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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

JAPAN SIGNS CHIP PACT WITH INDIA

- Japan and India have signed a memorandum for semiconductor design, manufacturing, equipment research, talent development and to bring resilience in the semiconductor supply chain.
- The nations will create an "implementation organization" that will work on government-to-government and industry-to-industry cooperation.
- With around 100 semiconductor manufacturing plants, Japan is among the top five countries to have a semiconductor ecosystem.
- Semiconductor industry will become a USD 1 trillion industry from USD 650 billion at present. This will require a huge amount of talents, significant growth at multiple locations in the world. Japan sees India as a partner where complementary strengths can be used.
- Japan houses companies that are global leaders in raw form of semiconductor wafers and ingot manufacturing, chemical and gases, lenses that are used in chip manufacturing equipment, display technologies etc.
- Collaboration with Japan for the development of semiconductors will help the government to attract Japanese companies to the Rs 76,000 crore semiconductor incentive scheme.
- Cost competitiveness of manufacturing in India, market and talent base, are the key things that will drive Japanese companies to invest in India with regard to the semiconductor and electronic ecosystem. India has over 50,000 design engineers. So, that is why the world is looking at India as a major destination for semiconductors.
- Partnership with Japan will also help India to move from assembly and advanced packaging of semiconductors to manufacturing.
- Further, the government might also easily focus on developing the semiconductor ecosystem below the 28-nanometer node as well going forward. In the entire 100% of semiconductor demand, close to 55% demand is going to come from the larger nodes such as 40 nanometer, 60 nanometer, even 90 nanometers, 28 nanometers.
- Japan has become the second Quad partner after the United States to sign such an agreement with India. Last month, US-based Micron Technologies announced its plans to set up a \$2.75-billion chip packaging (assembly, testing, marking, packaging) unit in the country.
- The first made-in-India chip under the Micron Technologies project will be rolled out by December 2024, and annual production worth \$1 billion is expected once the plant is fully operational.

ECOLOGY

SC URGES CENTRE TO TRANSFER CHEETAHS TO ANOTHER LOCATION

- The Supreme Court (SC) told the Union government that the deaths of 40% of the 20 cheetahs brought from South Africa and Namibia to the Kuno National Park (KNP) within a year does not present a good picture.
- The SC Bench urged the government to move the big cats to a more conducive environment, if required, and not make it a "prestige issue".
- The court recommended shifting the cheetahs to Rajasthan.
- The apex court also raised concerns about the suitability of the environment where they are relocated.
- According to the action plan for cheetah reintroduction in India under the Project Cheetah, 8–14 big cats are required to be brought in annually from African countries for the next five years at least.
- A memorandum of understanding in this regard has been signed by the government of India with Namibia and South Africa, in the interest of cheetah conservation.
- The Centre said that following the signing of the MOU, eight cheetahs were transported from Namibia to India on 17 September 2022 and released into quarantine enclosures in Kuno.
- As per the MoU with South Africa, 12 cheetahs—seven males and five females—were translocated from South Africa to KNP on 18 February 2023.
- However, in the last four months, eight cheetahs, including three cubs born in India, died of various ailments in separate incidents. Of them, two deaths happened last week.
- There are no cheetah experts in India as cheetahs went extinct from the country in 1947–48. Since then our officials have been to South Africa, Namibia and undergone specialised training on cheetah management.

WE AIM TO INSPIRE YOU

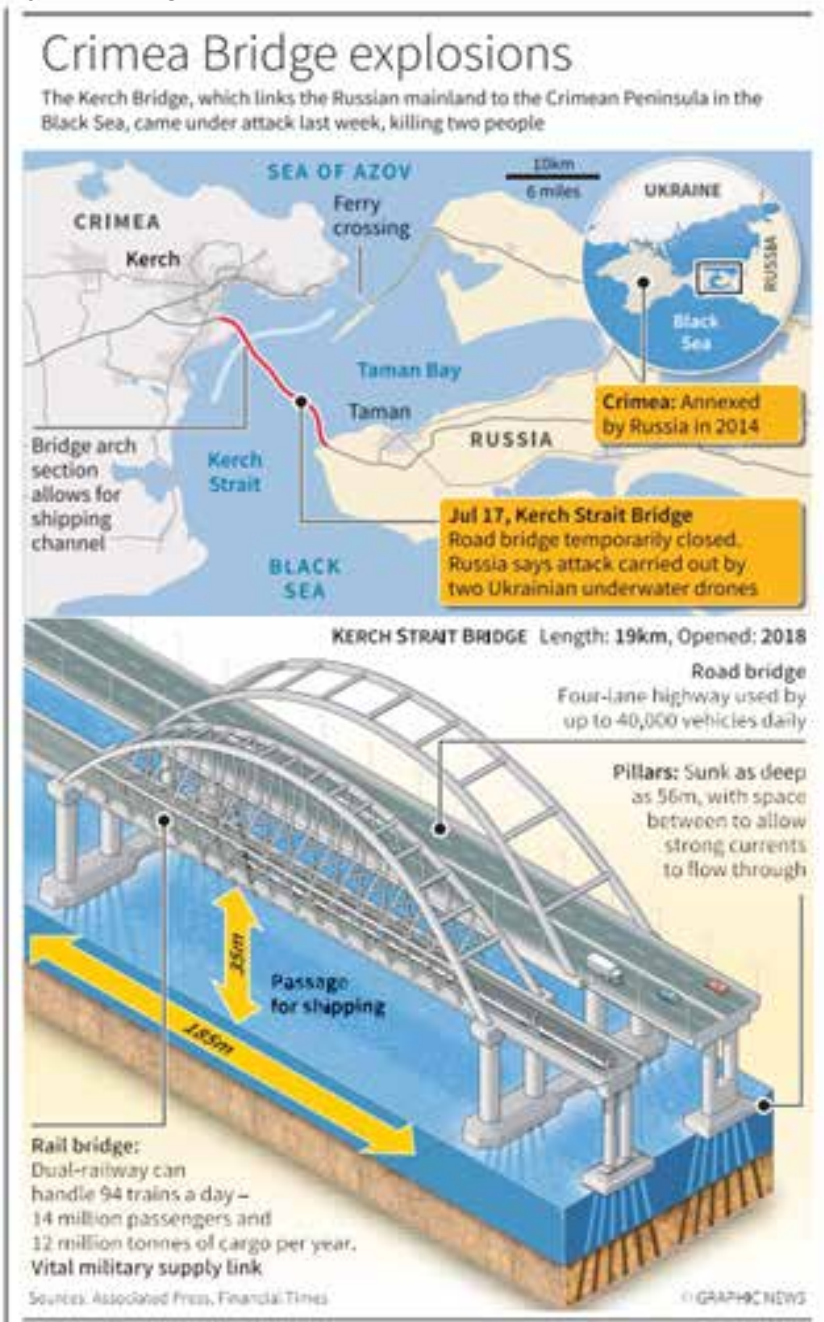
GEOGRAPHY

KERCH BRIDGE

The Kerch Bridge, which links the Russian mainland to the Crimean Peninsula in the Black Sea, came under attack last week. Waterborne drones struck the sole bridge.

The bridge is important to Russia for symbolic, administrative and operational reasons.

Geographical details and strategic details are given in the adjacent infographic.



POLITY AND GOVERNANCE

DISPLAY AGE-BASED RATING IN ADS: GOVT. TO OTT PLATFORMS

The Information and Broadcasting Ministry has asked OTT platforms to ensure display of age-based classification rating in the advertisements and other promotional material published by them on various media platforms. The Code of Ethics for online curated content under the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, provides for classification of content into age-based categories, and inclusion of the classification rating and consumer advice in any print, television, or online promotional or publicity material.

RIGHTS BODY TAKES UP MANIPUR GANGRAPE CASE, NHRC ISSUES NOTICE

Two and a half months after the ethnic conflict in Manipur began on May 3, the National Human Rights Commission of India issued its first public statement about human rights violations in the State on Thursday.

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) of India was established on 12 October, 1993. The statute under which it is established is the Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA), 1993 as amended by the Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Act, 2006.

It is in conformity with the Paris Principles, adopted at the first international workshop on national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights held in Paris in October 1991, and endorsed by the General Assembly of the United Nations by its Regulations 48/134 of 20 December, 1993.

The NHRC is an embodiment of India's concern for the promotion and protection of human rights.

Section 2(1)(d) of the PHRA defines Human Rights as the rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the Constitution or embodied in the International Covenants and enforceable by courts in India.

In its statement, the NHRC said that it had taken cognisance of the May 4 incident in B. Phainom village of Kangpokpi district, where a mob of 1,000 Meitei people had abducted five members of a Kuki-Zo family while they were being escorted to safety by the Manipur Police. The mob proceeded to kill two of the men who tried to protect the women. They then stripped, paraded and sexually assaulted the women in public, also gang-raping one of the women. A video of the incident went viral on Wednesday, prompting the police to act and arrest four accused within 24 hours.

Composition of NHRC

The chairperson and members are appointed by the president on the recommendations of a six-member committee

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consisting of the prime minister as its head, the Speaker of the Lok Sabha, the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, leaders of the Opposition in both the Houses of Parliament and the Central home minister. Further, a sitting judge of the Supreme Court or a sitting chief justice of a high court can be appointed only after consultation with the chief justice of India.

SC 'DEEPLY DISTURBED', ORDERS CENTRE, MANIPUR GOVT. TO ACT

Taking suo motu cognisance of sexual assault video, court issues ultimatum to governments to bring perpetrators to book or step aside for it to take action; S-G to convey concern to Centre

Suo motu means they take up cases by their own notice, without any petition being filed, or interest being brought before them.

Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud summoned the government's top law officers — the Attorney-General and Solicitor-General — to convey that the court was "deeply disturbed" by a video showing two women being paraded naked and sexually assaulted in strife-ridden Manipur.

The chairperson and members hold office for a term of three years or until they attain the age of 70 years, whichever is earlier. They are eligible for re-appointment. After their tenure, the chairperson and members are not eligible for further employment under the Central or a state government.

The Chief Justice, speaking for the court, gave the Union and Manipur governments an ultimatum to either bring the perpetrators to book or step aside for the judiciary to take action.

The Chief Justice's remarks came immediately after the court assembled for the day's work. Attorney-General R. Venkataramani and Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta were waiting in the front row of the courtroom.

Chief Justice Chandrachud said that it did not matter that the video was not a recent one, but rather of an incident that occurred in May, when the violence initially broke out.

"RAISE KATCHATHEEVU, TAMILS' ISSUE DURING SRI LANKAN PRESIDENT'S VISIT, CM TELLS PM"

The News : Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has written to Prime Minister asking him to raise two issues — the retrieval of Katchatheevu and the aspirations of the Tamilspeaking people in the neighbouring island nation — with the Sri Lankan leader.

Complete information on Katchatheevu

Katchatheevu, a small uninhabited island in the Palk Strait, has been a bone of contention between India and Sri Lanka for several decades. The island, which covers an area of about 285 acres, lies at a strategic location and holds immense religious and historical significance for both countries. The territorial dispute over Katchatheevu has not only impacted bilateral relations but has also raised concerns over fishing rights, sovereignty, and maritime boundaries in the region. In this article, we delve into the historical background, the contentious issues, and the efforts made by both nations to resolve the dispute.



Historical Background:

The origins of the Katchatheevu dispute can be traced back to colonial times. During British rule, both India and Sri Lanka were part of British Ceylon, and Katchatheevu was administered by the British as part of the Madras Presidency (now Tamil Nadu, India). After the independence of India and Sri Lanka in 1947 and 1948, respectively, the issue of sovereignty over the island became prominent.

The 1974 Agreement:

The dispute over Katchatheevu escalated in 1974 when India and Sri Lanka signed an agreement that ceded the island to Sri Lanka. The agreement, known as the "Agreement on the Maritime Boundary between the Government of India and the Government of Sri Lanka," was aimed at settling the maritime boundary between the two countries. However, the agreement did not address the issue of traditional fishing rights of Indian fishermen in the surrounding waters.

Impact on Fishing Communities:

One of the most significant concerns arising from the Katchatheevu dispute is the impact on the livelihoods of Indian fishermen. The waters around Katchatheevu have been traditional fishing grounds for Indian fishermen, particularly from Tamil Nadu. The agreement of 1974 led to restrictions on Indian fishermen's access to these waters, leading to numerous arrests and conflicts with the Sri Lankan Navy over the years.

Traditional fishing rights

In the following decades, there have been several attempts to resolve the dispute and address the concerns of fishing communities on both sides. India has consistently sought the restoration of traditional fishing rights for its fishermen in the region. Diplomatic dialogues, ministerial-level talks, and joint working groups have been formed to discuss the issue, but a permanent resolution remains elusive.

The Role of Politics and Emotions:

The Katchatheevu issue is not just about territorial claims or fishing rights; it is also deeply intertwined with politics and emotions on both sides. In India, especially in Tamil Nadu, the dispute has been a matter of emotive political rhetoric, with political parties vying to champion the cause of the fishermen.

This often puts pressure on the central government to take a stronger stance in negotiations with Sri Lanka.

There were no definitive breakthroughs in the Katchatheevu dispute. However, the issue continued to be a point of contention and was periodically brought up during bilateral discussions between India and Sri Lanka.

RULE 176 VS RULE 267: WHAT GOVT AGREES TO, WHAT OPP DEMANDS

The opening day of the Monsoon Session of Parliament was disrupted on Thursday after the government and the Opposition differed on the format of the discussion on the Manipur situation. While the government agreed for a short-duration discussion, the Opposition insisted that the Prime Minister make a suo motu statement followed by a discussion, suspending all business under Rule 267.

What is Rule 267, and Rule 176 ?

Rule 267	Rule 176
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> suspension of rules any rule may be suspended in its application to a motion related to the business listed before the Council of that day and if the motion is carried, the rule in question shall be suspended for the time being: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> short-duration discussion not exceeding 2.5 hours no formal motion or voting under a short duration discussion. The member who has given notice may make a short statement and the Minister shall reply shortly

According to the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States, Rule 267 relates to suspension of rules. It says, "Any member, may, with the consent of the Chairman, move that any rule may be suspended in its application to a motion related to the business listed before the Council of that day and if the motion is carried, the rule in question shall be suspended for the time being."

Short-duration discussion, on the other hand, is a brief discussion not exceeding two-and-a-half hours under Rule 176.

It means that a short-duration discussion under Rule 176 can be taken up immediately, a few hours later, the next day or can be fixed for a later date and time. But the rule says there shall be no

formal motion or voting under a short duration discussion. "The member who has given notice may make a short statement and the Minister shall reply shortly," the rule says.

What experts say

Experts say opposition parties had been mistakenly using Rule 267 as an equivalent to the adjournment motion in Lok Sabha. In case of adjournment motion, governed by Rules 56-63 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, the discussion is based on a motion. The rule defines adjournment motion as "a motion for an adjournment of the business of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance may be made with the consent of the Speaker".

What is an Adjournment motion?

The main object of an adjournment motion is to draw the attention of the House to a recent matter of urgent public importance having serious consequences, and with regard to which a motion or a resolution with proper notice will be too late.

The proposed matter to be raised has to be a serious issue that affects the whole country and its security, and the House is required to pay its attention immediately by interrupting the normal business of the House.

The subject of the motion must have a direct or indirect relation to the conduct or default on the part of the Union Government.

It must precisely pinpoint the failure of the Government of India in the performance of its duties in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and Law.

And the rules say "not more than one such motion shall be made at the same sitting."

ECONOMICS

INDIA'S RELIANCE ON IMPORTED CRUDE RISES TO 88.3% IN APRIL-JUNE

India's reliance on imported crude oil rose to 88.3% in April-June 2023, from 86.5% in the same period last year, the highest level of reliance on imported crude since 2018. The increase in reliance on imported crude is due to a number of factors, including:

Rise in global crude oil prices.

Decline in domestic oil production.

Increase in demand for petroleum products in India.

The rise in reliance on imported crude is a concern for the Indian

government, as it increases the country's vulnerability to fluctuations in global oil prices. The government has taken some steps to reduce India's reliance on imported crude, such as increasing investment in domestic oil production and promoting the use of alternative fuels.

The increase in reliance on imported crude is expected to put pressure on the Indian economy, as it will lead to higher fuel prices. The government is considering a number of measures to reduce the impact of the higher fuel prices, such as providing

subsidies to consumers and increasing the production of ethanol. The rise in reliance on imported crude is also a concern for the

environment, as it will lead to increased emissions of greenhouse gases.

CENTRE BANS EXPORT OF NON-BASMATI WHITE RICE TO CONTROL PRICE RISE IN INDIA



News in gist: Export duty of 20% was imposed last year to lower the price and ensure availability in the country.

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade under the Union

Commerce Ministry issued a notification banning the export of non-basmati white rice with immediate effect. The retail prices have increased by 11.5% over a year and 3% over the past month.

Non-basmati rice was exported under the category 'Free with export duty of 20%'. Export duty of 20% on non-basmati white rice was imposed last year to lower the price and to ensure availability in the domestic market. The export of non-basmati white rice variety increased from 33.66 lakh tonnes (September-March 2021-22) to 42.12 lt (September-March 2022-23) even after imposition of 20% export duty. In 2023-24, about 15.54 lt of this variety was exported against only 11.55 lt during 2022-23. The sharp increase in exports can be ascribed to high international prices due to geo-political scenario, El Nino sentiments and extreme climatic conditions in other rice-producing countries, etc.



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