



VEDHIK

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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India abstains from UNSC vote on Myanmar, calls for quiet and constructive diplomacy


Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

India, along with Russia and China, abstained from a UN Security Council resolution criticising Myanmar's military regime, and instead called for "quiet, patient" and "constructive" diplomacy with the junta.

The vote, which marked the first Security Council resolution on the situation in Myanmar in decades, and in particular, since the military overthrew the National Unity Government (NUG) in February 2021, demanded an end to the violence and the release of all political prisoners, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi.

The resolution (S/



 In view of our commitment to the democratic process and the well-being of Myanmar people, India has decided to abstain on this Resolution

RUCHIRA KAMBOJ
UN Representative

RES/2669 (2022)) proposed by the United Kingdom, which was passed by 12 votes, made several references to the importance of the "ASEAN" process, referring to the "five-point consensus" passed by the 10-nation Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) last year.

"We believe that the complex situation in Myanmar calls for an approach

of quiet and patient diplomacy. Any other course will not help in resolving the long-standing issues which have prevented enduring peace, stability, progress and democratic governance," India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ruchira Kamboj, said. She added that the Resolution would only "entrench" the parties concerned in Myanmar, and its

neighbours such as India would be among those most affected by the instability in that country.

India's abstention is being criticised by human rights advocates in Myanmar as indicative of a soft position on the junta that has not only imprisoned most of the democratic leadership but has also prosecuted them on charges of treason. In an interview to *The Hindu* this month, Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi appealed to India to "support ASEAN efforts", adding that distancing from the ASEAN-led process would not be effective in helping Myanmar.

Ms. Kamboj complimented the U.K. for taking the views of Myanmar's

neighbours and ASEAN countries into account while drafting the UNSC resolution but said India could not support it.

"Quiet and constructive diplomacy is the desirable recourse for seeking constructive and enduring solutions in Myanmar... In view of these concerns and our firm commitment to the democratic process and the well-being of the people in Myanmar, India has decided to abstain on this Resolution," she said.



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Beyond weapons

The U.S. should push Ukraine to find a solution to the conflict with Russia

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky's visit to Washington, his first overseas travel since Russia's invasion on February 24, and the Biden administration's decision to send a new \$1.8 billion military aid package, including Patriot missile defence systems and precision-guided missiles, are a testament to the deep relationship Ukraine and the U.S. share in the time of war. Ukraine has already received American financial and military funding from approved assistance worth around \$54 billion. The U.S. supply of long-range missiles (HIMARS) has played a major role in Ukraine's recent battlefield advances in Kharkiv and Kherson, after its heavy losses in Donbas. The Patriot missile system is expected to strengthen Ukraine's air defences at a time when Russia is bombarding the energy grid and water supplies. In Washington, President Joe Biden discussed a 10-point peace formula with Mr. Zelensky (the details are unknown) and also promised continued support "for as long as it takes". Both leaders tried to send out a message of unity amid concerns of cracks in the western alliance as the war is continuing indefinitely with its massive economic costs.

The U.S. has gradually stepped up its supply of weapons to Ukraine, but is still wary of sending offensive weapons out of fears of escalating the conflict. Ukraine has relentlessly campaigned for more advanced weapons, including U.S. aircraft, tanks and long-range tactical missiles. While Mr. Biden said his administration would continue to back Ukraine, he also warned of the risks of sending offensive weapons to Ukraine, which could "break up NATO, the EU and the rest of world". Currently, Ukraine has a battlefield advantage, recapturing swathes of territories in the northeast and south. But Russia has air superiority. The Patriot missiles could offer some protection to Ukraine but could also prompt Russia to carry out heavier attacks. This leaves Mr. Biden in a dilemma. He is ready to bolster Ukraine's defence but does not want to provoke a wider war between Russia and NATO. His Ukraine policy should not be an open-ended weapons supply package. The U.S. could help its ally but it should also push for a sustainable solution to the conflict. It should use its continued support to Ukraine to mount pressure on Russia – as its weapons play a critical role in Kyiv's counterattacks – and persuade Ukraine to resume direct negotiations. At this point, no military solution seems likely. Unless there is a credible push for talks, the war is likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

Japan reverses nuclear plan adopted post Fukushima crisis

Associated Press

TOKYO

Japan on Thursday adopted a new policy promoting greater use of nuclear energy to ensure a stable power supply amid global fuel shortages and to reduce carbon emissions, in a major reversal of its phase-out plan following the Fukushima crisis.

The new policy says Japan must maximize the use of existing nuclear reactors by restarting as many of them as possible and prolonging the operating life of old reactors beyond their 60-year limit,



The Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in Okuma town

and by developing next-generation reactors to replace them.

Anti-nuclear sentiment and safety concerns rose sharply in Japan after the 2011 Fukushima disaster, and restart approvals have

since come slowly under stricter safety standards. Utility companies have applied for restarts at 27 reactors in the past decade. Seventeen have passed safety checks and only 10 have resumed operations. That was in line with Japan's earlier plan to phase out nuclear energy by 2030.

In a reversal, the new policy says nuclear power provides stable output and serves "an important role as a carbon-free baseload energy source in achieving supply stability and carbon neutrality" and pledges to "sustain use of nuclear power into the future."

What do the J&K Land Grants Rules, 2022 entail?

How will the new rules impact the current land owners in Jammu and Kashmir? Who is eligible for lease rights in the Union Territory after the amendment? Why are political parties opposing the new rules?

Peerzada Ashiq

The story so far:

The J&K Lieutenant Governor's administration, in the third week of December, notified fresh land rules under J&K Land Grant Rules-2022 and replaced the J&K Land Grants Rules-1960, which dealt with the special rules to grant government land on lease in erstwhile State of J&K. Under the previous rules, prime locations such as Srinagar, Jammu, Gulmarg and Pahalgam were opened up for construction of hotels, commercial structures and residential buildings in the past.

What do new land laws entail?

According to the new land laws, the leases of current land owners will not be extended in case of their lease expiry. It reads that all leases, except the subsisting

or expired residential leases, expired or determined prior to the coming into force of these rules or issued under these rules shall not be renewed and shall stand determined. Unlike the previous up to 99 years of lease, the lease period has been reduced to 40 years.

What is the L-G administration's plan for lease now?

An expert committee will enlist all properties where lease had ended. It will be e-auctioned afresh. The rules open bidding to "any person legally competent under Section 11 of the Indian Contract Act, 1872." These rules deem a person or an entity in default of Government Revenue accrued to the government under J&K Land Grant Act, 1960 or Government convicted under Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 shall not be eligible for participation in the auction.

According to now-repealed land laws, no such land shall be granted on lease to the person, who is not a permanent residence of the State; except where the Government, for the reasons to be recorded, relax this restriction in the interest of industrial or commercial development or in the favour of a registered charitable society.

Who all are eligible for lease rights in J&K after amendments?

The L-G administration has diversified the use of land on lease to education, healthcare, agriculture, tourism, skill development and development of traditional art, craft, culture and languages. The land could be leased for hydro-electric projects, stadiums, playgrounds, gymnasiums or other recreational purposes. It also included provisions for self-employment or for

housing purposes of ex-servicemen, war widows and the families of martyrs, one who has sacrificed his life in the line of duty. In a first, the land could also be used for facilities of migrant workers, buildings and other construction workers.

What will be the immediate impact of the amendments?

The new rules have hundreds of properties open for fresh auction, where outsiders could also participate. The government has not yet released the list of properties where lease has ended. The impact will be of great significance in tourist hotspot Gulmarg, where 56 hotels out of 59 have their leases expired already. Similarly, properties in Pahalgam, Srinagar and Jammu's Patnitop will go up for auction.

Why are regional parties opposing these amendments?

National Conference vice president Omar Abdullah termed it as "unfortunate and aimed at settling outsiders". He said the first right to these lease properties "belongs to those who were already settled here". Kashmir's two key traders' bodies, the Jammu Kashmir Hoteliers Club (JKHC) and the Chamber Of Commerce Industry Kashmir (CCIK), said J&K's economy would come to a grinding halt and urged the L-G to reconsider the decision.

THE GIST

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Centre rules out an increase in MSP for cotton, but farmers seek more

The relatively higher prices offered for the produce, which is above the MSP, has not offset the increased input costs, say farmers; bad-quality seeds and pest attacks add to the woes; they demand a ban on import of cotton and cotton seeds

A. M. Jigeesh
NEW DELHI

While cotton farmers in several States have demanded an increase in the minimum support price (MSP) of the crop, the Union government has said that it is “watching” the cotton production scenario and will decide accordingly.

A senior official of the Union Textile Ministry told *The Hindu* that the domestic prices of cotton right now were higher than its MSP.

“MSP operations will kick in if prices fall. At this point, it is not necessary. We are fully ready to come into MSP,” the official said, adding that the Cotton Corporation of India will start procurement if the market is unable to ensure the MSP.

The MSP for medium staple cotton for the 2022-23 kharif season is ₹6,080



Need more: The minimum support price for medium staple cotton for the 2022-23 kharif season is ₹6,080 a quintal. NAGARA GOPAL

a quintal. Though farmers said cotton got prices much higher than the MSP, it was inadequate given the rise in prices of inputs such as seeds, pesticides and fertilizers.

Price above MSP

For Praful Khandhadia, a cotton farmer from Rajkot, the fortunate absence of

pink bollworm – a major menace – meant a comfortable production, though he had to contend with other problems.

“The income from cotton was not good in the past four years. So I have not cultivated cotton on about 60% of my land. Sowing was less, but the production was good. The

harvest is going on. It will be over by mid-February,” he said.

Mr. Khandhadia is able to get ₹8,500 a quintal at present. “It is higher than the MSP. Last March, some farmers got even ₹15,000 a quintal, but the production was very less. Given the increased input cost, the MSP should be at least ₹10,000 a quintal. We are selling the crop at ₹8,500 because of our immediate household and farm requirements,” he said.

Dwindling yield

Harvest of cotton is over in Punjab. In Fazilka, a major cotton belt in Punjab, farmers are getting about ₹8,200 a quintal on average.

“The production was just three quintals on average for an acre here. We used to get at least 15 quintals from one acre. We have been demanding compensation for cotton farmers. The seed-supply-

ing companies are the major culprits for our losses. They should be held liable for supplying bad-quality seeds. Cotton is a cash crop for us. Our lives are dependent on this. But the companies are looting us,” Gurbhej Rohiwala, Bharatiya Kisan Union (Ekta-Ugrahan) Fazilka district president, said.

In Maharashtra, some farmers have got as much as ₹12,000 a quintal, Ajit Nawale, All India Kisan Sabha’s Maharashtra secretary, said. However, some have had a low production because of the pink bollworm attack.

“The prices are good because of the global situation. The import has decreased and that is the reason farmers are getting good prices. We have been demanding that cotton import should be banned at any cost. Along with this, cotton seeds import should also be stopped,” he said.

Need taxonomy, definitions to avoid 'greenwashing': Rao

Green infrastructure investment trusts, green bonds can help financing of green projects, says RBI Deputy Governor; stresses need for regulated entities to assess climate-linked financial risks

Press Trust of India

MUMBAI

Reserve Bank Deputy Governor M. Rajeshwar Rao on Thursday called for a taxonomy on green finance to avoid the risk of "greenwashing". Green financing refers to lending to environmentally sustainable economic activities.

Speaking at an event here, Mr. Rao said a formal definition of green finance along with a taxonomy "is the need of hour" and added that it will enable more precise tracking of finance flows to green sectors.

"A taxonomy would

Climate caution

With India looking to increase green financing to help mitigate climate change impacts, risks of 'greenwashing' also rise

- Clear definitions, taxonomy will help lenders better assess climate risk in their loan portfolio

- A list of environmentally sustainable activities will aid flow of financing to the sector



- Given India's climate commitments, green infrastructure investment trusts can help scale up financing, says RBI's Rao

help banks and financial institutions in better assessing the climate risk in their loan portfolio, scaling up... sustainable finance and mitigating the risk of greenwashing," he said.

The call for clear definitions and a classification system, establishing a list of environmentally sustainable economic activities, comes at a time when India is looking at increas-

ing green finance to help the climate. Greenwashing refers to dishonest practices aimed at duping people.

Mr. Rao also said that green infrastructure investment trusts could help scale up green finance, given the need to rapidly scale up finance because of the country's climate commitments.

"There is a need for regulated entities to develop and implement comprehensive frameworks for understanding and assessing the potential impact of climate-related financial risks in their business strategy and operations," the senior RBI official added.

The uncontrolled re-entries of satellites

What are the different stages of a rocket launch? How does uncontrolled re-entries of rockets into the earth's orbit cause damage? What are the dangers highlighted in the letter written by the Outer Space Institute (OSI)?

EXPLAINER

Vasudevan Mukunth

The story so far:

More than 140 experts and dignitaries have signed an open letter published by the Outer Space Institute (OSI) calling for both national and multilateral efforts to restrict uncontrolled re-entries – the phenomenon of rocket parts falling back to earth in unguided fashion once their missions are complete. Among others, the letter is addressed to S. Somanath, chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

What are the stages of a rocket launch?

The Soviet Union launched the first artificial satellite in 1957. Today, there are more than 6,000 satellites in orbit, most of them in low-earth (100-2,000 km) and geostationary (35,786 km) orbits, placed there in more than 5,000 launches. The number of rocket launches have been surging with the advent of reusable rocket stages.

Rockets have multiple stages. Once a stage has increased the rocket's altitude and velocity by a certain amount, the rocket sheds it. Some rockets jettison all their larger stages before reaching the destination orbit; a smaller engine then moves the payload to its final orbit. Others carry the payload to the orbit, then perform a deorbit manoeuvre to begin their descent. In both cases, rocket stages come back down – in controlled or uncontrolled ways.

What is an uncontrolled re-entry?

In an uncontrolled re-entry, the rocket stage simply falls. Its path down is determined by its shape, angle of descent, air currents and other characteristics. It will also disintegrate as it falls. As the smaller pieces fan out, the potential radius of impact will increase on the ground.

Some pieces burn up entirely while others don't. But because of the speed at which they're travelling, debris can be deadly.



On a rise: Today, there are more than 6,000 satellites in orbit, most of them in low-earth (100-2,000 km) and geostationary (35,786 km) orbits. AFP

A 2021 report of the International Space Safety Foundation said, “an impact anywhere on an airliner with debris of mass above 300 grams would produce a catastrophic failure, meaning all people on board would be killed”.

Most rocket parts have landed in oceans principally because earth's surface has more water than land. But many have dropped on land as well.

Why are scientists worried about the re-entries?

The OSI letter cited examples of parts of a Russian rocket in 2018 and China's Long March 5B rockets in 2020 and 2022 striking parts of Indonesia, Peru, India and Ivory Coast, among others. Many news reports have focused on Chinese transgressions of late, but historically, the U.S. has been the worst offender.

Parts of a SpaceX Falcon 9 that fell down in Indonesia in 2016 included two “refrigerator-sized fuel tanks”. If re-entering stages still hold fuel, atmospheric and terrestrial chemical contamination is another risk.

As per the letter, “Conservative esti-

mates place the casualty risk from uncontrolled rocket body re-entries as being on the order of 10% in the next decade” and that countries in the ‘Global South’ face a “disproportionately higher” risk of casualties.

The U.S. Orbital Debris Mitigation Standard Practices (ODMSP) require all launches to keep the chance of a casualty from a re-entering body to be below 0.01%. But the U.S. Air Force and the NASA have waived this requirement on multiple occasions.

A July 2022 study by researchers in Canada found that this threshold, which some other countries have also adopted, is “arbitrary and makes little sense in an era when new technologies and mission profiles enable controlled re-entries,” and because many places have become more densely populated.

There is no international binding agreement to ensure rocket stages always perform controlled re-entries nor on the technologies with which to do so. The Liability Convention 1972 requires countries to pay for damages, not prevent them. These technologies include wing-like attach-

ments, de-orbiting brakes, and extra fuel on the re-entering body, and design changes that minimise debris formation.

What can make minimum damage?

While the OSI letter admits that any kind of re-entry will inevitably damage some ecosystem, it recommends that bodies aim for an ocean in order to avoid human casualties.

The letter concludes by asking that future solutions be extended to re-entering satellites as well. Advances in electronics and fabrication have made way for smaller satellites, which are easier to build and launch in large numbers. These satellites experience more atmospheric drag than if they had been bigger, but they are also likelier to burn up during re-entry.

India's 300-kg RISAT-2 satellite re-entered earth's atmosphere in October after 13 years in low-earth orbit. The ISRO tracked it with its system for safe and sustainable space operations management from a month beforehand. It plotted its predicted paths using models in-house. The RISAT-2 eventually fell into the Indian Ocean on October 30.

THE GIST

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'Both nations not patrolling several points as agreed'

Dinakar Peri
Vijaita Singh

NEW DELHI

As several patrolling points in east Ladakh remain inaccessible to Indian troops more than two years after the Galwan clash, a source in the defence establishment told *The Hindu* that after disengagement, in some well-known areas, neither side is patrolling, as per the understanding reached during talks.

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‘No patrolling at several points on LAC’

The source said that “patrolling by both sides was affected in certain areas due to the events of 2020.” These points were regularly patrolled before April-May 2020 when China started amassing troops close to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh.

“Post disengagement from the areas that are well known, both sides are not patrolling as per the understanding reached during the talks. The understanding to disengage is based on the principle of equal and mutual security without prejudice to the LAC claims. Both sides are currently engaged in talks to resolve the balance issues including aspects of patrolling,” the defence source said.

India and China to keep dialogue channels open

The 17th round of senior-level military talks was held on December 20 'in an open, constructive manner', 10 days after the two Armies clashed in the Yangtse area of Arunachal Pradesh

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

India and China held the 17th round of Corps Commander-level talks on December 20, at the Chushul-Moldo border meeting point on the Chinese side, during which they agreed to continue dialogue through military and diplomatic channels and work out a "mutually acceptable resolution of the remaining issues at the earliest," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Thursday.

The talks – which were not announced ahead of time, unlike in the past – came 10 days after soldiers of the two Armies clashed at the Yangtse area in the Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh, resulting in injuries on both sides.



Keeping peace: A file photo of Army personnel carrying out drills near the LAC in Arunachal Pradesh. PTI

Building on the progress made after the last meeting on July 17, 2022, the two sides exchanged views on the resolution of the relevant issues along the Line of Actual Control in the western sector in an "open and constructive manner," the MEA said. "They had a frank and in-depth discussion, keeping in line with

the guidance provided by the State Leaders to work for the resolution of the remaining issues at the earliest which would help in restoration of peace and tranquillity along the LAC and enable progress in bilateral relations," it stated.

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'Both nations not patrolling several points as agreed'

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NEW DELHI

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India, China agree to continue dialogue

“In the interim, the two sides agreed to maintain the security and stability on the ground in the Western sector,” the MEA statement said.

Since the stand-off began in May 2020, the two sides have so far held 16 rounds of talks. Both sides disengaged from Pangong Tso in February 2021, from patrolling point 17 in the Gogra-Hot Springs area in August 2021 and from patrolling point 15 in early November. This is in addition to the disengagement from Galwan in 2020 after the violent clash there.

Last month, Army Chief General Manoj Pande said the situation along the LAC is “stable but unpredictable”, adding that five out of the seven friction points have been resolved, with the focus now on the remaining two points. Infrastructure development is going on “unabated”, he stated, noting that there are roads, helipads and airfields being built right up to the passes.

Reshaping the world's responses to the terror matrix

The world has been witnessing a flurry of meetings and conferences on the issue of countering terrorism worldwide. The list resembles an alphabetic soup, viz., meetings of the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee, the No Money for Terror Conference, and an Interpol Conference in which terrorism figured prominently. The recurring theme has been the need to wage a coordinated fight against terrorism. Nothing much, however, seems to have changed. India and Pakistan, for instance, among the most affected by terrorism, have continued to hurl invectives at each other instead of finding ways to cooperate to deal with the terrorism menace. Much of the world is continuing on their paths. None of this augurs well for the fight against terrorism.

The relevance of past instances

An oft-repeated comment is, hence, worth recalling, viz., history is most relevant when it comes to ensuring a proper understanding of threats such as terrorism, which have a long-term impact. While there appears to be a lull as far as major terror incidents are concerned, it must not be lost sight of that it was as recently as at the beginning of this century that the world witnessed several landmark terror attacks. Two that stood out were the September 11, 2001 terror attack in New York, and the November 26, 2008 attacks on multiple targets in Mumbai. Both in their own way reflected the kind of paradigmatic changes that were taking place in the practice of violence. Both had profound strategic implications. The 9/11 attack heralded what came to be regarded as 'new age terrorism', while Mumbai underscored the dangers of state-sponsored terrorism. With these attacks the cognitive map of terrorism had changed.

This was confirmed by the series of major terror attacks that took place in 2015-16. The attacks on the Charlie Hebdo offices in Paris (January 2015) and on the Bardo Museum in Tunis (March 2015), were followed by the one in Istanbul (in which several were killed, in 2016). There was also the attack in Paris again, in November 2015 (in which at least 130 were killed, signalled not only the emergence of 'new age' terrorism but also the rise of new terrorist entities such as the Islamic State (IS) and the al Qaeda – each with their own caliphs.

During 2016, the IS launched several more spectacular attacks (some with its allies) across Asia, Europe and North Africa. The intensity has since declined to an extent, but this is offset by indications of new complicated patterns of relationships among various terrorist



M.K. Narayanan

is a former Director, Intelligence Bureau, a former National Security Adviser and a former Governor of West Bengal

Scrutinising declarations of a decline in levels of terrorism and reactivating the proposal for the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism are some of the steps needed

conglomerates. It has provided a fillip to many fringe extremist organisations that nurse a terror mindset. Hence, it would be wise for those in authority to heed the warning that terrorism could well prove to be the defining threat of not merely the present, but to future generations as well.

Terrorism remains the omnipresent threat that it has always been. The locales may shift but the threat remains. While Europe and Asia remain in the cross hairs of different terrorist groups, Africa and northwest Asia appear to have become the main hunting ground of the al-Qaeda and IS terrorists. Linkages among terrorist groups, have if anything, become strengthened, and evidence of this was forthcoming very recently when al-Qaeda leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri (successor to Osama bin Laden) was identified as living in Kabul in a 'safe house' maintained by the Haqqani Network (which has ties with Pakistan's intelligence). Zawahiri was eliminated in July 2022 in a U.S. directed 'Hell Fire' missile attack while he was still in Kabul. All this confirms, if confirmation was required, that al-Qaeda has both an advocacy and an advisory role, vis-à-vis, the Taliban in Afghanistan.

What is also becoming evident is that al-Qaeda's activities in particular are becoming more decentralised. It is finding fertile grounds in the Sahel region of Africa and in Eastern Africa, apart from its salience in Afghanistan. Among the al-Qaeda's firmest allies today is, undoubtedly, the Taliban. The Haqqani Network within the new Taliban government provides many an opportunity for al-Qaeda to find greater traction across the region.

A new mix

The belief that the growing ambit of terrorist activities was the primary reason for the recent spate of meetings on terrorism would, however, be misleading. Very little seems to have been discussed at these meetings on how to deal with the spate of newer terror groups, i.e., groups apart from al-Qaeda and the IS, whose ambit of activities had widened and become more widespread. There is again no indication that the meetings took stock of the fact that ideology intertwined with religious extremism had become an even more potent threat than previously. Instead, it would seem that the terrorist 'handle' had become a useful ploy for many governments to drum up support for their various initiatives, without much substance to their declarations.

Many of the past problems still remain. The declining level of serious terrorist incidents do not, however, translate into a decline in

terrorism. No doubt, today's scaled-down attacks of little known targets do not attract public attention. But as in most other fields of human endeavour, it is the small incidents that portray what could happen in the near and the not too distant future. It would be unfortunate if counter-terrorism experts across India were not to read proper meanings into many recent terror attacks, such as the one in Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu) and Mangaluru (Karnataka) attacks. The incidents may appear relatively insignificant, but are symptomatic of growing radicalisation and suggestive of the fact that a sizeable base is being built in the southern region, which could lead to the creation of organisations on the model of the Indian Mujahideen (of the early 2000s). Constant and careful vigil by counter-terrorism experts is needed to keep track of not only these activities but also the kind of links that are being established (under the radar) by global terrorist outfits whose presence is not as widely advertised as that of al-Qaeda and the IS.

Measures needed

Hence, what is most needed by world leaders, at one level, is not to accept all declarations of a decline in levels of terrorism at face value and, at another level, not to treat some terrorists as good and others as bad, based on each nation's predilections. The next step is to reactivate the proposal for the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) that has been languishing in the offices of the UN (since India first proposed this in the 1990s), and finalise the list of items needed to check terrorism globally. Acceptance of the CCIT would send signals far more potent than empty platitudes by world leaders at global conferences on the need to defeat terrorism. Once the CCIT is accepted by the UN, the war on terror would gain a new salience.

Additionally, counter-terrorism agencies the world over need to hone their skills and capabilities on how best to counter 'new age terrorism'. There is also a clear need for counter-terrorism agencies across the world to function in a more coordinated manner, exchanging both intelligence and tactics. They need to take stock of the newer patterns of terror such as 'enabled terrorism' and 'remote control terrorism', viz., violence conceived and guided by controllers thousands of miles away, positing the dangers of Internet-enabled terrorism. Counter-terrorism experts will again need to enlarge their expertise to accommodate multi-domain operations, and undertake terror 'gaming', all of which have become essential in today's day and age.

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

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

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