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DAILY NEWS ANALYSIS

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FOREWORD

We, at Team Vedhik is happy to introduce a new initiative - "Vedhik - Daily News Analysis (DNA)_The Hindu" compilations to help you with UPSC Civil Services Examination preparation. We believe this initiative - "Vedhik - Daily News Analysis (DNA)_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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Out of favour

The military, not Imran Khan, is the real threat to Pakistan's democracy

The Pakistan Election Commission's decision to disqualify Imran Khan from completing his term in Parliament is a setback for the former Prime Minister, who has been rallying his supporters against his political rivals as well as the military establishment ever since he was ousted in April. The commission found Mr. Khan, leader of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, guilty of illegally selling gifts he got from foreign dignitaries when Prime Minister and concealing the profits. And the four-member bench came up with a particularly harsh judgment of barring a popular politician and the main opposition leader from office, an order that is reminiscent of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's disqualification in 2018. Mr. Khan would also be prevented from heading the PTI as an earlier Supreme Court judgment bars disqualified leaders from heading political parties. The verdict came days after Mr. Khan swept the by-polls by winning six out of seven National Assembly seats, in a sign of his surging popularity despite the different cases slapped on him. He has challenged the commission's verdict in the Islamabad High Court, but, needless to say, the development has added to his legal woes. It could threaten his political career and worsen the political instability.

While the legality of the commission's verdict would be reviewed by the High Court, it is hard to miss the parallels between the disqualification of Mr. Sharif and that of Mr. Khan, barred from office after they fell out with the powerful military establishment. Mr. Sharif always had a testy relationship with the military. Mr. Khan, on the other side, was a beneficiary of Mr. Sharif's ouster. He rose to power with help from the establishment, and the then opposition which makes up the current government, accused him of being a pawn in the hands of the generals. But the tables turned when Mr. Khan tried to rein in the military. Now, he is accusing the military of conspiring with his political rivals to keep him out of power. Whether he is right or wrong, Pakistan's history suggests that any popular leader who tries to mobilise political capital independent of the military's standing would be met with strong institutional resistance. Mr. Khan's story is no different. Pakistan is in a crisis. The Shehbaz Sharif government is a short-term arrangement; the economy is in free fall; and this year's floods have made matters worse, leading to growing public resentment. The civilian leaders should assert themselves, strengthen democracy and take the country out of the morass it is in. Instead, their power struggles, under the long shadow of the military, are further destabilising the country.

Xi Jinping begins third term with key allies on board

Chinese President unveils new leadership after national congress. With six allies on the newly announced Politburo Standing Committee, he has a firmer grip on the ruling Communist Party

Ananth Krishnan
BEIJING

Chinese leader Xi Jinping began his unprecedented third five-year term on Sunday in even firmer control of the ruling Communist Party after filling the newly announced Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC) with all of his allies.

As many as four allies of Mr. Xi, 69, were on Sunday appointed to the PBSC that was announced after the first meeting of the new Central Committee, which was unveiled on Saturday following the conclusion of the CPC congress.

With two other allies continuing on the PBSC, this marks an unprecedented sweep of all seven positions on the all-powerful body, a first in Chinese Communist Party politics



New team: Chinese President Xi Jinping (centre) introducing the Politburo Standing Committee members to the media on Sunday. REUTERS

where power in the past was shared between different factions, an arrangement shattered by Mr. Xi.

The chosen ones

Mr. Xi introduced the new leadership to the media on Sunday. They are, in order

of rank, Li Qiang, the former party chief in Shanghai; Zhao Leji, former head of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI); Wang Huning, the ideology czar; Cai Qi, the former Beijing party chief; Ding Xuexiang, Mr. Xi's

chief of staff; and Li Xi, the party chief in the key economic powerhouse province of Guangdong.

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Xi begins third term with key allies on board

Second-ranked Mr. Li is likely to take over from outgoing Premier Li Keqiang as the new Premier in March despite criticism of the draconian Shanghai lockdown earlier this year, a sign seen by some observers as reaffirmation of the “zero-COVID” regime, while Mr. Zhao is likely to head the National People’s Congress, or Parliament. Mr. Li was on Saturday appointed as the new head of the powerful CCDI, the anti-corruption agency.

Introducing the leadership, Mr. Xi said, “we will not be daunted by high winds, choppy waters or dangerous storms.” The CPC, he said, “can only become invincible if it remains committed to self-reform”. “The world is grappling with unprecedented challenges,” he said. “Just as China cannot develop in isolation from the world, the world needs China for its development,” he added, noting that the Chinese economy, which grew only 0.4% in the second quarter, has been weighed down by COVID lockdowns, and presents Mr. Xi his biggest domestic challenge, still had “great resilience”. The CPC also named its 24-member Politburo. Foreign Minister Wang Yi’s promotion to the body suggests he will take over as top diplomat from retiring Yang Jiechi, while the appointment of He Lifeng suggests he will be Mr. Xi’s new economic czar and in charge of shaping economic policy. There were no women in the entire Politburo, a first in 25 years. The CPC congress concluded on Saturday with two surprises. A frail-looking former leader Hu Jintao (79), once a power centre in the party in his own right and more recently known to be in ill-health, was unexpectedly escorted off stage.

The second surprise was the exclusion of former Premier Li Keqiang and formerly fourth-ranked PBSC member Wang Yang – both allies of Mr. Hu – from the new Central Committee that was announced at the congress. Their early retirements paved the way for Sunday’s clean sweep of the Party’s highest body for Mr. Xi and his allies.

Upholding unity, opposing uniformity

The debate on Hindi imposition has erupted once again after the Official Language Committee headed by Union Home Minister Amit Shah recommended making Hindi the medium of instruction in central institutes of higher education in Hindi-speaking States. The Committee also proposes that Union government employees be punished for not knowing Hindi, making Hindi practically the sole official language of the Union government. In the past, Mr. Shah suggested that Hindi replace English as the link language, and be made the working language of Union Ministries. Several leaders in the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have called for making Hindi the national language of India.

Discrimination continues

According to the Constitution, there is no national language in India. As per the Eighth Schedule, there are 22 official languages – Tamil for Tamil Nadu, Bangla for West Bengal, Hindi for Uttar Pradesh, Malayalam for Kerala, etc. – with Hindi and English being the official languages of the Union government. This already suggests a fundamental discrimination against the non-Hindi-speaking people because the mother tongue of the Hindi-speaking people is considered for the purposes of the Union but the mother tongues of the non-Hindi-speaking people are not. This makes some Indians more “Indian” than others. The Official Language Committee’s recommendations will deepen this existing discrimination on the basis of language.

The Union government is dependent on the States for its revenue. Non-Hindi-speaking States provide revenue to the Union government which is disproportionately higher than the percentage of the population in these States. Hindi-speaking States survive on the basis of cross-subsidies from non-Hindi-speaking States



Garga Chatterjee

is the General Secretary of Bangla Pokkho



“Salem” Dharamidharan

is the Spokesperson of the DMK Party and Executive Coordinator of Dravidian Professionals Forum

The Indian Union is an agglomeration of ethno-linguistic nationalities that have their own languages and cultures

transferred via the Union government. Even funding for central universities and institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology and the All-India Institutes of Medical Sciences is contributed indirectly and disproportionately by non-Hindi-speaking States. It will be a travesty of justice if funds from non-Hindi-speaking States are used to fund the artificial growth of Hindi at the cost of the fundamental rights of non-Hindi-speaking Indians. This imposition of Hindi is a direct assault on federalism and the principle of equal citizenship. Information provided, online or on paper, for recruitment exams to the Army, the Border Security Force, the Central Reserve Police Force, the Staff Selection Commission, etc. is available to Hindi-speaking people in their mother tongue, but the same is denied to non-Hindi-speaking people in their mother languages. The Union government spends 22 times more money on Hindi than it does on Bengali, Tamil or any other language.

Against Hindi imposition

The attempts to impose Hindi have been challenged by non-Hindi-speaking people all over India. The first such protest was organised by E.V. Ramasamy ‘Periyar’ in Tamil Nadu in August 1937 in opposition to the decision of the C. Rajagopalachari-led Congress regime of making Hindi

compulsory in secondary schools. In the Constituent Assembly, members from Hindi-speaking provinces even claimed that those who don’t know Hindustani (Hindi) had “no right to stay in India”. The language movement in Manbhum district led to the partition of the district between Bihar and West Bengal, and Purulia district was born in 1956. Later, protests broke out in Tamil Nadu against the introduction of Hindi as the sole official language of the Union government. This forced the Union government to amend the Official Languages Act to provide for the use of English until all the non-Hindi-speaking States agreed to drop it. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) has been the most vocal organisation fighting against Hindi imposition. This strong stand has been used by Hindi chauvinists to brand Tamil Nadu as an aberration. However, similar anti-Hindi protests have now arisen in States such as Karnataka, West Bengal, Kerala and Maharashtra.

In light of the country’s changing demographics, if parliamentary seats are reallocated, it will widen the fiscal disparity between Hindi-speaking and non-Hindi-speaking States. This plan goes hand in hand with the Union government’s continued attacks on State rights.

The boom of India’s service sector as well as the success of the educated Indian diaspora was made possible thanks to the proficiency of Indians in English. The link language of the world is English. India’s beauty and stability lie in its plurality and unity in diversity. Any attempt to destroy this via the imposition of one language will threaten India’s unity. You can either have unity or uniformity; you cannot have both. The Union government must understand that the Indian Union is an agglomeration of ethno-linguistic nationalities that have their own languages and cultures and let them live in peace.



THE HINDU ARCHIVES

Vital intervention

Supreme Court must do everything possible to curb the propagation of hate

There is good reason for the Supreme Court to ask the police to be proactive in dealing with hate speech by taking immediate legal action without waiting for a formal complaint. The Court has also warned of contempt action if the police showed any hesitation in compliance. Directed at the police in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, the order is in response to the “unending flow of hate speeches” highlighted in a writ petition before it. The Court has referred to the growing “climate of hate”, and taken note of the inaction in most instances, despite the law containing provisions to deal with the phenomenon. It is quite apparent that the governments at the Centre and in some like-minded States do not share the Court’s concern for communal harmony, fraternity and tranquillity; in fact, some of them may be contributing to the vitiated atmosphere either by studied inaction or complicity in allowing provocative speeches in purported religious gatherings by majoritarian elements. Intervention by the highest court has become necessary in the light of some controversial religious leaders getting away lightly after making unacceptable comments, some of them tinged with a genocidal tenor. It is in such a backdrop that the Court has underscored the constitutional values of secularism and fraternity among all religions and social groups.

It was a religious conclave held in Haridwar late last year that set the tone for the ‘hate speech’ case that is being heard now. Even then, the Court had called for corrective measures, leading to another conclave being prevented by local authorities in Roorkee in Uttarakhand. While the intervention may have halted a few meetings at that time, it cannot be said that such transgressions have ended. There has been a disconcerting pattern of Hindu festivals becoming an occasion for the conduct of religious processions that end in clashes caused by provocative behaviour. In the name of dealing with the resulting clashes or disturbances, officials have resorted to demolishing the houses of those allegedly involved in the incidents, without following any process of law. Such developments have given rise to new curbs on minorities, such as unwarranted police probes into the holding of group prayers, and new allegations of purported plots to infiltrate Hindu events. Some television channels have been adding to the bigotry by their manner of functioning. Administrative bias on the one hand and the spread of social prejudice on the other cannot be allowed to vitiate the national mood. Towards that end, the Court must do everything possible to nudge authorities to enforce the law against the propagation of hate.

Home Ministry cancels FCRA licences of two NGOs headed by Sonia

An inter-ministerial committee, formed in 2020, carried out investigations and found 'several irregularities' by the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation and the Rajiv Gandhi Charitable Trust

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has cancelled the FCRA registration of two non-governmental organisations (NGO) headed by Congress leader Sonia Gandhi owing to irregularities, a senior government official said on Sunday.

Congress MP Rahul Gandhi and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra are also associated with the NGOs.

Registration under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act is mandatory to receive foreign funds. The cancellation makes the two NGOs ineligible to receive foreign funds.

Ms. Gandhi is the chairperson of the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation (RGF) and the Rajiv Gandhi Charitable Trust (RGCT).

After the Galwan Valley



Congress MP Rahul Gandhi and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra are also associated with the NGOs. RGFINDIA.ORG

incident of June 15, 2020, when Rahul Gandhi sharpened his attack accusing the government of surrendering territory to China, the ruling BJP had accused the two Congress-linked NGOs of receiving foreign funds from the Chinese government in 2005-06.

The Home Ministry constituted an inter-ministerial probe committee on July 8, 2020 to probe the allegations.

Two years after the

committee was formed, the Ministry recently cancelled the registration of the two NGOs.

"There were several irregularities by the two NGOs in the way the FCRA registration was being used, following the probe, the registration was cancelled," the official said. The annual returns filed in December 2021 show that the NGOs did not receive any foreign donation in the financial year 2020-21, but

the account balance stood at ₹11.5 crore for the RGCT and ₹13.5 crore for the RGF.

The two NGOs

The RGCT, a registered, not-for-profit organisation, was established in 2002 and is located at Jawahar Bhawan on Rajendra Prasad Road, a prime location in central Delhi. Ms. Gandhi is the chairperson of the trust and Mr. Gandhi is a member of the Board of Trustees. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is one of the biggest donors to the RGCT.

The RGF was set up in 1991. Ms. Gandhi is the chairperson, and the Board of Trustees includes former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, P. Chidambaram, Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Suman Dubey, Rahul Gandhi, Ashok Gan-guly and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. It is also located at Jawahar Bhavan.

The CCI's ₹1,300 crore fine on Google

Why did the Competition Commission of India impose such a huge fine on the tech giant? How is the Alphabet owned company allegedly violating its position especially with regard to the Android mobile device ecosystem? Is this the first probe against Google in India?

EXPLAINER

Diksha Munjal

The story so far:

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has imposed a provisional fine of ₹1,337.76 crore on Alphabet-owned Google for “abusing its dominant position” in markets related to the Android mobile device ecosystem.

How did Google violate the competition law in India?

The CCI, the country's competition watchdog is empowered under the Competition Act, 2002, to check whether companies especially large tech companies are not eliminating healthy competition in the market and creating a monopoly. The current case by CCI against Google started in 2019 and since then the regulator has examined various practices of the tech giant with respect to relevant markets.

The first is regarding the Android operating system (OS). All smartphones need an OS to run applications and programs and one of the most prominent OS is Android which was acquired by Google in 2005. According to Counterpoint research, 97% of India's 600 million smartphones are powered by Google's Android OS. Google operates and manages the Android OS and licenses other Google proprietary applications such as Chrome and Play Store through it. Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) or smartphone companies then use this OS and Google apps on their mobile phones. While the Android source code is openly accessible and covers the basic features of a smartphone, it does not include Google's proprietary applications. To use these applications, manufacturers have to enter into agreements with Google that govern their rights and obligations such as the Mobile Application Distribution Agreement (MADA), the Anti-fragmentation Agreement (AFA) etc. The CCI held that through these restrictions in agreements, Google makes sure that the manufacturers who wished



In troubled waters: The Google Headquarters in the U.S. GETTY IMAGES

to use Google apps had to use Google's version of Android.

Secondly, Google is the dominant player in the app store market for Android OS worldwide (except China). According to the EU, the Google Play Store accounts for more than 90% of apps downloaded on Android devices globally. The CCI held that through the mandatory pre-installation of the Google Suite (which includes Play Store), consumers did not have the option of side-loading or downloading apps outside of the play store. Third is the company's dominance in the general internet search market and the non-OS specific browser market (meaning engines like Chrome, Firefox, etc.). As of last year, Google has a 92% share in the global search engine market. Therefore, by having Revenue Sharing Agreements with mobile manufacturers for its services, Google was able to “secure exclusivity” for its search services to the “total exclusion of competitors”. The CCI said that these agreements with OEMs guaranteed Google continuous access to search queries of mobile users,

helping not only in protecting its advertisement revenue but also in reaping the network effects through “continuous improvement of services, to the exclusion of competitors”. This was also compounded by making Google the default search browser in Android smartphones. Finally, due to Google's agreements with manufacturers, another of its revenue-earning apps – Youtube, the CCI said, gained a significant edge over competitors in the online video hosting platforms market. The mention of Google's antitrust practices with regard to Youtube was the distinguishing factor between the CCI probe and the EU probe of Google in 2018.

What has CCI told Google to change ?

Apart from the “cease and desist” order against Google for indulging in anti-competitive practices, the CCI has directed it to take certain measures with regard to the Android OS ecosystem. Some of the major directions include – that smartphone makers should be allowed to choose which of Google's proprietary apps they want to in-

stall, that the licensing of Play Store to manufacturers should not be linked with requirements to pre-install Google search services or any other Google apps, that Google should allow users to choose their default search engine for all search entry points etc. The CCI also noted that there were “glaring inconsistencies” in the revenue data presented by Google and gave it 30 days to provide the requisite financial details and supporting documents.

What are the other antitrust suits?

Google is already facing two other antitrust probes by the CCI. In June 2021, the Commission ordered a probe into allegations that Google had abused its dominant position with Android in India's smart television market and in November 2020, the CCI had initiated a probe to look into allegations that Google abused its dominant position to push its payments system. Google also faces three probes each in the U.S. and the EU. The EU suits have altogether imposed fines totalling around \$8 billion on Google.

THE GIST

The CCI, the country's competition watchdog is empowered under the Competition Act, 2002, to check whether companies especially large tech companies are not eliminating healthy competition in the market and creating a monopoly.

The CCI said that due to Google's various agreements with manufacturers, one of its major revenue-earning apps, Youtube, gained a significant edge over competitors in the online video hosting platforms market. The mention of Google's antitrust practices with regard to Youtube was the distinguishing factor between the CCI probe and the EU probe of Google in 2018.

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Teachers' training key to NCF implementation, say experts

Identifying gaps in pedagogy, acquainting teachers with new methods essential for implementing framework effectively, they say; curriculum recommends more than just learning from textbooks

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Curriculum Framework for foundational age children provides an “organic” and “well-framed” road map for teaching three- to eight-year-olds, but will be difficult to implement in the absence of proper teacher training and infrastructure support, experts say.

Educationists who have done substantial work in elementary methods of teaching said that the NCERT or the State Boards and the SCERTs need to involve teachers as they are the primary stakeholders.

“It is good that this (NCF) got released. It is necessary, but far from sufficient. Leaving it here would make it incomplete,” Shaveta Sharma-Kukreja, CEO of the Central Square Foundation, told *The Hindu*.

Ms. Kukreja said that the timing of the NCF was right and so was the focus on early education. Now it



Novel ways: The NCF favours an interactive curriculum using story-telling techniques. ISTOCKPHOTO/VIKRAM RAGHUVANSHI

was for the NCERT and SCERTs to identify the gaps in the current pedagogy so that the NCF could be implemented.

According to Vineet Nayar, founder and chairperson of Sampark Foundation, implementation would need “frugal” and “innovative” ideas that disrupt the resistance to change and resource constraints.

The guidelines should talk of how to implement rather than just stop at

what to implement, he said.

The NCF 2022 for foundational age groups favours developing an interactive curriculum for children at various levels using story-telling techniques and real-life experiences. It says board games and stories from the Panchatantra should be used to teach children in the 6-8 age group.

For the first three years of the foundational stage, that is three to six years,

there should not be any prescribed textbooks. Rather, simple worksheets are more than sufficient to meet the curricular goals, says the document.

It also recommends that the mother tongue should be the primary medium of instruction for children till eight years of age, in both public and private schools. English could be one of the second language options, it says, without giving any time-frame for introducing the language.

It is here, educationists feel, that the real challenge lies. “It is an ideal document, but are we really ready for this?” asks Ameeta Mulla Wattal, chairperson and executive director of education (innovations and training) at DLF Foundation Schools. “...Teachers have to be trained, whether it is on using the mother tongue or thematic concepts in pedagogy. We need to activate public and private agencies and involve Corporate Social Responsibility in teacher training,” she said.



Money spinner: In India, toll collections or transmission fees make up the InvIT's distributable cash flows. K. MURALI KUMAR

How InvITs work and generate their returns

Investors in an InvIT become part owners of its operating assets such as toll roads or power transmission lines, while in a stock IPO, they get to part-own the underlying business

Aarati Krishnan

The buzz around the recent bond offer from the National Highway Infrastructure Trust (NHIT) has led to a lot of curiosity about Infrastructure Investment Trusts or InvITs.

The Government of India too is increasingly using the InvIT route to monetise assets held by government entities, and bring in broad-based public shareholding. Should retail investors look at InvITs as a replacement for shares, fixed income instruments or something else? Well, InvITs are an in-between vehicle that have features of stocks, bonds and mutual funds. Before investing in them, it's useful to know how they work and generate returns.

How they work

InvITs list on the bourses to raise money to acquire a portfolio of infrastructure assets that are already running and generating regular cash flows.

InvITs can own any assets capable of generating steady cash flows over time. Companies with listed shares are free to conserve their profits and reinvest it in the business, while holding back dividends. But under SEBI regulations, InvITs are required to compulsorily distribute 90% of the in-

come they earn every year to their unit holders.

This makes InvITs more suitable for income-seeking investors rather than growth-seeking ones. SEBI also caps the borrowing that an InvIT can take on to 70% of its assets. While investors in a stock IPO become part owners of the underlying business, investors in an InvIT become part owners of the operating assets it owns. InvITs may own their infrastructure assets directly or through arms called special purpose vehicles (SPVs).

InvITs globally tend to own many types of assets – warehouses, oil pipelines, power plants and roads.

But in India, the listed InvITs mainly own toll roads or power transmission lines. These assets generate toll collections or transmission fees which make up the InvIT's distributable cash flows. Both shares and InvITs, once listed on the exchange, trade in the secondary market on a daily basis. Investors are free to buy or sell units of the InvIT at the traded price.

While shares are priced in the markets based on their profit potential, InvITs tend to be priced based on the distributions they make.

A key metric for InvIT investors to track is the distributable per unit (how much cash it is able to pay

out on a per unit basis) and the yield, which is the annual distribution as a percentage of the InvIT's market price. An InvIT is also required to get its portfolio periodically valued by independent valuers who declare a net asset value (NAV) per unit. The price of the InvIT can trade at a premium or discount to this NAV, but does not usually stray far from it.

Regulation, governance

Unlike companies, the kind of assets an InvIT can own are subject to regulation. SEBI requires listed InvITs to have at least 80% of their asset value in completed infrastructure assets that are already churning out cash. Only the remaining can be invested in under-construction projects, shares and bonds of infrastructure companies, government securities and so on. Apart from this, InvITs are also required to distribute a minimum 90% of the cash they earn and cap their debt at 70%.

SEBI rules also specify an InvIT governance structure that is akin to mutual funds. InvITs are initially floated by a sponsor (a promoter) who is usually an owner of infrastructure assets. For subsequent assets it may still look to the sponsor, or shop elsewhere. Just as AMCs manage mutual funds, InvITs usually have an investment manager.

The investment manag-

er, for a fee, operates and maintains the InvIT's assets, acquires and sells assets as the need arises and takes decisions on distributions.

Returns and taxation

InvITs may earn their returns from the assets they own in three forms. One, if the InvIT holds assets on its own balance sheet, it may earn income from toll collections, power transmission fees or other avenues, which, after meeting expenses, is distributed to shareholders. Two, if the InvIT holds assets through an SPV, it may earn dividends from the SPV's profits. Three, the InvIT may also lend to the SPV to acquire and maintain assets in which case it will earn income from it by way of interest receipts and loan repayments. The returns that an InvIT distributes to its unitholders can take all three forms.

The taxation of the distribution you receive depends on its source. Interest and dividend income will be taxed like income from bonds and shares respectively and direct payouts by the InvIT will be taxed as income in your hands. The capital gains you make on trading in InvIT units on the exchanges are treated as short term and taxed at 15% if held for less than 36 months, and taxed at 10% if held beyond this period.

Health Insurance Premium

For a 30-year-old male, non-smoker, living in a metro city sum insured of ₹10 lakh

Insurer Name	Key Features of Insurers	Plan Names under each Insurer	Premium Annually	Insurer Name	Key Features of Insurers	Plan Names under each Insurer	Premium Annually
Niva Bupa Health Insurance	Day Care Treatments	Health ReAssure	9,590	Royal Sundaram General Insurance	Day Care Treatments	Lifeline supreme	8,578
	Hospitalization at Home	Health Pulse Enhanced	10,161		Hospitalization at Home		
	Family Floater option	Health Companion	9,862		Hospital Room Eligibility		
	E-consultation	Health Premia	16,436		Alternate Medicine		
	Alternate Medicine	Go Active	11,747		Restoration of cover		
Family Floater option	Medi Classic	11,095	Day Care Treatments	Mediclaim Policy	9,416		
Star Health Insurance	Restoration of cover	Star Comprehensive	11,476	Oriental Insurance	Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage	Individual Mediclaim Policy	12,684
	Wellness Benefits	Young Star Gold Plan	8,389		Day Care Treatments		
	Existing Illness cover	Diabetes Safe Plan-B	19,122		Hospitalization at Home		
	Free health checkup	Young Star Silver Plan	7,133	SBI General Insurance	Free health checkup	Arogya Supreme	13,180
Bajaj Allianz General Insurance	Hospital Room Eligibility	Individual Health Guard	12,212	Chola MS General Insurance	Day Care Treatments	Flexi Health	7,807
	Wellness Benefits				Hospital Room Eligibility		
	Family Floater Option				Hospitalization at Home		
	No claim bonus				Bajaj Health Guard -Platinum		
DIGIT General Insurance	Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage	Early Cover Option	8064	Edelweiss General Insurance	Day Care Treatments	Edelweiss Health Insurance-Gold (Health 241 Add-on)	10,916
	Restoration of cover	Super Care Option	7616		Hospitalization at Home	Edelweiss Health Insurance Gold	8,733
	Alternate medicine (AYUSH)	Ultimate Option	8393		Hospital Room Eligibility		
	Pre and Post Hospitalisation Coverage	Medicare	9,820		Alternate Medicine		
TATA AIG	Day Care Treatments	Medicare Premier	12,176	Data as on October 19, 2022			
	Hospitalization at Home			Source: www.policybazaar.com Premium is calculated on the basis of age of insured member, location, Plan type and sum insured Health insurance covers medical expenses that arise due to an illness and benefit the insured subject to the terms and conditions and exclusions of the Policy.			
	Free health checkup						

36 satellites launched by ISRO's heaviest rocket send signals

Sangeetha Kandavel

CHENNAI

The Indian Space Research Organisation's heaviest rocket, Launch Vehicle Mark 3 (LVM3 or GSLV Mark 3), which took off from the second launch pad (SLP) of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota at 12.07 a.m. on Sunday has successfully put into orbit 36 satellites of the U.K.-based OneWeb.

The 43.5-metre LVM3 weighing around 644 tonnes carried 36 satellites weighing 5,796 kg. OneWeb's satellites separated successfully from the rocket and were dispensed in nine phases, with signal acquisition on all 36 satellites confirmed. With this launch, LVM3 has made its entry into the global commercial launch market.

LVM3-M2 is the dedicated commercial satellite mission of NewSpace India Ltd. (NSIL), a Central public sector enterprise (CPSE) under the Department of Space. This mission is being undertaken as part of the commercial arrangement between NSIL and Network Access Asso-



PTI

ciates Ltd. (OneWeb Ltd.), which is a joint venture between India's Bharti Enterprises and the U.K. government.

Addressing presspersons an hour after take-off, ISRO Chairman S. Somnath said, "Today's event is very historic to the country and the Indian Space programme. This is the first ever commercial launch of LVM3 with a heaviest payload to LEO. The LVM3 was conceived primarily for launching geostationary satellites with a payload capacity of 4T, which can be used for launching 6T payloads for LEO."

Sunil Bharti Mittal, CEO of Bharti Enterprises, whose company is one of the biggest investors in OneWeb, said it is a new chapter for India in the space sector.

U.K. is ready to support manufacture of Indian jet engines, says envoy

High Commissioner Alex Ellis says the U.K. has offered help to the Indian government, and India will be absolutely central to ensuring a safe and open Indo-Pacific; earlier, the U.K. had offered collaboration in the development of aircraft carrier and sixth generation fighter technologies

Dinakar Peri
GANDHINAGAR

Making a strong pitch for joint collaboration, Alex Ellis, the U.K. High Commissioner in India, said what engine maker Rolls-Royce is ready to do and the British government ready to support is the indigenisation of design and manufacture of Indian jet engines something which "I don't think any other partner in the world has offered up to now".

They are now waiting for the Indian government to make a decision, he said.

The strong pitch comes as India considers offers from the world's top engine manufacturers to jointly develop an aero-engine for its future indigenous fighter jets.

"What the U.K. brings is high levels of expertise and technology in everything from missiles to engines. What India can bring is

huge scale, and of course a significant market. And all has to be done through the prism of Make in India and Make for the World. So, what I'd also like to see is not only British companies tying up with Indian companies but also looking at how they can export," Mr. Ellis said in a brief conversation with *The Hindu* at DefExpo.

"We've seen that on the civil side. I'll give you one example. JCB now exports from India to over 100 countries around the world. And I think we need to accelerate that work on the defence side."

Future programme

Elaborating, he said the governments of India and the U.K. have already done scoping of what the future programme might look like and now the next step is for the Indian government to decide what it wants to do in terms of building a more powerful engine. The High Commissioner said



India will be absolutely central to ensuring a safe and open Indo-Pacific and that is a strong U.K. interest and a strong Indian interest as well

ALEX ELLIS
U.K. High Commissioner

Rolls-Royce has the capability both in civil and military aviation.

Earlier, the U.K. had offered India collaboration in development of aircraft carrier and sixth generation fighter technologies. Development of a fighter engine is among the top priorities for India, for which it is considering three global engine makers – General Electric of the U.S., Rolls-Royce of the U.K. and Safran of France – for joint collaboration.

To a question on how the U.K. can support India as it diversifies its military arsenal with emphasis on

indigenisation, Mr. Ellis said, "We have seen the kind of disastrous consequences of Russia's completely unwarranted invasion of Ukraine. And we've also seen the effectiveness of Ukrainian response with support from the U.K. and other countries. And that's what we're going to see over the next few years, the growth of trust and partnerships between countries like the U.K. and India..."

At the Expo, India and the U.K. announced a new defence industry joint working group to strengthen defence collabora-

tion, which also held its first meeting.

Pointing out that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and former U.K. Prime Minister Boris Johnson met last year and again this year, he said there is a comprehensive strategic partnership because "we want to have a much deeper and more structured relationship". "And the future, frankly, is a tougher one, both in the Indo-Pacific and also in the European theatre and we can actually gain strength from being together," Mr. Ellis said.

On the Indo-Pacific where the U.K. has been very active and the high tempo of military military engagements, the High Commissioner said the Indo-Pacific is not just about defence and security, but "a whole host of things", including research, students, commercial collaborations, and one element of it is defence and security. "India will be absolutely central to ensuring a safe

and open Indo-Pacific and that is a strong U.K. interest and a strong Indian interest as well," he stressed.

We had the biggest deployment of U.K. Navy since the end of the Cold War this time last year into the Indo-Pacific, Mr. Ellis noted and also referred to the tri-service exercise with India. "I would expect us to see an increasing tempo of military to military cooperation, particularly with an eye on the Indian Ocean and want to create a shared understanding and ability to act together," he added.

There has been a sharp increase in India's military engagements in the Indian Ocean Region and the Indo-Pacific. For instance, the Malabar naval exercise comprising of India, Australia, Japan and the U.S. is scheduled to be hosted by Japan in November, while the India-U.S. bilateral Army exercise 'Yudh Abhyas' is set to be held in Uttarakhand early November.

'Deesa base fills gaps in airfields between Gujarat, Rajasthan'

Dinakar Peri

GANDHINAGAR

The new Deesa airfield to be constructed in Gujarat close to the western border fills a huge gap between airbases in Gujarat and Rajasthan, Indian Air Force (IAF) chief Air Chief Marshal V.R. Chaudhari told *The Hindu* at DefExpo.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone virtually last week at the expo, where he said the forward base will add to the security architecture of the country.

The new airbase will help optimise fuel-carrying by aircraft in addition to balancing Pakistan's recent upgrades in the area, a defence official stated, while adding that the base would also be well protected while allowing the Air Force to launch offensive operations when required.

The project received sanction from the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) in March 2018 at a

cost of ₹997.63 crore and will be executed in two phases. Of this, ₹935.74 crore has been earmarked for 'works services' for creation of infrastructure, a defence official said. The tender has been awarded and work is ready to commence, officials said.

The base will also play a vital role in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions in the region, a second source stated, adding that the base will also improve overall air connectivity in the region with the current thrust for regional connectivity under the UDAN scheme.

Mr. Modi had said that India is now better prepared to respond to any misadventure on the western borders. "After coming to government, we decided to set up an operational base in Deesa, and this expectation of our forces is being fulfilled today. This region will now become an effective centre of security of the country," he added.

Five new varieties to expand India's Basmati platter

SPECIAL

A.M. Jigeesh
NEW DELHI

Five new Basmati varieties, developed by a group of scientists led by Ashok Kumar Singh, Director, Indian Agriculture Research Institute (IARI), in 2020 and 2021 are all set to bring revolutionary changes in the way this type of paddy is cultivated in the country.

Three of the five varieties can resist two common diseases of paddy. The other two can save 35% of the water now required as the seeds can be directly sown, obviating the need for transplanting seedlings. These two seeds are resistant to herbicides too, helping the farmers control weeds more efficiently. In the next three years, all of the five seeds will have the combined qualities of disease and herbicide resistance, Dr. Singh says.

"This is a landmark achievement. We started the research in 2008. This is 100% indigenous revolution using indigenous

breeding programmes," Dr. Singh told *The Hindu*. "This will help in increasing farmers' income by reducing the cost of cultivation, by improving production and by realising price of their labour and input cost. The cost of cultivation will be reduced. It will reduce the use of pesticides and water. If the production is free from residue, it will get better prices," he explained.

Export in mind

India is known for its Basmati rice, with the produce from seven States – Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand – earmarked for Geographical Indication.

Basmati, known for its mouthfeel, aroma, length of the grain when cooked and taste, has a market abroad and brings about ₹30,000 crore in foreign exchange every year. While 75% of the export is to West Asian countries, European Union countries also import Indian Basmati. However, recently, the



Greener pastures: Ashok Kumar Singh, Director, IARI, at a paddy field site in New Delhi. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

export to EU countries faced certain hurdles due to the increase in the pesticide residue levels in the rice from India.

Dr. Singh says that over a period of time, as the area of cultivation increased, traditional varieties become susceptible to two major diseases – bacterial leaf blight (BLB) and blast (leaf and collar) diseases caused by the fungus *Magnaporthe oryzae*. Pesticides and fungicides used against these diseases increased the residue levels permitted in developed countries.

"Achieving the permitted levels is very difficult if

we are using pesticides for controlling pests. The only way was that we bring in genetic resistance so that we do not have to spray pesticides and fungicides. So, from Pusa Basmati 1121, we developed Pusa Basmati 1885; from Pusa Basmati 1509, we developed Pusa Basmati 1847; Pusa Basmati 1401 was improved to develop Pusa Basmati 1886. All these varieties have two genes to resist BLB and two genes to resist blast disease. Farmers need not use pesticides and it will decrease the cost of farming by ₹3,000 an acre. Because of effective disease control, production will increase

and most important, there is no question of pesticide residue and our consignments will not be rejected," Dr. Singh says.

The response

The IARI provided one kilogram each of the seeds to about 10,000 farmers in these seven States in 2021. "They had grown these crops during this kharif season. In the last week of September, I travelled 1,500 kilometres to see for myself how the crop is doing and to hear the feedback from farmers. I stayed at the residences of farmers. There is phenomenal response for these varieties. I am hoping that from next year, these varieties will change the scenario of Basmati cultivation and it will directly help in terms of addressing the problem of pesticides residue," Dr. Singh says, sharing hopes of an increased coverage area in the next crop year. "I have asked farmers to keep this year's produce for next year as seeds," he adds.

The traditional way of paddy cultivation relied on

transplanting the plants into a water-filled field midway through the cycle.

"Around 3,000 litres of water is required for one kilogram of Basmati rice. This has impacted the water table of States such as Punjab and Haryana. We have to change the practice of cultivating transplanted variety of paddy to direct sowing of rice (DSR). Water saving is 35% in DSR and the requirement will be 2,000 litres for a kilogram of rice. The second advantage is that the green house gas emission is reduced by 35% as water is not stagnating in this process. Labour cost of transplantation, which is about ₹3,000, is also saved. Overall saving will be at least ₹4,000 per acre," he says.

However, one of the major problem in the DSR is weeds. Without the water acting as a herbicide, the DSR method allows for a lot of weeds to crop up in the field. "So, we transferred a gene that is resistant to a herbicide. So, when farmers spray herbicide, weeds will be killed, not paddy," he says.

Xi Jinping promotes three India border command Generals to top PLA posts

Foreign Minister Wang Yi, 69, promoted to Politburo despite being above retirement age; actions suggest China's military and foreign policy are likely to have Xi's firm stamp in the next term

Ananth Krishnan

BEIJING

Three People's Liberation Army (PLA) Generals who have occupied key roles leading the army in the Western Theatre Command, which borders India, have received significant promotions in the just concluded Communist Party Congress.

General He Weidong, 65, was on October 23, 2022 named the new Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC), which leader Xi Jinping will head for a precedent-defying third five-year term. He replaces the retiring Xu Qiliang.

Unprecedented move

General Zhang Youxia, 72, a close associate of Mr. Xi, will continue for another term as the other – and first ranking – Vice Chairman. Like Mr. Xi's continuation, both appointments have also broken precedent. General He becomes a Vice Chairman without ever serving on the CMC, essentially receiving a double promotion. General Zhang continues despite being above the retirement age.

As the highest ranking Vice Chairman, General Zhang will be Mr. Xi's right-hand man in the PLA, which has seen sweeping reforms since 2016, when Mr. Xi disbanded the Soviet-style general staff de-



Tall figure: Xi Jinping arriving to introduce members of the CPC's new Politburo Standing Committee in Beijing on Saturday. AFP

partments – which had grown into separate fiefdoms – and unified them under the direct command of the CMC.

He also stamped his authority by purging the then two highest ranking Generals – and former CMC vice chairmen – Xu Caihou and Guo Boxiong.

Active roles

General He is one of three PLA Generals promoted who were actively involved in recently leading the Army in the Western Theatre Command (WTC) which borders India, during a period of heightened tensions spanning the 2017 Doklam crisis and the Line of Actual Control (LAC) crisis that began in April 2020.

General He served as

the Army (ground forces) commander of the WTC from 2016 until 2019. The WTC was at the time headed by the long-serving General Zhao Zongqi, who was on retirement moved to the National People's Congress, the Parliamentary body.

General He was in 2019 promoted to head the Eastern Theatre Command, which gives him familiarity also with China's eastern frontiers, and specifically in dealing with the Taiwan issue.

Leading the LAC charge

The second promoted WTC General is Xu Qiling, 60, who has been appointed as one of 205 members of the Party's new Central Committee. He succeeded General He as WTC Army

Commander in 2020. He was in charge during the LAC crisis, and was promoted from Lieutenant General to General to head the WTC in July 2021, to replace General Zhao's successor, General Zhang Xudong, who reportedly passed away due to illness.

General Xu had a short stint before being moved to head the joint staff department of the CMC, where he is likely to continue.

His successor and current head of the WTC, General Wang Haijiang, 59, has also joined him on the Central Committee of the Party.

Xi's firm grip

The appointments suggest China's military, and foreign policy, are likely to have Mr. Xi's firm stamp in the next term.

Also breaking precedent, Foreign Minister Wang Yi, 69, was promoted to the Politburo despite being above the retirement age, and is likely to replace retiring Yang Jiechi as Director of the Party's Central Commission for Foreign Affairs as the next top diplomat.

He will continue as Foreign Minister until the NPC convenes in March. Another official trusted by Mr. Xi, the current envoy in the U.S. and Mr. Xi's former protocol chief Qin Gang, was also appointed to the Central Committee, and may be in line to succeed Mr. Wang.

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 provision 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 & privilege and issues arising out of these;

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.