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VEDHIK

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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Different narratives

India must build ties with all political factions of the Maldives while helping it meet its needs

The Maldives government's decision to ban the 'India Out' protests shows how the campaign, which started as an online protest by critics of the Ibrahim Solih administration, has grown into a polarising political issue in the Indian Ocean island nation with which India has deep ties. The campaign, which remained a fringe protest in the initial years, gained currency late last year after former President Abdulla Yameen took it over. Mr. Yameen, who served two years in jail after losing power in 2018, wanted a strong political narrative to make a comeback, particularly as the country heads to its presidential election in 2023. Critics termed the Solih administration "a puppet of New Delhi", accusing it of allowing an Indian military presence, thereby compromising the country's sovereignty – an allegation the government has repeatedly denied. Mr. Yameen has organised several political rallies, openly attacking the government's ties with India. When Mr. Yameen was in power, he was largely seen as a friend of China. His government's ultimatum to India to withdraw two of its helicopters from two atolls had triggered tensions. But relations between the two countries improved remarkably after Mr. Solih's Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) came to power in 2018.

President Solih adopted an 'India first' foreign policy. In the past four years, India has emerged as the Maldives's main security and economic partner, committing \$1.4 billion towards its 'socio-economic development needs'. In February 2021, it signed the Uthuru Thila Falhu (UTH) harbour development deal with Male to develop the National Defence Force Coast Guard Harbour. The Yameen camp stepped up its attack on the government after this deal. India has historically played an important role in the Maldives as a friendly big neighbour. But China's rise in the Indian Ocean region has raised the strategic profile of this small, import-dependent island-nation of 5,50,000 people, where both countries vied for influence. Now, while Mr. Yameen is trying to regain his lost support by shoring up Maldivian nationalism and anti-India sentiments, the MDP is trying to counter it with another nationalist narrative. It argues that ties with India, the closest big neighbour of the Maldives, is important for the country's security, including food security. While these two narratives would clash in the coming election, India, being the centre of the political wrangling, would find itself in a difficult situation. Victory is not guaranteed for the MDP, which faces anti-incumbency problems and differences between Mr. Solih and the powerful former President Mohamed Nasheed. If it loses, India risks losing the influence it has built over the last few years. The challenge before India is to build closer ties with all political factions of the Maldives while helping the country meet its economic and security requirements.

India extends duration of \$400 mn currency swap

Sri Lanka also draws on \$1 bn credit line

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
COLOMBO

India on Friday extended the duration of a \$400 million currency swap facility with Sri Lanka which it had concluded with the island nation in January.

This was the first extension of an international debt instrument to Sri Lanka after the government led by President Gotabaya Rajapaksa on April 12 temporarily suspended debt servicing.

"India's unstinted and multi-faceted support to Sri Lanka continued. As ongoing currency support, @RBI extended the duration of the \$400 million currency swap for @CBSL which was concluded in #January this year," India's High Commission in Colombo said on Twitter.

The debt default came as the island nation was grappling with economic crisis, forex shortages and a balance of payments crisis.

Sri Lanka had also drawn on Indian credit lines worth \$1 billion for essential imports and separate ones for the importation of fuel.

Meanwhile, PM Mahinda Rajapaksa expressed Sri Lanka's gratitude to Chinese premier Li Keqiang for Beijing's assurances of support.

"Had a very productive conversation with Chinese Premier Li Keqiang. I reiterated #SriLanka's gratitude to #China for the longstanding friendship and for assuring support to address some of the crucial needs affecting peoples' livelihoods and well-being in these difficult times," he said in a tweet.

India-U.K. defence, trade ties to get a booster shot

U.K. likely to offer series of technological collaborations

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE

NEW DELHI

In the backdrop of the rapid geopolitical turmoil, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his British counterpart Boris Johnson on Friday agreed on a new and expanded India-U.K. defence partnership and vowed to seal an ambitious free trade agreement by the end of the year.

After his wide-ranging talks with Mr. Modi on the second and final day of his India visit, Mr. Johnson said the U.K. is creating an Open General Export Licence (OGEL) for India to “reduce bureaucracy and slashing delivery times” for defence procurement.

The British Prime Minister said both sides agreed to work together to meet new threats across land, sea, air space and cyber domains and the U.K. will partner with India on new fighter jet technology as well as in the



Strengthening bonds: Narendra Modi and Boris Johnson at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Friday. ■ R. V. MOORTHY

maritime sphere to detect and respond to threats.

‘A beacon in stormy seas’
Ahead of a bilateral meeting at Hyderabad House, the British Prime Minister on Friday described the India-U.K. relationship as a “beacon in stormy seas.”

“Our collaboration on the issues that matter to both our countries, from climate change to energy security

and defence, is of vital importance as we look to the future. I look forward to discussing these issues with Prime Minister Modi in New Delhi today and working together to deliver a more secure and prosperous future for both our peoples,” said Mr. Johnson in his first statement after a ceremonial welcome at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

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India-U.K. defence, trade ties to get a booster shot

The U.K. will also issue an Open General Export Licence (OGEL) to support greater defence and security collaboration in the coming decade. The OGEL will reduce bureaucratic interference and shorten delivery time for India's defence procurement. This is the first British OGEL in the Indo-Pacific region.

"Today, we have agreed on a new and expanded defence and security partnership, and decades-long commitment to not only forge tighter bonds between us but to support your goal, Narendra, of Make in India (in defence)," Mr. Johnson said, describing Modi as his "*khas dost*" (special friend).

Referring to the Free Trade Agreement (FTA), Mr. Johnson said he wanted negotiators from both sides to close the deal before Deepavali in October.

Mr. Modi said "good progress" is being made in the negotiations and that both sides have decided to do their best to close the pact by the end of this year. "In the last few months, India has concluded Free Trade Agreements with UAE and

Australia. At the same pace, with the same commitment, we would like to move forward on the FTA with the U.K. as well," Mr. Modi said.

"We have also agreed to enhance cooperation in the defence sector...We welcome the U.K.'s support for 'self-reliant India' in manufacturing, technology, design and development," he said. On Ukraine, Mr. Modi stressed an immediate ceasefire and resolution of the problem through dialogue and diplomacy. "We also reiterated the importance of respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all countries," he said.

Talking about the Indo-Pacific, Mr. Modi emphasised on maintaining a free, open, inclusive and rules-based order in the region and noted that India welcomed the U.K.'s decision to join the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative. "We reiterated our support for a peaceful, stable and secure Afghanistan and for an inclusive and representative government. It is necessary that Afghan territory is not used to spread terrorism in other countries," he said.

Global sanctions on Russia may help spur Indian exports: EEPC

‘Maintaining current export trend unlikely to be easy’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD

Engineering exporters’ representative association EEPC India said it expects sanctions on Russia, imposed in the wake of its invasion of Ukraine, to help open up opportunities for Indian exporters.

Sanctions could bring opportunities for Indian engineering exporters to replace Russia in the global market, Chairman Mahesh Desai was quoted as saying in an EEPC statement. But, he also warned that the war posed significant risks to economies and trade globally.

Besides the war, a rise in COVID-19 cases in China was a major challenge for the

 **Engineering exports rose 46% to \$112 bn in fiscal year 2021-22**

smooth functioning of global supply chains. Other factors detrimental to maintaining the ‘good show’ of FY22 include inflation pressure in the U.S., real estate instability in China as well as rising steel prices in India. Some financial issues were also likely to act as a bottleneck to exports in the months ahead, he said.

India’s engineering exports rose more than 46% to \$112.10 billion in FY22, surpassing the \$107.34 billion target set by the Centre. As many as 32 out of the 34 en-

gineering product panels witnessed growth in the fiscal. The share of engineering in total merchandise exports was 26.7%, the EEPC said in the statement.

For the first time, monthly engineering exports crossed the \$11-billion mark in March, rising 19.7% to \$11.13 billion.

The top 25 export destinations that include the U.S., the UAE, China, Germany, Italy and Singapore accounted for almost 75% of India’s total engineering exports.

Exports to China, however, declined 44.5% in March to \$316 million. For the fiscal year, total exports to China were higher at \$5.45 billion (\$4.84 billion).

Outrage without borders

Assam police action against Mevani's remarks is a blatant misuse of the law

The arrest of Gujarat independent legislator, Jignesh Mevani, by the Assam police is an egregious instance of the misuse of law to target a vocal critic of the Union government. There are several aspects about his arrest that ought to cause shock and revulsion to those who believe in law and democracy. Mr. Mevani's tweets, subsequently withheld by Twitter, described Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a "Godse worshipper", but also contained an appeal to him to call for peace in some areas of Gujarat that witnessed communal violence. It is clear that apart from being harsh criticism of the PM, there is nothing in it that can be seen as affecting public tranquillity or causing divisions in society. Not only have the police invoked the entire gamut of offences related to inflammatory speech, breach of peace and outraging of religious feelings, but provisions related to conspiracy and hacking of computers have also been added for good measure. While some of the criminal provisions in the FIR are questionable, it is astounding that the police in distant Kokrajhar, Assam, chose to act on a complaint by a political functionary against a legislator in Gujarat and travel all the way to take him into custody and jail him in Assam. Except for the fact that the allegedly offending remark was made online and is accessible on the Internet, there is nothing to confer jurisdiction on the Assam police.

The use of Section 295A of the IPC, which only applies to acts that outrage the religious feelings of a section, is particularly questionable because there is nothing in Mr. Mevani's remarks that can be seen even remotely insulting towards any religious belief or practice. Further, it is quite notable that the police or ruling party functionaries in BJP-ruled Gujarat did not pursue the case there. It is almost as if his opinion contained a higher potential for breach of peace or disturbance to public tranquillity in Assam than in his home State. It is not clear on what basis the police in Kokrajhar accepted the complainant's claim that the tweet could destroy the social fabric "in this part of the country". There cannot be a better example of the misuse of the principle that anyone can set the criminal law in motion. There is something perverse about the manner in which the inter-State operation of criminal law allows any citizen to be held by the police from another State with such ease, even when the alleged offences attract short prison terms that do not warrant arrest. It is disconcerting that a judicial magistrate denied bail to Mr. Mevani and granted police custody in a matter that only involves interpretation of some words. Judicial officers ought to show greater independence by raising questions about territorial jurisdiction instead of accepting the prosecution claims in such cases without demur.

SC moots deeper scrutiny before award of death penalty

Trial judges to be assisted by ‘mitigation experts’

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday asked Attorney General K.K. Venugopal for assistance to institutionalise a mechanism by which information crucial to decide whether a person should be condemned to death or not can be gathered and placed on record before trial judges.

A Bench led by Justice U.U. Lalit said courts may be opting for the death penalty too soon. In some cases, trial courts sentence a person to death merely hours after

conviction. No effort is ever made to dig deeper into a convict’s childhood experiences, multi-generational history of physical and mental health issues, exposure to traumatic events and other familial, social and cultural factors crucial in order to undertake an individualised sentencing enquiry, the court stated.

On Friday, the Bench said this ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach while considering mitigating factors during sentencing should end. A more enlightened approach has to be evolved.

The court said a “mitigation expert”, a qualified professional with unhindered access to the convict’s past, ought to be at the centre of this change in outlook.

Mitigating investigators would be experts in fields as varied as social work, sociology, anthropology, criminology, psychology and other social sciences. They could interview the convicts, their families, friends and other associated with the prisoners and their past to draw a complete picture. The information could then be placed before a trial judge.

'Postal ballot for NRIs being contemplated'

CEC urges members of Indian community to register as overseas electors

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra, during a recent visit to South Africa and Mauritius, urged Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) to register as overseas electors and told them that a proposal on postal ballots for NRIs was being contemplated, the Election Commission of India said on Friday.

An ECI delegation led by Mr. Chandra visited the two countries from April 9 to 19 and interacted with groups of NRIs, apart from holding

meetings with election management bodies of the countries, the statement said.

"During the interaction with members of the Indian community, the CEC urged them to register as overseas voters as the present numbers are abysmally low.

He also shared with the members that extension of Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS) facility to overseas voters is being contemplated," the ECI said.

In meetings with NRI groups, Mr. Chandra spoke

of the experience of conducting elections in India, which has 950 million voters in over 1 million polling stations.

Online voting

Mr. Chandra's visit and interactions with NRIs came after Union Law Minister Kiren Rijju informed the Lok Sabha in March that the government was exploring the possibility of allowing online voting for NRIs.

The ECI had written to the Law Ministry in 2020 proposing that NRIs be allowed

to vote through postal ballots, following which the matter has been under consideration by the government.

While the ECI at present allows NRIs to register as overseas electors as long as they have not acquired the citizenship of another country, they have to reach their respective polling booths to cast their votes in person on voting day.

According to an ECI official, as of now there are only 1.12 lakh registered overseas electors.

India said to halve LIC IPO fundraising goal to \$3.9 bn

‘Decision follows investor feedback’

REUTERS

NEW DELHI

New Delhi is halving its fundraising goal for Life Insurance Corporation of India’s IPO to ₹30,000 crore (\$3.9 billion), having had to cut its valuation estimates after feedback from investors, a government source said.

The drastic lowering of ambitions for the IPO – which would still be India’s largest to date – is a setback for PM Narendra Modi’s administration which had positioned the sale as the first and biggest of a wave of privatisations aimed at replenishing state coffers.

The state-owned insurance behemoth is now valued at about ₹6 trillion, according to the source, who declined to be identified.



Earlier government estimates had called for LIC to be valued at about ₹17 trillion. “Investors have become very risk averse in the last few months” said the source. “After roadshows, we realised there was no point in putting high valuation up front. Higher valuation can be discovered post the listing. After all the government will still hold almost 95%” post issue.

Future's lenders said to reject \$3.4 bn sale deal with Reliance

Banks cite legal issues dogging proposed transaction as causing value erosion

REUTERS
MUMBAI

Future Group's lenders have rejected a \$3.4 billion sale of the Indian group's retail assets to Reliance Industries, banking sources said, adding to Future's struggles to pay off debt after it was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"All secured lenders have voted against the scheme of arrangement put forward by Reliance," said a senior official at a state-owned lender.

"Initially we thought that any other alternative methods will result in lower recoveries but since then it (Future) has been entangled in legal issues and now we are unsure of the value left in it,"



Sticky wicket: Lenders' stand adds to debt-laden Future's woes as it faces legal challenges to Reliance deal. ■ REUTERS

the source said.

The lenders' rejection comes amid a legal challenge by Amazon which has accused Future of violating certain contracts by dealing with Reliance, run by Mu-

kesh Ambani.

Future has denied any wrongdoing and said it will be pushed to bankruptcy if the deal fails. The case is being heard at various legal forums, including an arbitra-

tion panel in Singapore.

But in February, Reliance, which had kept to the sidelines earlier, suddenly took control of hundreds of Future stores, citing non-payment of rent, after assuming many of the leases held by cash-strapped Future.

That spooked bankers, some of whom have already initiated debt recovery proceedings against Future.

Future Group as a whole has more than \$4 billion in debt and lenders started classifying the loans as non-performing assets (NPA).

Typically, banks which are secured creditors are accorded the highest priority during debt resolution.



NITI Aayog gets a new vice-chairman

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

The government on Friday appointed Suman K. Bery as the vice-chairman of the NITI Aayog following the resignation of Rajiv Kumar. Mr. Bery will take charge from May 1, 2022.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has accepted “the resignation of Rajiv Kumar,” an official order said.

Mr. Kumar took over as the vice-chairman of the Aayog in August 2017 after the then vice-chairman Arvind Panagariya exited the government think tank. The reason for Mr. Kumar’s resignation could not be ascertained.

Mr. Bery had earlier served as the Director-General (Chief Executive) of the National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi. He was also a member of the Prime Minister’s Economic Advisory Council, Statistical Commission and the Reserve Bank of India’s Technical Advisory Committee on Monetary Policy.

Tech start-ups raised \$7.2 bn in Q1 of 2022

Quarter saw emergence of 15 unicorns

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Indian technology start-ups raised \$7.2 billion in the January-March quarter of calendar 2022, as per the Tech Startup Investment Factbook prepared by Nasscom, along with PGA Labs.

The number of deals closed increased 34% compared with a year earlier; however, the percentage of funding in large fundraising rounds declined from 68% to 58%. About 81% of funding activity was driven by early-stage and growth-stage deals, the study released by Nasscom on Friday showed.

According to the factbook, enterprise technology and financial technology were the top sectors in the



quarter, and large-ticket deals helped these sectors account for 41% of total funding. About 52% of funding activity was driven by growth-stage companies. Some 58% of funding by deal size was in the size of \$100 million or above.

The quarter also saw the emergence of 15 new unicorns (firms with valuation of at least \$1 billion).

Rajnath rolls out schemes for defence start-ups

‘Opportunity to understand new technologies’

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday launched Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) Prime and the sixth Defence India Start-up Challenge (DISC-6) meant to encourage defence start-ups during DefConnect 2.0. The iDEX-Prime aims to support projects, requiring support beyond ₹1.5 crore up to ₹10 crore, to help the ever-growing start-ups in the sector, the Defence Ministry said.

“The iDEX has provided an opportunity to our science and technology professionals to understand futuristic technologies such as AI, Augmented Reality, block-chain and space technologies. The start-up ecosystem has also been promoted and encouraged through order placement,” Mr. Singh said. He noted that the iDEX has, so far, introduced more than 100 win-



Innovation in focus: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh at DefConnect 2.0 in New Delhi on Friday. •PTI

ners to the market, providing direct & indirect employment to thousands of skilled and semi-skilled people.

The DISC-6 with 38 problem statements was also launched by Mr. Singh which relate to Artificial Intelligence (AI), advanced imaging, sensor systems, among others.

Mr. Singh stressed on continuous strengthening of all sectors, especially the security apparatus, to deal with the challenges that may emanate from the fast-changing world order.

Stating that every new

threat is becoming more complex and challenging than the previous one, Mr. Singh said, “After the COVID-19 pandemic, the world is now witnessing the Ukrainian conflict. We have also witnessed instability in the Middle East [West Asia], in Afghanistan and now in Pakistan. One way or the other, such events impact our country as well. There is a need to equip the country in every area to ensure peace and stability. The development of disruptive technology is a key requirement to handle new threats and challenges of the future.”

Fishing for workable solutions in the Palk Bay

A pragmatic approach is the first of options available to resolve the festering India-Sri Lanka fisheries dispute



T. RAMAKRISHNAN

After a gap of 15 months, the India-Sri Lanka Joint Working Group (JWG) on fisheries held its much-awaited deliberations (in virtual format) on March 25. But between the two meetings of the JWG, a number of events – some of them unfortunate – have occurred in the Palk Bay region that encompasses India's Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka's Northern Province. For instance, seven fishermen – five from Tamil Nadu and two from Sri Lanka – have died in “mid-sea clashes”. Just as sections of fishermen from the Palk Bay bordering districts of Tamil Nadu continue to transgress the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL), cases of many of them getting arrested and their boats being impounded by the Sri Lankan authorities continue. What has precipitated matters is that in early February, the impounded boats, around 140 in number, were auctioned despite a bilateral understanding on the matter.

Trawling as an issue

Apart from poaching in the territorial waters of Sri Lanka, the use of mechanised bottom trawlers is another issue that has become a bone of contention between the

fishermen of the two countries; the dispute is not just between the two states. This method of fishing, which was once promoted by the authorities in India, is now seen as being extremely adverse to the marine ecology, and has been acknowledged so by India. The actions of the Tamil Nadu fishermen adversely affect their counterparts in the Northern Province who are also struggling to come to terms with life after the civil war. The ongoing economic crisis in the island nation has only worsened their plight.

At the same time, the fishermen of Tamil Nadu experience a genuine problem – the lack of fishing areas consequent to the demarcation of the IMBL in June 1974. If they confine themselves to Indian waters, they find the area available for fishing full of rocks and coral reefs besides being shallow. The distance between Dhanushkodi (Tamil Nadu) and the IMBL is nine nautical miles (NM) while the maximum distance – Devipattinam and the IMBL – is 34 NM. Under the Tamil Nadu Marine Fishing Regulation Act 1983, mechanised fishing boats can fish only beyond 3 NM from the coast. This explains the trend of the fishermen having to cross the IMBL frequently. Another factor is that the people of the two countries in general and fisherfolk in particular have common threads of language, culture and religion, all of which can be used purposefully to resolve any dispute.

It is because of this factor as



FILE PHOTO/L. BALACHANDAR

well as the plight of the fishermen of the Northern Province that the two governments have been repeatedly saying that the whole problem has to be looked at from humanitarian and livelihood angles.

Fisher-level talks

With the problem having been discussed by the JWG, and earlier during the visit of India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar to Sri Lanka, in March as well, it is time steps are taken to take the process forward. The present situation, which is otherwise very stressful for Sri Lanka in view of the economic crisis, can be utilised to bring the fishermen of the two countries to the negotiating table. This is because the Indian government's two-month ban on fishing on the east coast of the country began on April 15. It is up to Sri Lanka now to ensure that the talks take place as the Indian side is keen on resuming fisherfolk-level deliberations. As several substantive issues were discussed threadbare in the previous rounds of such meetings – the last one was in New Delhi in November 2016 – only some fine-

tuning of the respective positions had to be done.

While Indian fishermen can present a road map for their transition to deep sea fishing or alternative methods of fishing, the Sri Lankan side has to take a pragmatic view that the transition cannot happen abruptly. To elicit a favourable response from the fishermen of the Northern Province, the Tamil Nadu fishermen have to commit themselves to a short and swift transition for which the governments in India (Central and State) have to come forward to perform the role of guarantors. Also, whenever there is a genuine complaint about Tamil Nadu fishermen having damaged the properties of the Northern Province's fishermen, the Indian government can compensate this through the proper channels of Sri Lanka.

Deep sea fishing

In the meantime, India will have to modify its scheme on deep sea fishing to accommodate the concerns of its fishermen, especially those from Ramanathapuram district, so that they take to deep sea fishing without any reservation. The revised scheme has to absorb satisfactorily not only the unit cost of long liners but also the running cost. Also, there is a compelling need for the Central and State governments to implement in Tamil Nadu the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana in a proactive manner. The scheme, which was flagged off two years ago, covers alternative livelihood measures

too including seaweed cultivation, open sea cage cultivation, and sea/ocean ranching.

During Mr. Jaishankar's visit, India had signed a memorandum of understanding with Sri Lanka for the development of fisheries harbours. This can be modified to include a scheme for deep sea fishing to the fishermen of the North. It is a welcome development that the JWG has agreed to have joint research on fisheries, which should be commissioned at the earliest. Such a study should cover the extent of the adverse impact of bottom trawling in the Palk Bay region.

Simultaneously, the two countries should explore the possibility of establishing a permanent multi-stakeholder institutional mechanism to regulate fishing activity in the region. At the same time, Sri Lanka should take a lenient view of the situation and refrain from adopting a rigid and narrow legal view of matters concerning the release of 16 fishermen or impounded fishing boats (around 90 in number). Any delay in this will only increase the bitterness between the two countries at a time when the economic crisis of Sri Lanka is generating empathy in India. What everyone needs to remember is that the fisheries dispute is not an insurmountable problem. A number of options are available to make the Palk Bay not only free of troubles but also a model for collaborative endeavours in fishing.

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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.