Policy of 1988?
    (a) 28% (b) 30% (c) 33% (d) 35%

11. What is the target number of Nagar Vans to be set up under the Nagar Van Yojana by 2024-25?
    (a) 500 (b) 550 (c) 600 (d) 650

12. What is the allocation ratio of funds between states and the Centre for the Compensatory Afforestation Fund (CAMPA)?
(a) 80:20 (b) 85:15 (c) 90:10 (d) 95:5

13. What is the "all-encompassing" dictionary meaning that will continue to hold field until states and UTs prepare a consolidated record of forest lands?
(a) Forest definition
(b) Tree cover definition
(c) Woodland definition
(d) None of the above

14. Which ministry should issue a circular to states and UTs regarding the forest amendments?
(a) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(b) Environment Ministry
(c) Ministry of Agriculture
(d) None of the above

15. Which of the following requires the final approval of the top court for establishment?
(a) Zoos
(b) Safaris
(c) Both zoos and safaris
(d) None of the above

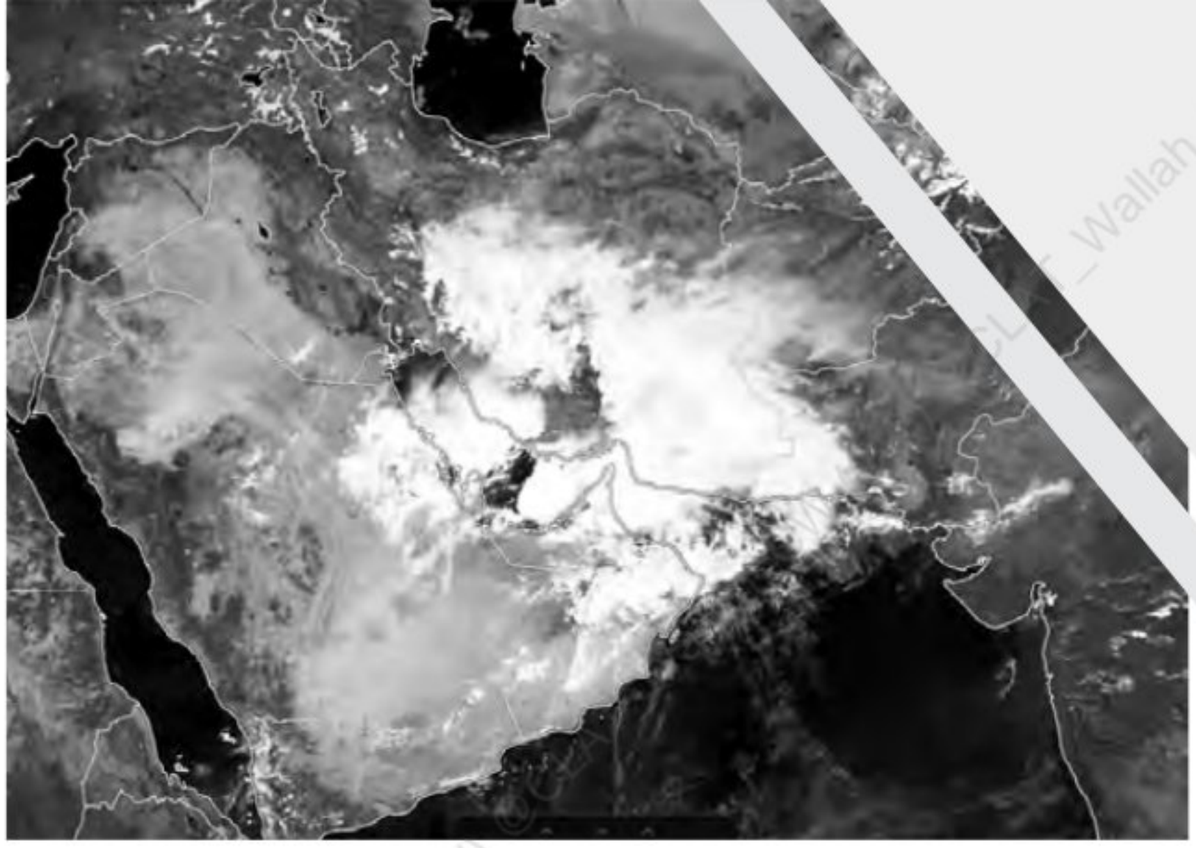
16. Which of the following is NOT a contentious clause in the forest bill?
(a) Covers land declared forest under the Indian Forest Act, 1927
(b) Exemption for construction within 100 km of international borders
(c) Exemption for work on strip forests along rail lines
(d) All of the above are contentious clauses

17. Which year was the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) launched?
(a) 2006 (b) 2007 (c) 2008 (d) 2009

18. Which body is in charge of the overall implementation of the NAPCC?
(a) Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
(b) Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change
(c) NITI Aayog
(d) National Green Tribunal

19. How many "National Missions" form the core of the National Action Plan on Climate Change?
(a) 6 (b) 7 (c) 8 (d) 9

20. Which of the following is NOT one of the eight National Missions under the NAPCC?
(a) National Solar Mission
(b) National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture
(c) National Mission for Green Revolution
(d) National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem



April 2024
TOPIC in NEWS

Dubai & Mumbai Extremely Harsh Climate Situations

Why in News?

UAE experienced one of heaviest records' downpour following a severe thunderstorm which affected Oman and then reached UAE.

At the same time, Mumbai, lying across the sea from Arabia, is under the influence of a heatwave accompanied by high humidity indexes which stayed above 55% for days.

Explained:

Dubai recently experienced an unprecedented weather event, with heavy rainfall causing significant flooding across the city. On April 16, Dubai received rainfall equivalent to what it typically gets in a year and a half, marking the heaviest downpour in ninety years. This extreme weather phenomenon was not limited to Dubai; other cities in the United Arab Emirates, such as Sharjah and Abu Dhabi, also faced excessive rainfall, while neighboring countries like Oman and Saudi Arabia experienced flash floods. The primary cause of this weather anomaly was attributed to a Western Disturbance weather system[In which the rainfed clouds move from the Mediterranean to West Asian countries like Iran , Pakistan, India etc.{ Mawath – Rainfall of Winters in India} due to Movement of High velocity winds]. This time such winds were compensated by opposite winds seen in the area of west asia and central Asia this lead to western disturbance's failure to move over Western Asia due to the presence of an anticyclone. Consequently, a storm system, characterized by heavy rainfall and lightning, developed over the region below it [near Dubai and UAE]

Several factors may have contributed to the severity of the rainfall in Dubai. Firstly, cloud seeding operations conducted by the UAE National Centre of Meteorology could have intensified the rainfall. Additionally, local dust acting as natural cloud seeders might have enhanced the precipitation. Moreover, warm sea temperatures, exacerbated by global warming, led to increased water evaporation and, consequently, more moisture in the atmosphere. This, combined with high surface temperatures, created favorable conditions for intense rainfall. The atmospheric conditions, including low-pressure areas at both high altitudes and surface levels, further intensified the thunderstorms. The transition from El Nino to La Nina may have also played a role in influencing the weather patterns in the region, contributing to the unusually heavy rainfall experienced in Dubai.

Way to marks:

Weather Outrage in Dubai

- April 16 saw Dubai experienced rainfall that was as much as what it was supposed to receive within one year and a half.
- Since ninety years ago, UAE experienced the most intense downpour as compared to all others ever witnessed on its soils.

- In addition to this, Unites Arab Emirates cities like Sharjah as well as Abu Dhabi saw Excessive Rainfall.
- Such manifestations also occurred across other states like Oman or Saudi Arabia including Bahrain where Flash Floods were declared due to this factor.

Scenario in Mumbai

- Mumbai Weather's Konkan Coast is boiling hot and humid.
- Santa Cruz Station reached 39°C on April 16 and it was Hottest Temperature in 15 years.

The Cause

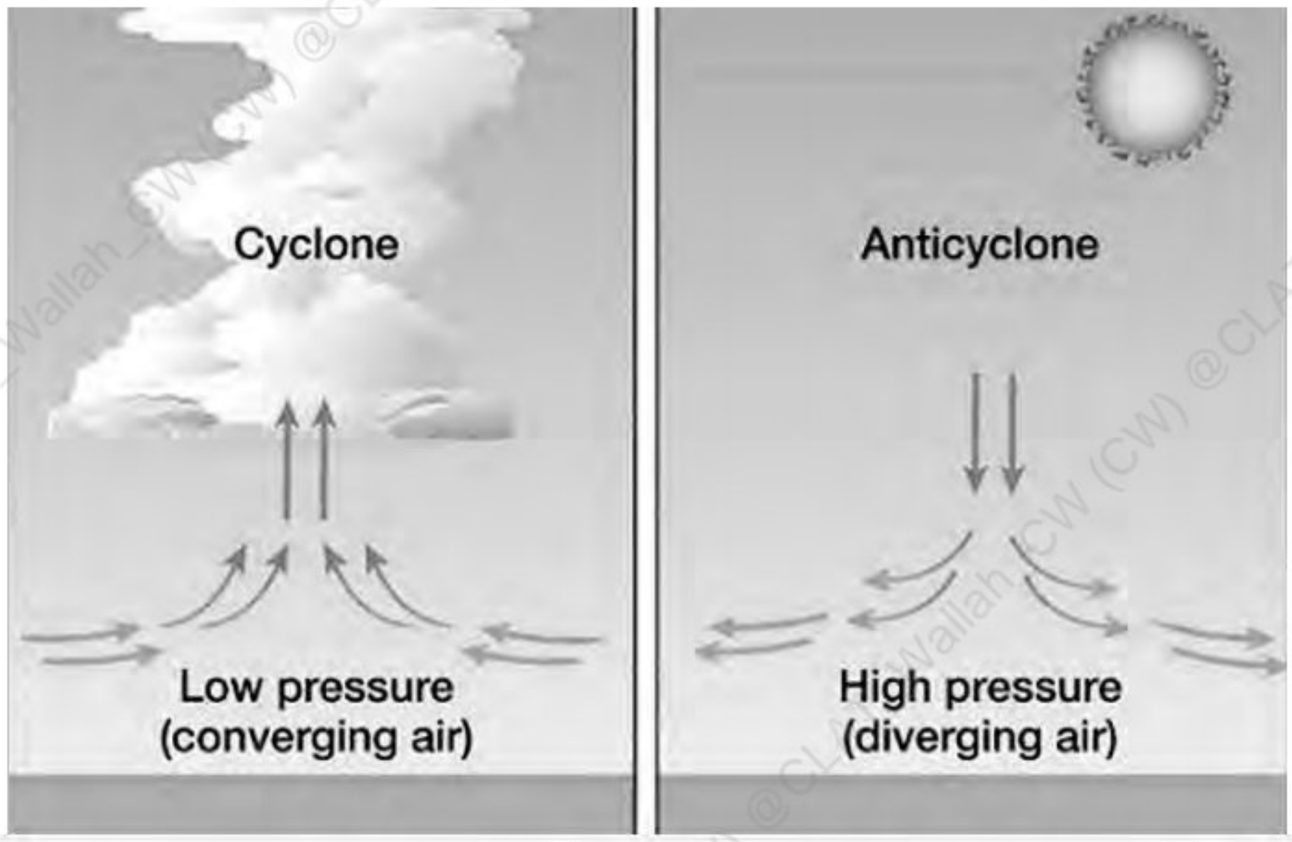
- A Western Disturbance, which is a weather system did not move over Western Asia due to an anticyclone.
- This divine intervention on the part of the anticyclone might have resulted in a storm system characterized by rainfall accompanied by lightning bolts.
- According to specialists, Western Disturbance affected the western extreme of the anticyclone.
- Hence, High Anticyclone is a possible factor for Harsh Weather in Dubai.

Other Possible Reasons for Dubai Floods

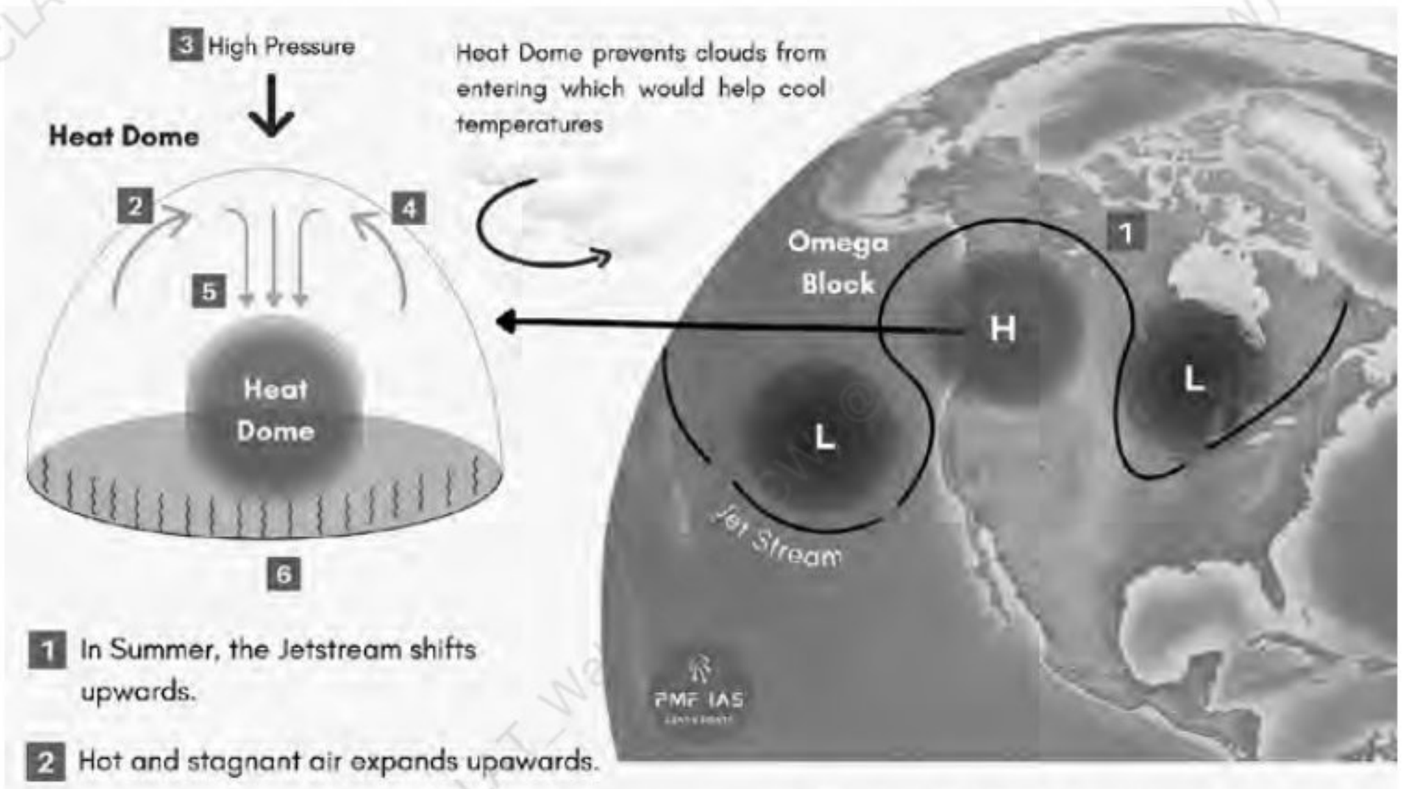
- The rainfall from storm system could have been increased by cloud seeding operations from UAE National Centre of Meteorology.
- The heavy rain could also be due to local dust acting as natural cloud seeders.
  - This is similar to man-made cloud seeding, because dust can form clouds when acting as condensation nuclei.
- The seas near Dubai are experiencing warm water that is unusually warm due to global warming followed by temperatures above them which are quite high.
  - It enhances water evaporation potential and helps the atmosphere to hold more water.
  - This has led to significant increases in rainfall amounts including recent heavy rains witnessed in Dubai.
- "The air got squeezed by low-pressure both in the upper parts of the atmosphere and at the surface level.
  - The temperature difference between warm ground level and cold high altitudes intensified this squeezing of air due to low pressure areas at both levels.
  - This resulted in a lot of thunderstorms occurring.
- The weather could have been influenced by other elements such as moving from El Nino to La Nina.

Why Mumbai is so Hot?

- The high-pressure areas are referred to as anticyclones.
  - In anticyclones, winds move in a downwards direction and they are compressed resulting in heating leading to heat waves across large areas.
  - To other nearby areas such as the surrounding regions, anticyclones may bring severe weather conditions.
- In Mumbai, the high-pressure area caused the "heat dome effect" which intensified the warm air mass over the city.
  - The warm Middle East and Arabian Peninsula Subcontinent air came in through sinks where it was warmed up.
  - Such thunderstorms further increased humidity of Mumbai just before the monsoon season.
  - It is a known fact that in most nights in Mumbai Sea breezes usually moderate high temperatures.
  - However, this may not have been the case during this cold night if an anticyclone was blocking such winds.



Cyclone	Anticyclone
1. It represents areas of **low pressure**.	It represents areas of **high pressure**.
1. Cyclones spin in a **counterclockwise direction in the Northern Hemisphere** and clockwise in the Southern Hemisphere.	Anticyclones spin in a **clockwise direction in the Northern Hemisphere** and counterclockwise in the Southern Hemisphere.
1. Cyclones are associated with **clouds**, **rain** and **thunderstorms**.	Anticyclones are associated with **fair weather** but can lead to temperature extremes and poor air quality under certain conditions.
1. **Air moves upward**, creating Convergence	**Air moves downward**, creating divergence

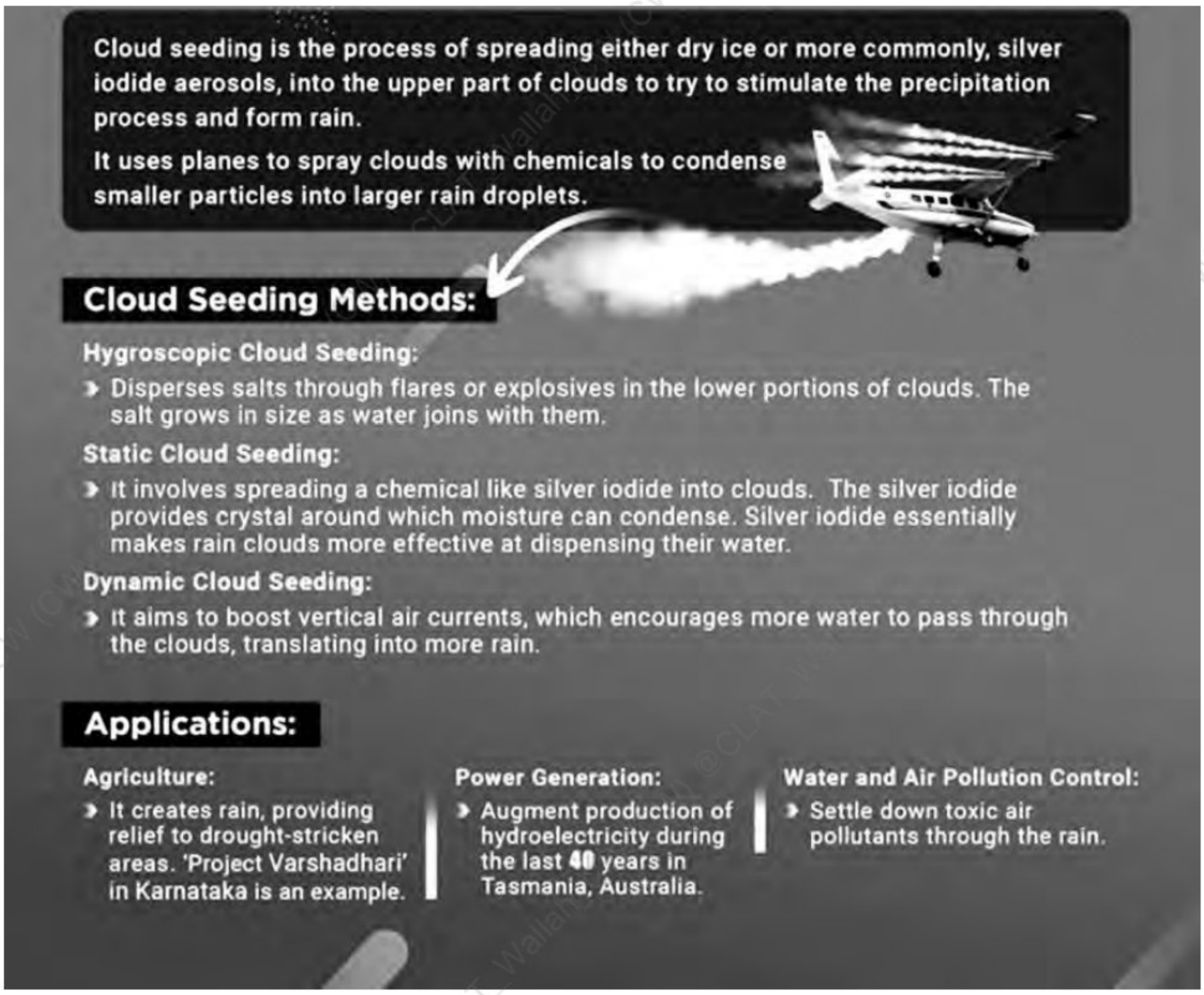


Cloud Seeding

- Cloud seeding is manipulating the weather by enhancing rain or snowfall from clouds by enabling freezing nuclei into supercooling clouds.
- Water raindrops need some nuclei to form on.
- When cloud seeding, chemicals such as silver iodide are used to form ice crystals that attract water vapour in the air thus resulting into creation of rain clouds.
- In the past, the UAE has applied cloud seeding to increase rainfall in desert areas.

Related Facts

- *Clouds come about when little particles of water-droplets or small crystals of ice, are formed due to the cooling & condensation of water vapor in the air around a small particle of dust or salt that is suspended in the air.*
- *In the absence of these particles (called condensation nuclei or ice nuclei), raindrops or snowflakes would be created and there would be no rainfall.*



Pepper it With

- Monsoon Pattern in India ,Disaster Management Act 2005.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. What caused the unprecedented heavy rainfall in Dubai recently?
   (a) A tropical cyclone
   (b) A Western Disturbance weather system
   (c) El Nino effect
   (d) La Nina effect

2. How much rainfall did Dubai receive on April 16, 2024?
   (a) Equivalent to its annual rainfall
   (b) Twice its annual rainfall
   (c) Equivalent to its rainfall in six months
   (d) Equivalent to its rainfall in a year and a half

3. What is the primary cause of the heavy rainfall in Dubai according to specialists?
   (a) Warm sea temperatures
   (b) Cloud seeding operations
   (c) Western Disturbance weather system
   (d) El Nino effect

4. Which of the following countries did NOT experience heavy rainfall and flooding along with Dubai?
   (a) Saudi Arabia (b) Oman (c) Qatar (d) Bahrain

5. What is the purpose of cloud seeding operations conducted by the UAE National Centre of Meteorology?
   (a) To prevent rainfall
   (b) To reduce humidity levels
   (c) To increase rainfall
   (d) To disperse clouds

6. What role do local dust particles play in enhancing rainfall in Dubai?
   (a) They reduce rainfall intensity
   (b) They act as natural cloud seeders
   (c) They absorb moisture from the air
   (d) They prevent cloud formation

7. What effect does global warming have on sea temperatures near Dubai?
   (a) It decreases sea temperatures
   (b) It has no effect on sea temperatures
   (c) It increases sea temperatures
   (d) It stabilizes sea temperatures

8. How do warm sea temperatures contribute to increased rainfall in Dubai?
   (a) By reducing evaporation rates
   (b) By decreasing moisture in the atmosphere
   (c) By increasing water evaporation potential
   (d) By decreasing water evaporation potential

9. Which of the following atmospheric conditions intensified the thunderstorms in Dubai?
   (a) High-pressure areas
   (b) Warm surface temperatures
   (c) Low-pressure areas at both high altitudes and surface levels
   (d) Stable atmospheric conditions

10. What is the purpose of the Western Disturbance weather system?
    (a) To cause droughts
    (b) To enhance rainfall in the Arabian Peninsula
    (c) To decrease humidity levels
    (d) To disperse clouds

11. Which of the following is NOT a possible reason for the heavy rainfall in Dubai?
    (a) Cloud seeding operations
    (b) Warm sea temperatures
    (c) Low atmospheric pressure
    (d) High atmospheric pressure

12. What effect does warm sea water near Dubai have on the atmosphere?
    (a) Decreases water evaporation potential
    (b) Increases water evaporation potential
    (c) Decreases cloud formation
    (d) Increases humidity levels

13. What is cloud seeding?
    (a) Preventing rainfall
    (b) Reducing humidity levels
    (c) Enhancing rain or snowfall from clouds
    (d) Dispersing clouds

14. Which chemical is commonly used in cloud seeding operations?
    (a) Carbon dioxide (b) Silver iodide (c) Nitrogen (d) Oxygen

15. What is the role of cloud seeding in manipulating weather?
    (a) Decreasing rainfall
    (b) Increasing humidity levels
    (c) Enhancing rain or snowfall from clouds
    (d) Dispersing clouds

16. How do ice crystals form in cloud seeding?
    (a) By using nitrogen
    (b) By using oxygen
    (c) By using silver iodide
    (d) By using carbon dioxide

17. What atmospheric condition did the Western Disturbance weather system fail to move over, causing heavy rainfall in Dubai?
    (a) Cyclone
    (b) High-pressure area
    (c) Low-pressure area
    (d) Anticyclone

18. How did the presence of an anticyclone contribute to the heavy rainfall in Dubai?
    (a) It intensified thunderstorms
    (b) It prevented the Western Disturbance weather system from moving
    (c) It decreased humidity levels
    (d) It dispersed clouds

19. Which natural phenomenon may have influenced the weather in Dubai, according to the information provided?
    (a) El Nino (b) Tsunami (c) Cyclone (d) Tornado

20. What role does dust play in cloud formation in Dubai?
    (a) It prevents cloud formation
    (b) It reduces rainfall intensity
    (c) It acts as natural cloud seeders
    (d) It decreases atmospheric humidity



Padma Awards 2024

Why in News?

The President was blessing Padma Awards at Rashtrapati Bhavan in tow Delhi.

Explained:

The Padma Awards are one of the highest civilian honors in India, conferred by the Government of India annually on the eve of Republic Day. These awards recognize exceptional contributions and achievements in various fields such as art, literature, science, civil service, public affairs, social work, and sports. The awards are divided into three categories: Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Shri, in order of decreasing precedence. Recipients are chosen through a rigorous selection process, and the awards are meant to acknowledge and celebrate outstanding individuals who have made significant contributions to society and the nation as a whole.

The Padma Awards hold great significance as they honor individuals who have excelled in their respective fields and have contributed significantly to the nation's progress and development. By recognizing their exceptional achievements and contributions, these awards not only serve as a source of inspiration but also motivate others to strive for excellence in their own fields. Moreover, the Padma Awards play a crucial role in preserving and promoting India's rich cultural heritage by honoring individuals who have made significant contributions to art, literature, and other cultural spheres. Overall, the Padma Awards serve as a symbol of national pride and appreciation for exceptional talent and service to the nation.

Way to marks:

Padma Awards

- Padma Awards which were established in 1954 are one of the highest civilian honours given by India.
- They are usually declared every year since India gained independence on 26th Jan (Republic Day).

  Padma Awards, which were instituted in the year 1954, is announced every year on the occasion of Republic Day except for brief interruption(s) during the years 1978 and 1979 and 1993 to 1997.

  The award is given in three categories, namely,
- Padma Vibhushan for exceptional and distinguished service;

Related Facts

- In 2024, 132 Padma awards including 2 Duo Cases (where the Award is counted as one) are conferred.
- This comprised 5 Padma Vibhushan, 17 Padma Bhushan, and 110 Padma Shri Awards.
  - 30 were women, 8 were from the category of Foreigners / NRI / PIO / OCI and 9 were posthumously honored.

- Padma Bhushan for distinguished service of a high order; and
- Padma Shri for distinguished service.

All persons without distinction of race, occupation, position or sex are eligible for these awards. However, Government servants including those working with PSUs, except doctors and scientists, are not eligible for these Awards.

The award seeks to recognize works of distinction and is given for distinguished and exceptional achievements/service in all fields of activities/disciplines. An illustrative list of the fields is as under:

- The total number of awards to be given in a year (excluding posthumous awards and to NRI/foreigners/OCIs) should not be more than 120.
- The award does not amount to a title and cannot be used as a suffix or prefix to the awardees' name

WHO DECIDES

All nominations received for Padma Awards are placed before the Padma Awards Committee, which is constituted by the Prime Minister every year. The Padma Awards Committee is headed by the Cabinet Secretary and includes Home Secretary, Secretary to the President and four to six eminent persons as members. The recommendations of the committee are submitted to the Prime Minister and the President of India for approval.

Bharat Ratna

- The Bharat Ratna, which translates to "Jewel of India" in English, is awarded by the President of India.
- It is the Highest Civilian Award of the Republic of India, instituted on 2 January 1954, during the tenure of Former President of India Rajendra Prasad.
- It is conferred in recognition of "Exceptional Service/Performance of Highest Order".
  - It was originally limited to achievements in the "Arts, Literature, Science and Public Services".
  - But in Dec 2011, the government expanded the criteria to include "Any Field of Human Endeavour".
- Recommendations for Bharat Ratna are made by the Prime Minister of India to the President.
- It is presented in a ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi.
- It is Not Mandatory that Bharat Ratna be awarded Every Year.
- There is No Written Provision that Bharat Ratna should be awarded to Indian Citizens Only.
  - **Naturalized Indian Citizen :** Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu, better known as Mother Teresa (1980)
  - **2 Non – Indians:** Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Nelson Mandela (1990).

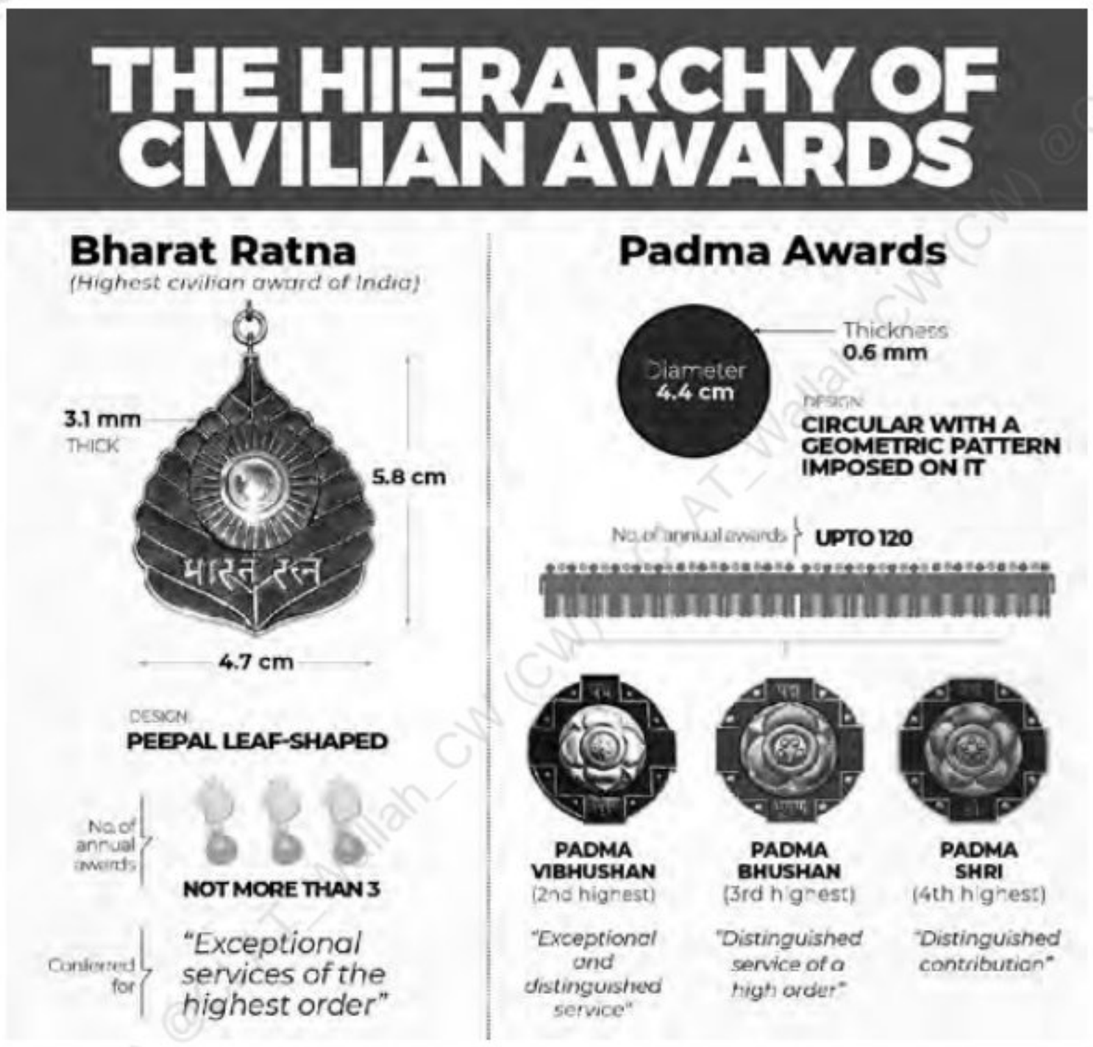


- In 1992, the Government's Decision to confer Bharat Ratna Posthumously on Subhas Chandra Bose met with criticism due to controversy over his death.
- The Padma Awards Committee recommend the awards each year, which are formed by the Indian Prime Minister and typically given by the Indian President in March-April.

Extra Shots

- Janata Party Government did not discontinue or abolish Bharat Ratna Award in 1977.
- Bharat Ratna was temporarily discontinued between 1977 and 1980, but it was not due to any decision by the Janata Party Government.
- Instead, it was a result of a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed in the Supreme Court of India, which led to the Suspension of the Award during that period.









Pepper it With

- Forest Rights Act and Supreme court issue , Classification of forests in India.

Scan the code to download the answer key of this month's magazine.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. When were the Padma Awards instituted?
   (a) 1947 (b) 1950 (c) 1954 (d) 1960

2. The Padma Awards are usually announced on which day?
   (a) Independence Day (15th August) (b) Republic Day (26th January)
   (c) Gandhi Jayanti (2nd October) (d) None of the above

3. How many categories of Padma Awards are there?
   (a) 2 (b) 3 (c) 4 (d) 5

4. Which is the highest civilian award given by India?
   (a) Padma Vibhushan (b) Padma Bhushan (c) Padma Shri (d) Bharat Ratna

5. Who among the following is not eligible for Padma Awards?
   (a) Government servants (b) Doctors (c) Scientists (d) Both b) and c)

6. For which field was Vyayanathimmala Bali awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 2023?
   (a) Art (b) Literature & Education
   (c) Medicine (d) Social Work

7. How many Padma Vibhushan awards were given in 2023?
   (a) 3 (b) 4 (c) 5 (d) 6

8. Who among the following received the Padma Bhushan award in the field of Journalism in 2023?
   (a) Kundan Vyas (b) Satyabrata Mookherjee
   (c) Togdan Rinpoche (d) Usha Uthup

9. What is the maximum number of Padma awards (excluding posthumous and foreign awards) that can be given in a year?
   (a) 100 (b) 120 (c) 150 (d) 180

10. The Padma Awards committee is headed by:
    (a) Prime Minister (b) President (c) Vice President (d) Cabinet Secretary

11. When was the Bharat Ratna award instituted?
    (a) 1947 (b) 1950 (c) 1954 (d) 1962

12. What is the maximum number of Bharat Ratna awards that can be given in a year?
    (a) 2 (b) 3 (c) 4 (d) There is no limit

13. The Bharat Ratna award can be given for which of the following fields?
    (a) Any field of human endeavour
    (b) Only arts, literature, science and public services
    (c) Both a) and b)
    (d) None of the above

14. Which of the following is the design of the Bharat Ratna medal?
    (a) Circular with a geometric pattern
    (b) Peepal leaf-shaped
    (c) Lotus-shaped
    (d) Star-shaped

15. What is the diameter of the Padma Awards medal?
    (a) 3.4 cm (b) 4.0 cm (c) 4.4 cm (d) 4.8 cm

16. What is the thickness of the Padma Awards medal?
    (a) 0.4 mm (b) 0.5 mm (c) 0.6 mm (d) 0.7 mm

17. What is the design of the Padma Awards medal?
    (a) Circular with a geometric pattern imposed on it
    (b) Peepal leaf-shaped
    (c) Lotus-shaped
    (d) Star-shaped

18. What is the name of India's newest civilian award?
    (a) Sardar Patel National Integration Award
    (b) Sardar Patel National Unity Award
    (c) Sardar Patel National Honor Award
    (d) Sardar Patel National Service Award

19. When will the first Sardar Patel National Unity Awards be announced?
    (a) 15th August 2019 (b) 2nd October 2019 (c) 31st October 2019 (d) 26th January 2020

20. How many Sardar Patel National Unity Awards can be given in a year?
    (a) 2 (b) 3 (c) 4 (d) No limit mentioned



D Gukesh wins 2024 FIDE Candidates Chess Tournament

Why in News?

D Gukesh, a 17-year-old Indian Grandmaster from Chennai, has made history by winning 2024 FIDE Candidates Chess Tournament in Toronto, Canada.

Explained:

The issue revolves around the historic achievement of Indian Grandmaster D. Gukesh, who has won the 2024 FIDE Candidates Chess Tournament in Toronto, Canada. By clinching this title, Gukesh has earned the right to challenge the current World Chess Champion, Ding Liren of China. He has become the youngest challenger ever for the World Chess Championship, surpassing the record set by Garry Kasparov in 1984, and only the second Indian after Viswanathan Anand to win the Candidates Tournament.

Way to marks:

- He clinched the title by drawing his Final Round game against American Grandmaster Hikaru Nakamura.
- Nakamura, Nepomniachtchi and Caruana tied for 2nd place with 8.5 Points Each.
- By winning Candidates Tournament, Gukesh has earned Right to Challenge the Current World Chess Champion, Ding Liren of China.
- Gukesh is Only 2nd Indian, after Viswanathan Anand, to win Candidates Tournament.
- He has become Youngest Challenger ever for World Chess Championship, surpassing the record set by Garry Kasparov in 1984.

Women's Candidates Tournament

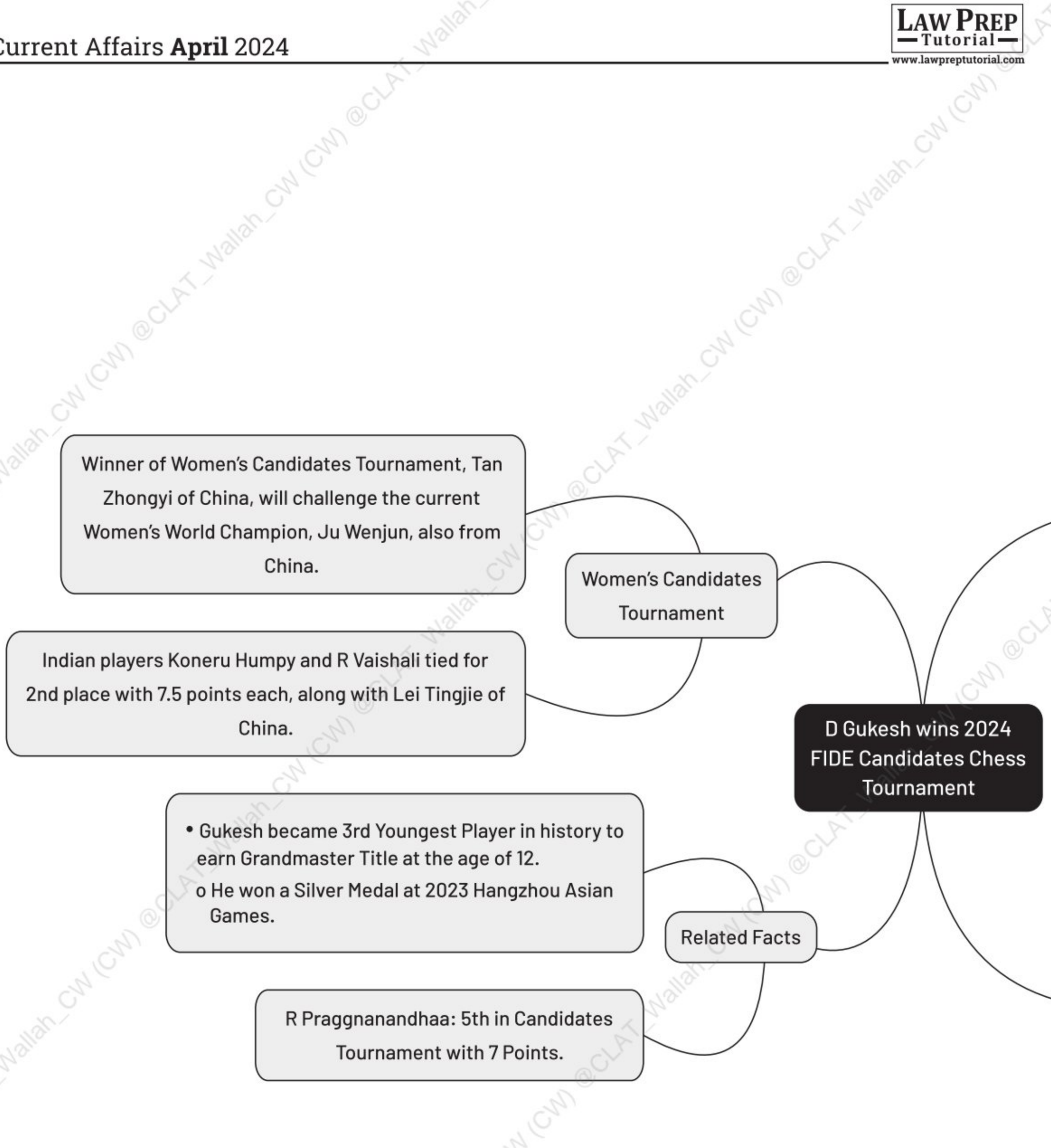
- Winner of Women's Candidates Tournament, Tan Zhongyi of China, will challenge the current Women's World Champion, Ju Wenjun, also from China.
- Indian players Koneru Humpy and R Vaishali tied for 2nd place with 7.5 points each, along with Lei Tingjie of China.

Related Facts

- Gukesh became 3rd Youngest Player in history to earn Grandmaster Title at the age of 12.
  - He won a Silver Medal at 2023 Hangzhou Asian Games.
- R Praggnanandhaa: 5th in Candidates Tournament with 7 Points.

Related Facts

- Youngest World Champion: Garry Kasparov (22 years old in 1985)
- Viswanathan Anand: 1st Indian World Champion (2000-2002, 2007-2013)


D Gukesh wins 2024 FIDE Candidates Chess Tournament
Women's Candidates Tournament
Winner of Women's Candidates Tournament, Tan Zhongyi of China, will challenge the current Women's World Champion, Ju Wenjun, also from China.
Indian players Koneru Humpy and R Vaishali tied for 2nd place with 7.5 points each, along with Lei Tingjie of China.
Related Facts
• Gukesh became 3rd Youngest Player in history to earn Grandmaster Title at the age of 12.
o He won a Silver Medal at 2023 Hangzhou Asian Games.
R Praggnanandhaa: 5th in Candidates Tournament with 7 Points.

- He clinched the title by drawing his Final Round game against American Grandmaster Hikaru Nakamura.
- Nakamura, Nepomniachtchi and Caruana tied for 2nd place with 8.5 Points Each.

Recent Achievement

- By winning Candidates Tournament, Gukesh has earned Right to Challenge the Current World Chess Champion, Ding Liren of China.
- Gukesh is Only 2nd Indian, after Viswanathan Anand, to win Candidates Tournament.
- He has become Youngest Challenger ever for World Chess Championship, surpassing the record set by Garry Kasparov in 1984.

World Chess Championship

- Annual Competition to determine the World Champion in Chess.
- Organized by: World Chess Federation (FIDE)
- 1st Oficial World Championship held in 1886.

World Chess Championship

- Annual Competition to determine the World Champion in Chess.
- **Organized by:** World Chess Federation (FIDE)
- 1st Official World Championship held in 1886.
- **Notable Champions:** Wilhelm Steinitz, Jose Raul Capablanca, Bobby Fischer, Garry Kasparov, Viswanathan Anand, Magnus Carlsen
- **Current Format:** Candidates Tournament Winner challenges Reigning Champion in a 12-Game Match



R Praggnanandhaa



Praggnanandhaa at Tata Steel Chess Tournament 2023

Full name	Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa
Country	India
Born	10 August 2005 (age 18) Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India
Title	Grandmaster (2018)
FIDE rating	2747 (April 2024)
Peak rating	2747 (February 2024)
Ranking	No. 14 (April 2024)
Peak ranking	No. 13 (December 2023)

Medal record [hide]

Representing India

Asian Games

S	2022 Hangzhou	Men's team

Scan the code to join our Instagram Channel

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

1. Candidates Chess tournament 2024 won by whom?
   (a) Viswanathan Anand (b) Praggnanandhaa (c) D. Gukesh (d) Koneru Humpy

2. Against which player did Gukesh draw the final round game to clinch the Candidates title?
   (a) Fabiano Caruana (b) Ian Nepomniachtchi
   (c) Hikaru Nakamura (d) Magnus Carlsen

3. How many points did Nakamura, Nepomniachtchi, and Caruana score, tying for second place?
   (a) 8.0 (b) 8.5 (c) 9.0 (d) 7.5

4. By winning the Candidates Tournament, what right has Gukesh earned?
   (a) To challenge the World Chess Champion (b) To become the next FIDE President
   (c) To be inducted into the Chess Hall of Fame (d) To receive the Grandmaster title

5. Who is the current World Chess Champion that Gukesh will challenge?
   (a) Magnus Carlsen (b) Ding Liren (c) Fabiano Caruana (d) Viswanathan Anand

6. Apart from Gukesh, which other Indian has won the Candidates Tournament?
   (a) Viswanathan Anand (b) Praggnanandhaa (c) Koneru Humpy (d) None of the above

7. What record has Gukesh broken by becoming the youngest Challenger for the World Chess Championship?
   (a) Garry Kasparov's record (b) Magnus Carlsen's record
   (c) Bobby Fischer's record (d) Jose Raul Capablanca's record

8. Who won the Women's Candidates Tournament?
   (a) Koneru Humpy (b) R. Vaishali (c) Tan Zhongyi (d) Lei Tingjie

9. Which player will Tan Zhongyi challenge for the Women's World Chess Championship title?
   (a) Hou Yifan (b) Ju Wenjun (c) Anna Muzychuk (d) Humpy Koneru

10. How many Indian players tied for second place in the Women's Candidates Tournament?
    (a) 1 (b) 2 (c) 3 (d) None

11. Viswanathan Anand won the World Chess Championship in which year?
    (a) 2000 (b) 2007 (c) 2010 (d) 2013

12. Which of the following players has not won the World Chess Championship?
    (a) Wilhelm Steinitz (b) Jose Raul Capablanca
    (c) Bobby Fischer (d) Praggnanandhaa

13. How many games are played in the World Chess Championship match between the Candidates winner and the reigning champion?
(a) 10 (b) 12 (c) 14 (d) 16

14. Which organization conducts the World Chess Championship?
(a) International Olympic Committee (IOC) (b) World Chess Federation (FIDE)
(c) United Nations (UN) (d) International Chess Federation (ICF)

15. In which year was the first official World Chess Championship held?
(a) 1866 (b) 1886 (c) 1906 (d) 1926

16. Which of the following players is not a notable World Chess Champion mentioned in the information?
(a) Magnus Carlsen (b) Garry Kasparov
(c) Viswanathan Anand (d) Praggnanandhaa

17. What is the highest achievement of Praggnanandhaa in chess so far?
(a) Winning the Candidates Tournament (b) Becoming a Grandmaster at the age of 12
(c) Winning the World Chess Championship (d) Winning the Chess Olympiad

18. Which Indian player won the World Junior Chess Championship in 2018?
(a) D. Gukesh (b) Praggnanandhaa (c) Koneru Humpy (d) R. Vaishali

19. Who was the first undisputed World Chess Champion?
(a) Wilhelm Steinitz (b) Emanuel Lasker
(c) Jose Raul Capablanca (d) Alexander Alekhine

20. Which of the following is not a requirement to become a Grandmaster in chess?
(a) Achieving a FIDE rating of at least 2500 (b) Winning a major international tournament
(c) Defeating at least three current Grandmasters (d) Participating in the Chess Olympiad

For more exam related videos and guidance, scan the code to join our YouTube Channel



NEWS IN SHORT

'Order of the Druk Gyalpo'

- The Prime Minister of India, Mr. Narendra Modi, received Bhutan's highest civilian award, the 'Order of the Druk Gyalpo', during his two-day State visit to Bhutan.
- He is the first foreign Head of the Government to receive the honour.
- The award underscores his leadership, characterised by an unwavering commitment to progress, which aligns closely with Bhutan's national vision of achieving Self-Reliance.
- India and Bhutan have also exchanged several MoUs and signed agreements in the fields of energy, trade, digital connectivity, space and agriculture, and finalised the MoU on the establishment of rail links between the two nations.
- The Order of the Druk Gyalpo stands as Bhutan's most esteemed civilian accolade, reserved for individuals for their contribution to society, embodying values of service, integrity, and leadership.

'Station Shiv Shakti'

- The International Astronomical Union (IAU) working group for Planetary System Nomenclature has approved the name 'Station Shiv Shakti' for the landing site of Chandrayaan-3's Vikram lander.
- The "Shiv Shakti" point on the moon signifies a connection spanning from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari.
- "Shiv" symbolizes determination for the betterment of humanity.
- "Shakti" represents the strength to achieve these resolutions.
- The location of Chandrayaan-2's lander crash in September 2019 as "Tiranga Point."
- Former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam proposed naming the site where the Chandrayaan-1 moon impact probe landed in November 2008 as "Jawahar Point."

India's first small-scale liquefied natural gas unit at GAIL

- India's first small-scale liquefied natural gas (SSLNG) unit at GAIL (India) Ltd's Vijaipur complex in Madhya Pradesh.
- The SSLNG unit is aimed to increase its share in the country's primary energy mix to 15% by 2030.
- This development is part of the government's broader initiative to promote the use of natural gas in various sectors.
- Liquefied natural gas (LNG) is natural gas that has been cooled to a liquid state, about -260°F (-162°C), to make it easier and safer to store and transport.
- Natural gas is a cleaner and more economical alternative to conventional hydrocarbons like coal and oil, making it crucial in India's transition towards greener energy sources.

- The primary component of natural gas is methane, comprising 70-90% of its composition.
- According to the IEA, Natural gas accounts for about a quarter of global electricity generation. Presently in India the share of natural gas in the energy basket is 6.7%. The top natural gas producing countries are the United States, Russia and Iran.
- Small-Scale LNG: SSLNG involves liquefying and transporting natural gas on a smaller scale, catering to areas without pipeline connections using specialised trucks and vessels.

6 sites in the Tentative UNESCO list of WHS

- 6 new sites from Madhya Pradesh have found place in the Tentative UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites (WHS).
- The sites included in the new list included Gwalior Fort, Historical Group of Dhamnar Bhojeshwar Mahadev Temple, Rock Art Sites of Chambal Valley, Khooni Bhandara, Burhanpur, and Gond monuments of Ramnagar, Mandla.
- Gwalior Fort: It is renowned for its formidable walls, stands atop a hill providing panoramic views of the surrounding city. Historically, it is believed that the fort's first foundations were laid in the 6th century AD by Rajput warrior Suraj Sen.
- Historical Group of Dhamnar: It comprises 51 rock-cut caves, stupas, chaityas, and dwellings dating back to the 7th century AD. Among these, the colossal statue of Gautam Buddha in the nirvana pose is a significant highlight.
- Bhojeshwar Mahadev Temple: It is dedicated to Lord Shiva and boasts a massive Linga carved from a single stone. It was commissioned by Raja Bhoj in the 11th century, this temple is revered for its grandeur and unique architecture.
- Rock Art Sites of the Chambal Valley: It hosts the world's largest concentration of rock art sites, showcasing scenes from various historical periods and civilizations. These sites, spanning across Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh, provide insights into ancient human life and cultural evolution.
- Burhanpur's Khooni Bhandara: It is an underground water management system comprising eight waterworks built by Abdurrahim Khankhana in the historical city of Burhanpur. It was built using the Persian qanat approach and designed by Persian geologist, Tabkutul Arz.
- Gond Memorial of Ramnagar, Mandla: The region formerly known as the Central Provinces of India and covering parts of the present-day states of Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra; was historically called Gondwana, the home of the largest heterogenous tribe of India, the Gond tribe.

GI tags for Tripura items

- The two traditional items from Tripura, Matabari Pera and Pachra, have been awarded with the Geographical Indication (GI) tag marking a significant milestone for local artisans and weavers.
- Matabari Pera, a dairy-based confectionery that served as prasad at the Tripurasundari temple, and Pachra, a handwoven cloth used by Indigenous communities, have been recognised with the prestigious GI tag.
- The GI tag ensures legal protection against unauthorised imitation or misuse of the product, safeguarding its authenticity and preserving the cultural heritage associated with it.
- This recognition also facilitates market access and promotion, both domestically and internationally, fostering economic opportunities for local communities involved in its production.

ASI to delist 18 "centrally protected monuments"

- The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has decided to delist 18 "centrally protected monuments" because it has assessed that they do not have national importance.
- These 18 monuments are part of an earlier list of monuments that the ASI had said were "untraceable".
- Among the monuments that face delisting now are a mediaeval highway milestone recorded as Kos Minar No.13 at Mujessar village in Haryana, Barakhamba Cemetery in Delhi, Gunner Burkill's tomb in Jhansi district, a cemetery at Gaughat in Lucknow, and the Telia Nala Buddhist ruins in Varanasi.
- The precise location of these monuments, or their current physical state, is not known.
- This is the first such large-scale delisting exercise in several decades. The ASI currently has 3,693 monuments under its purview, which will fall to 3,675 once the current delisting is completed.
- The delisted monument will no longer be conserved, protected, and maintained by the ASI. It will effectively be removed from the ASI's list of centrally protected monuments.

The centenary of Vaikom satyagraha

- India commemorated the centenary of Vaikom satyagraha, a pivotal movement in India's history that challenged untouchability and caste oppression.
- Vaikom Satyagraha was a nonviolent agitation, unfolded in Vaikom within the princely state of Travancore, Kerala precisely a century ago spanning from 30th March 1924 to 23rd November 1925.
- This movement stood as a formidable protest against the entrenched practices of untouchability and caste discrimination that had long plagued Indian society.
- The movement was triggered by the prohibition of people from oppressed classes, especially Ezhavas, from walking on the roads surrounding the Vaikom Mahadeva temple.
- Efforts were made to negotiate with authorities, including Maharani Regent of Travancore, to open temple roads.
- It was the first among the temple entry movements in India, setting the stage for similar movements across the country.
- It emerged amidst the growing nationalist movement and aimed to foreground social reform alongside political aspirations.
- It was led by visionary leaders like Ezhava leader T K Madhavan, K.P. Kesava Menon, and K. Kelappan.
- Erode Venkatappa Ramasamy, revered as Periyar or Thanthai Periyar, played a crucial role, mobilising volunteers, delivering speeches, and enduring imprisonment, earning the title 'Vaikom Veerar'.
- The movement gained more power when Mahatma Gandhi reached Vaikom in March 1925 and held discussions with leaders of various caste groups.

Space Science and Technology Awareness Training (START), 2024

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) announced an active space science programme, the Space Science and Technology Awareness Training (START), 2024.
- START is an introductory-level online training in space science and technology.
- The undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) students of physical sciences (Physics and Chemistry) and technology (e.g. Electronics, Computer Science, Mechanical,) studying in various educational institutes within India will be eligible to be considered for the training.
- The main objective of the training programme is to attract youngsters to the fields of space science and technology.

Magneto fossils

- The scientists have unearthed a 50,000-year-old sediment, a massive magneto fossil found deep in the Bay of Bengal, marking one of the youngest discoveries of its kind.
- Scientists at CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography, used magnetic analyses and electron microscopy to study a sediment sample from the southwestern Bay of Bengal.
- "Magneto Fossils" refer to fossilised remains of magnetotactic bacteria that contain magnetic minerals.
- Magnetotactic bacteria leave fossilised magnetic particles in geological records.
- Magnetotactic bacteria are mostly prokaryotic organisms that arrange themselves along the earth's magnetic field. It was discovered by Salvatore Bellini in 1963.
- These organisms follow the magnetic field to reach places that had optimal oxygen concentration. This process is facilitated by the presence of iron-rich crystals within their cells.

Ozone Found on Jupiter's Moon Callisto

- A team of scientists from various countries, including India, has uncovered compelling evidence suggesting the existence of ozone on Callisto, one of Jupiter's moons.
- Ozone presence suggests the presence of oxygen, essential for life.
- The ozone layer is found in the lower part of the earth's stratosphere, around 15-35 km above ground.
- Callisto ranks as one of Jupiter's largest moons and is the third-largest moon in the Solar System, following Ganymede (Jupiter) and Titan (Saturn). It was discovered in 1610, by Italian scientist Galileo Galilei along with Jupiter's three other largest moons: Ganymede, Europa and Io.

Kodaikanal Solar Observatory celebrated its 125th birth anniversary.

- The observatory has played a crucial role in advancing our understanding of solar activity and its impact on Earth's climate and space weather.
- A solar observatory is a facility or institution dedicated to observing and studying the Sun.
- These observatories use specialised telescopes and instruments to observe various phenomena on the Sun's surface, in its atmosphere, and in the surrounding space.
- The Kodaikanal Solar Observatory is a solar observatory owned and operated by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics. It was established in 1899.
- It is on the southern tip of the Palani Hills.
- The Evershed effect (apparent radial flow of gas observed in the penumbra (outer region) of sunspots on the Sun) was first detected at this observatory in January 1909.
- The establishment of the Kodaikanal Solar Observatory (KoSO) in India, was motivated by the need to understand the link between solar activity and monsoons.
- The devastating Great Drought of 1875-1877 in India highlighted the potential link between solar activity and seasonal rainfall patterns.

Anti-dumping probe by India

- India has initiated an anti-dumping probe into the import of 'Insoluble Sulphur' used in the rubber industry from China and Japan.
- Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) is the apex national authority under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry for administering all trade remedial measures including anti-dumping, countervailing duties, and safeguard measures.

- It offers assistance to domestic industries and exporters in responding to trade remedy investigations initiated against them by foreign nations, thereby providing trade defence support.

S.A.R.A.H by WHO

- The World Health Organization (WHO) announced the launch of S.A.R.A.H., a digital health promoter prototype with enhanced empathetic response powered by generative artificial intelligence (AI).
- S.A.R.A.H. (Smart AI Resource Assistant for Health) engages users in 8 languages on various health topics, accessible 24/7 on any device.
- It provides information on major health topics, including healthy habits, mental health, and other risk factors related to overall physiological health.
- It aims to empower individuals to optimise their health and well-being journey, serving as an additional tool to realise their rights to health.
- It supports users in understanding risk factors for diseases like cancer, heart disease, lung disease, and diabetes.

'Project Akashteer'

- The Indian Army has initiated the implementation of control and reporting systems as part of 'Project Akashteer', a strategic move aimed at bolstering its air defence capabilities.
- The project developed by Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) is aimed at significantly enhancing the operational efficiency and integration of the Army's air defence mechanisms.
- BEL is a Navratna PSU under the Ministry of Defence.
- The Project stands as a pioneering effort to automate air defence control and reporting processes through digitisation, promising a streamlined approach to complex operations.

Agni- Prime successfully flight-tested

- The new generation ballistic missile Agni-Prime was successfully flight-tested from the Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.
- It was conducted jointly by the Strategic Forces Command (SFC) and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- The launch aligns with India's strategic goals, as part of its 'Mission Divyastra' program, further solidifying its position among nations with formidable strategic capabilities.
- Agni Prime is a nuclear-capable new-generation advanced variant of the Agni class of missiles. It is a two-stage canister missile with a maximum range of 1,000 to 2,000 km.
- It is lighter than all the earlier Agni series of missiles.
- It is equipped with the Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry Vehicle (MIRV) technology.

Atomic clocks in India

- India aims to deploy its own atomic clocks across the nation, to enhance its timekeeping infrastructure and national defence capabilities for the future.
- The deployment of atomic clocks across India aims to synchronise all digital devices with Indian Standard Time (IST), ensuring uniformity.
- These atomic clocks are being installed by the National Physical Laboratory (NPL) under the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Ministry of Consumer Affairs.
- An atomic clock, is a clock, known for its exceptional accuracy, and functions by utilising specific resonance frequencies of atoms, typically cesium or rubidium.
- It was invented in 1955 by Louise Essen.
- The extreme precision levels of the atomic clocks can be interpreted by the fact that they will lose one second approximately every 100 million years.

- Most commonly used atomic clocks are the cesium atomic beam, the hydrogen maser, and the rubidium gas cell.
- The cesium clock has high accuracy and good long-term stability. The hydrogen maser has the best stability for periods of up to a few hours.

Excess chital on Bose Island

- The chital (Axis axis) population on Bose Island, Andaman and Nicobar Islands has exceeded the ecosystem's carrying capacity, prompting the Andaman and Nicobar Forest Department to consider relocating around 500 deer to a Biological Park in Port Blair.
- It was brought to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands for hunting in the early 1900s by the British.
- Under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, a Chief Wildlife Warden can permit translocation for the purpose of scientific management.
- The law mandates that such translocation should cause minimum trauma to animals.
- Recent studies indicate that the invasive chital species is negatively impacting local flora and fauna, necessitating strategic management measures.
- The chital, also known as the spotted deer or axis deer, is a graceful and elegant herbivore native to the grasslands and forests of India and Sri Lanka.
- Chital prefer open grasslands, savannas, and lightly forested areas.
  - IUCN Red list: Least Concern
  - WLPA 1972: Schedule II.

Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant

- The Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant (NPP) faced a drone strike amid the ongoing conflict between Ukraine and Russia.
- Russia, in control of the facility, accused Ukraine of launching the attacks.
- The Zaporizhzhya NPP is located near Energodar in south-eastern Ukraine, it ranks as the largest NPP in Europe. The facility is owned and operated by Energoatom, Ukraine's state-owned nuclear energy generating company.

Parivartan Chintan

- Parivartan Chintan, the Tri-Service Conference aimed at generating new and fresh ideas, initiatives, and reforms to propel Jointness and Integration efforts, was held in New Delhi on 8th April 2024.
- It was chaired by Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), General Anil Chauhan.
- It is the first-ever conference of the Heads of all Tri-Services Institutions.
- The post of CDS was created in 2019 on the recommendations of a committee of defence experts headed by Lt General DB Shekatkar.
- General Bipin Rawat was the first CDS in the country.
- CDS acts as Head Department of Military Affairs in the Ministry of Defence. The post is the Single-point military adviser to the Defence Minister, also plays Advisory role in Nuclear Command Authority.

IMPORTANT Dates

260th Raising Day of AMC- 3rd April



- The Army Medical Corps (AMC) commemorated its 260th Raising Day (3rd April 2024) reflecting on centuries of dedication and sacrifice in serving the nation.
- The AMC, originally known as the Indian Medical Service, was founded in India in 1764 during the British colonial era. With the motto of 'Sarve Santu Niramaya' (let all be free from disease) through selfless service.
- The Indian Army Medical Corps (IAMC) was established on 3rd April 1943, following the Royal Army Medical Corps model (United Kingdom). It was created by merging the Indian Medical Service (IMS), Indian Medical Department (IMD), and Indian Hospital Corps (IHC) into a unified corps of officers and men.
- The IAMC was re-designated as the Army Medical Corps (AMC) effective from 26th Jan 1950.
- The AMC has excelled in UN Peacekeeping Missions and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) activities, contributing to national progress and development.
- The AMC Raising Day recognises the contributions of Officers, and other ranks of the Army Medical Corps who have positively impacted the lives of personnel, families, and veterans of the Armed Forces.



World Health Day- 7th April

- The theme for World Health Day 2024 is 'My health, my right'.
- It is celebrated annually and each year draws attention to a specific health topic of concern to people all over the world.
- The date of 7 April marks the anniversary of the founding of WHO in 1948.

Jallianwala Bagh Massacre- 13th April



- The massacre took place on 13 April 1919 at Amritsar and is also known as the Amritsar massacre.
- On this day, British troops under the Command of Gen Dyer fired on a large crowd of unarmed Indians in Amritsar in Punjab of India.
- Several hundred people were killed and many hundreds were wounded.

World Heritage Day- 18th April



- This day is observed every year on 18 April to preserve the human heritage and recognize the efforts of all the relevant organizations in the field.
- This day was announced by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in 1982 and was approved by the General Assembly of UNESCO in 1983.
- The official theme for World Heritage Day 2024 is "Discover and experience diversity".
    - The Celebration aimed to raise awareness of the importance of heritage preservation for sustainable development under the annual theme "Shared Cultures, Shared Heritage and Shared Responsibility" of the International Day for Monuments and Sites.

World Earth Day- 22 April



- This day is observed every year on 22 April to mark the anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970.
- World Earth Day is celebrated to increase awareness about the importance of the planet.
- The theme for World Earth Day 2024 is "Planet vs. Plastics".
- In 2009, the General Assembly passed a resolution designating April 22 as International Mother Earth Day.

National Panchayati Raj Day- 24 April



- National Panchayati Raj Day is celebrated every year on 24 April in India.
- On this day Constitution came into force with effect on 24 April 1993.
- In 2010 the first National Panchayati Raj Day was celebrated.
- A new part in the Constitution Part IX was added bypassing the 73rd Amendment Act from Article 243 to 243 (O) titled "The Panchayats" and a new Eleventh Schedule consisting of 29 subjects within the functions of Panchayats was also added.

JUST IN ONE-LINE

1. The Indian Navy's shipbuilding program achieved a significant milestone with the launch of 'Agray' and 'Akshay', the 5th and 6th ships of the 08 x ASW (Anti-Submarine Warfare) Shallow Water Craft (SWC) Project. These ships are being built by M/S Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) in Kolkata for the Indian Navy.
2. India's premier integrated Oil Palm Processing Unit, established by 3F Oil Palm is located in Roing within the lower Dibang Valley of Arunachal Pradesh.
3. GRID Controller of India Limited (GRID-INDIA) is designated as a Miniratna Category-I Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) by the Ministry of Power highlighting its pivotal role in the nation's power sector.
4. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) has released the Global E-waste Monitor 2024, which states that the world's generation of electronic waste is rising five times faster than documented e-waste recycling.
5. The National Payments Corporation of India has been granted approval to Paytm-owner One97 Communications Ltd to participate in Unified Payments Interface (UPI) as a Third-Party Application Provider (TPAP) under the multi-bank model. Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, State Bank of India, and YES Bank will act as Payment System Provider (PSP) banks to Paytm.
6. National Zoological Park, New Delhi, observed the International Day of Forests on 21st March 2024, under the theme "Forests and innovation: new solutions for a better world."
7. Hyperloop is a transportation concept developed by Elon Musk in 2013 that would use pressurised tubes and capsules to connect mobility hubs in large cities.
8. The Union Minister for Defence inaugurated 'Nausena Bhawan', the first Headquarter building of the Indian Navy, in New Delhi.
9. Himachal Pradesh has instituted a one-year ban on the production, sale and storage of Cotton Candy or Candy floss after the presence of Rhodamine B, a potentially hazardous colouring agent. The ban is on the heels of states like Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Goa, which have implemented similar restrictions on harmful colouring agents.
10. H5N1 bird flu, a highly pathogenic virus, has been spreading globally, posing a significant threat to birds and wildlife. Avian influenza A(H5N1) or H5B1 Bird Flu is a highly pathogenic virus that primarily circulates among birds but can infect mammals.

11. The World Health Organization (WHO) has introduced a new initiative, Coronavirus Network (CoViNet). CoViNet is designed to facilitate and coordinate global expertise and capacities for the early detection, monitoring, and assessment of various coronaviruses.

12. The UN Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP 27) convened in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt established a Loss and Damage Fund for climate disaster recovery in developing nations. The 2023 UNFCCC COP 28 (Dubai) focused on transitioning from fossil fuels, pledging to triple renewable energy capacity by 2030.

13. Nimmu-Padam-Darcha road in Ladakh road serves as a crucial link between Manali and Leh, passing through Darcha and Nimmu along the Kargil–Leh highway. It now stands as the third axis connecting Ladakh to the hinterland, alongside the existing Manali-Leh and Srinagar-Leh routes.

14. A 900-year-old Kannada inscription belonging to the Kalyani Chalukya dynasty was discovered in a neglected state in Gangapuram, in Telangana. It was issued by Customs Officers under Tailapa-III, son of Emperor 'Bhulokamalla' Someswara-III of the Kalyani Chalukya dynasty.

15. The Afar Triangle, nestled in the Horn of Africa, is a geological depression where three tectonic plates, the Nubian, Somali, and Arabian plates converge.

16. Skyroot Aerospace (a leading Indian space-tech company) achieved a significant milestone with the successful test firing of Stage-2 of the Vikram-1 space launch vehicle, known as Kalam-250, at Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)'s propulsion testbed in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.

17. India's Ministry of External Affairs recently expressed firm support for the Philippines in defending its national sovereignty amidst tensions with China over the South China Sea.

18. Green steel is the eco-friendly production of steel with lower greenhouse gas emissions, possibly reducing costs and enhancing quality compared to traditional methods.

19. India launched a new database (Unite Aware platform) to record crimes against UN peacekeepers and monitor progress in holding perpetrators accountable.

20. A new world record was announced by scientists in South Korea in sustaining temperatures of 100 million degrees Celsius for 48 seconds in plasma state, in a nuclear fusion experiment. This is seven times hotter than the core of the sun.

21. The Suvidha portal is a technological solution developed by the Election Commission of India (ECI) to ensure a level playing field upholding the democratic principles of free, fair, and transparent elections.

22. Coral Reef Watch (CRW) of the United States and the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) have confirmed the fourth global mass coral bleaching event in 2023-2024.