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DAILY NEWS ANALYSIS

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FOREWORD

We, at Team Vedhik is happy to introduce a new initiative - "Daily Current Affairs_The Hindu" compilations to help you with UPSC Civil Services Examination preparation. We believe this initiative - "Daily Current Affairs_The Hindu" would help students, especially beginners save time and streamline their preparations with regard to Current Affairs. A content page and an Appendix has been added segregating and mapping the content to the syllabus.

It is an appreciable efforts by Vedhik IAS Academy helping aspirants of UPSC Civil Services Examinations. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Babu Sebastian, former VC - MG University in extending all support to this endeavour. Finally I also extend my thanks to thank Ms. Shilpa Sasidharan and Mr. Shahul Hameed for their assistance in the preparing the compilations.

We welcome your valuable comments so that further improvement may be made in the forthcoming material. We look forward to feedback, comments and suggestions on how to improve and add value for students. Every care has been taken to avoid typing errors and if any reader comes across any such error, the authors shall feel obliged if they are informed at their Email ID.

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Talking and listening

India and China will find it difficult to simply pick up the threads of their conversation

Brief as it was, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi's visit to Delhi on Friday appears to have left behind more questions than answers on its purpose. The visit was a first by a senior Chinese official since the military standoff along the LAC began in April 2020. Since then, despite 15 rounds of border commander talks and eight rounds of meetings of the special Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC), friction areas remain – including Patrol Point (PP) 15, Demchok and Depsang – where troops have been amassed on both sides. However, it appeared that during his meetings, separately with NSA Ajit Doval, followed by External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Mr. Wang proposed no new mechanism or formulation to break the logjam in those talks, as had been the case earlier. Instead, the Chinese side only repeated that India must put the differences on the border issue “in the proper place in bilateral relations”, and revive bilateral talks on all issues. The suggestion was part of a three-step formula, according to a Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs statement that included taking a long-term, ‘civilisational’ view of India-China ties, seeing each others’ development as a “win-win” and cooperating at the multilateral sphere. The last point was a reference to China’s turn to host the BRICS summit later this year, which Mr. Wang hoped Prime Minister Modi would attend, and India’s turn to host the SCO and G-20 summits next year, where Chinese President Xi Jinping would be among the invitees.

However, neither Mr. Wang nor his hosts in the Government answered why, if his message did not differ from the past, he was received in Delhi at all. That he was merely in the region – visiting Pakistan for an OIC conference; Afghanistan to meet with the Taliban ahead of another conference in Beijing, and Nepal to further bilateral cooperation and infrastructure projects – and decided to “drop in” does not seem to suffice as a reason, when bilateral ties remain at a standstill. Nor does it explain why the Modi government, which has consistently said it would only hold bilateral talks about resolving the border standoff, departed from this precept to discuss bilateral and international issues. Neither side announced Mr. Wang’s arrival until the first meetings on Friday, indicating that there is something more behind the scenes. It is also possible that his outreach stems from a desire to compare notes on Ukraine, where India and China find themselves at odds with the western sanctions regime that threatens to isolate Russia and split global transactions into a “dollar vs non-dollar” system, while also finding themselves not entirely comfortable with Mr. Putin’s actions. Regardless of any common understanding on other issues, however, it is clear that New Delhi and Beijing cannot simply pick up the threads of their conversation until there is a full understanding of events since April 2020, and demobilisation by the PLA, followed by the disengagement of troops, is completed.

'India, UAE trade pact likely from May 1'

Exporters of almost 6,090 goods will get duty-free access to the UAE market

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
DUBAI**

The free trade agreement between India and the UAE is likely to come into effect from May 1 this year, under which domestic exporters of as many as 6,090 goods from sectors such as textiles, agriculture, dry fruits, gem and jewellery would get duty-free access to the UAE market, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Sunday.

The Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) was signed by India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in February which aims to boost bilateral

trade to \$100 billion in the next five years from current \$60 billion. The two countries have agreed to set up a technical council on Investment, Trade Promotion and Facilitation, as part of the agreement signed.

The Minister said the detailed text of the pact has been released in public domain and now "we are trying to complete all our paperwork expeditiously. We hope it can be operationalised by May 1, 2022".

Overall, the UAE is offering duty elimination on over 97% of its products which account for 99% of Indian exports here in value terms.

Immediate duty-free access covers all labour-intensive sectors such as gems and jewellery, textiles and apparel, agricultural and fish products, leather, footwear, and sport goods, pharmaceuticals and medical devices, and many engineering products.

Automatic recognition

"Currently, we are exporting about \$26 billion worth of goods to the UAE, almost 90% of them will get total tariff (or customs duty) elimination on Day 1 itself. Going forward, the rest of the 9.5% (about 1,270 goods) will also get zero duty," Mr. Goyal said

at the Dubai Expo here. He said the UAE also opened doors for the rest of the Middle East, some parts of Africa and Europe.

Key areas of India's interest are computer related services, audio visual, education, health, tourism, travel, professionals services like nursing, engineering, and accountancy.

"We are also working for mutual recognition agreements of professionals and skilled services, so that if they approve our nursing colleges then the nursing degree from that college will get automatic recognition here and vice versa," he said.

Myanmar FM to attend BIMSTEC meet

It will be the first time Modi will be at a forum that includes the junta-run State Administrative Council

SUHASINI HAIDAR
MEERA SRINIVASAN
NEW DELHI/COLOMBO

It is better to engage Myanmar rather than “isolate” the country, said Sri Lanka’s Foreign Secretary Admiral Jayanath Colombage (retired), explaining Colombo’s decision to invite Myanmar military administration’s Foreign Minister to the fifth Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) summit this week.

Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa will host Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other leaders at the summit being held in “hybrid mode” from March 28 to 30. Mr. Rajapaksa will chair the session on March 30, with leaders of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, and Thailand joining him virtually. Myanmar’s Foreign Minister will speak at the session, officials in Colombo said.

This is the first time that Mr. Modi – joining the event virtually – will be at a forum that includes the military



Chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing attending a ceremony to mark Myanmar’s 77th Armed Forces Day. ■ AFP

junta-run ‘State Administrative Council’ (SAC). External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar will participate in the BIMSTEC ministerial meeting in person.

Last year, Colombo invited Myanmar’s junta-appointed Foreign Minister – just over a month after the military’s power grab – for the virtual meeting of the regional body, sparking criticism from pro-democracy activists in Myanmar.

group virtually, an apparent departure from the line taken by the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) that decided in February not to invite the Foreign Minister to its retreat. It asked Myanmar to send only a “non-political” representative.

On the inclusion of the junta administration on the guest list, Mr. Colombage said, “Inviting Myanmar to join the summit virtually does not amount to Sri Lanka recognising what is happening in Myanmar. At the same time, rather than isolating a country, it is better to have them in your fold, and talk to them, discuss, engage.” However, admitting that it was “difficult to interact with a military leadership running the country,” the former naval chief-turned-bureaucrat said it was through discussion and engagement that “practical and pragmatic solutions” can be found.

He said it was time for BIMSTEC to show determination and make things hap-

pen, for it represented “a very important region” linking the “Western Pacific and Indian Ocean, and between the Pacific and SAARC.”

One of the main objectives of this week’s summit would be to launch the ‘BIMSTEC charter’, and hand over the leadership of the forum to Thailand, the next chair, he added.

Mr. Jaishankar will participate in the Foreign Ministers’ meet on March 29, which will include the Myanmar Foreign Minister. In December last year, Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla visited Myanmar and met with the coup leader SAC chief General Min Aung Hlaing, who overthrew the National Unity Government (NUG) and imprisoned all leaders, including Aung San Suu Kyi. India’s bilateral engagement with the Myanmar military rulers has been at odds with the stance of Western countries. Mr. Jaishankar had said at a Quad ministerial meeting in Melbourne that India will not recognise “unilateral sanctions”.

Russian Foreign Minister to visit Delhi this week

Focus on oil purchase, payment, defence supply hurdles

SUHASINI HAIDAR
DINAKAR PERI
NEW DELHI

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov will visit Delhi this week for official meetings, as the war in Ukraine completes one month, sources confirmed on Sunday. The visit, the first by a senior Russian official since President Vladimir Putin declared war on the neighbouring country, comes amid a flurry of trips by several leaders from the Western-backed sanctions regime, seeking a shift in India's position, which has not criticised Moscow for the invasion.

Mr. Lavrov's visit is expected to focus on strategic issues resulting from the war, as well as specific discussions on purchasing Russian oil, payment mechanisms, given the sanctions against Russian banks and exclusion from the SWIFT, and possible disruptions in the supply of military hardware.

The Modi government indicated in Parliament last week that it is considering offers of discounted Russian



Sergei Lavrov

oil and a special inter-ministerial group headed by the Finance Ministry is looking into the payments issues for Indian importers and exporters that arise from the war and Western sanctions.

Sources told *The Hindu* that there would be technical talks between the Russian Central Bank or Bank of Russia and the Reserve Bank of India this week, and a team would travel to India ahead of Mr. Lavrov's visit, to further discuss setting up payment structures.

Seeking assurance

India would also be looking for clarity and assurances

from Russia on timely delivery of spares and components for systems in use and of the deals under way, including S-400 missile systems and AK-203 assault rifles, as well as streamlining the rupee-rouble payment system for any future purchases.

Ahead of Mr. Lavrov's visit, newly appointed Russian Ambassador Denis Alipov called on three of the senior-most officials in the Ministry of External Affairs last week – Secretary (West) Sanjay Verma, Secretary (East) Saurabh Kumar, and Secretary (Economic Relations) Dammu Ravi. In tweets, Mr. Alipov said he held exchanges on Russia-India cooperation at the United Nations, G-20, and other multilateral fora.

Mr. Lavrov's visit will be seen as an outreach to India as the U.S. and European allies increase pressure to "isolate" Russia, and increase defence exports to Ukraine and neighbouring countries, and call on other countries to support their efforts.

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Russian Foreign Minister to visit Delhi this week

U.S. President Joe Biden said last week that he was discussing the possibility of ousting Russia from the G-20 grouping, with the next summit to be held in Bali, Indonesia in November this year. When asked, officials said India, which would host the G20 summit in 2023, was unlikely to support such a move.

U.K. Foreign Secretary Liz Truss and Mexican Foreign Minister Ebrard will be in Delhi mid-week as well, while Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz will arrive ahead of Israel Prime Minister Naftali Bennett's visit next Sunday. In addition, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh are expected to travel to the U.S. to meet their counterparts Antony Blinken and Gen. Lloyd Austin later this month, where possible U.S. sanctions on the S-400 purchase could come up.

Mr. Lavrov's visit will follow days after Chinese Fo-

reign Minister Wang Yi travelled to Delhi, and discussed the Ukraine issue, among others with National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and Mr. Jaishankar, where Mr. Jaishankar said the "common element" in thinking on the crisis was the need for an immediate ceasefire and return to dialogue and diplomacy. Mr. Lavrov is likely to travel to Beijing as well, for bilateral talks and a conference on Afghanistan.

India has consistently abstained from all resolutions at the United Nations criticising Russia thus far, and called for talks. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also spoken to Mr. Putin and Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky a number of times on the telephone between February 24 and March 7 while Indian students were being transported back from Ukraine, and diplomats have suggested he could help mediate a resolution.

EXPLAINER

The move to ease voting for overseas citizens

How can NRIs register their mandate without being physically present at their respective constituencies? What is ETPBS?

SRINIVASAN RAMANI

The story so far: On March 25, Union Minister for Law and Justice Kiren Rijiju in response to a question in the Lok Sabha stated that the government was exploring the possibility of allowing online voting for non-resident Indians (NRI). The minister's statement on easing voting for NRIs comes in the wake of a proposal made by the Election Commission of India (ECI), that wrote to the Law Ministry in November 2020, to extend the facility of postal ballots to eligible NRIs for the various State Assembly elections to be held in 2021. The ECI then, had proposed amending the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, in order to allow this facility. The postal ballots were to be sent to NRIs electronically after which they will send the ballots back, after choosing their candidate, via post.

How can overseas voters currently vote in Indian elections?

Prior to 2010, an Indian citizen who is an eligible voter and was residing abroad for more than six months, would not have been able to vote in elections. This was because the NRI's name was deleted from electoral rolls if he or she stayed outside the country for more than six months at a stretch.

After the passing of the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, 2010, eligible NRIs who had stayed abroad beyond six months have been able to vote, but only in person at the polling station where they have been enrolled as an overseas elector.

Just as any resident Indian citizen above the age of 18 years is eligible to

vote in the constituency where she/he is a resident, overseas Indian citizens are also eligible to do so. In the case of overseas voters, their address mentioned in the passport is taken as the place of ordinary residence and chosen as the constituency for the overseas voter to enrol in.

How has the existing facility worked so far?

From merely 11,846 overseas voters who registered in 2014, the number went up to close to a lakh in 2019. But the bulk of these voters (nearly 90%) belonged to just one State – Kerala. Of the 25,606 such voters who actually turned up, 25,534 were from Kerala (mostly from Kozhikode and Malappuram districts).

Clearly, a very low proportion of eligible overseas residents actually registered or turned up to vote. The Representation of the People Act, envisaged voters as only the "ordinary residents" in a constituency who will choose representatives to represent their local interests while mediating on larger issues in the legislature.

Some democracies that already allow absentee voting stipulate that overseas electors are eligible to vote provided they are not abroad for a specified period of time and/or if they mention an "intent to return".

Section 20-1A, Part III of the Representation of the People Act addresses this to some extent by qualifying "a person absenting himself temporarily from his place of ordinary residence shall not by reason thereof cease to be ordinarily resident therein" and in essence provides for NRIs who are temporarily staying abroad to be eligible



to vote in their local constituencies.

Yet, the proviso of having to visit the polling booth in person has discouraged eligible voters from exercising their mandate.

In the winter session of Parliament in 2017, the government proposed to remove the restriction imposed by Section 20A of the Representation of the People Act, which required them to be physically present to vote in their constituencies.

The Bill provided for overseas voters to be able to appoint a proxy to cast their votes on their behalf, subject to conditions laid down in the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961.

The Bill was later passed in 2018, but lapsed with the dissolution of the 16th Lok Sabha. The ECI then approached the government to permit NRIs to vote via postal ballots similar to a system that is already used by service voters, (a member of the armed Forces of the Union; or a member of a force to which provisions of the Army Act, 1950 (46 of 1950) which is the Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System or ETPBS.

What is ETPBS and how does it function?

The Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 was amended in 2016 to allow service voters to use the ETPBS. Under this system, postal ballots are sent electronically to registered service voters. The service voter can then download the ETPBS (along with a declaration form and covers), register their mandate on the ballot and send it to the returning officer of the constituency via ordinary mail. The post will include an attested declaration form (after being signed by the voter in the presence of an appointed senior officer who will attest it). The postal ballot must reach the returning officer by 8 a.m. on the day of the counting of results.

The ECI proposed to extend this facility to overseas voters as well. For this to commence, the Law Ministry has to amend the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961. In the case of NRI voters, those seeking to vote through ETPBS will have to inform the returning officer at least five days after notification of the election. The returning officer will then send the ballot electronically via the ETPBS. The NRI voter can then register her/his mandate on the ballot printout and send it back with an attested declaration in a process similar to the service voter. Except in this case, the senior officer would be appointed by the Indian diplomatic or consular representative in the resident country of the NRI. The ECI has not specified whether the voter should send in the ballot through ordinary post to the returning officer or drop it off at the Indian consular office/embassy, which will then send the envelopes constituency-wise to the returning officers.

Will this facility be available to all overseas voters across countries?

There were news reports that the ECI had indicated to the Ministry of External Affairs that it would want postal voting introduced on a pilot basis in non-Gulf countries. But ECI officials told *The Hindu* that the ECI had asked the Law Ministry to explore the possibility of extending postal ballots to overseas electors and not restrict it to any particular country.

In March 2021, the Ministry of External Affairs informed ECI that the implementation could require to overcome "huge logistical challenges" and needs "a realistic assessment of requirements".

Are postal ballots a viable means of voting?

The ETPBS method allowed for greater turnout among service voters in the 2019 Lok Sabha election. With increasing mobility of citizens across countries for reasons related to work, the postal ballot method has been recognised by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (an intergovernmental organisation that works to support democratic processes and institutions) as a means to allow overseas voters to exercise their right, subject to certain conditions normally related to the time spent abroad or the work carried out abroad.

A postal ballot mechanism that allows for proper authentication of the ballot at designated consular/embassy offices and an effective postal system should ease this process for NRIs, but rules must be clearly framed for eligibility on the basis of time spent away from the country.

THE GIST

■ After the passing of the Representation of the People (Amendment) Act, 2010, NRIs who had stayed abroad beyond six months have been able to vote, but only in person at the polling station where they have been enrolled as an overseas elector.

■ However, only a very low proportion of overseas residents actually registered or turned up to vote. The proviso of having to visit the polling booth in person has discouraged eligible voters from exercising their mandate.

■ The Conduct of Election Rules, 1961 was amended in 2016 to allow service voters to use the Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS). Under this system, postal ballots are sent electronically to registered service voters. The service voter can then register their mandate on the ballot and send it back via ordinary mail. The ECI proposed to extend this facility to overseas voters as well.

States can identify minorities: govt.

No truth in petitioner claim that Centre has unbridled power, it tells SC

LEGAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The governments in nine places where followers of Hinduism, Baha'ism and Judaism are a 'minority', can consider laying down guidelines to identify them as minority communities at the State level, the Centre has told the Supreme Court.

"Matters like declaring that followers of Judaism, Baha'ism and Hinduism who are minorities in Ladakh, Mizoram, Lakshadweep, Kashmir, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Punjab and Manipur can establish and administer educational institutions of their choice in the State and laying down guidelines for identification of minority at State level may be considered by the State government concerned," the Ministry of Minority Affairs told the Supreme Court.

The Centre was responding to a petition filed by ad-



vocate Ashwini Upadhyay that the followers of Judaism, Baha'ism and Hinduism – who are the real minorities in Ladakh, Mizoram, Lakshadweep, Kashmir, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Punjab and Manipur – cannot establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

The Centre said the allegation was "not correct".

The government's affidavit explained that Parliament and State legislatures have concurrent powers to enact law to provide for the protection of minorities and their

interests.

"Religious and linguistic minorities are spread all over the country and are not related or restricted to any single State or Union Territory. A religious group that is in majority in one State may be in minority in another State," the Centre submitted.

The Centre gave the example of how Maharashtra notified 'Jews' as a minority community within the State. Again, Karnataka notified Urdu, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Marathi, Tulu, Lambadi, Hindi, Konkani and Gujarati as minority languages within the State.

The government also defended the constitutionality of Section 2(f) of the National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions Act and Section 2(c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act of 1992.

Mr. Upadhyay had argued that the Centre has reserved for itself unbridled power to

declare a community as a minority.

The Centre responded that Parliament was empowered under Article 246 of the Constitution read with Entry 20, "economic and social planning", of the Concurrent List to enact laws to promote and protect the interests of minorities.

The government said both Acts came into existence out of Parliament's intentions to safeguard minority interests.

Parliament has the legislative competence and the Central government has the executive competence to notify a community as a minority under Section 2(c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act of 1992. "The Central government notified six communities, namely Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Parsis and Jains, as minorities under Section 2(c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act of 1992," the affidavit said.

India's 'space economy' valued at ₹36,794 crore

The sector has evolved considerably and now accounts for about 0.23% of the GDP, says a study by two premier institutions

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

A collaboration between two premier research and educational institutions in Thiruvananthapuram has shed light on India's "space economy", the contours of which have remained largely vague even as the country's space programme grew by leaps and bounds.

In a first-of-its kind attempt at measuring the size of India's space economy, researchers from the Centre for Development Studies (CDS) and the Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology (IIST) arrived at a figure of ₹36,794 crore (approximately \$5 billion) for the financial year 2020-21. The estimated size, as a percentage of the GDP, has slipped from 0.26% in 2011-12 to 0.19% in 2020-21, they found.

The findings, outlined in a

paper, "The space economy of India: its size and structure", by CDS Director Sunil Mani; V.K. Dadhwal, till recently IIST Director; and Shaijumon C.S., Associate Professor of Economics, IIST, were the subject of a recent webinar.

By employing internationally accepted frameworks, the authors have examined the annual budget for the space programme and its constituents; space manufacturing, operations and application. According to the paper, space applications accounted for the major chunk of this evolving economy, constituting 73.57% (₹27,061 crore) of it in 2020-21, followed by space operations (₹8,218.82 crore or 22.31%) and manufacturing (₹1,515.59 crore or 4.12%).

The budget outlay for space has considerable influence on the dynamics of



Limitless possibilities: India's communication satellite GSAT30 being launched. • FILE PHOTO

the space economy, according to the study. "India's space economy has evolved considerably and now accounts, on an average, for about 0.23% of the GDP (over 2011-12 to 2020-21). We have also noticed a decline in

the budget for space-related activities, leading to a reduction in the size of the economy in the last two years," Professor Mani said. The budget outlay in 2020-21 was ₹9,500 crore, shrinking from ₹13,033.2 crore in the pre-

vious fiscal. The estimated size of the space economy shrunk from ₹43,397 crore in 2018-19 to ₹39,802 crore in 2019-20 and ₹36,794 crore in 2020-21.

The study also found that the space budget as a percentage of the GDP slipped from 0.09% in 2000-01 to 0.05% in 2011-12, and has remained more or less at that level since then. In relation to GDP, India's spending is more than that of China, Germany, Italy and Japan, but less than of the U.S. and Russia.

First attempt

While it has limitations, the study nevertheless is a first-time attempt at scientifically measuring the size of the space economy, Dr. Shaijumon said. Professor Mani cited the inability to establish the size of the space-based remote sensing industry as a

drawback. "The next step for us would be to look at the impact of space economy on the Indian economy itself. The impact is both direct and indirect," he said.

For the present study, the authors have relied on Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Parliament documents, the Comptroller and Auditor-General's (CAG) reports, data on intellectual property rights and other government data, in addition to Scopus-indexed space publications.

The CDS-IIST research project has coincided with the new Central government policies opening up the sector to private players. These policies, according to the authors, are very likely to enlarge the size of the sector through enhanced private investment and improved integration with the global private space industry.

Modi pitches for 'local for global'

Prime Minister praises India for achieving the export target of \$400 billion

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN
NEW DELHI

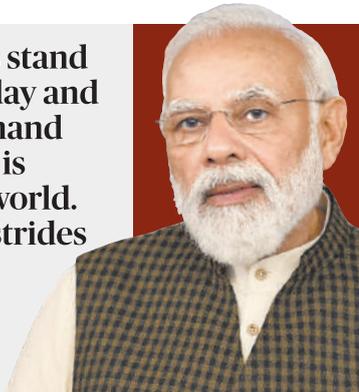
After his 'vocal for local' pitch, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his 87th edition of the *Mann ki Baat* radio broadcast on Sunday, made a call for 'local for global' while lauding the quantum jump in exports of Indian products.

Praising India for achieving the export target of \$400 billion, Mr. Modi said that at first instance, it might come across as a matter related to the economy, but more than that, it was related to the capability of India, the potential of India.

"Our export figures stand at 400 billion dollars today and this means that the demand for items made in India is increasing all over the world. The supply chain of India is getting stronger by

 **Our export figures stand at \$400 billion today and this means that the demand for items made in India is increasing all over the world. The nation takes great strides when resolutions are bigger than dreams**

NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister



the day. The nation takes great strides when resolutions are bigger than dreams," he said.

Today new products from all corners of the country were reaching foreign shores, let them be leather goods from Hailakandi in Assam or handloom products from Osmanabad, or fruits and vegetables from Bijapur, he said.

He attributed the success of "Make in India" drive to

farmers, artisans, weavers, engineers, small entrepreneurs and MSME sector, among others, and pitched for making the local 'global' and augment the prestige of Indian products further.

The Prime Minister also spoke about the need for yoga and cleanliness and urged children to take up water conservation issues on a war footing. He urged the entrepreneurs in Ayush-related start-ups to propagate their

products in languages for audiences in non-English speaking foreign countries.

Mr. Modi said that during the last one year through the government's GeM portal, the government had purchased items worth more than ₹1 lakh-crore.

Close to 1.25 lakh small entrepreneurs, small shopkeepers from every corner of the country had sold their goods directly to the government, the PM said.

"There was a time when only big companies could sell goods to the government. Now even the smallest of shopkeepers can sell one's goods to the government on the GeM Portal – this is the New India, in which all of us together will fulfill the dream of an Aatmanirbhar Bharat, a self-reliant India," he said.

General Studies Paper I	
A	History of Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of art forms, literature and architecture from ancient to modern times;
B	Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present-significant events, personalities, issues;
C	Freedom struggle-its various stages and important contributors / contributions from different parts of the country;
D	Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country;
E	History of the world will include events from 18 th century such as industrial revolution, world wars, re-drawing of national boundaries, colonization, decolonization,
F	Political philosophies like communism, capitalism, socialism etc.-their forms and effect on the society
G	Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India;
H	Effects of globalization on Indian society;
I	Role of women and women's organization;
J	Social empowerment, communalism, regionalism & secularism
K	Salient features of world's physical geography;
L	Geographical features and their location- changes in critical geographical features (including water bodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes;
M	Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, cyclone etc.
N	Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian subcontinent);
O	Factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India);
P	Population and associated issues;
Q	Urbanization, their problems and their remedies
General Studies Paper II	
A	India and its neighbourhood- relations;
B	Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate;
C	Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests;
D	Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.
E	Indian Constitution, historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure;
F	Comparison of the Indian Constitutional scheme with other countries;
G	Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein; Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
H	Parliament and State Legislatures - structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these;
I	Structure, organization and functioning of the executive and the judiciary, Ministries and Departments;

J	Separation of powers between various organs dispute redressal mechanisms and institutions;
K	Appointment to various Constitutional posts, powers, functions and responsibilities of various Constitutional bodies;
L	Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies;
M	Mechanisms, laws, institutions and bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections;
N	Salient features of the Representation of People's Act;
O	Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance- applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential;
P	Citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures;
Q	Issues relating to poverty and hunger,
R	Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States, Performance of these schemes;
S	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to education and human resources;
T	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to health
General Studies Paper III	
A	Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment;
B	Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth;
C	Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
D	Infrastructure Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc. Government budgeting;
E	Land reforms in India
F	Major crops, cropping patterns in various parts of the country, different types of irrigation and irrigation systems;
G	Storage, transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints;
H	e-technology in the aid of farmers; Technology Missions; Economics of Animal-Rearing.
I	Issues of buffer stocks and food security, Public Distribution System- objectives, functioning, limitations, revamping;
J	Food processing and related industries in India – scope and significance, location, upstream and downstream requirements, supply chain management;
K	Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies and minimum support prices
L	Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology;
M	Indigenization of technology and developing new technology;
N	Developments and their applications and effects in everyday life;
O	Issues relating to intellectual property rights
P	Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment
Q	Disaster and disaster management
R	Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges, basics of cyber security;
S	Money-laundering and its prevention;

T	Various forces and their mandate;
U	Security challenges and their management in border areas;
V	Linkages of organized crime with terrorism;
W	Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security;
X	Linkages between development and spread of extremism.
General Studies Paper IV	
A	Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in human actions;
B	Dimensions of ethics;
C	Ethics in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators;
D	Role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.
E	Attitude: Content, structure, function; its influence and relation with thought and behaviour;
F	Moral and political attitudes;
G	Social influence and persuasion.
H	Aptitude and foundational values for Civil Service , integrity, impartiality and non-partisanship, objectivity, dedication to public service, empathy, tolerance and compassion towards the weaker sections.
I	Emotional intelligence-concepts, and their utilities and application in administration and governance.
J	Contributions of moral thinkers and philosophers from India and world.
K	Public/Civil service values and Ethics in Public administration: Status and problems;
L	Ethical concerns and dilemmas in government and private institutions;
M	Laws, rules, regulations and conscience as
N	sources of ethical guidance;
O	Accountability and ethical governance; strengthening of ethical and moral values in governance; ethical issues in international relations and funding;
P	Corporate governance.
Q	Probity in Governance: Concept of public service;
R	Philosophical basis of governance and probity;
S	Information sharing and transparency in government, Right to Information, Codes of Ethics, Codes of Conduct, Citizen's Charters, Work culture, Quality of service delivery, Utilization of public funds, challenges of corruption.
T	Case Studies on above issues.