



VEDHIK

DAILY NEWS ANALYSIS

03 - NOV - 2022



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.

CONTENTS

- GSP 01 A News - Gandhian, SEWA founder, and women's empowerment activist Elaben Bhatt dies
- GSP 02 A News - Concerned about security of Chinese in Pak. Xi to Sharif
- GSP 02 C Editorials - The most dangerous moment since 1962
- GSP 02 C News - India-U.K. FTA will tighten screws on generic drugs MSF
- GSP 02 C News - Netanyahu inching towards reclaiming power in Israel Part I
- GSP 02 C News - We want to be India's defence partner of choice U.S. official
- GSP 02 C News - Netanyahu inching towards reclaiming power in Israel Part II
- GSP 02 E Editorials - Can convicted legislators be disqualified from Assembly
- GSP 02 E News - Uttarakhand's Uniform Civil Code committee sifts through four lakh suggestions, plans more outreach
- GSP 02 G News - Protests in Leh, Kargil for statehood as Ladakh completes 3 years as U.T.
- GSP 02 K News - DMK seeks support for recalling T.N. Governor Part I
- GSP 02 K News - DMK seeks support for recalling T.N. Governor Part II
- GSP 02 M News - Pahari ethnic community added to Scheduled Tribes list of Jammu and Kashmir
- GSP 03 A News - RBI had to ensure recovery took hold before acting on inflation Das
- GSP 03 G News - India wheat export doubles to \$1.48 billion in April-Sept
- GSP 03 K News - Centre 'doubles' fertilizer subsidy as prices see a surge
- GSP 03 K News - India aims to end urea imports from 2025 Minister
- GSP 03 L Editorials - Seeds of hope
- GSP 03 L Editorials - The new hybrid variant of mustard
- GSP 03 P Editorials - A chance to expand the world's biosphere footprint

Gandhian, SEWA founder, and women's empowerment activist Elaben Bhatt dies

Mahesh Langa
AHMEDABAD

Elaben Bhatt, 89, Gandhian, leading women's empowerment activist and founder of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), passed away on Wednesday in a hospital in Ahmedabad after a brief illness.

The recipient of several national and international awards, including the Padma Bhushan, the Ramon Magsaysay Award, and the Indira Gandhi Peace Prize, she was globally recognised as a woman leader who carried out pioneering work in organising the informal sector for self-employment and empowerment of women not only in India but across South Asia.

Elaben was the Chairperson of the Sabarmati Ashram and recently resigned as the Chancellor of the Mahatma Gandhi-founded Gujarat Vidhya-



Elaben Bhatt

pith. In 2007, she became part of a group of world leaders called the Elders, founded by Nelson Mandela to promote human rights and peace across the world.

Working women

She was also a member of the Rajya Sabha and the Planning Commission in the 1980s. She served in many international organisations, including Women's World Banking, a global network of microfi-

nance organisations, which she co-founded. She also served as an Adviser to the World Bank. Founded by her in 1972, SEWA is one of the largest cooperatives working for women, with a base of over two million members from as many as 18 States in the country and in neighbouring nations.

"Sad to know about the death of Elaben Bhatt. She will be remembered long for her work for the promotion of women's empowerment, social service and education among the youth. Condolences to her family members and admirers," Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and many other political leaders also expressed their condolences over her demise.

Concerned about security of Chinese in Pak.: Xi to Sharif

Pakistan is a priority in China's neighbourhood diplomacy, Chinese President tells the PM, who is the first foreign head of government to visit Beijing following the start of Xi's third term

Ananth Krishnan
BEIJING

Chinese leader Xi Jinping told visiting Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif he was “deeply concerned” about the security of Chinese personnel working on projects in the country.

Mr. Xi also stressed Pakistan was “a priority in China's neighbourhood diplomacy”, as the two leaders held talks in Beijing.

Mr. Sharif is the first foreign head of government to visit Beijing following the start of Mr. Xi's third five-year term, after the conclusion of the Communist Party congress last month. Vietnam Communist Party chief Nguyen Phu Trong, who met Mr. Xi earlier this week on a party-to-party visit, was the first overseas visitor in Mr. Xi's new term, while German Chancellor Olaf



Mutual benefits: Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif meeting Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing on Wednesday. REUTERS

Scholz will visit China later this week, on Friday, underlining Beijing's stepped up diplomacy following the congress even as the “zero-COVID” policy remains in place.

Flood relief

Mr. Xi and Mr. Sharif discussed the flagship China Pakistan Economic Corridor plan, but did not announce any new major in-

vestments. The official *Associated Press of Pakistan* reported China offered an additional \$68 million in flood relief.

Mr. Xi pointedly noted in an official statement released by Beijing that he was “deeply concerned about the security of Chinese people in Pakistan and hopes that Pakistan will provide a reliable and safe environment for Chi-

nese institutions and personnel going to Pakistan”.

This follows a number of attacks on Chinese nationals in the country. In April, three Chinese were killed following a suicide attack near a Confucius Institute in Karachi. Mr. Xi also underlined Pakistan's importance to China, saying they had an “iron-clad friendship” and Beijing “placed Pakistan in a priority in our neighbourhood diplomacy.”

He also called for both sides “to create conditions” to carry forward the still-discussed upgrading of the Main-Line 1 railway line from Karachi to Peshawar.

The Associated Press of Pakistan reported Mr. Sharif and Mr. Xi “discussed key issues pertaining to the region” which included the situation in Kashmir. This was not, however, mentioned in the Chinese statements.

The most dangerous moment since 1962

In October 1962, when the United States discovered that the Soviet Union had moved nuclear missiles to Cuba, U.S. President John F. Kennedy called it “a deliberately provocative and unjustified change in the status quo which cannot be accepted by this country...” He ordered a naval quarantine of Cuba, thus blocking access for Soviet ships. He had appointed an executive committee of his National Security Council to advise him on possible reactions. While most members of the ExComm favoured airstrikes on Cuba targeting the Soviet missiles, Kennedy stuck to quarantine, which was also one of the recommendations of the committee. At the same time, he opened a back channel to Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev through his brother Robert Kennedy. “Even if he (President Kennedy) doesn’t want or desire a war, something irreversible could occur against his will. If the situation continues much longer, the President is not sure that the military will not overthrow him and seize power,” Robert Kennedy told the Soviet Ambassador in Washington. Khrushchev reciprocated to Kennedy’s message, which he saw as a “call for help”, and both leaders pulled their countries back from the brink of a nuclear war.

The world has seen several military conflicts since the Cuban missile crisis. There have been wars across continents. Both the former Soviet Union and the U.S. had launched interventions, invasions and proxy conflicts in weaker countries. But a 1962-like scenario, where two nuclear superpowers came eyeball to eyeball never happened – until the outbreak of the Ukraine crisis. Eight months after Russia’s invasion of Ukraine began, this is what it looks like it is: a complex polycentric conflict where, inside Ukrainian territory, Russia’s nuclear-armed forces are battling high-performing Ukrainian troops that are directly assisted, in terms of money, weapons and fighters, by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the trans-Atlantic nuclear alliance.

Origins of crises

Besides fears of the existing conflict escalating into a direct Russia-NATO war, there are similarities and dissimilarities between the Cuban missile crisis and the Ukraine war. The similarities begin with the origins of both crises. Khrushchev secretly moved the nuclear missiles to Cuba after the failed Central Intelligence Agency-backed Bay of Pigs invasion of the island in 1961, where the guerillas, under the command of Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, had overthrown a pro-American military dictatorship in 1959. Later, the Soviets claimed that the missiles were



Stanly Johny

stanly.johny@
thehindu.co.in

for defensive purposes, but the U.S. found the presence of nuclear missiles in an island 145 km off the coast of Florida as a security threat. Put simply, the U.S. would not accept any challenge to its hegemony in the western hemisphere, its immediate periphery.

The origins of the Ukraine crisis can be traced to NATO’s eastward expansion. When NATO took in more countries and pushed its borders towards Russia’s periphery, both the group’s leadership and the new members emphasised that they were a defensive alliance and did not pose any threat to Moscow. They also argued that the former Soviet allies and the (newly born) republics were independent entities that could take sovereign decisions on whether they should join any military alliance or not. Yet, like Kennedy and his national security team did not accept the Soviet argument that the Cuban missiles were for defensive purposes, or that Cuba was an independent country which could take sovereign decisions on whether it should host Soviet missiles or not, Russian President Vladimir Putin and his team did not buy NATO’s similar arguments. Mr. Putin saw NATO’s expansion into and growing influence on the old Russian rim land as a national security threat to Russia, just like Kennedy saw the presence of Soviet missiles in the Caribbean as a national security threat to the U.S.

But the similarities end there. The Cuban missile crisis was a crisis that was resolved before it actually slid into war, whereas in the case of Ukraine, a full-scale war began on February 24 with the Russian invasion, which makes the crisis even more complex and demands more urgent calls for enhanced diplomatic efforts. Mr. Putin and U.S. President Joe Biden missed the bus to avert an actual conflict, but they can still avert a catastrophic direct Russia-NATO war. But are they doing anything to meet that?

The spiral model

The current phase of the Ukraine war is a textbook example of what international relations theorists call a spiral model, where parties treat each other with matching hostility, sharply escalating an existing conflict. Even if there is no desire for a nuclear war on both sides, escalatory spirals could be dangerous, which, if left unchecked, could take their own course. Still, why is there no conscious diplomatic effort to create conditions for talks?

One way to look at conflicts is to take a moral, normative view of them. The mainstream narrative in the U.S. about Mr. Putin matches this view – he is the aggressor, who has violated international laws and norms by invading Ukraine

and annexing its territories, and, therefore, Washington would not hold talks with the Kremlin. This normative absolutism is not consistent with the past and present of American foreign policy. The U.S. itself has violated UN norms several times in its interventions abroad and it had no moral qualms in recognising its ally Israel’s illegal annexation of Syria’s Golan Heights or recognising the disputed Jerusalem, half of which has been illegally annexed by Israel, as its capital.

A more realistic explanation is that Washington sees an opportunity in the Ukraine war to weaken Russia by continuing to arm Ukraine. As per this narrative, Russian failure in Ukraine could have political consequences, including challenges to Mr. Putin’s hold on power. So, escalation becomes a policy of choice. The Russians, on the other side, see the U.S. as the main force behind Ukraine, before and after the war began. As a failure in Ukraine will have both security and political consequences, Mr. Putin cannot afford to make compromises. Escalation becomes the way ahead for him as well. This is a dangerous slope.

Strategic empathy

Unless the leaders break the spiral, the conflict will keep deteriorating, as was evident in Russia’s recent attacks on Ukraine’s infrastructure and the Ukrainian drone attack in Sevastopol, Crimea. To break the spiral, the parties will have to first look beyond their personalist view of the conflict and try to understand the structural conditions which their rivals operate from. This would allow the leaders to empathise with their rivals, irrespective of their moral positions (what Realists call strategic empathy), and take difficult decisions to make peace. Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky says he would not talk with Russia as long as Mr. Putin is the President. Mr. Biden says “Putin cannot remain in power”. But is there any certainty that the security situation in Europe would be better if the Putin regime collapses? Did the collapse of the communist Soviet Union bring lasting peace to Europe? For Mr. Putin, Washington is the sum of all evil. But how can he expect President Biden to sit idle when Russia seeks to redesign the European security architecture through force? Which American President will do so?

Kennedy and Khrushchev had shown strategic empathy to understand the predicament both leaders were in, and they could make difficult choices. But Mr. Putin and Mr. Biden are in their own silos, blaming each other and blindly pursuing their goals through force, while Ukraine is on fire. The sooner they come out of it, the better for the world.

The Ukraine war is a textbook example where the parties involved are treating each other with matching hostility – a dangerous slope – sharply escalating the conflict

India-U.K. FTA will tighten screws on generic drugs: MSF

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI/LONDON

The proposals on intellectual property (IP) rights in the draft India-U.K. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) will hurt the global supply of generic medicines, Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières or MSF) warned on Wednesday. In a press note, the international organisation said the intellectual property chapter of the India-U.K. FTA contains “harmful IP provisions”. The IP-related chapter, leaked on October 31, showed the controversial provisions tabled by the U.K. to “tighten the screws on producing, supplying and exporting affordable generic medicines from India”.

“Given the disastrous consequences this leaked IP chapter could have on the global supply of generic medicines, the U.K. government should withdraw it completely,” Leena Menghaney, South Asia head of MSF’s Access Campaign, said.

In a “Fact Sheet”, MSF has argued that the demand for “harmonisation”

It is feared that the FTA provision goes directly against the current Indian patent law

of Indian patent law with the U.K.’s laws will lead to dilution of important provisions in the Indian patent system necessary for manufacturing generics.

“Article E.10 of the leaked IP chapter stipulates that both parties “shall not” make patent opposition proceedings available BEFORE the grant of a patent. In effect, this provision applies only to India as the U.K. does not have a pre-grant opposition system – this goes directly against the current Indian patent law, which allows patent opposition proceedings both before and after the grant of a patent,” the MSF.

A U.K. government spokesperson said they would not comment on the “alleged leaks” and will sign “a deal that is fair, reciprocal, and ultimately in the best interests of the British people and the economy.”

Netanyahu inching towards reclaiming power in Israel



Strong show: Likud party leader Benjamin Netanyahu waves as he addresses his supporters in Jerusalem on Wednesday. REUTERS

Agence France-Presse
JERUSALEM

Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu inched towards reclaiming power on Wednesday after projected election results showed a majority government was within reach for the veteran right-winger, though the outlook could shift as ballots are counted.

If the exit polls hold, it would mark a dramatic co-

meback for Mr. Netanyahu, Israel's longest-serving Premier, whose Likud party is poised to form a coalition with its ultra-Orthodox Jewish allies and a rising extreme-right.

"We are close to a big victory," Mr. Netanyahu told supporters at a rally in Jerusalem early on Wednesday.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

We want to be India's defence partner of choice: U.S. official

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

“We want to be the partner of choice for India,” a senior U.S. defence official said on Wednesday while stating that America is the best partner when it comes to sharing high-end technology and next-generation equipment while India diversifies its military arsenal ending heavy dependence on Russia. To a question on the situation on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and conversation between India and the U.S., Rear Admiral Michael L. Baker, the U.S. Defence Attaché in India, said the two countries worked closely to exchange views and both could not take the eye off the ball on regional security issues.

“India has the ability to choose its partners. It has made a conscious decision to diversify over the last decade. And it has made a conscious decision to partner with the U.S. on a host of areas. My focus is on how to take that forward,” he said in a conversation with a small group of journalists. There are some pretty challenges across sharing high-end technology and next-generation equipment, and the U.S. is the best partner in that, he said.

To a question on the recent submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) test by *INS Arihant*, India's nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine, the Rear Admiral said, “A country is able to go through and test its lawful and sovereign capabilities in a responsible way. From what I can tell, India has done that in a responsible way.”

On the continuing stand-off in eastern Ladakh and the situation along the LAC, he said it was certainly an important area for them and they remained watchful. “We work closely with India to exchange our views on this area to make sure that we



Michael L. Baker

have a clear understanding of what we think may be happening. I think it is a space both for India and the U.S. to remain watchful. We can't take the eye off the ball of regional security issues.”

There has been talk of India and the U.S. doing joint patrols in the past which was turned down by the Defence Ministry at that point. India has since carried out joint patrols with France. Asked if the time has come for joint patrols between India and the U.S., he said to one degree, they were conducting joint patrols, referring to the broad naval cooperation.

India has ships inside the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF). Alongside the U.S., “we operate in the same operational space in the North Arabian Sea, in the Arabian Gulf”, he noted. “As India makes its deployments into the Pacific, it is almost continually operating with the U.S. forces. Whether we make some sort of formal declaration is kind of a secondary question. Navies of the world are out there on the sea together. We can't help but be in the space together... We operate together pretty routinely,” he said.

On the efforts for co-development and co-production of military hardware, he said they had good meetings this year on the next steps of the the Defence Technology Trade Initiative (DTTI). “It is a focus area of our dialogue right now,” he said.

Netanyahu might reclaim power in Israel

“We don’t know the final results yet, but if the results are like the exit polls, I will form a national [right-wing] government,” Mr. Netanyahu said.

But his main rival, caretaker Prime Minister Yair Lapid, told his supporters in Tel Aviv that “nothing is decided”, and that his centrist Yesh Atid party “will wait patiently... for the final results”.

Projections from three Israeli networks put Mr. Netanyahu’s Likud on track for a first-place finish, with between 30 and 32 seats. That number, combined with projected tallies for the extreme-right Religious Zionism alliance and the two ultra-Orthodox Jewish parties, would give the bloc backing Mr. Netanyahu between 61 and 62 seats.

An outright victory for the bloc would end the short reign of an alliance of eight parties under Mr. Lapid that managed to oust Mr. Netanyahu last year before collapsing itself.

Can convicted legislators be disqualified from Assembly?

Why were the two Uttar Pradesh legislators awarded prison sentences? Under what conditions can an MLA/MP, sentenced by the Court, be removed from their positions?

K. Venkataraman

The story so far:

Two Uttar Pradesh legislators were convicted on criminal charges in recent days, but only one of them has been disqualified and his seat declared vacant by the State's Legislative Assembly secretariat. Azam Khan, the Samajwadi Party MLA for Rampur, was sentenced to a three-year jail term, for making an inflammatory speech in 2019. As disqualification upon conviction on a criminal charge, accompanied by a prison sentence of two years and more is immediate, the Assembly secretariat declared his seat vacant. However, there has been no such response in regard to Vikram Singh Saini, MLA from Khatauli, after he was sentenced to two years' imprisonment in connection with the Muzaffarnagar riots of 2013.

When does conviction attract disqualification?

Section 8 of the Representation of the People Act (RPA), 1951, contains provisions aimed at decriminalising electoral politics. There are two categories of criminal cases that attract disqualification upon conviction. In the first category are offences that entail disqualification for a period of six years upon any conviction. If the punishment is a fine, the six-year period will run from the date of conviction, but if there is a prison sentence, the disqualification will begin on the date of conviction, and will continue up to the completion of six years after the date of release from jail. Major IPC offences are included under this head: making speeches that cause enmity between groups (Sec.153A) and doing so in a place of worship (Sec.505), bribery and personation during elections and

other electoral offences, offences relating to rape and cruelty to women by husband and latter's relatives. Besides, serious provisions of special laws such as the Protection of Civil Rights Act, Customs Act, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act etc are among the category of offences that entail disqualification regardless of the quantum of punishment. Laws for prevention of Sati, corruption, terrorism and insult to national flag and national anthem etc are also part of this group. All other criminal provisions form a separate category under which mere conviction will not entail disqualification. A sentence of at least two years in prison is needed to incur such disqualification.

Is there legal protection for legislators against disqualification?
Under Section 8(4) of the RPA, legislators could avoid immediate disqualification

until 2013. The provision said that with respect to a Member of Parliament or a State legislator the disqualification will not take effect for three months. If within that period, the convicted legislator files an appeal or revision application, it will not take effect until the disposal of the appeal or application. In other words, the mere filing of an appeal against conviction will operate as a stay against disqualification. In *Lily Thomas vs. Union of India*, the Supreme Court struck down clause (4) as unconstitutional, thus removing the protection enjoyed by lawmakers.

Can the disqualification be removed?

The Supreme Court has the power to stay not only the sentence, but also the conviction of a person. In some rare cases, conviction has been stayed to enable the appellant to contest an election. However, the SC has made it clear that such a stay should be very rare and for special reasons. The RPA itself provides a remedy through the Election Commission. Under Sec. 11 of the Act, the EC may record reasons and either remove, or reduce the period of, a person's disqualification. The EC exercised this power for Sikkim Chief Minister P.S. Tamang, who served a one-year sentence for corruption, and reduced his disqualification so as to contest a bye-election and remain in office.

THE GIST

Section 8 of the Representation of the People Act (RPA), 1951, contains provisions aimed at decriminalising electoral politics.

There are two categories of criminal cases that attract disqualification upon conviction. In the first category are offences that entail disqualification for a period of six years upon any conviction. All other criminal provisions form a separate category under which mere conviction will not entail disqualification.

The Supreme Court has the power to stay not only the sentence, but also the conviction of a person. In some rare cases, conviction has been stayed to enable the appellant to contest an election.

Uttarakhand's Uniform Civil Code committee sifts through four lakh suggestions, plans more outreach

Responses to 'One law for all' cover a range of subjects, from 'reverse inheritance' and banning polygamy and polyandry to same age of marriage for men and women; most comments received by panel from tribal belts and rural and hilly areas

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

The five-member team formed to frame the draft for a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in Uttarakhand is currently struggling to read and analyse over three lakh handwritten letters, 60,000 e-mails, and 22,000 suggestions uploaded on its website by residents of the hill State sharing their view and recommendations on "One law for all".

Among the suggestions, which have mostly been received from tribal belts and rural and hilly areas, are policy interventions on "reverse inheritance" (parents to have rights over their offspring's property), same age of marriage for both genders, and a total ban on polygamy and polyandry.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, a member of the panel said they were currently in the process of reading the approximately four lakh sug-



Seeking views: The UCC panel members with residents of Mana village in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

gestions, which may take a month or possibly more time. "We are trying to incorporate all the suggestions given by the people, especially related to gender equality," the member said.

The State has a population of about one crore. Asked how an unbiased uniform law can emerge from the views of about 4% of the population (going by the number of suggestions received), a senior member said the exercise was

not even needed to legislate if the government intended to do so. "Asking suggestions from people is a healthy way to make laws. This 4% may look a small number but the suggestions we have received are great and worth incorporating," the member added.

The panel has so far held 18 meetings at various places in the State, including at the last village in Chamoli district, Mana. People in Nabi, Gunji and Ku-

ti villages of Pithoragarh district along the India-Nepal border have also responded. All these villages are in tribal-dominated regions.

The panel is going to recommence its public outreach to create awareness on the subject from November 9. "The tribal community was more aware of the UCC than those in the plains. They wanted gender neutral laws for all, in matters pertaining to marriage, divorce and succession, to name a few," the member said.

Another member said elderly people in Pithoragarh told them that they had spent all they had on the education of their children and on sending them to cities but received nothing in return when they became old and helpless. "They questioned us that if children have equal rights in parents' income and property, parents should also be given equal rights [on their children's

property] so that they can also live a decent life as their children live," the member said, adding that this suggestion would be included in the recommendations, along with another in which young men and women asked to have the same age for marriage.

"We have received suggestions to ban polygamy and polyandry, which too is common in the interior areas of the State," the member said.

The expert committee was formed by the Uttarakhand government to examine ways for implementing a UCC. A website was launched in September, seeking views from the public by October 22.

The committee is headed by retired judge Ranjana Prakash Desai. The other members are retired judge Pramod Kohli, social worker Manu Gaur, retired IAS officer Shatrughan Singh, and Vice-Chancellor of Doon University Surekha Dangwal.

Protests in Leh, Kargil for statehood as Ladakh completes 3 years as U.T.

Peerzada Ashiq

KARGIL

Ladakh's twin districts of Kargil and Leh on Wednesday witnessed street protests to press for demands of statehood and special status under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, as the region completed three years of Union Territory (UT) status this month.

Hundreds of protesters raised slogans such as "Home Minister pay attention, we are not begging" and "Pay attention, we are demanding our rights" and marched on the streets.

In Leh, the street protest was spearheaded by the Apex Body-Leh (ABL), an amalgam of religious and political parties in the district. ABL head Thupstan Chhewang led the rally



On strike: Groups demanding statehood for Ladakh staging a protest in Kargil on Wednesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ly from the NDS Memorial Sports Ground to Polo Ground. In Kargil, the Kargil Democratic Alliance, an amalgam of religious and political parties, organised street rallies in the town.

"The Government of India should pay heed to our demand to grant statehood. In case statehood is difficult to grant, let La-

dakh be a U.T. with a legislature," Mr. Chhewang said.

He said the groups from Leh and Kargil were meeting again to chalk out a timeline for protests if the demands were not met by the Centre.

On January 6, 2021, the Union Home Minister constituted a committee under

Minister of State for Home G. Kishan Reddy to have a dialogue with the representatives from Ladakh "to find an appropriate solution to the issues related to language, culture and conservation of land in Ladakh".

The KDA and Apex Body-Leh (ABL) have been jointly fighting for the restoration of statehood and special status on the lines of the rights granted to the tribal areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram to safeguard local culture, language and demography.

The government on Wednesday issued a notification empowering the Lieutenant Governor (L-G) of Ladakh to make rules for recruitment to the Public Services Group-A and Group-B Gazetted posts.

DMK seeks support for recalling T.N. Governor

Its Lok Sabha member T.R. Baalu urges Opposition parties to sign a joint petition urging the President to remove R.N. Ravi; Congress agrees to be on board, while others are yet to take a stand

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Seeking allies in its tussle with Tamil Nadu Governor R.N. Ravi, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) has called on Opposition parties to sign a joint petition asking President Droupadi Murmu to recall him immediately. The Congress has already come on board, but other parties are yet to make their stand clear.

In a letter to Opposition parties on Wednesday, DMK Lok Sabha MP T.R. Baalu urged them to sign the joint memorandum, and the Congress has agreed to do so.

“Governors who abide by their constitutional role are now an extinct species. Each one appointed since

Power point

Governor R.N. Ravi’s remarks on various issues have drawn criticism from various parties in Tamil Nadu



MPs from the DMK and like-minded political parties are requested to kindly visit Anna Arivalayam headquarters to sign a memorandum addressed to the President, pertaining to the immediate withdrawal of the Governor of Tamil Nadu

T.R. BAALU’S LETTER

2014 has been a disgrace and has danced to the tune of *hum do* (we two) even before that tune has been played,” Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh told *The Hindu*.

The DMK’s letter joins a growing chorus of voices

against the office of Governor in multiple States.

Undemocratic: CPI(M)

Addressing a press conference here on Monday, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) general secretary Sitaram Yechury had also

urged like-minded Opposition parties to come together for a protest against the alleged “undemocratic and anti-constitutional” acts of Governors.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

DMK seeks support for recalling T.N. Governor

The Left Front government in Kerala is also locked in a very bitter and public fight with Governor Arif Mohammed Khan. CPI general secretary D. Raja had recently called for abolishing the post of Governor, calling it redundant in a Parliamentary democracy.

On Sunday, leaders of the DMK-led Secular Progressive Alliance had issued a joint statement accusing Mr. Ravi of deliberately expressing views to create confusion. “His speeches are given importance since he is the Governor of the State. If he is expressing views to please the BJP leadership to get a higher position for himself, he should quit the Governor post. He cannot do it so long as he remains the Governor of the State,” it said.

Pahari ethnic community added to Scheduled Tribes list of Jammu and Kashmir

Abhinay Lakshman

NEW DELHI

The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) has now cleared the way for the inclusion of the 'Pahari ethnic group' on the Scheduled Tribes list of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

The proposal green-lit by the commission also called for the inclusion of the "Paddari tribe", "Koli" and "Gadda Brahman" communities to be included on the ST list of J&K. This comes within a month of Union Home Minister Amit Shah announcing in a public address in Rajouri that the Pahari community would be given reservation in jobs and education. Government sources said that after several meetings of the commission, the panel cleared the proposal for their inclusion.

"The commission has examined the proposal received from the Ministry of

After several meetings of the commission, the panel cleared the proposal

Tribal Affairs... The commission supports the proposal on the basis of the recommendation of the Office of the Registrar General of India [RGI]," the NCST concluded.

The suggestion for the inclusion had come from the commission set up for socially and educationally backward classes in the Union Territory, headed by Justice (Retd.) G.D. Sharma. With the delimitation of the newly-formed UT having been done and the Election Commission of India looking to hold elections there soon, Mr. Shah had promised that his government was working to implement the recommendations of the Justice Sharam Commission, while

addressing a public rally on October 4 in Rajouri in Pir Panjal Valley, where most Paharis reside.

The delimitation commission has reserved six of the nine Assembly segments in the Pir Panjal Valley for STs.

The Pir Panjal valley is also home to Gujjars and Bakarwals, who are already categorised as STs, and have expressed resentment over the possibility of the inclusion of Paharis in the ST list.

While promising Pahari ST status, Mr. Shah had also vowed that the government will not dilute the share of benefits available to Gujjars and Bakarwals in the area and sought the support of all three communities.

Once the NCST and the Office of the RGI have approved the proposal for inclusion, all that remains to be done is for the Union Cabinet to give the final nod.

RBI had to ensure recovery took hold before acting on inflation: Das

Central bank did not want to risk the costs to the economy and the people of the country by tightening policy too early, asserts Governor; Russia's war with Ukraine that started on February 24 changed the picture on inflation, he observes

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

A day before writing to the government detailing reasons for the central bank's protracted failure to keep inflation below 6% as mandated by law, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das on Wednesday asserted that while there had been slippage in the inflation trajectory, any premature policy tightening could have proved costly for the country.

"We did not want to upset the process of recovery, we wanted the economy to safely land, reach the shores" before trying to



Stress on stability: 'Today, growth momentum has sustained, inflation is expected to moderate, financial sector is stable'. PTI

pull down inflation, Mr. Das told bankers at FIBAC 2022, an annual banking conclave. "But February 24 [the day Russia invaded

Ukraine] changed the entire picture," he added.

Stating that the counterfactual also needed to be appreciated, he said, "In

the process [of dealing with the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and war-induced imported inflation] there has been a slippage in our inflation trajectory to keep inflation below 6%, but it would have proved very costly for the economy, the citizens of this country. They would have paid a high cost," he asserted.

'Growth has sustained'

"Today, I can say with confidence that the whole debate about RBI [being] behind the curve has ended. Today, as we stand, the growth momentum has sustained, inflation is ex-

pected to moderate, the financial sector is stable and resilient, the balance sheets of banks are looking robust, corporate sector balance sheet is also strong, the MSME sector has withstood the crisis and there has been credit offtake," he added.

Underlining that domestic inflation remained elevated, he said the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was closely monitoring the inflation trends as well as the effect of its past actions. "In our view, price stability, sustained growth and financial stability need not be mutually exclusive," Mr. Das emphasised.

India wheat export doubles to \$1.48 billion in April-Sept.

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The country's wheat exports more than doubled to \$1.48 billion during April-September as compared with the year-earlier period, the Commerce Ministry said.

Though the government banned wheat exports in May, some shipments are allowed to meet food security needs of the countries that request for it.

"Wheat export rose to \$1,487 million in April-September from \$630 million in April-September 2021," the Ministry said.

Supply disruption

The global wheat supply has been seriously disrupted because of the Russia-Ukraine war. Both nations



are major wheat producers.

The Ministry also said exports of agricultural and processed food products rose 25% during the six-month period of the fiscal.

The overall export of Agricultural and Processed Food Export Development Authority (APEDA) products increased to \$13.77 billion in April-September 2022 from \$11.05 billion in the year-earlier period.

For 2022-23, an export target of \$23.56 billion has been fixed by APEDA and export of \$13.77 billion has already been achieved in the six-month period.

Fresh fruit exports

Similarly, export of fresh fruits increased to \$313 million from \$301 million a year earlier. Export of lentils rose from \$135 million to \$330 million.

Basmati rice exports, too, increased to \$2.28 billion from \$1.66 billion a year earlier. Shipments of non-basmati rice registered a growth of 8% to \$3.20 billion.

Similarly, export of poultry products increased 83% to \$57 million, while shipments of dairy products climbed 58% to \$342 million.

Centre 'doubles' fertilizer subsidy as prices see a surge

Cabinet approves a subsidy of ₹51,875 crore for nitrogen, phosphorus, potash and sulphur for phosphatic and potassium fertilizers for rabi season; highest subsidy so far, says Union Minister

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Considering the huge increase in the prices of fertilizers in global market, the Centre has "doubled" the fertilizer subsidy for this rabi season. A meeting of the Union Cabinet here on Wednesday approved a subsidy of ₹51,875 crore for nitrogen, phosphorus and potash (NPK) and sulphur for phosphatic and potassium fertilizers for the ongoing rabi season.

From the budget estimate of ₹21,000 crore of nutrient-based subsidy, the amount has been more than doubled, said Union Minister for Fertilizers and Chemicals Mansukh Mandaviya. Briefing media persons after the meeting, he said the Centre had revised the subsidy keeping the increasing market prices in mind.

'Highest so far'

He said the total fertilizer subsidy for the rabi season, including ₹80,000 crore



Small relief: A farmer carries his harvested paddy for transport in Odisha. BISWARANJAN ROUT

for urea, would be ₹1,38,875 crore and for both the rabi and kharif, the subsidy amount would be ₹2.25 lakh crore. "This is the highest subsidy so far. Last year it was ₹1.65 lakh crore," Mr. Mandaviya said and added that as commercial prices had doubled due to the Ukraine-Russia conflict and the logistics issues due to

pandemic the Centre decided to double the subsidy component too. "Increased prices would have burdened the farmers. We have ensured that there will not be any increase in the fertilizer prices in the next six months," he said.

Mr. Mandaviya said a bag of diammonium phosphate cost ₹1,350 and it would have cost ₹2,650

without subsidy. On urea, he said, the subsidy was around ₹2,400 a bag. It was being sold for about ₹266 instead of the market price of ₹2,700.

He said the Centre had taken measures to increase production of urea in India. While the requirement was 350 lakh tonnes, the production in the country was 250 lakh tonnes. He said four new plants were coming up and nano urea would also replace the use of urea slowly. Mr. Mandaviya said the country had enough stock of fertilizers for this season and reports about farmers queuing up to buy fertilizers were blown out of proportion.

The Centre said the move would help the farmers. "This will enable smooth availability of all P&K fertilizers to the farmers during rabi 2022-23 at affordable prices and support the sector. The volatility in the international prices of fertilizers and raw materials has been primarily absorbed by the Centre," a release said.

India aims to end urea imports from 2025: Minister

Reuters

NEW DELHI

India aims to end imports of urea from 2025 as the nation boosts its local production capacity with the commissioning of new plants, fertilisers minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Wednesday.

“We are aiming for ending our dependence on imported urea by 2025... our five new plants will be commissioned by then,” he told reporters.

Production of indigenous local urea containing nanoparticles of the crop nutrient would rise to 5 MT by 2025, he said, adding PM Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Ramagundam plant on November 12.

Seeds of hope

Scientific consent must dictate product availability to farmers and consumers

After years of being in limbo, there is a surge of optimism around DMH-11, or Dhara Mustard Hybrid-11, a variety developed using genetic engineering techniques by Indian scientists and public funds. The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC), the apex regulator and an arm of the Environment Ministry, last week cleared the variety for environmental release. The seed can be grown in fields for producing more of its kind and is a precursor to it being approved for commercial release. DMH-11 employs genes from soil bacterium that makes mustard, a self-pollinating plant, amenable to being crossed with other varieties and producing hybrid varieties. Hybrid varieties are generally more vigorous and, in the case of mustard, an oil seed, will produce more oil. Despite having varieties of mustard, India continues to be a net oil importer due to poor yields. The food crisis due to the Ukraine war has only exacerbated the problem. Despite decades-long trials, mustard hybrids have not made it to Indian farmers because of activists opposed to genetic modification technology in principle and some farmer groups that believe them to be dangerous.

While several top scientists and agricultural experts have cheered the GEAC approval, the celebration ought to be muted. In 2017 too, GEAC had cleared the plant and then did a backtrack by introducing additional tests after protests. In 2009, GEAC had cleared Bt Brinjal, a transgenic food crop, only to be over-ruled by the UPA government – again after protests. Agriculture, being a State subject, may merit political scrutiny before a seed can be commercially released; however, in the case of transgenic technology, these decisions have only served to throttle technological progress. The hold, or the so-called ‘moratorium’, on Bt Brinjal persists and it was only in 2020 that GEAC approved fresh field trials, which were in effect repetitions of earlier tests. It is unclear if it will be available in the immediate future. The barnase-barstar system, used in DMH-11, is promising but already outdated given that cutting-edge technology such as CRISPR is in vogue. DMH-11 alone may not be the panacea for India’s edible oil crisis and rather represents a platform technology that requires seed companies to invest and develop their own hybrids. However, the uncertainty around regulatory policy regarding seed development hinders this. To signal transformation, the Government must second the approval by GEAC and restore the system, whereby scientific consent – rather than political considerations – determines the availability of products to farmers and consumers.

The new hybrid variant of mustard

How significant is the development of the Dhara Mustard Hybrid-II (DMH-II)? Why are some activist groups opposing the commercial release of the crop? What are their allegations? How many transgenic crops are commercially cultivated in India?

EXPLAINER

Jacob Koshy

The story so far:

The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC), India's apex regulator of genetically modified plants and food products, has approved the environmental release of Dhara Mustard Hybrid-II (DMH-II), a genetically-engineered variant of mustard. If approved for commercial cultivation it would be the first genetically modified food crop available to Indian farmers.

What is DMH-II?

DMH-II is a hybrid variant of mustard developed by researchers at The Centre for Genetic Manipulation of Crop Plants, at the University of Delhi. Deepak Pental, who has led the efforts to develop hybrid mustard at the Centre for decades and was a former Vice-Chancellor of the University, began with DMH-I, a hybrid variant that was developed without transgenic technology. DMH-I was approved for commercial release in northwest India in 2005-2006 but scientists have said that this technology wasn't bankable enough to consistently produce hybrid mustard. While India has several mustard varieties, it is a self-pollinating plant and therefore a challenge for plant-breeders to cross different mustard varieties and induce desirable traits. Being able to turn off this self-pollinating trait to enable such crossings and then restoring the trait, to enable seed production, is how the mustard plant's genes are to be manipulated. DMH-II is a result of a cross between two varieties: Varuna and Early Heera-2. Such a cross wouldn't have happened naturally and was done after introducing genes from two soil bacterium called barnase and barstar. Barnase in Varuna induces a temporary sterility because of which it can't naturally self-pollinate. Barstar in Heera blocks the effect of barnase allowing seeds to be produced. The result is DMH-II (where II refers to the number of generations after



Black and yellow: Women carry fodder for their cattle through a mustard field. REUTERS

which desirable traits manifest) that not only has better yield but is also fertile. DMH-II is a transgenic crop because it uses foreign genes from a different species.

Are hybrid mustard varieties better?

Trial conducted over three years by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) suggest that DMH-II has 28% higher yields than its parent Varuna and was 37% better than zonal checks, or local varieties that are considered the best in different agro-climatic zones. These trials were conducted at eight locations over three years. DMH-II rather than being an end in itself signals the proof of success of the barnase-barstar system that can act as a platform technology to develop newer hybrids. Scientists say that having better hybrids is necessary to meet India's rising edible-oil import bill. Mustard (*Brassica juncea*) is cultivated in 6-7 million hectares during the Rabi winter season predominantly in Rajasthan, Haryana, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh. India imports anywhere from 55-60% of its domestic edible-oil requirement. In 2020-21, around 13.3 million

tonnes of edible oil were imported at a cost of ₹1,17,000 crore according to the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences. This is primarily due to low productivity – of about 1-1.3 tonnes/hectare – that has been stagnant for over two decades. On the other hand, hybrid mustard and rapeseed are the dominant form of oil seeds in Canada, China and Europe. So, proponents say, the only way to improve India's productivity is to have more mustard hybrids.

Why is it controversial?

There are two main reasons why transgenic mustards are a topic of debate. The use of genes that are foreign to the species is one and secondly, the preparation of mustard hybrids require the use of another gene, called the bar gene, that makes it tolerant to a herbicide called glufosinate-ammonium. Activist groups allege that the GM mustard hasn't been evaluated as a herbicide tolerant crop posing potential risks. Finally, they allege, GM mustard plants may dissuade bees from pollinating the plant and this could have knock-off environmental catastrophes. Activist groups

have also been supported by the Swadeshi Jagran Manch, an Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh affiliate, who have consistently opposed GM crops.

What next for GM mustard?

This isn't the first time that the GEAC has cleared the environmental release of GM mustard. In 2017 too, the apex body had cleared it but the process got stalled after a case was lodged in the Supreme Court. The government, or specifically the Environment Ministry, hasn't officially supported GM mustard despite the GEAC being a body under it. Bt Brinjal, the first transgenic food crop, too was cleared by the GEAC in 2009 but was put on hold by the then-UPA government on the grounds that more tests were needed. Currently the only transgenic crop grown in India is Bt-cotton. The GEAC go-ahead only allows DMH-II to be grown in fields under the supervision of the ICAR. The Indian Agricultural Research Institute has said that the crop would be commercially available after "three seasons" now that they can be grown in large quantities for evaluation.

THE GIST

The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC), India's apex regulator of genetically modified plants and food products, has approved the environmental release of Dhara Mustard Hybrid-II (DMH-II), a genetically-engineered variant of mustard.

Trial conducted over three years by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) suggest that DMH-II has 28% higher yields than its parent Varuna and was 37% better than zonal checks, or local varieties that are considered the best in different agro-climatic zones.

Activist groups allege that the GM mustard hasn't been evaluated as a herbicide tolerant crop posing potential risks. They also allege that GM mustard plants may dissuade bees from pollinating the plant and this could have knock-off environmental catastrophes.

A chance to expand the world's biosphere footprint

November 3 will be the first 'The International Day for Biosphere Reserves', to be celebrated beginning 2022. The World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR) was formed in 1971, as a backbone for biodiversity conservation, ecosystem restoration, and living in harmony with nature. There are now 738 properties in 134 countries, including 12 in India, four in Sri Lanka, and three in the Maldives.

Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal do not have biospheres as yet, but help is on its way: The 'South and Central Asia MAB Reserve' Networking Meeting (where MAB stands Man and the Biosphere) is planned for 2023, to advance biosphere reserve establishment, and management. UNESCO is ready to assist in carrying out a professional potentiality analysis. In addition, an expert mission has been planned for spring 2023 – to Bhutan, India's north-east and the Sundarbans in Bangladesh.

An ideal platform to network

The WNBR, an amazing network of sites of excellence, is a unique tool for cooperation through sharing knowledge, exchanging experiences, building capacity and promoting best practices. Its members are always ready to support each other. This kind of help extended through the network is of great importance because the ecological carrying capacity of the planet earth has been exceeded. We have to revert to living in harmony with nature – to breathe clean air again, have access to enough good water, eat nutritious and affordable food, and live in dignity.

Our planet has been set up uniquely in the solar system so that ecosystems can function and provide a home for all living creatures. From whatever vantage point we look at nature conservation – an environmental, cultural or even a religious point of view – it is our responsibility to respect nature.

Benno Böer

is Chief, Natural Sciences Unit, UNESCO, New Delhi office

Miguel Clüsener-Godt

is former Director, UNESCO Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences

Günter Köck

is Member, Austrian MAB National Committee, Austria Academy of Sciences

Neha Midha

is Programme Officer, UNESCO New Delhi office

Expanding biosphere reserves across the world, especially in Asia, will help millions of people realise a better future, one that is in harmony with nature

The best concept for 'Living in Harmony with Nature' that exists in the United Nations system, is the WNBR, making these places more important today than ever before, where humans are thriving and relearning how to live with nature.

Opportunities in South Asia

In South Asia, over 30 biosphere reserves have been established. The first one was the Hurulu Biosphere Reserve, in Sri Lanka, with 25,500 hectares of tropical dry evergreen forest. In India, the first biosphere reserve was designated by UNESCO in 2000, namely, the blue mountains of the Nilgiris stretching over Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala. India's network of reserves has gone from strength to strength. Considering the massive long-term threats to human survivability (besides pandemics and armed conflicts), such as biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution and population dynamics, accelerated by the blind belief in technological solutions for all problems, we need many more biosphere reserves globally. South Asia offers countless options.

India is a vast sub-continent, an emerging superpower of unlimited opportunities. It has become an important global player on environmental sustainability issues. India is likely to become the world's most populated country in 2023.

Spain, with a landmass of 506,000 km², and a population of 47.4 million is one of the lead participating WNBR countries globally, with 53 properties. In a comparison with the surface size of Spain to India (ca. 3.3 million km²), and India's human population of ca. 1.4 billion people, it appears a good idea to carry out a potentiality analysis of biosphere reserves in India, with a focus on the seven sisters in north-east India.

South Asia has a very diverse set of ecosystems, with Bhutan, India, and Nepal combined having thousands of glaciers,

surrounded by lakes and alpine ecosystems.

As an article by Eric Falt highlights, biosphere reserves have all developed science-based management plans, where local solutions for sustainable human living and nature conservation are being tested, and best practices applied. Issues of concern include biodiversity, clean energy, climate, environmental education, and water and waste management, supported by scientific research and monitoring.

All biosphere reserves are internationally recognised sites on land, at the coast, or in the oceans. Governments alone decide which areas to nominate.

Before approval by UNESCO, the sites are externally examined. If approved, they will be managed based on a plan, reinforced by credibility checks while remaining under the sovereignty of their national government.

A perspective

Some of the countries in South Asia do not yet have any or enough biosphere reserves. In most, if not all cases, the political will is certainly there, but there is a lack of know-how and financial resources. Of course, more financial support from the richer nations and the private sector would be desirable to advance biosphere reserves in these countries. Bangladesh, Bhutan, and Nepal are on our priority list.

The existence of the new World Network of Mountain Biosphere Reserves provides a welcome opportunity for Bhutan and Nepal to establish their first biosphere reserves and participate in the world network. If these pockets of hope can expand, with at least one biosphere reserve per country in Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal until 2025 (with additional biosphere reserves in India's North-East and along the coasts) it will give realisation to millions of people that a better future is truly possible – one where we will truly live in harmony with nature.

Curious collage shows rhino horns are shrinking

Scientists analysed artwork and photographs to assess changes in horn length and human attitudes towards the animal

Rahul Karmakar
GUWAHATI

The horns of rhinoceroses may have become smaller over time from the impact of hunting, according to a recent study which analysed artwork and photographs of the animal spanning more than five centuries.

The study, published in the latest edition of *People and Nature* by the British Ecological Society, relied on a repository of images maintained by the Netherlands-based Rhino Research Center (RRC).

“We found evidence for declining horn length over time across species, per-



Rhino horn is valued in many cultures. RITU RAJ KONWAR

haps related to selective pressure of hunting, and indicating a utility for image-based approaches in understanding societal

perceptions of large vertebrates and trait evolution,” said the study, authored by scientists from the Universities of Helsinki and Cam-

bridge, as well as the RRC.

Five species face threat
Rhinos have long been hunted for their horns. The five surviving rhino species are threatened by habitat loss and hunting.

The study found that the rate of decline in horn length was highest in the critically endangered Sumatran rhino and lowest in the white rhino of Africa, the most commonly found species in the wild and in captivity.

This observation follows patterns seen in other animals, such as tusk size in elephants and horn length in wild sheep, which have been driven down by di-

rectional selection due to trophy hunting, the study said.

The RRC’s repository holds a collection of more than 4,000 rhino images, including artistic portrayals from 1481 and photographs, of which the earliest was taken in 1862. The scientists used this for two research approaches.

They studied 3,158 images to assess the changes in representations of rhinos and human interactions with the animal over 500 years. They identified 80 images of all five rhino species, to analyse changes in horn length over time, extracting morphological data from photographs.

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.