UPSC-CSE 2027/28
DAILY
CURRENT AFFAIRS
ONE STOP SOLUTION
By Faiyaz Sir
The Indian EXPRESS
THE HINDU
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PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU
पत्र सूचना कार्यालय
11
SEPTEMBER
COMPLETE COVERAGE
EXAM FOCUSED
ANALYSIS MADE EASY
STATIC + CURRENT INTEGRATION
STAY AHEAD
STAY PREPARED

ख्वाहिशों से नहीं गिरते
फल झोली में,
मंजिल के लिए मेहनत की
शाख को हिलाना पड़ता है।
UPSC
IAS
PCS
CURRENT AFFAIRS
GENERAL STUDIES
SELF IMPROVEMENT
Dream Plan Study Achieve
Better Version of Me

आज क्या पढ़ेंगे?

1. Blue Economy
2. RUPP
3. महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

नीली अर्थव्यवस्था को नई गति: पीएमएमएसवाई के तहत भारत के मत्स्य क्षेत्र को सशक्त करते छह वर्ष

चर्चा में क्यों?

- प्रधानमंत्री मत्स्य संपदा योजना (पीएमएमएसवाई) के छह वर्ष पूरे होने के अवसर पर यह विस्तृत आलेख भारत की नीली अर्थव्यवस्था को सशक्त करने, मत्स्य उत्पादन को रिकॉर्ड स्तर पर पहुँचाने और तटीय समुदायों की आजीविका को बदलने में इसकी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका को रेखांकित करता है।

भारत की नीली अर्थव्यवस्था को मज़बूत करना

- भारत का मत्स्य क्षेत्र एक महत्वपूर्ण आर्थिक आधार है, जो विशेष रूप से हाशिए पर रहने वाले और तटीय समुदायों के लगभग तीन करोड़ लोगों की आजीविका का संधारण करता है।
- उत्पादन, निर्यात, अवसंरचना और प्रौद्योगिकी अपनाने को बढ़ावा देने वाली नीतियों के कारण इस क्षेत्र में निरंतर वृद्धि हुई है।
- सरकार ₹20,750 करोड़ के कुल परिव्यय के साथ वर्ष 2020–21 से पीएमएमएसवाई कार्यान्वित कर रही है।
- बजट अनुमान 2026–27 में रिकॉर्ड ₹2,500 करोड़ आवंटित किए गए हैं, जिससे मत्स्य अवसंरचना और आजीविकाओं को मजबूती मिली है।

- 11 अगस्त 2026 तक, मत्स्य पालन विभाग ने ₹21,394.88 करोड़ की परियोजनाओं को मंजूरी दी है, जिसमें ₹9,510.89 करोड़ का केंद्रीय हिस्सा शामिल है।

सफलता की कहानी: आइस प्लांट से अधिक समृद्धि की ओर

- पोरबंदर, गुजरात के श्री प्रवीणभाई बाबूलाल मसानी ने वर्ष 2021–22 में पीएमएमएसवाई के तहत ₹48 लाख की सब्सिडी प्राप्त की।
- इस सहायता से उन्होंने प्रतिदिन 30 मीट्रिक टन क्षमता वाला आइस प्लांट स्थापित किया।
- इससे मछली पकड़ने वाली नौकाओं के लिए उच्च गुणवत्ता वाली बर्फ की सिल्लियों का उत्पादन संभव हुआ, जिससे मछली को ताजा रखने में मदद मिलती है।

- इस योजना से उनका व्यवसाय मजबूत हुआ है और उनके परिवार की आजीविका बेहतर हुई है।

पीएमएमएसवाई के माध्यम से भारत के मत्स्य क्षेत्र का रूपांतरण

- केंद्रीय क्षेत्र (सीएस): इसका पूर्ण वित्तपोषण केंद्र सरकार द्वारा किया जाता है। यह आनुवंशिक सुधार, नवाचार, प्रौद्योगिकी प्रदर्शन, प्रशिक्षण, रोग निगरानी, और मत्स्य बंदरगाहों के आधुनिकीकरण को सहायता प्रदान करता है।
- प्रधानमंत्री मत्स्य किसान समृद्धि सह-योजना (पीएम-एमकेएसएसवाई): वर्ष 2023-24 से 2026-27 तक चार वर्षों के लिए संचालित इस उप-योजना का वित्तीय परिव्यय ₹6,000 करोड़ है। यह औपचारिकीकरण, बीमा कवरेज और गुणवत्ता आश्वासन को बढ़ावा देती है।

- केंद्र प्रायोजित योजना (सीएसएस): केंद्र और राज्यों द्वारा कार्यान्वित इस योजना के तहत मछली उत्पादन, अंतर्देशीय व समुद्री मत्स्य पालन, समुद्री शैवाल की खेती, कोल्ड-चेन अवसंरचना, और बीमा को शामिल किया गया है।

उत्पादन, अवसंरचना और आजीविकाओं को सुदृढ़ बनाती, पीएमएमएसवाई

- मछली उत्पादन 2019-20 के 141.64 लाख टन से बढ़कर 2024-25 में रिकॉर्ड 197.75 लाख टन हो गया है।
- इस योजना ने मत्स्य पालन और जलीय कृषि गतिविधियों में 58 लाख व्यक्तियों के लिए रोजगार के अवसर सृजित किए हैं।
- मत्स्य निर्यात 2019-20 के ₹46,663 करोड़ से बढ़कर 2025-26 में ₹73,890 करोड़ हो गया है।

आधुनिक जलीय कृषि और मत्स्य अवसंरचना का विस्तार

- ₹713.80 करोड़ की लागत से 12 एकीकृत एक्वापार्क को मंजूरी दी गई है।
- समुद्री शैवाल की खेती के लिए ₹198.17 करोड़ की परियोजनाओं को मंजूरी मिली है।
- अंतर्देशीय जलीय कृषि के तहत 52,058 जलाशय पिंजरों, 23,285.06 हेक्टेयर तालाब क्षेत्र, 12,081 आरएएस और 4,205 बायो-फ्लोक इकाइयों को सहायता दी गई है।
- 2,672 सजावटी मछली पालन इकाइयों को सहायता प्रदान की गई है।

मत्स्य अवसंरचना और मूल्य श्रृंखला को सुदृढ़ बनाना

- 28 मछली पकड़ने के बंदरगाहों, 25 मछली उतारने के केंद्रों और 23 ड्रेजिंग परियोजनाओं के लिए ₹3,741.89 करोड़ मंजूर किए गए हैं।
- कोल्ड-चेन और विपणन अवसंरचना के लिए ₹2,797 करोड़ की मंजूरी दी गई है।
- स्वीकृत परियोजनाओं में 28,489 मछली परिवहन इकाइयाँ, 775 कोल्ड स्टोरेज और आइस प्लांट, तथा खुदरा व थोक मछली बाजार शामिल हैं।

सामूहिक कार्रवाई, सुदृढ़ता और प्रौद्योगिकी के माध्यम से समुदायों का सशक्तीकरण

- एफएफपीओ: 2,195 मछुआरा किसान उत्पादक संगठनों की स्थापना के लिए ₹544.86 करोड़ की परियोजनाओं को मंजूरी दी गई है।

- जलवायु-सुदृढ़ तटीय समुदाय: 100 तटीय मछुआरा गांवों की पहचान जलवायु-सुदृढ़ तटीय मछुआरा गांवों (सीआरसीएफवी) के रूप में की गई है (प्रति गांव ₹200 लाख की इकाई लागत)।
- प्रौद्योगिकी-संचालित जलीय कृषि: जल के पुनर्चक्रण वाली प्रणालियों (आरएएस) और बायो-फ्लोक प्रौद्योगिकी (जिसे "ग्रीन सूप" भी कहा जाता है) को बढ़ावा दिया जा रहा है।

मत्स्य क्षेत्र का डिजिटल रूपांतरण

- सितंबर 2024 में शुरू किए गए राष्ट्रीय मत्स्य डिजिटल प्लेटफॉर्म (एनएफडीपी) के माध्यम से डिजिटल शासन और एकल-खिड़की प्रणाली को बढ़ावा दिया जा रहा है।
- 8 सितंबर 2026 तक इस प्लेटफॉर्म पर 37.23 लाख से अधिक कुल पंजीकरण दर्ज किए गए हैं।

एसडीजी 14: जल के नीचे जीवन में योगदान

- यह योजना बायो-फ्लोक, आरएएस और समुद्री कृषि जैसी संधारणीय विधियों को बढ़ावा देकर जलीय संसाधनों के संरक्षण और सतत् विकास लक्ष्य 14 में योगदान देती है।
- सतत् मत्स्य पालन और नीली अर्थव्यवस्था के विकास की ओर प्रधानमंत्री मत्स्य संपदा योजना (पीएमएमएसवाई) उत्पादन, आधुनिक अवसंरचना, डिजिटल प्लेटफॉर्म और आजीविका के अवसरों को मजबूत करके भारत के मत्स्य क्षेत्र को एक प्रतिस्पर्धी, आधुनिक और सतत् दिशा प्रदान कर रही है।

निष्कर्ष

- प्रधानमंत्री मत्स्य संपदा योजना (पीएमएमएसवाई) ने अपने छह वर्षों के सफर में उत्पादन, आधुनिक अवसंरचना, डिजिटल प्लेटफॉर्म और तटीय समुदायों के सशक्तीकरण के माध्यम से भारत के मत्स्य क्षेत्र को एक नई दिशा दी है। यह योजना न केवल ग्रामीण अर्थव्यवस्था और मत्स्य निर्यात को मजबूती प्रदान कर रही है, बल्कि जलीय संसाधनों के सतत् उपयोग को बढ़ावा देकर देश को एक आधुनिक और आत्मनिर्भर 'विकसित भारत' के लक्ष्य की ओर अग्रसर करने में भी अहम भूमिका निभा रही है।

अभ्यास प्रश्न

Q.'प्रधानमंत्री मत्स्य संपदा योजना' (PMMSY) के संदर्भ में निम्नलिखित कथनों पर विचार कीजिए:

1. इस योजना के तहत केंद्रीय क्षेत्र की उप-योजना के रूप में 'प्रधानमंत्री मत्स्य किसान समृद्धि सह-योजना' (पीएम-एमकेएसएसवाई) का क्रियान्वयन किया जा रहा है, जिसका वित्तीय परिव्यय ₹6,000 करोड़ है।
2. बायो-फ्लोक प्रौद्योगिकी को जलीय कृषि क्षेत्र में "ग्रीन सूप" या हेटरोट्रॉफिक तालाबों के नाम से भी जाना जाता है।

उपर्युक्त कथनों में से कौन-सा/से सही है/हैं?

A. केवल 1

B. केवल 2

C. 1 और 2 दोनों

D. न तो 1, न ही 2

अभ्यास प्रश्न

> "भारत की 'नीली अर्थव्यवस्था' के संधारणीय विकास में 'प्रधानमंत्री मत्स्य संपदा योजना' (PMMSY) की भूमिका का परीक्षण कीजिए। आधुनिक अवसंरचना, प्रौद्योगिकी-संचालित जलीय कृषि और डिजिटल पहलों ने देश के मत्स्य क्षेत्र को किस प्रकार रूपांतरित किया है? विश्लेषणात्मक चर्चा कीजिए।" (250 शब्द)

How should RUPPs be regulated?

Why do some RUPPs remain active despite poor compliance? How can their misuse be curbed? What can be done to improve transparency? Should RUPPs face a vote threshold for tax breaks? How can the EC act against non-serious parties?

EXPLAINER

Rangarajan R.

The story so far:

A 'BBC News Hindi' investigation has revealed that six Registered Unrecognised Political Parties (RUPP), all based in Gujarat, had received donations of around ₹1,700 crores for the year 2023-24. This is higher than the total received by five nationally recognised political parties, except the BJP, for the same period, which stood at ₹1,480 crores.

What are registered parties?

Political parties are an association or body of individuals that can be formed by citizens. Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RP Act) lays down the requirements for registration of a political party with the Election Commission (EC). After satisfactory scrutiny of the documents submitted, the EC registers a political party as a RUPP. The RUPPs enjoy the following benefits – (a) tax exemption for donations received under Section 12 of the Income Tax Act, 2025, (b) common symbol for contesting general elections to the Lok Sabha/State Assemblies, and (c) 20 'star campaigners' during election campaign. The RUPPs are required to maintain the details of individual donors above twenty thousand rupees in a financial year and submit them to the poll body every year. As per section 29C of the Representation of the People Act, failure to furnish these details will result in losing income tax exemption.

The RUPPs, under the Income Tax Act, 2025, are required to accept donations in excess of two thousand rupees only through cheque or bank transfers.

What are the issues?

As per the EC notification, India had more than 2,800 RUPPs as of July, but only around 750 contested the 2024 general elections. This has resulted in the moniker – 'letter pad parties' – for the rest of the RUPPs. The RP Act does not confer explicit powers on the EC to de-register a political party if it fails to contest elections, conduct inner-party elections, or lodge requisite returns. In the *Indian National Congress vs Institute of Social Welfare & Ors* (2002), the Supreme Court held that the EC does not have the power to de-register any political party under the RP Act. It may de-register only under exceptional circumstances, such as registration obtained by fraud, the political party ceasing to have allegiance to the Constitution, or being declared unlawful by the government. The EC periodically publishes the list of de-listed RUPPs. The October 2025 notification contains over 800 such parties.

However, the six RUPPs – Aam Janmat Party, Bharatiya National Janata Dal, Garib Kalyan Party, New India United Party, Satyawadi Rakshak Party and the Swatantrata Abhivyakti Party – remain on the list of active RUPPs as per the EC notification in October 2025. This is because they managed to field a total of 15 candidates during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. The Association for Democratic Reforms periodically publishes reports on the status of submission of annual reports of RUPPs. In its July 2025 report, in which the annual reports of 2022-23 are analysed, it is stated that reports of only 26% of RUPPs are available in the public domain. Poor compliance with statutory requirements, coupled with a lack of transparency, results in these 'letter pad' parties being used as an opaque channel for tax evasion and money laundering.

What needs to be done?

The Law Commission, in its 255th report, had recommended amendments for de-registration of a political party if it fails to contest elections for ten consecutive years. The EC, in its memorandum for electoral reforms (2016), also suggested an amendment to the RP Act that would empower it to de-register a party. These are long-pending reforms that need to be carried out to empower the EC to act against non-serious parties, some of which are merely a façade for illegal financial transactions.

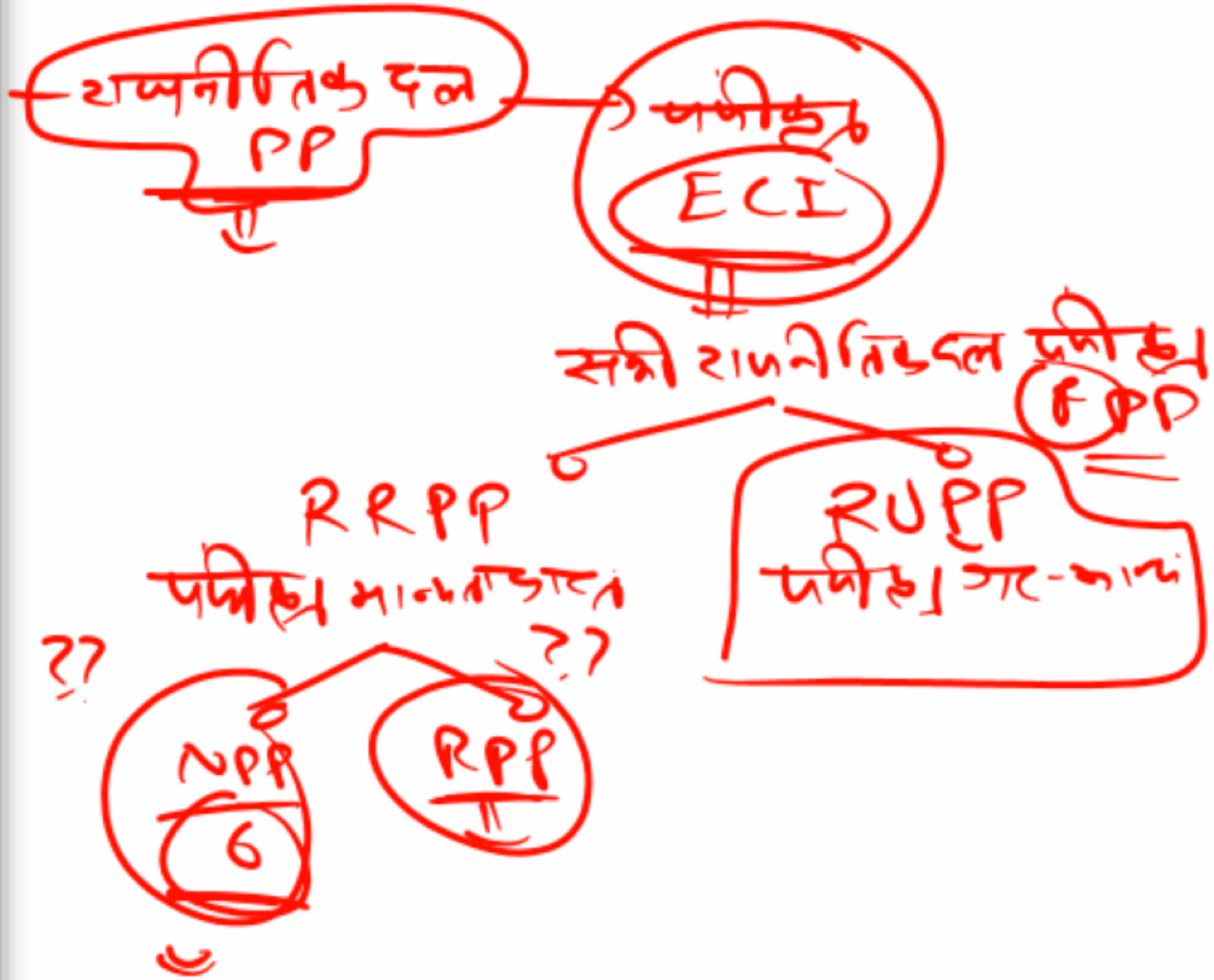
However, if parties contest elections merely to fulfil a statutory requirement, they could continue to misuse their tax exemptions and be used for money laundering and other nefarious activities. In the present digital world, it is not difficult for the Income Tax Department and other enforcement agencies to monitor the transactions of such parties and take strict action against any wrongdoing. This would act as a deterrent against the misuse of the benefits and exemptions available to political parties. The EC had also suggested that tax exemptions be provided only for political parties that win seats in Lok Sabha or Legislative Assembly elections. This can be viewed as an undemocratic and extreme measure, as there are parties that consistently contest elections without electoral success. Instead, similar to the 1% vote threshold for allotting common symbols to RUPPs, a suitable vote percentage threshold may be stipulated by law for RUPPs to avail of tax exemptions on donations received.

(Rangarajan R. is a former IAS officer Views expressed are personal)

GETTY IMAGES

THE GIST

- Six Gujarat-based RUPPs received about ₹1,700 crore in donations in 2023-24, raising concerns over opaque political funding
- Weak statutory provisions and poor compliance allow many non-serious RUPPs to remain active and potentially misuse tax exemptions
- The EC needs stronger powers to de-register such parties, while a suitable vote threshold could determine eligibility for tax exemptions



- **RUPPs (Registered Unrecognised Political Parties - पंजीकृत गैर-मान्यता प्राप्त राजनीतिक दल)**

मुख्य मुद्दा (The Main Issue)

- **₹1,700 करोड़ का चंदा:** गुजरात की 6 RUPPs को साल 2023-24 में लगभग ₹1,700 करोड़ का चंदा मिला, जो BJP को छोड़कर बाकी 5 राष्ट्रीय दलों को मिले कुल चंदे (₹1,480 करोड़) से भी अधिक है।
- **लेटर पैड पार्टियां (Letter Pad Parties):** भारत में 2,800 से अधिक RUPPs हैं, लेकिन 2024 के आम चुनाव में केवल 750 ने ही चुनाव लड़ा। बाकी केवल कागजों या "लेटर पैड" पर चल रही हैं।
- **कर छूट का दुरुपयोग:** आयकर अधिनियम की धारा 13A के तहत राजनीतिक दलों को मिलने वाले चंदे पर टैक्स छूट मिलती है। नियमों का पालन न करने के बावजूद कई पार्टियां इस छूट का उपयोग मनी लॉन्ड्रिंग या टैक्स चोरी के लिए कर रही हैं।

RUPPs क्या हैं और इन्हें क्या सुविधाएं मिलती हैं?

- **पंजीकरण:** जनप्रतिनिधित्व अधिनियम, 1951 (RP Act) की धारा 29A के तहत इनका चुनाव आयोग (EC) में रजिस्ट्रेशन होता है।
- **सुविधाएं:**
  - धारा 13A के तहत चंदे पर टैक्स छूट।
  - चुनाव में साझा चुनाव चिन्ह (Common Symbol) पाने का अवसर।
  - चुनाव प्रचार के लिए 20 'स्टार प्रचारक'।
- **शर्तें:** इन्हें हर साल अपने ऑडिट खाते, चंदे की रिपोर्ट (₹20,000 से अधिक के दाता) और चुनाव खर्च का ब्योरा देना होता है। ₹2,000 से अधिक का चंदा चेक या बैंक ट्रांसफर से लेना अनिवार्य है।

समस्याएं क्या हैं?

- **पारदर्शिता की कमी:** रिपोर्ट के अनुसार केवल 26% RUPPs की वार्षिक रिपोर्ट सार्वजनिक रूप से उपलब्ध हैं।
- **डी-रजिस्ट्रेशन की शक्ति का न होना:** सर्वोच्च न्यायालय (Indian National Congress vs Institute of Social Welfare, 2002) के अनुसार, चुनाव आयोग के पास किसी दल का पंजीकरण रद्द (De-register) करने की सीधी शक्ति नहीं है, जब तक कि धोखाधड़ी या गैर-कानूनी गतिविधि साबित न हो। आयोग केवल उन्हें निष्क्रिय (In-active) सूची में डाल सकता है।

सुधार के लिए क्या कदम आवश्यक हैं?

- **डी-रजिस्ट्रेशन की शक्ति:** विधि आयोग (255वीं रिपोर्ट) और चुनाव आयोग ने मांग की है कि यदि कोई दल 10 साल तक लगातार चुनाव न लड़े, तो आयोग को उसका पंजीकरण रद्द करने का अधिकार मिले।
- **टैक्स छूट के लिए वोट प्रतिशत का नियम:** यह सुझाव दिया गया है कि टैक्स छूट केवल उन्हीं दलों को मिले जो लोकसभा या विधानसभा चुनावों में एक निश्चित प्रतिशत (जैसे 1% वोट) हासिल करते हैं, ताकि गैर-संजीदा (Non-serious) पार्टियां केवल टैक्स बचाने के लिए इसका उपयोग न कर सकें।
- **कड़ी निगरानी:** इनकम टैक्स विभाग और जांच एजेंसियों को इन फर्जी पार्टियों के वित्तीय लेनदेन पर सख्त कार्रवाई करनी चाहिए।

Prelims Practice Question

- **Q. 'पंजीकृत गैर-मान्यता प्राप्त राजनीतिक दलों' (RUPPs) के संदर्भ में निम्नलिखित कथनों पर विचार कीजिए:**

1. भारत में किसी भी राजनीतिक दल का पंजीकरण जनप्रतिनिधित्व अधिनियम, 1951 (RP Act) की धारा 29A के तहत चुनाव आयोग द्वारा किया जाता है।
2. जनप्रतिनिधित्व अधिनियम, 1951 के तहत चुनाव आयोग को उन राजनीतिक दलों का पंजीकरण रद्द (De-register) करने का स्पष्ट वैधानिक अधिकार प्राप्त है जो लगातार चुनाव नहीं लड़ते हैं।
3. आयकर अधिनियम की धारा 13A के तहत RUPPs को भी प्राप्त चंदे पर टैक्स छूट का लाभ मिलता है, बशर्ते वे वार्षिक ऑडिट रिपोर्ट और चंदे का ब्योरा जमा करें।

उपर्युक्त कथनों में से कौन-सा/से सही है/हैं?

A. केवल 1 और 2

B. केवल 2 और 3

C. केवल 1 और 3

D. 1, 2 और 3

Mains Practice Question

- प्र. "भारत में पंजीकृत गैर-मान्यता प्राप्त राजनीतिक दल (RUPPs) चुनावी पारदर्शिता में सुधार के बजाय कर चोरी और मनी लॉन्ड्रिंग के माध्यम बनते जा रहे हैं।" इस कथन के आलोक में RUPPs से जुड़ी समस्याओं का विश्लेषण कीजिए तथा चुनाव आयोग को सशक्त बनाने हेतु आवश्यक विधायी सुधारों का सुझाव दीजिए। (15 अंक / 250 शब्द)

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

YouTube Homework

Will follow the law on *Vande Mataram*, says Omar on National Song

Day after NC and Congress trade barbs over playing of all stanzas at event on September 7, J&K CM asks ally to bring law and change national song in Parliament; PDP terms stand 'unfortunate'

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Thursday defended the move to stand for all the stanzas of the national song, *Vande Mataram*, and said "his party will follow the law".

"The Congress should have stopped it [controversial stanzas of *Vande Mataram*] in Parliament. Even in the Congress-ruled States, the national song is played at official functions. All stanzas of the national song are mandatory now. Those who do not stand will face legal action. What does the Congress want... that people to go to jail in Kashmir over this?" said Mr. Abdullah.

The Chief Minister's remarks came against the backdrop of senior Congress leaders, including party general secretary K.C. Venugopal, questioning him and other National Conference (NC) leaders who stood for all the stanzas during a ceremony of

CM Omar Abdullah, MoS L. Murugan and others during the closing ceremony of International Film Festival in Srinagar on Thursday. PTI

the International Film Festival of Jammu and Kashmir (IFFJK) on September 7 in Srinagar. The two parties exchanged barbs over the matter on Wednesday.

Mr. Abdullah said he wished the Congress to come to power at the Centre and "change the national song in Parliament". "Let the Congress bring the change in Parliament. As a party, we never adopted *Vande Mataram*. However, we will abide by legal and statutory obligation," he said.

The Chief Minister also defended the remarks of party legislator Tanvir Sadiq, who suggested that the economic distress in Kashmir had "people sharing pyjamas" at one point of time until party founder Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah ushered in economic reforms. The remarks drew criticism from political parties, including the BJP.

"He has referred to a well-documented historical reality. [The accounts of Indian Civil Service member and author] Walter Lawrence and other accounts record the widespread poverty faced by Kashmiris under the Zaildar, Chakdar and landlord system. This is history, not Tanvir's personal opinion. His point was to underline how far our people have come since then. There is no basis for an apology; the issue has simply been blown out of proportion," said the Chief Minister.

'Communal agenda'

The Opposition Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) reacted sharply to Mr. Abdullah's remarks. PDP leader and ex-Minister Naeem Akhtar termed the NC stand on *Vande Mataram* as "unfortunate". "There is an obvious communal agenda in it. Unfortunately, the NC has adopted and accepted it. It's the Congress and Rahul Gandhi who are raising the right issues in the country, whether it was the issue of waqf, *Vande Mataram* or Muslims facing demolitions of mosques or shrines in the country," he said.

Karnataka limits rendition of *Vande Mataram* to 2 stanzas

The government order says that all six stanzas will be played at functions involving the President, V-P, Prime Minister or Governor; acknowledges the National Song's role in 'instilling nationalism'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka government has issued an order stating that only the first two stanzas of the National Song *Vande Mataram* are to be sung at State functions. The stand is in line with that of the Congress at the national level.

However, the entire six stanzas will be played or sung in functions involving the President, Vice-President, Prime Minister, or Governor, the order states. The order, issued by the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms (DPAR), follows a Cabinet decision.

The order acknowledges that *Vande Mataram* played an important role in instilling nationalism, unity, and patriotism among the people of the country during the Indian national movement for freedom.

It refers to the guidelines issued by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs prescribing the singing of the official version of the song, as well as the procedure to be followed while singing or playing it at various government and public programmes.

However, the order says that the State government has considered the need to maintain 'uniformity, dignity and appropriate protocol' with regard to the singing of *Vande Mataram*.

The order issued by Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms follows a decision by the State Cabinet. FILE PHOTO

BJP slams order on National Song

NEW DELHI

The BJP on Thursday questioned the Karnataka Congress government over its order on *Vande Mataram*. BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi said the Congress had become completely isolated from all its alliance partners on the issue, and only the Muslim League remained with it.

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

SC asks Centre to review NEET-SS cut-off decision

Super-specialty medical seats remaining vacant makes a 'rather compelling' case for reduction of qualifying percentile, top court says; willing to hold a 'stray round' for unfilled seats, says Centre

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court asked the Union government on Thursday to reconsider its decision not to reduce the cut-off percentile for National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Super-specialty (NEET-SS) seats in the current year, while expressing concern about a large number of seats going unfilled annually.

The order from a Bench of Justices P.S. Narasimha and Alok Aradhe came after Additional Solicitor-General Aishwarya Bhati, for the Centre, said the government was willing to conduct a "stray round" for the vacant NEET-SS seats, but had decided not to lower the qualifying percentile. She said the vacant seats would revert to States such as Tamil Nadu.

The court was hearing a petition filed by the Tamil Nadu Medical Officers Association, represented by senior advocate P. Wilson, who said Tamil Nadu had 40 vacant seats left, and they should be returned to the State. The petitioner-association had challenged the "premature diversion" of 152 vacant super-specialty seats earmarked for in-service government doctors in Tamil Nadu to the all-India quota. It had also sought protection of the State's in-service reservation policy, pending a final decision on reduction of the NEET-SS qualifying percentile.

Mr. Wilson stressed that many eligible candidates, mostly in-service government doctors serving in rural parts of the State, were awaiting a reduction in the qualifying percentile. He said the NEET-SS seats were "precious", and cannot remain vacant.

Senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, for Tamil Nadu, said the State wanted the vacant seats to completely revert to it. He further urged the top court to lower the cut-off percentile.

The court said the fact that many seats remain unfilled makes the case for reduction of the qualifying percentile "rather compelling".

Justice Narasimha advised the Additional Solicitor-General to "reflect a little more" about bringing down the percentile, and even consult with other members of the Bar on the issue.

Ms. Bhati urged the court then to "add a line" in its order "directing us to reconsider this... to consider reduction to the extent possible".

The law officer revealed that even some of the experts had "varying views" on the question of lowering the qualifying percentile.

"Some amount of reduction can be made. For last years, we had even reduced it [qualifying percentile] to 0%," Ms. Bhati submitted.

The court scheduled the case for further hearing and directions on September 17.

Staking claim

The petition has challenged the 'premature diversion' of 152 vacant Super-specialty seats earmarked for in-service government doctors in Tamil Nadu to the all-India quota

What the petition says

- At least **40 seats** remain vacant from those diverted, and they should be returned to Tamil Nadu
- Many eligible candidates, mostly in-service government doctors serving in rural parts of the State, are **awaiting a reduction** in the qualifying percentile
- NEET-SS seats are **'precious'** and cannot remain vacant

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

- **NEET SS (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test - Super Speciality)** भारत में मेडिकल फील्ड की सबसे उच्च स्तरीय प्रवेश परीक्षाओं में से एक है।
- यह परीक्षा **National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences (NBEMS)** द्वारा आयोजित की जाती है।

NEET SS से जुड़ी मुख्य बातें

- **उद्देश्य:** इस परीक्षा के जरिए Post Graduate (MD/MS/DNB) की पढ़ाई पूरी कर चुके डॉक्टर्स को **Super Speciality Courses** में एडमिशन मिलता है।
- **प्रवेश वाले कोर्स:**
  - **DM** (Doctorate of Medicine) - जैसे Cardiology, Neurology, Gastroenterology आदि।
  - **M.Ch** (Master of Chirurgiae/Surgery) - जैसे Neurosurgery, Urology, Plastic Surgery आदि।
  - **DrNB** (Doctorate of National Board) Super Speciality courses.
- **योग्यता (Eligibility):** उम्मीदवार के पास MCI/NMC द्वारा मान्यता प्राप्त संस्थान से संबंधित विषय में **MD, MS या DNB** की डिग्री होनी अनिवार्य है।
- **परीक्षा का पैटर्न:**
  - यह एक **Computer Based Test (CBT)** होता है।
  - इसमें बहुविकल्पीय प्रश्न (MCQs) पूछे जाते हैं।
  - इसमें नेगेटिव मार्किंग भी लागू होती है।
- **NEET SS क्यों जरूरी है?**
- यदि कोई डॉक्टर MBBS और उसके बाद MS/MD करने के बाद किसी एक विशेष अंग या बीमारी के विशेषज्ञ (Super Specialist) बनना चाहता है—जैसे दिल के सर्जन या दिमाग के डॉक्टर—तो उन्हें NEET SS पास करना होता है।

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

Rajasthan mountaineer sets goal of climbing 'seven summits' after scaling 5 highest peaks

Mohammed Iqbal
JAIPUR

Mountaineer Manasvi Agrawal from Rajasthan's Udaipur city, who hoisted the Tricolour on Everest in May this year and scaled the highest peaks of five continents in record nine months, has set the target of climbing 'seven summits', which are the highest peaks across all seven continents.

Manasvi Agrawal has scaled the highest peaks of five continents in a record nine months. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Ms. Agrawal, 29, is the first female civilian mountaineer from Rajasthan to conquer Everest, which is the world's highest peak, and hoist the national flag there. Three women from the State had earlier scaled Everest, but they were affiliated with the army, paramilitary forces or government institutions.

Prior to Everest, Ms. Agrawal had hoisted the Tricolour atop Vinson Massif, which is Antarctica's highest peak, Mount Elbrus (Europe), Mount Kilimanjaro (Africa), and Mount Aconcagua (South America). She achieved the distinction of scaling the highest peaks of five continents in just nine months.

State recognition

Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma conferred a State-level award on Ms. Agrawal on the Independence Day last month in recognition of her achievements and contributions to mountaineering.

At a felicitation ceremony in Udaipur earlier this week, Ms. Agrawal said there was a mountain within every individual. "If we conquer it, we can overcome any challenge the world throws at us," she said, adding that every peak had brought a new challenge before her and made her resolve stronger.

Having hoisted the Tricolour atop the highest peaks of five continents, Ms. Agrawal has set her sights on the peaks of the remaining two. She said no peak was impossible to conquer if there was "determination and courage".

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

मनस्वी अग्रवाल (Manasvi Agrawal) राजस्थान के उदयपुर की एक प्रमुख अंतरराष्ट्रीय पर्वतारोही, विधि (Law) शोधकर्ता और सहायक आचार्य (Assistant Professor) हैं।

पर्वतारोहण की प्रमुख उपलब्धियां:

- **अंटार्कटिका की अंटार्कटिक चोटी (Vinson Massif):** दिसंबर 2025 में अंटार्कटिका की सर्वोच्च चोटी 'विन्सन मैसिफ' को फतह कर तिरंगा फहराने वाली वे राजस्थान की पहली पर्वतारोही बनीं।
- **दक्षिण अमेरिका की अकोन्कागुआ चोटी (Mount Aconcagua):** जनवरी 2026 में एंडीज पर्वत श्रृंखला की लगभग 23,000 फीट ऊंची चोटी पर पहुंचकर इतिहास रचा।
- इसके अलावा वे यूरोप की **माउंट एलब्रस** और अफ्रीका की **माउंट किलिमंजारो** चोटियों को भी सफलतापूर्वक फतह कर चुकी हैं। उनका लक्ष्य दुनिया के सभी सातों महाद्वीपों की सबसे ऊंची चोटियों (Seven Summits) को फतह करना है।

शिक्षा एवं करियर:

- उन्होंने **गुजरात नेशनल लॉ यूनिवर्सिटी (GNLU)** से 5 वर्षीय लॉ डिग्री हासिल की है और पर्यावरण कानून (Environmental Law) में रिसर्च कर रही हैं।
- UGC NET (Assistant Professor) परीक्षा में 99.2 पर्सेंटाइल हासिल कर वे उदयपुर के लॉ कॉलेज में सहायक आचार्य के रूप में भी कार्यरत हैं।

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

YouTube Homework

Nandankanan Zoo playing soulful Indian ragas to comfort rescued baby orangutans

Satyasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

From the rousing rhythm of the tabla to the soulful strumming of sitar - Nandankanan Zoological Park has upgraded its playlist for the five rescued baby orangutans to help them calm their frazzled nerves.

According to officials, the DNA sampling, essential to ascertain the origin of the five orangutans rescued from a forest in Odisha's Balasore district, has been postponed by at least 10 days as the animals are yet to "fully stabilise emotionally in their new surroundings".

"Orangutans are not native to India. These young animals, separated from the mother, are experiencing psychological distress. Experts have advised music therapy for them," said Pradeep Devidas Mirase, Deputy Director of Nandankanan Zoo. While music is a universal language and connects everyone across different cultures, languages, and physical locations, zoo officials are hoping the soulful ragas will help keep the primates comfortable in their new surroundings.

The orangutans, aged about one year, have been expressing emotions like human children, a senior official said. "Sometimes they appear to be relaxed, and in the next moment, they cling to each other, likely due to anxiety for being separated from their mothers," the officer said.

The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, meanwhile, has launched a probe into the mysterious presence of the orangutans, thousands of kilometres away from their natural habitats in Indonesia and Malaysia.

One of the baby orangutans, recently rescued from Balasore, playing with soft toys at the Nandankanan Zoo's quarantine cell. PTI

'Smuggled via sea route'

While the investigation is at a preliminary stage, senior Odisha Forest Department officials said the traffickers may have used a sea route to smuggle the orangutans before bringing them into India through one of the north-eastern States, possibly via Myanmar or Bangladesh.

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

- Nandankanan Zoological ParkClick to open side panel for more information और **ओरांगुटान (Orangutans)** दोनों का आपस में विशेष महत्व है। हाल ही में सितंबर 2026 में ओडिशा के बालासोर जिले से तस्करी कर लाए गए 5 छोटे ओरांगुटान बच्चों को रेस्क्यू करके नंदकानन वन्यजीव उद्यान में ही देखभाल के लिए रखा गया है।
- दोनों के बारे में अलग-अलग विस्तृत जानकारी नीचे दी गई है:

1. नंदकानन जैविक उद्यान (Nandankanan Zoological Park)

- नंदकानन भारत के सबसे प्रमुख और बड़े चिड़ियाघरों में से एक है। 'नंदकानन' शब्द का शाब्दिक अर्थ होता है — *"स्वर्ग का बगीचा"*।
- **स्थिति व स्थापना:** यह ओडिशा की राजधानी भुवनेश्वर (और कटक के पास) में स्थित है। इसकी स्थापना 1960 में हुई थी।

मुख्य विशेषताएं:

- **सफेद बाघ (White Tigers):** नंदकानन सफेद बाघों के प्रजनन (Breeding) और उनके संरक्षण के लिए दुनिया भर में प्रसिद्ध है।
- **वन्यजीव सफारी:** यहाँ लायन सफारी (Lion Safari) और व्हाइट टाइगर सफारी जैसी सुविधाएं मौजूद हैं।
- **प्राकृतिक वातावरण:** यह चिड़ियाघर 'कांजिया झील' (Kanjia Lake) के किनारे और चंदका जंगल के बीच स्थित है।
- **अंतरराष्ट्रीय पहचान:** यह WAZA (*World Association of Zoos and Aquariums*) का सदस्य बनने वाला भारत का पहला चिड़ियाघर है।
- **पैंगोलिन संरक्षण:** यहाँ भारतीय पैंगोलिन (Indian Pangolin) के लिए विशेष ब्रीडिंग सेंटर भी चलाया जाता है।

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

2. ओरांगुटान (Orangutans)

- ओरांगुटान दुनिया के सबसे बुद्धिमान और बड़े एप्स (Apes - बिना पूंछ वाले वानर) की प्रजातियों में से एक हैं।
- **मूल निवास (Habitat):** ओरांगुटान **भारत के मूल निवासी नहीं हैं**। ये केवल दक्षिण-पूर्व एशिया (इंडोनेशिया और मलेशिया) के **बोर्नियो (Borneo)** और **सुमात्रा (Sumatra)** द्वीपों के वर्षावनों में पाए जाते हैं।
- **इंसानों से समानता:** इनका डीएनए (DNA) मनुष्यों के डीएनए से लगभग **97% मेल खाता है**। ये इंसानों की तरह ही बहुत भावनात्मक और बुद्धिमान जीव होते हैं।
- **पेड़ों पर जीवन (Arboreal):** ये अपना अधिकांश जीवन पेड़ों की शाखाओं पर ही बिताते हैं। 'ओरांगुटान' नाम मलय भाषा के शब्द *Orang* (मानव) और *Hutan* (जंगल) से मिलकर बना है, जिसका अर्थ होता है **"जंगल का मानव"**।
- **संरक्षण स्थिति (Conservation Status):** जंगलों की कटाई और अवैध तस्करी के कारण ओरांगुटान की सभी प्रजातियां (जैसे Bornean और Sumatran) गंभीर रूप से संकटग्रस्त (**Critically Endangered**) श्रेणी में आती हैं।
- **अवैध तस्करी:** अंतरराष्ट्रीय व्यापार (CITES) के तहत इनके व्यापार पर पूर्ण प्रतिबंध है, फिर भी पेट्स (Pets) के रूप में इनकी ब्लैक मार्केट में भारी मांग के कारण इनकी तस्करी की जाती है।

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

No Statehood, Ladakh to get unique elected body, says Chief Secretary

Home Ministry discusses the proposed structure of the UT-level body under Article 371 at a meeting with LAB and KDA; Ladakh leaders call the meeting a 'waste of time and money', say Ministry and UT administration are not on the same page

UT – Sui Generis

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Ladakh Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra said on Thursday that neither Statehood nor a Union Territory (UT) with a legislature is being offered to Ladakh; instead, it will be a *sui generis* model, a unique body under the Constitution that will have legislative, executive, and financial powers.

Mr. Kundra, while responding to a question by *The Hindu* on whether the head of the elected body will be called a Chief Minister and whether the assurance was akin to restoring Statehood for Ladakh, said, "Ladakh was never a State. It was part of J&K, and later it became a UT. Aspiration of the people is to have legislative, executive, and financial powers. An agreement has been reached with the leadership here, a *sui generis* model, which does not exist anywhere in the country, will be crafted for Ladakh, where a legislative body will be created. It is not going to be Statehood for sure or a UT with legislature, but it is some other body which will have these powers, the nomenclature is yet to be finalised, that is why discussions are on."

Civil Society members from Ladakh, including Sonam Wangchuk, address a press conference in New Delhi. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Chief Secretary informed that at a meeting with the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) on September 9, the proposed structure of the UT-level body under Article 371 of the Constitution was discussed, and the members expressed their consensus on having a "direct election through constituencies" for the UT-level body.

He said the members have been given a list of eight to nine questions to examine the structural relationship and distribution of powers between the existing hill councils and the proposed UT-level body as per their requirements. The next round of discussions is expected in October.

Emphasising that constitutional safeguards require a detailed and established legal and parliamentary process, Mr. Kundra said any constitutional amendment needs broad political consensus, consultation, and parliamentary consideration. He stressed that the process would move forward through dialogue and consensus and that no framework would be imposed on Ladakh without due consultation with stakeholders.

LAB, KDA disappointed

The members of LAB and KDA said they were "disappointed" with the talks, stating that the UT administration under L-G Vinai Saxena and the Union Home Ministry were not on the same page.

Cherring Dorjay Lakruk of the LAB said that if the government officials wanted them to answer questions, they should have shared the agenda beforehand. "They are asking us what will be the name of the elected body, what will be the CM called? They should have sent the agenda in advance. We cannot answer these questions instantly, they involve legal questions," he said.

Climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, part of the LAB delegation that met Ministry officials on September 9, said that "no concrete progress" has been made on their key demands and cautioned that protests would resume if assurances were not provided within a week.

He added that the meeting was a "waste of time and money" and that the government should not compel them to protest.

"We spend our own money and come to Delhi, then we go back without a concrete outcome. Money and time is (sic) wasted. In 2020, when they needed us before the hill council elections there, the government sent a chartered aircraft for our leaders and asked (for) their help to not boycott the elections and help them win. They have made all efforts to drive wedges between the communities and regions and want to tire out the leaders, we are not giving up," Mr. Wangchuk said.

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

- लद्दाख का **'सुई जेनेरिस' (Sui Generis) मॉडल** एक ऐसा विशेष प्रशासनिक और संवैधानिक ढांचा तैयार करने का प्रस्ताव या विचार है, जो लद्दाख की अनूठी भौगोलिक, सांस्कृतिक और जनसांख्यिकीय आवश्यकताओं के बिल्कुल अनुकूल हो।
- लैटिन भाषा में *Sui Generis* का अर्थ होता है — **"अपनी तरह का अकेला" (Unique in its own class)**।

सुई जेनेरिस मॉडल की आवश्यकता क्यों पड़ी?

- **अनुच्छेद 370 हटने के बाद की स्थिति:** अगस्त 2019 में जम्मू-कश्मीर से अनुच्छेद 370 हटाकर लद्दाख को बिना विधायिका (Without Legislature) वाला केंद्र शासित प्रदेश (UT) बनाया गया था।
- **असुरक्षा की भावना:** स्थानीय लोगों (विशेषकर लेह और कारगिल के निवासियों) को लगा कि बिना किसी स्थानीय विधायिका के उनके अधिकार, ज़मीन, पर्यावरण और नौकरियां बाहरी लोगों के प्रभाव में आ सकती हैं।
- **छठी अनुसूची (6th Schedule) की मांग:** लद्दाख के राजनीतिक और सामाजिक संगठन (जैसे *Leh Apex Body* और *Kargil Democratic Alliance*) लंबे समय से लद्दाख को संविधान की **छठी अनुसूची** में शामिल करने की मांग कर रहे हैं।

सुई जेनेरिस मॉडल में क्या खास हो सकता है?

- केंद्र सरकार का मानना है कि पूर्वोत्तर भारत के राज्यों के लिए बनी छठी अनुसूची को सीधे लद्दाख पर लागू करने के बजाय एक **नया (Sui Generis) मॉडल** तैयार किया जाए, जो विशेष रूप से लद्दाख के लिए ही डिज़ाइन किया गया हो:
- **स्वायत्त पर्वतीय विकास परिषदों (LAHDC) का सशक्तीकरण:** लेह और कारगिल की स्थानीय पर्वतीय परिषदों को ज़मीन, रोज़गार, बजट और स्थानीय संसाधनों से जुड़े कानून बनाने के अधिक अधिकार देना।
- **ज़मीन और नौकरियों का संरक्षण:** बाहरी लोगों द्वारा लद्दाख में ज़मीन खरीदने और स्थानीय सरकारी नौकरियों में आवेदन करने पर विशेष कानूनी प्रतिबंध लगाना (जैसे अनुच्छेद 371 के तहत कई राज्यों को मिला हुआ है)।
- **सांस्कृतिक और पर्यावरणीय सुरक्षा:** हिमालयी क्षेत्र के नाजुक पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र (Ecosystem) और स्थानीय जनजातीय संस्कृति को सुरक्षा प्रदान करना।
- **संसदीय और बजटीय प्रतिनिधित्व:** लद्दाख के लिए संसद और राज्य प्रशासनिक व्यवस्था में अधिक प्रतिनिधित्व व सीधा फंड आवंटन।

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

YouTube Homework

Focus on cooperation over confrontation in space: PM

Hemanth C.S.
PARIS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has emphasised the need for countries to explore, innovate, and protect space together. He was delivering a speech through video-conferencing on the second day of the International Space Summit in Paris on Thursday.

He invited France and the world to be co-travellers in India's next space frontier. "Let the space summit in Paris send a clear message: we will explore together, innovate together, and protect space together, for all humanity, and for generations to come."

The Prime Minister said that while orbits have become more crowded, technologies more powerful, and with more actors in the space domain, the focus should be on cooperation over confrontation, sustainability over short-term gain, and inclusion over exclusion.

Narendra Modi

"We support a safe, secure, peaceful, and sustainable space domain anchored in international law, dialogue, and multilateral cooperation," he said.

Mr. Modi highlighted the cost-effective missions of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and its capabilities to serve farmers and fishermen, weather forecasting, disaster management, and navigation.

"More than 430 satellites from 34 countries have travelled to space aboard Indian rockets. ISRO's technologies and partnerships serve not only India, but the wider world," he said. He cited the Chandrayaan-3 and Aditya-L1 missions, and the visit of an Indian astronaut to the International Space Station in 2025.

"Looking ahead, we aim to establish an Indian space station by 2035, and send an Indian to the moon by 2040. In all these efforts, our guiding principle has been clear: the benefits must reach all humanity. Alongside ISRO, India's private space sector is also surging in a big way," he said.

During the summit, many French companies such as RIDE!, Safran Space, and U-Space signed several contracts with Indian companies such as TakeMeToSpace, Dhruva Space, and AXISCADES, respectively.

(This reporter is in Paris at the invitation of France's Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs to cover the International Space Summit)

International Space Summit

G-7
NATO
SCO
BRICS

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

- **इंटरनेशनल स्पेस समिट (International Space Summit - ISS)** वैश्विक अंतरिक्ष क्षेत्र (Space Sector) के प्रमुख देशों, अंतरिक्ष एजेंसियों (जैसे ISRO, NASA, ESA), वैज्ञानिकों और निजी कंपनियों के बीच रणनीतिक संवाद, सहयोग और नीतियों पर चर्चा के लिए आयोजित किया जाने वाला एक प्रमुख वैश्विक सम्मेलन है।

1. अंतर्राष्ट्रीय अंतरिक्ष शिखर सम्मेलन 2026 (पेरिस)

- **स्थान व तिथि:** यह सम्मेलन **9 और 10 सितंबर 2026** को **पेरिस (फ्रांस)** में आयोजित हुआ।
- **पहलकर्ता:** फ्रांस के राष्ट्रपति इमैनुएल मैक्रों की पहल पर इसका आयोजन किया गया।
- **भागीदारी:** इसमें दुनिया भर के राष्ट्राध्यक्ष, वैज्ञानिक, अंतरिक्ष यात्री (Astronauts), निजी कंपनियों के प्रतिनिधि और नीति निर्माता शामिल हुए।

प्रमुख विषय (Focus Areas):

- **अंतरिक्ष सुरक्षा और नियमन (Space Security & Regulation):** उपग्रहों की बढ़ती संख्या, अंतरिक्ष कचरे (Space Debris) और कक्षाओं के सुरक्षित उपयोग के लिए नियम बनाना।
- **अंतरिक्ष अर्थव्यवस्था (Space Economy):** कम लागत में अंतरिक्ष तक पहुँच और वाणिज्यिक अंतरिक्ष उड़ानों का विकास।
- **जलवायु परिवर्तन और अवलोकन:** पृथ्वी अवलोकन (Earth Observation) उपग्रहों के ज़रिए वैश्विक जलवायु monitoring और आपदा प्रबंधन।

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

2. मुख्य उद्देश्य और महत्व

- **वैश्विक सहयोग:** विभिन्न देशों की अंतरिक्ष एजेंसियों और निजी कंपनियों (जैसे SpaceX, Blue Origin आदि) के बीच रणनीतिक तालमेल बिठाना।
- **अंतरिक्ष मलबे पर नियंत्रण:** अंतरिक्ष में निष्क्रिय पड़े उपग्रहों और कचरे से सक्रिय उपग्रहों की सुरक्षा के लिए दिशा-निर्देश तय करना।
- **गहन अंतरिक्ष अन्वेषण (Deep Space Exploration):** चंद्रमा (Moon Missions) और मंगल ग्रह (Mars Missions) से जुड़े मानव अभियानों पर विचार-विमर्श।
- **उभरते देशों की भागीदारी:** भारत जैसे अग्रणी और विकासशील देशों को वैश्विक अंतरिक्ष नीतियों में अधिक प्रभावी भूमिका देना।

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

YouTube Homework

Rude lessons

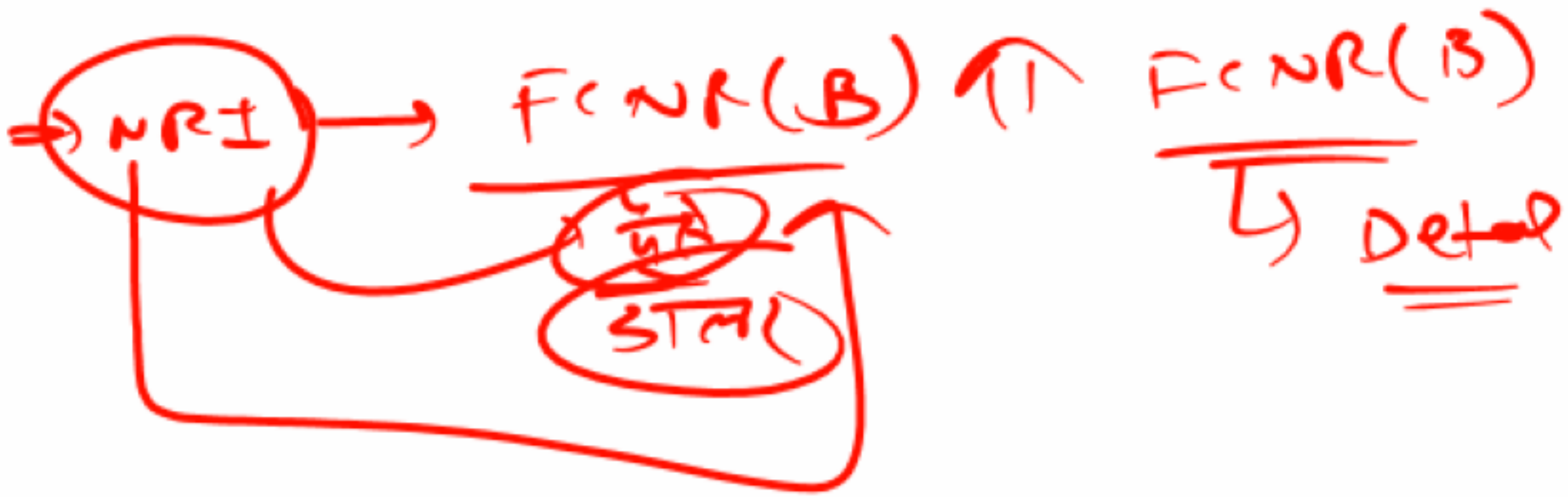
India should learn from Canada and be wary of deals with the U.S.

The U.S.-Canada trade dispute has a few sharp lessons for India. The two economies have been deeply economically integrated since at least 1965, when they established free trade in automobiles and their parts. This then widened into a full-fledged free trade agreement in 1989, which was expanded into the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) about five years later. The economic integration between the U.S. and Canada has steadily continued and, by all accounts, has worked well for both economies. The target for the much smaller Canadian economy was to achieve economies of scale by producing vast amounts of a few products. According to Nobel laureate Paul Krugman, Canada accounts for 70% of the oil refined in the American Midwest, and supplies 60% of the nation's aluminium. It also supplies nearly all the types of lumber used in U.S. residential construction. Yet, despite this long and fruitful trade partnership, their economic relationship has fallen to a new low. Canada pulled out of negotiations over a new tariff deal citing last-minute insertions by the U.S. side. The U.S. has made a similar allegation against Canada. Canada recently levied reciprocal tariffs on the U.S. of up to 50% as a reaction to the 50% tariffs that the U.S. has imposed on imports from Canada. From September 29, the U.S. will outright ban certain Canadian alcoholic spirits, some dairy goods, and motorcycles. Statements by U.S. President Donald Trump are hardly conciliatory in nature.

The first lesson for India lies here: if this is how the U.S. treats a next-door neighbour, alliance member, and long-standing trade partner, India should not take for granted any favourable treatment that it might receive from the U.S. The second lesson is that barrelling ahead with trade deals might not always be the best plan. Before Canada, Malaysia also backed out of a deal it had signed with the U.S. It argued that once the U.S.'s reciprocal tariff system was deemed illegal, the benefit from a trade deal no longer outweighed the costs of opening up to the U.S. Despite the success of its recent trade pacts, India should weigh the same pros and cons when it comes to the U.S., especially since a deal might not be the end of the tariff pressure. India has faced this before. Despite the February 2026 agreement of 18% tariffs on imports from India, the U.S. has forged ahead with its forced labour and excess capacity investigations that could see tariff levels exceed that limit. India has done well to insist that a deal will not be struck until its advantage over its competitors is clear. The third lesson is that this advantage can vanish even after a deal is struck.

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

YouTube Homework



FCNR(B) deposits: Understanding who finally bears the foreign exchange risk

The RBI swap shields banks from currency risk on the principal, while banks have to manage dollar interest payments themselves, leaving some exposed if the rupee weakens; some banks have planned to buy U.S. dollars when they actually need to make the interest payments

NEWS ANALYSIS

Balasubramanyam C.P.

The story so far: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) introduced a special swap facility in June to encourage non-resident Indians to put money into FCNR(B) deposits, as the rupee faced pressure from high oil prices and India sought to strengthen its foreign-exchange reserves.

The response was much stronger than the RBI's initial target, as Indian banks mobilised more than $127 billion through these deposits, against an initial target of about $50 billion.

The RBI subsequently closed the window for fresh FCNR(B) deposits on August 31, 2026.

The scheme has given banks a relatively cheap source of foreign-currency funding and added substantially to India's foreign-exchange reserves. The deposits typically have three-to-five-year maturities, raising the question of who bears the currency risk when the principal and interest have to be paid.

Bet on dollars: The scheme has given banks relatively cheap forex funding source. GETTYIMAGES/ISTOCK

Risks to RBI

The RBI's special swap facility shields banks from foreign-exchange risk on the principal amount of the FCNR(B) deposits. *Reuters* reported that the interest payments, however, have to be managed by the banks independently.

Under the arrangement, the RBI bears the cost of hedging the foreign-currency exposure, according to a Bank of America (BofA) Securities Research report.

It estimated that this hedging cost could be up to 3%, while SBI Research used an average hedging cost of around 3% a year in its calculations. So, the RBI's cost comes from protecting the dollar value of the principal against movements in the rupee-dollar exchange rate.

> The RBI has taken on the exposure associated with the principal through its swap, while banks still face currency risk on the interest payments in the future

Handling cost

The RBI has received foreign currency through the deposits, adding to the country's reserves. SBI Research said the RBI had recouped $31.2 billion of its foreign-currency assets by August 7, 2026, equivalent to 55% of the amount mobilised at that point. It also said the RBI may use part of the amount to invest in U.S. securities because of higher yields.

BofA estimated that the RBI could earn around 4.5-5% on the foreign exchange reserves generated through the deposits.

It said this could potentially more than offset a hedging cost of up to 3%, assuming the foreign-currency holdings are hedged for five years.

SBI Research assumed FCNR(B) mobilisation of $65-70 billion and a 3% annual hedging cost, and calculated an annual notional cost of about $2.1 billion. If that cost remained at 3% for five years, the cumulative cost would be about $10.5 billion.

It argued that this cost is relatively small compared with India's foreign-exchange reserves. Against current reserves of around $700 billion, it calculated the five-year cost at 1.45% of the reserve stock.

Risks to banks

The central bank's swap facility does not cover the interest that banks have to pay depositors in dollars.

That means banks have to arrange the dollars needed for these interest payments and manage the foreign-exchange exposure themselves. *Reuters* reported that foreign banks are largely hedging this exposure, while most state-run banks and several private-sector Indian lenders have left it unhedged.

Unhedged exposure

The main reason cited by bankers for not hedging the exposure is the cost of hedging.

Reuters reported that hedging the foreign-exchange risk on interest payments for three-to-five-year deposits costs banks about 3% a year.

The interest on these deposits is paid when the deposits mature.

Some banks have therefore chosen not to pay that cost and instead plan to buy dollars when they actually need to make the interest payments.

One banker at a mid-sized State-run lender told *Reuters* that the bank expected to handle the payments through spot dollar purchases when required, rather than locking in protection in advance.

What if rupee weakens?

Consider a bank that has to pay $1 million in interest.

If the dollar costs ₹95, the payment would require ₹9.5 crore.

If the rupee weakens and the dollar rises to ₹100 at the point of maturity, the same $1 million payment would require ₹10 crore.

A bank that has hedged its exposure would have protection against such a currency movement.

A lender that has left the exposure unhedged would have to bear the higher rupee cost.

This could become a broader concern because much of the future interest-payment exposure has been left unhedged.

If the rupee weakens significantly, banks may need to buy dollars at the same time to meet their interest obligations. That could increase demand for dollars and add to pressure on the rupee. That means the FCNR(B) scheme has not eliminated currency exposure altogether.

The central bank has taken on the exposure associated with the principal through its swap, while banks continue to face currency risk on the interest payments in the future.

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

The global war on terror, an empowered Iran

Shashank Ranjan

Indian Army veteran (Colonel), currently teaching at the O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonepat, Haryana

As West Asia remains mired in conflict, it is worth examining how the United States-led global war on terror inadvertently emboldened Iran, elevating it to a regional power that is now capable of confronting the U.S. in the ongoing conflict.

Prior to 2001, Iran faced strategic containment from two hostile regimes: the Taliban in Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein's Iraq. U.S. invasions toppled both governments, eliminating Iran's most dangerous neighbours. The new governments in both countries proved friendlier to Tehran. In Iraq, the fall of the Sunni regime led to a Shia-led government with deep ties to Iran, transforming an enemy into a strategic partner. According to analysts, Iran had surpassed the U.S. as the most influential power in Iraq, significantly improving its strategic position.

Sectarianism was the fuel

The invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq created a chaotic environment in the region that fuelled sectarian conflicts centred on the Shia-Sunni divide. These developments provided fertile ground for the emergence of terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda in Iraq, which later evolved into the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Regional powers took sides – Iran bolstered Shia militias in Iraq, while Saudi Arabia supported Sunni extremists. This sub-conventional proxy warfare entrenched Iran as a regional power broker, contrary to the overarching U.S. objective of isolating Iran.

ISIS, being ideologically anti-Shia, posed an unprecedented threat to Iran. This pushed Iran to become a central actor in the anti-ISIS coalition, deploying military advisers and mobilising allies across the region.

Iran consolidated its influence by becoming a key counter-terrorism player, exploiting power vacuums and using the crisis to strengthen its diplomatic position. Though the emergence of a shared enemy opened a narrow window for dialogue with the U.S., no synchronisation materialised, as President George W. Bush had famously labelled Iran part of the 'Axis of Evil' in his 2002 State of the Union address, alongside Iraq and North Korea, citing their pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and support for terrorism.

The role of the 'Axis of Resistance'

However, from Iran's point of view, what mattered was the "Axis of Resistance" (the Axis) – a political, military, and social network linking Iran, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine. It was designed as a "ring of fire" around Israel, serving as a form of forward defence for Iran. In addition, Iran gained several buffer zones in Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen through key Axis members such as Hezbollah, Hamas, the Houthis, and Shia militias in Iraq. The Axis contributed to the emergence of the "Shia Crescent", an arc of Iranian influence extending through Iraq, Syria, and Lebanon.

Iran gained international legitimacy for its military activities in Iraq and Syria. Groups such as Hezbollah became battle-hardened and politically entrenched. The Houthis in Yemen graduated from a local insurgent movement into a political insurgent group. In terms of military capabilities, Iran's primary focus was on the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), which controls the country's strategic assets and specialises in sub-conventional warfare, including the control of proxies. By comparison, Iran's conventional military received far less attention.

The U.S. withdrawal from Iraq and the Arab Spring in 2011 created vacuums that Iran was uniquely positioned to fill. Iran invested significantly in the Axis to gain an asymmetric advantage over the U.S. and Israel, as matching them on conventional military metrics was a difficult proposition for Tehran.

The "Forever Wars" in West Asia drained American resources and attention, allowing Iran to expand its influence unimpeded while reinforcing its hardline posture. The rise of ISIS paradoxically benefited Iran, which became one of the first and most critical military supporters of the Iraqi government in its fight against the group. Iran deployed its elite Quds Force to coordinate Baghdad's defence, cementing its influence over Iraq's security apparatus. In Syria, defending the Assad regime protected Iran's only major state ally and helped consolidate its supply routes to Hezbollah in Lebanon.

The transformation of Iran

The global war on terror fundamentally transformed Iran from a contained state into a dominant regional power. By removing hostile regimes, creating power vacuums, and unintentionally strengthening Iran's alliance network, U.S. actions produced outcomes diametrically opposed to their stated objectives.

The global war on terror enabled Tehran to project power in Afghanistan, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen. As a result, Iran's role as a pivotal broker was cemented, with lasting consequences for West Asian geopolitics.

Having benefited from these developments, Iran increasingly invested in the Axis while rallying domestic support around nationalism rather than religion. Iran's current resilience against the U.S.-Israeli offensive in West Asia could be viewed as a manifestation of the strategic advantages flowing from the global war on terror.

America's post-9/11 wars created strategic openings that Iran exploited

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

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- G-7
- NATO
- SCO

Chinese President Xi to visit India for BRICS summit; boost to normalisation process

Ananth Krishnan
BEIJING

China announced on Thursday that President Xi Jinping will attend the BRICS Summit in New Delhi this weekend, on what will be his first visit to India in almost seven years.

Mr. Xi last visited in October 2019 for an informal summit with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Mamallapuram in Tamil Nadu. The two leaders are expected to meet for bilateral talks on the sidelines of the coming summit in New Delhi.

Mr. Xi will be accompanied by a large delegation, including Politburo member and Foreign Minister Wang Yi, and Commerce Minister Wang Wentao, who is likely to have talks on the sidelines with Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, his counterpart.

The talks between the two Ministers will give both sides the opportunity to take stock of a growing but challenging trade relationship and air their respective concerns, with India seeking an easing of export controls and China wanting further relaxation of investment restrictions.

Mr. Xi's visit in itself holds enormous significance for the relationship in the view of India and Chinese officials, and for the continued normalisation process. Especially on the Chinese side, a visit by Mr. Xi to India, after a seven-year gap, is seen as important signalling to the Chinese system on where relations are headed after a difficult period.

Border tensions starting in April 2020, culminating in a clash at Galwan Valley in June, brought a four-year freeze in relations. Following a meeting between Mr. Modi and Mr. Xi in October 2024 on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Kazan, both sides have begun a gradual and steady normalisation in relations.

Mr. Modi and Mr. Xi last met at the SCO Summit in Tianjin, China, in August last year, when they both "welcomed the positive momentum and steady progress in bilateral relations" and "reaffirmed that the two countries were development partners and not rivals, and that their differences should not turn into disputes."

In China, the visit by Mr. Xi is being seen as an effort by both sides to keep ties stable, rather than as an indicator of any significant realignment.

"I would describe it as strategic risk management rather than strategic realignment," Hu Shisheng, Director of the South Asia Institute at the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations in Beijing told *The Hindu* in a recent interview.

"Recent difficulties in India-U.S. relations may give New Delhi greater incentives to diversify its strategic options, while the relative stabilisation of China-U.S. ties reduces some of the external pressure on China-India relations. But the structural differences between China and India have not disappeared. What we are seeing is an attempt to build a more stable form of competitive coexistence - keeping the border peaceful, restoring practical cooperation, and expanding coordination through BRICS and the Global South without pretending that strategic competition no longer exists."

During talks in Beijing last month, both National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and Mr. Wang highlighted the positive impact that meetings between the leadership had on the relationship in setting the trajectory.

LEADERS CONVERGE
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BRICS — 12-13 Septemb-22'
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महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

India-Canada trade deal by the end of the year, says envoy

Suhasini Haidar
T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

The India-Canada trade deal will be ready by the end of the year, Canadian High Commissioner Christopher Cooter has told *The Hindu*, adding that the two countries are planning for their increased engagement this year to culminate in a visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the North American country in December.

Speaking at *The Hindu Mind* in New Delhi on Wednesday, Mr. Cooter said that the two countries had ample opportunities for bilateral investment which could scale up to $1 trillion.

He did, however, point out that India could ease some tax and regulatory hurdles to spur further investment, something on which Canada has been engaging with the Union Finance Ministry.

"Previously, we discussed for 12 years, and we got no trade agreement," Mr. Cooter said. "This time, we started in March 2026. We have probably done more in these six months than we did in those 12 years." "I am pretty confident the trade deal will be agreed to by the end of the year," he said. "Our hope is we get there by the time of a Modi visit to Canada, which would mean achieving this in about nine months [since March]," the Canadian High Commissioner said.

Big investments

Mr. Cooter acknowledged that while trade is currently small (about US$8 billion), the investment relationship between the two countries is a strong one, with a large space to grow.

"So, you actually provide good employment for 1,00,000 Canadians in Canada through Indian investment in Canada," Mr. Cooter said. "The other part of the story is that, while trade itself is rather small, the pension funds and other big institutional investors have about $100-110 billion Canadian dollars or $80 billion U.S. dollars in investment in India."

"...the difference with Canadian investment is that our investment

Christopher Cooter

through these institutional investors is also direct investment". "We estimate that no less than 75% of all our investment through those funds is in physical assets. And no other country has that," he added. "So, those create not just tens of thousands, those create hundreds of thousands of jobs."

Bigger potential

Looking ahead, Mr. Cooter noted that most of Canada's mining assets were abroad, but "virtually none" of them were in India. "If you were to deregulate, I am pretty certain our hundreds of Canadian mining companies would come in here, start exploring, start mining, helping with processing, technology, etc," he said. "That's an example where we might invest in your country."

"And you might invest in, let's say, a tungsten mine in Canada because tungsten is useful for your defence industry," Mr. Cooter added. "We've got the things that you actually need, like energy. We're the fourth largest in oil, fifth largest in LPG, and fifth largest in LNG. We have 20% of the world's potash and number 2 or 3 in titanium."

He emphasised that Canadian funds and companies were eager to invest more and there were some issues India could address to enable that. "There are some tax issues," Mr. Cooter said. "...That's a discussion we are having now with the Finance Ministry in particular. There are things that slow the investment a little bit. You could take some more steps to deregulate. That would actually make the environment for Canadian investment even better."

EDITORIAL
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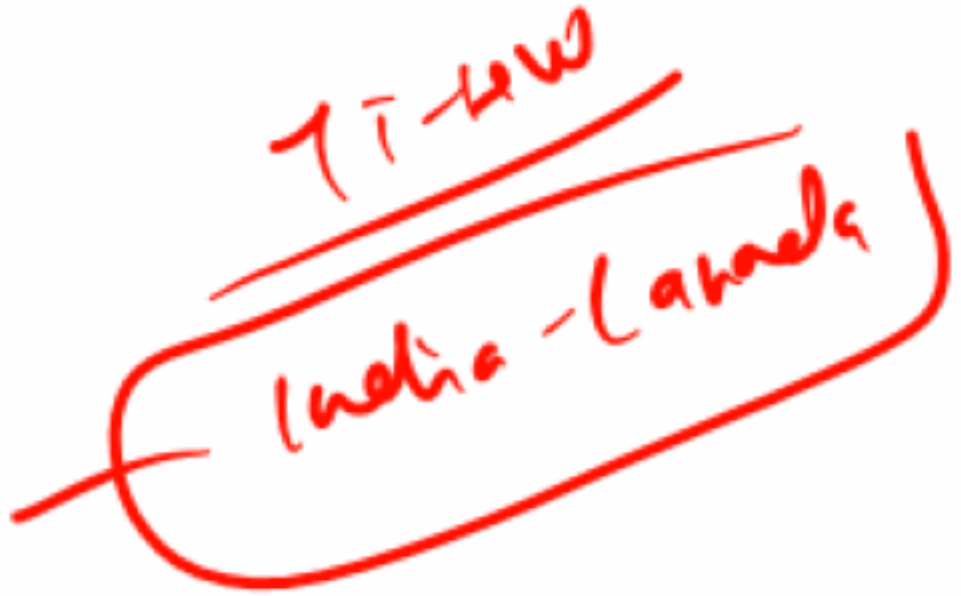

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

'Voters to get $5,000 each if Republicans win Nov. polls'

Agence France-Presse
DALLAS

U.S. President Donald Trump has promised $5,000 to every American adult if Republicans retain control of Congress after the midterm election in November, coupling the extraordinary claim with a plea for his supporters to "pretend" he was on the ballot. "If the Republicans win, you win with us and you get $5,000. It will be called the Trump dividend," he said.

Mr. Trump, however, did not disclose where the money would come from saying only that "our country is making so much money".

FULL REPORT ON
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महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

YouTube Homework

Houthis seize key city on Red Sea, advance towards Bab el-Mandeb

The Yemeni group seizes Zuqar Island on the Red Sea, 'after rocket attacks and a ground assault carried out using boats transporting fighters'; Saudi Arabia conducted '40 strikes in recent hours in Taiz, Hodeida, Al-Jawf, Marib', the group says

Agence France-Presse
SANAA

Yemen's Houthis seized control of the strategic Red Sea port city of Mokha on Thursday, a Yemeni military source said, as the group reported new strikes by Saudi forces.

The Iran-backed Houthis, who control large parts of northwest Yemen, launched a large-scale offensive last week against Yemeni government forces, who are backed by Saudi Arabia. They also launched attacks on Saudi territory that left dozens of people wounded, in a conflict that has reignited during the war on Iran that began with U.S.-Israeli strikes on Tehran in late February.

Loyal fighters: Houthi rebels march during a mobilisation campaign in Sanaa, Yemen, on Thursday. AP

Witnesses said they saw Houthi forces entering Mokha on Thursday chanting "death to America, death to Israel".

The Yemeni military source said they were advancing towards the strategic Bab el-Mandeb strait "after having taken control of Mokha". The waterway, which links Asia to Europe via the Red Sea and Suez Canal, has gained importance as a transit route since the start of the wider war, which saw Iran blockade the Strait of Hormuz.

The military source said the Houthis also seized Zuqar Island, in the southern Red Sea, "after rocket attacks and a ground assault carried out using boats transporting fighters".

Also on Thursday, the Houthis reported air strikes. "The Saudi enemy's air force conducted around 40 strikes in recent hours in the governorates of Taiz, Hodeida, Al-Jawf and Marib," Houthi news agency *Saba* said.

Yemen relapsed into war in July after years of relative calm punctured by sporadic violence and deepening poverty. Since last week, the fighting in Yemen has left more than 500 dead, mostly combatants. It has also forced nearly 20,000 people to flee their homes, the International Organization for Migration said on Tuesday.

On Wednesday, the Saudi-led coalition battling the Houthis said the anti-government fighters fired ballistic missiles and drones at several cities in southern Saudi Arabia.

The Houthis triggered the return to hostilities in July when they let an Iranian plane land in defiance of Saudi control of Yemeni airspace.

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

West Asia
ROMANIA
RUSSIA
BULGARIA
KAZAKHSTAN
UZBEKISTAN
GEORGIA
AZERBAIJAN
ARMENIA
GREECE
TÜRKIYE
(TURKEY)
TURKMENISTAN
CYPRUS
SYRIA
LEBANON
ISRAEL
JORDAN
IRAQ
IRAN
Axis of Evil
Axis of Resistance
KUWAIT
EGYPT
SAUDI ARABIA
QATAR
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
OMAN
SUDAN
ERITREA
YEMEN
DJIBOUTI
ETHIOPIA
SOMALIA

Saudi Arabia
Red Sea
Eritrea
Dahlak
Halib
Midi
Yemen
Hudaydah
Mount Emba Soira
Zuqar
Hanish
Al-Mokha
Perim island
Bab al-Mandab
Arabian Sea
Socotra
Ethiopia
Djibouti
Somalia

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

- **जुकर** द्वीप **(Zuqar Island)** और **मोखा पोर्ट (Mokha Port City)** दोनों ही भू-राजनीतिक (Geopolitical) और व्यापारिक दृष्टि से अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण **लाल सागर (Red Sea)** और **बाब-अल-मंदेब जलडमरूमध्य (Bab-el-Mandeb Strait)** के पास स्थित हैं।

1. जुक़र द्वीप (Zuqar Island)

- **भौगोलिक स्थिति:** यह लाल सागर में स्थित एक ज्वालामुखी द्वीप है, जो यमन और इरिट्रिया के बीच यमन के तट के पास स्थित है।
- **हनीश द्वीप समूह का हिस्सा:** यह रणनीतिक रूप से महत्वपूर्ण 'हनीश द्वीप समूह' (Hanish Islands) का सबसे बड़ा द्वीप है।
- **इतिहास और संप्रभुता विवाद:** 1995 में यमन और इरिट्रिया के बीच इन द्वीपों के स्वामित्व को लेकर एक संक्षिप्त सैन्य संघर्ष हुआ था, जिसे **'हनीश द्वीप विवाद'** कहा जाता है। 1998 में स्थायी मध्यस्थता न्यायालय (Permanent Court of Arbitration) ने अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानून के तहत इस द्वीप पर **यमन की संप्रभुता** को मान्यता दी।
- **सामरिक महत्व:** यह द्वीप लाल सागर में अंतर्राष्ट्रीय नौवहन मार्गों (Shipping Lanes) पर निगरानी रखने के लिए बेहद संवेदनशील और रणनीतिक स्थान पर स्थित है।

2. मोखा बंदरगाह शहर (Mokha Port City)

- **स्थिति:** मोखा यमन के दक्षिण-पश्चिम तट पर लाल सागर के किनारे स्थित एक ऐतिहासिक बंदरगाह शहर है।
- **कॉफ़ी का इतिहास (Mokha Coffee):** 15वीं से 17वीं शताब्दी के दौरान मोखा दुनिया में कॉफ़ी का सबसे बड़ा और मुख्य व्यापारिक केंद्र था। प्रसिद्ध **'मोचा कॉफ़ी' (Mocha Coffee)** का नाम इसी शहर के नाम पर पड़ा है, जहाँ से अरब महाद्वीप की प्रसिद्ध अरेबिका कॉफ़ी पूरी दुनिया में निर्यात की जाती थी।
- **आधुनिक महत्व:** मोखा बाब-अल-मंदेब जलमार्ग के ठीक उत्तर में स्थित होने के कारण एक प्रमुख तटीय रणनीतिक बिंदु है। वर्तमान में यमन संकट और लाल सागर में चल रहे समुद्री सुरक्षा तनाव के कारण यह स्थान रक्षा और व्यापारिक सुरक्षा की दृष्टि से चर्चा में रहता है।

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

Algeria cuts diplomatic relations with the UAE

Agence France-Presse
ALGIERS

Algeria said on Thursday it was cutting diplomatic ties with the United Arab Emirates following years of tension, with Algiers accusing Abu Dhabi of interfering in national and regional affairs. In an official statement, Algiers accused the Gulf country of "provocative and hostile acts", but it remained unclear what triggered the rupture.

Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune has often referred to the UAE as a "micro-state" or "statelet" seeking to destabilise several countries in the region, citing Libya, Mali and Sudan.

The Emirati Foreign Ministry later said it hoped the decision would be temporary.

महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य

Impact of trade restrictions on illegal West Bank settlements remains limited

As many as 12 countries, including the U.K., France, and Canada have issued a joint statement on introducing new restrictions on trade with illegal Israeli settlements in West Bank; while it reinforces their commitment to the two-state solution, it appears largely symbolic and barely consequential

NEWS ANALYSIS

Sambavi Parthasarathy

The U.K., France, and Canada, along with nine other countries, namely, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain and Sweden, issued a joint statement on Tuesday confirming their intention to introduce new restrictions on trade with illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank. While the U.K., France and Canada announced a trade ban, some have sanctions in process and others have already sanctioned their trade with illegal settlements.

While the joint statement reinforces the commitment of these countries to the two-state solution, it appears largely symbolic and barely consequential.

Rising settler violence

The statement comes in response to the rapidly deteriorating situation 'amid unprecedented levels of settler violence and settlement expansion' in the occupied West Bank and Israel's decision to publish tenders for construction of 1,234 Israeli homes as part of its E1 settlement project that aims to create a continuous settlement 'corridor' between occupied East Jerusalem and Ma'ale Adumim.

This construction on Palestinian land is illegal under international law and would isolate Palestinian communities between the northern and southern West Bank.

While the E1 settlement project is the latest trigger, Israel has been intensifying its activities in the West Bank since October 7, 2023, resulting in more than a thousand casualties and several thousand injuries.

More than 41,000 Palestinians have been displaced in the West Bank due to settler and Israeli violence as of UNRWA's monthly snapshot released last month. Settler violence has also been escalating. Data from UN OCHA show that more than 3,000 settler attacks resulted in casualties or property damage between January 2025 and July 2026.

Israel also scaled up the expansion of its footprint since October 7, 2023. In less than three years, nearly 5,000 structures, including houses and other infrastructure, have been demolished. That is an average of nearly 5 buildings being demolished in the West Bank each day.

Data from Peace Now, an Israeli activist group tracking settlements, show that settlers established at least 200 outposts (Israeli settlements established without government approval and are considered illegal even under Israeli law) and issued over 12,000 tenders for construction of housing units in the region since 2023.

Beyond borders: A demonstration against illegal Israeli settlements in the West Bank, outside the Houses of Parliament in central London on Wednesday. AFP

While the decision to restrict shipments from Israeli settlements emerged in this backdrop, it is unlikely to deter Israel's illegal activities in the West Bank.

Eight of the 12 countries that issued the joint statement already belong to the European Union which already has a trade policy with respect to goods from Israeli settlements. But that policy itself has several loopholes.

EU policy loopholes

As per existing EU policy, goods originating from Israeli settlements in territories occupied by Israel since 1967 are not entitled to benefit from preferential tariff treatment.

The EU has ensured this since 2004 via a 'Technical arrangement' between EU and Israel customs authorities by differentiating between products originating in Israel and settlements. Basically, shipments are required to carry proof of origin (names and postal code) to identify the real origin and if so, deny preferential treatment and trade preferences that are granted to Israel under the EU-Israel association agreement.

This existing policy has not deterred illegal settlements from flourishing in occupied territories. The population of settlers in the West Bank doubled between 2004 and 2025 and trade to the EU from these settlements had eventually found its way.

Palestinian rights legal advocacy group Global Echo, in its 'Importing Occupation' report released in 2026, found that illegal settlement products to the EU are sustained through three principal practices – hiding in plain sight (indicating actual location and postal code of production in occupied territory while designating that location as being in Israel), sham address method (use of proxy or invented address within Israel's recognised borders instead of disclosing true origin) and mingling method (co-mingling settlement produce with goods from within Israel). The organisation, in its analysis of over 30,000 export documents accompanying over 6,800 shipments of agricultural products from Israel, found that more than 17% of the 5,900 shipments destined for Europe – that is, one in six shipments overall and one in five shipments bound for the EU – originated from illegal settlements.

Lack of impact

These practices, which have already undermined effective application of the EU's trade policy, could still allow products from settlements in the European market despite the restrictions. Further, even if the move by these 12 countries effectively counter these existing loopholes, the intended impact on Israeli activities in the West Bank is not likely to pan out.

This is because these countries continue to harbour their trade activities with Israel, which account for at least $21 billion. This is over 40% of the value of Israel's trade in goods with the EU, its single largest trading partner.

Meanwhile, trade with settlements amounts only to a fraction of this value which is why it is unlikely to amount to any sort of economic impact/threat.

Overview

- Blue Economy
- RUPP
- Vande Mataram
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- Manasvi Agrawal
- Ladakh – SUI Generis Model
- International space Summit
- USA-Canada & India
- Axis of Resistance
- FCNR (B) Deposite
- BRICS
- India-Canada FTA
- USA Elections
- Houthies
- Algeria & UAE
- UK & Israel

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