

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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OPERATIONALISATION OF PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS (PREVENTION OF UNFAIR MEANS) ACT

Context

- Amid **NEET-UG and UGC cheating controversy**, the Union government has notified a stringent law to prevent paper leaks and cheating which came into effect from June 21st.

Background

- In the last few years, leaks of question papers and organised cheating had affected the interests of lakhs of students due to cancellation of tests and examinations.
- Regarding this, the Union Government came up with the **Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Bill in 2024**, and subsequently passed by the **Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha** in February 2024.
- Recently, the **President of India** gave the go ahead with the Bill and after that it was operationalised as the **Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024**.
- The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, addresses **unfair practices by various entities** involved in public examinations conducted by the Central Government and its agencies.

Reasons for Cheating in Public Examination

- Examination malpractices**, including paper leaks, are widespread in India. Over the **past five years**, about 41 paper leaks across 15 states have affected 140 lakh job seekers competing for one lakh vacancies.
 - It erodes **confidence in educational institutions** and devalues qualifications.
- Genuine candidates suffer due to **malicious intentions**, and suffer mental, financial, and physical strain on candidates and their families.
 - Instances of candidates **committing suicide** due to exam-related stress.
- Commercial Exploitation and Profit Motives:** Coaching centres, printing presses, and consulting firms exploit vulnerable candidates.
 - Further complicates the situation and exacerbates anxiety among young candidates.

- With the view of the above concerns, **necessitate effective implementation** of the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act of 2024 **to protect bona fide candidates** and **punish offenders**.

Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024

- The Act aims to prevent unfair means in the public examinations conducted by above agencies among others, and addresses related matters.
- The Act **defines several offences** in relation to public examinations. It **prohibits collusion or conspiracy** to facilitate indulgence in any unfair means. It specifies **unfair means** to include **unauthorised access or leakage of question paper or answer key**; assisting a candidate during a public examination; tampering with computer network or resources; tampering with documents for shortlisting or finalising of merit list or rank; and, conducting fake examinations, issuing fake admit cards or offering letters to cheat, for monetary gain.

Responsibilities of Service Providers

Definitions under the Act

- Candidate:** Refers to a person authorised to appear in a public examination.
- Communication Device:** Has the same meaning as defined in the Information Technology Act, 2000.
- Public Examination:** Includes any examination conducted by the public examination authority (as specified in the Schedule) or other notified authorities.
- Unfair Means:** Encompasses acts like question paper leaks, unauthorised assistance to candidates, tampering with answer sheets, and more.

- In case of **violation of provisions of the Act**, the service providers must report to the police and the concerned examination authority.
 - Failure to report such incidents will be an offence.
- In case, the service provider themselves commits an offence, the examination authority must report it to the police.

- The Act prohibits service providers from **shifting the exam centre without permission** from the examination authority.
 - ♦ **A service provider** is an organisation that provides computer resources or any other support to a public examination authority.

Inquiry and investigation

- All offences under the Act are **cognisable, non-bailable, and non-compoundable**.
- No action will count as an offence if it is proved that the accused had exercised due diligence.
- An officer **not below the rank Deputy Superintendent or Assistant Commissioner of Police** will investigate the offences under the Act.
- The Central Government may **transfer** the investigation to **any Central Investigating Agency**.

Offences and Penalties

- It imposes **strict punishments**, including three to five years of imprisonment for general cheating and **five to ten years**, plus a **minimum fine of Rs 1 crore**, for organised cheating crimes.
 - ♦ The law allows for the seizure of **properties of institutions** involved in paper leaks, and they must cover the costs of the compromised exams.
- **Offences in relation to the Service Providers:** An offence by a service provider will be punishable with a **fine of up to one crore rupees**. Further, they will also be **barred from conducting public examinations** for four years.
 - ♦ If it is established that offences involving service providers were committed with the **consent or connivance of any** Director, senior management, or persons-in-charge of the service providers, such persons will be held personally liable.
 - ♦ They will be punished with imprisonment **between three years and 10 years**, and a **fine of one crore rupees**.

Key Issues

- **Fate of Public Examinations Cancelled Due to Unfair Means:** Public exams affected by unfair means (such as paper leakage) are often cancelled, and the fate of lakhs of candidates is at stake.

- **Unawareness Among Invigilators and Officials Regarding Examination Procedures:** Invigilators and administrative officers lack awareness of proper exam procedures, may lead to inefficiency and potential adoption of unfair means.
 - ♦ It needs to conduct capacity-building programs, establish eligibility criteria for invigilators, and provide training on fair practices and common procedures.
- **Underutilization of Modern Technology and AI in Examination Processes:** Authorities underutilize technology despite offenders leveraging it.
 - ♦ It needs to streamline question paper-setting using electronic methods, digitally review and verify question sets, maintain a centralised question bank, and use AI for surveillance during exams and evaluation.
- **Investigation Challenges and Need for Specialized Authority:** Investigations currently handled by officers below DSP rank.
 - ♦ There is a **need to establish a specialised investigation and regulation authority** to address non-routine offences impacting a large segment of candidates.
- **Key ethical issues** involved in cheating in exams are like the violating academic integrity for unfair advantage; and lack of personal accountability.

Conclusion

- The Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 aims to maintain the **integrity of public examinations** and **ensure fairness**. It provides legal provisions to curb unfair means and protect the credibility of the examination system.

Source: IE

GULF INTEGRAL PART OF INDIA'S EXTENDED NEIGHBOURHOOD

Context

- The Gulf region has become an increasingly **important strategic partner of India** and an integral part of its **'extended neighbourhood'** as per the Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI).

Gulf Region

- The Gulf Region typically refers to the countries surrounding the Persian Gulf in the Middle East.

- It includes nations like **Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)**.
- This region is known for its vast oil reserves, which have significantly influenced global economics and politics.

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

- It is a **political and economic alliance** of **six Middle Eastern countries**—Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Oman.
- It was established in **1981**.
- It aims to achieve unity among its members based on their common objectives and their similar political and cultural identities, which are rooted in Arab and Islamic cultures.
- Presidency of the council rotates **annually**.



Importance of Gulf Region for India

- **Energy Security:** The Gulf countries are major suppliers of crude oil and natural gas to India.
 - ♦ India is highly dependent on Gulf oil for its energy needs, making the region crucial for India's energy security.
- **Remittance:** Remittances from Indian expatriates working in the Gulf contribute significantly to India's economy.
 - ♦ Remittance is the non-commercial transfer of money by an individual to his/her home country or family.
- **Security Cooperation:** The Gulf region is strategically important for India's security interests, given its location and influence in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean regions.

India's Relations with GCC

- **Strategic Partnership:** GCC is a major trade and investment partner for India. While India has close economic and political ties with all countries, the strategic partnership exists with only Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Oman.
- **Energy Security:** GCC contributes to **35% of India's oil imports** and **70% of gas imports**. India is executing the **second phase of its Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR)**. Several GCC countries have expressed their interest in the same.
- **Trade and Investment:** GCC countries contribute to about **one-sixth of India's total trade**.
 - ♦ The GCC is India's largest regional bloc trading partner. Trade with the GCC comprised 15.8 percent of India's total trade in FY2022-23, compared to 11.6 percent of total trade with the European Union.
 - ♦ India also has a significant trade deficit with the GCC which is driven by India's dependence on GCC countries for oil and gas imports.
- **Defence Relations:** India's defense engagements with these countries are gaining significant momentum.
 - ♦ From mere training of security personnel in various military institutes, they have extended ties to other areas, including intelligence sharing, counterterrorism, artificial intelligence, electronic warfare, and cybersecurity.

Conclusion

- India will likely become an increased 'strategic partner' for the Gulf states.
- Managing mutual challenges, while focusing on growing political, economic and security interests, will be the key to enabling India-Gulf relations to strengthen and become more ambitious.

Source: ET

REFUGEE CRISIS IN INDIA

Context

- Fearing "aerial bombardment and attacks", about **5,400 people from Myanmar have taken shelter in Manipur's Kamjong district**.

About

- Kamjong district shares its **eastern border with Myanmar**.

- ♦ To its west are the Thoubal and Kangpokpi districts, **dominated by Meiteis and Kuki-Zos respectively.**



- Since the **2021 military coup in Myanmar**, many people have crossed over to Mizoram and Manipur due to **shared ethnic ties** with the people of these States.
- India and Myanmar share an **unfenced border**; earlier this year, however, the Union Home Minister announced the **suspension of the Free Movement Regime (FMR) with Myanmar**.
 - ♦ The Assam Rifles is deployed along the Myanmar border.

Refugee Crisis in India

- India has faced various refugee situations primarily involving people from neighboring countries like **Afghanistan, Myanmar, and Tibet**.
 - ♦ **Afghan Refugees:** With the Taliban's resurgence in Afghanistan, there has been an influx of Afghan refugees into India seeking safety and asylum. Many of them are Sikhs and Hindus facing religious persecution.
 - ♦ **Rohingya Crisis:** Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar have sought refuge in India due to ethnic violence and persecution in Myanmar's Rakhine State. India has been grappling with their status, with the government taking a firm stance on their deportation.
 - ♦ **Tibetan Refugees:** Tibetans have been living in India since the 1959 Tibetan uprising against Chinese rule. They are granted refugee status and live primarily in settlements in states like Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka.

India's Policy on Refugees

- India is **not a signatory** to the **1951 UN Convention** relating to the **Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol**.

- All foreign undocumented nationals are governed as per the provisions of The Foreigners Act, 1946, The Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939, The Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920 and The Citizenship Act, 1955.
- As per the MHA foreign nationals who enter into the country **without valid travel documents are treated as illegal immigrants.**

Challenges Faced by India due to Influx of Refugees

- **Resource Strain:** Hosting refugees puts pressure on resources such as food, water, housing, and healthcare facilities, especially in areas where infrastructure is already stretched thin.
- **Legal and Administrative Concerns:** India lacks a comprehensive legal framework for refugees, leading to challenges in determining their legal status, rights, and access to essential services like education and employment.
- **Social Cohesion:** Large numbers of refugees can strain social cohesion, potentially leading to tensions with host communities, especially when resources are perceived as scarce.
- **Security Concerns:** There are security concerns related to refugee influxes, including the potential infiltration of extremist elements or challenges in monitoring movements across porous borders.
- **Diplomatic Relations:** Hosting refugees can strain diplomatic relations with neighboring countries or countries of origin, particularly if there are geopolitical tensions or disputes involved.
- **Integration Issues:** Integration of refugees into Indian society poses challenges due to language barriers, cultural differences, and lack of specific programs or policies aimed at their integration.
- **Economic Impact:** Refugees compete for low-skilled jobs, affecting the local job market, while their potential contributions to the economy through entrepreneurship or labor may not be fully realized.

Way Ahead

- By implementing these strategies, India can work towards a **comprehensive approach** to managing the refugee crisis, ensuring that refugees receive the protection and support they need while promoting stability and cooperation in the region.

- ♦ **Refugee Status Determination:** Establish clear procedures for determining refugee status and provide legal protections accordingly.
- ♦ **Access to Rights:** Ensure refugees have access to basic rights such as education, healthcare, and employment.
- ♦ **Regional Collaboration:** Work with neighboring countries and international organizations to manage refugee flows and share responsibilities.
- ♦ **Bilateral Agreements:** Strengthen diplomatic ties to facilitate the safe return or resettlement of refugees.
- ♦ **Empowerment Initiatives:** Support initiatives that empower refugees economically and socially, such as vocational training and language education.
- ♦ **Conflict Resolution:** Address the root causes of displacement through diplomatic efforts and support for peacebuilding initiatives.
- **Empowerment:** Equipping children with knowledge and skills empowers them to rebuild their lives and communities in the aftermath of the disaster.
- **Community Building:** The initiative can foster a sense of community and support among children and families in relief camps, helping them connect and share experiences.
- **Resilience Building:** By ensuring educational continuity, the initiative contributes to building resilient communities that can better withstand and recover from future disasters.
- **Positive Impact:** The initiative demonstrates a commitment to child welfare and education, contributing to positive public perception and support for relief efforts.

Source: TH

INDIA'S SPACE ECONOMY

In News

- The Government said that the country's share in the **global space economy** is projected to increase fourfold by 2030 compared to 2021.

About India's Space economy

- India has proven itself as a trailblazer in space exploration from the humble beginnings of **transporting rocket parts on bullock carts** to the **proud achievement of launching a record number of satellites** in a single mission.

Present Status

- A report by the World Economic Forum and McKinsey estimates the size of the global space industry to be **\$630 Bn in 2023**. It is expected to grow 9% per annum and reach \$1.8 Tn by 2035.
 - ♦ **India's space economy**, valued at **\$8.4 Bn in 2023**, currently accounts for 2-3% of the global space economy.
 - ♦ India so far earned **174 Million US Dollars** from the launching of the foreign satellites; out of these \$174 million, as much as \$157 million have been earned only in the last nine years.

Importance and Achievements

- ISRO has established itself as a reliable player in the global satellite launch market through its Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) and the more powerful Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) series.

Source: TH

SCHOOL IN A BOX INITIATIVE

In News

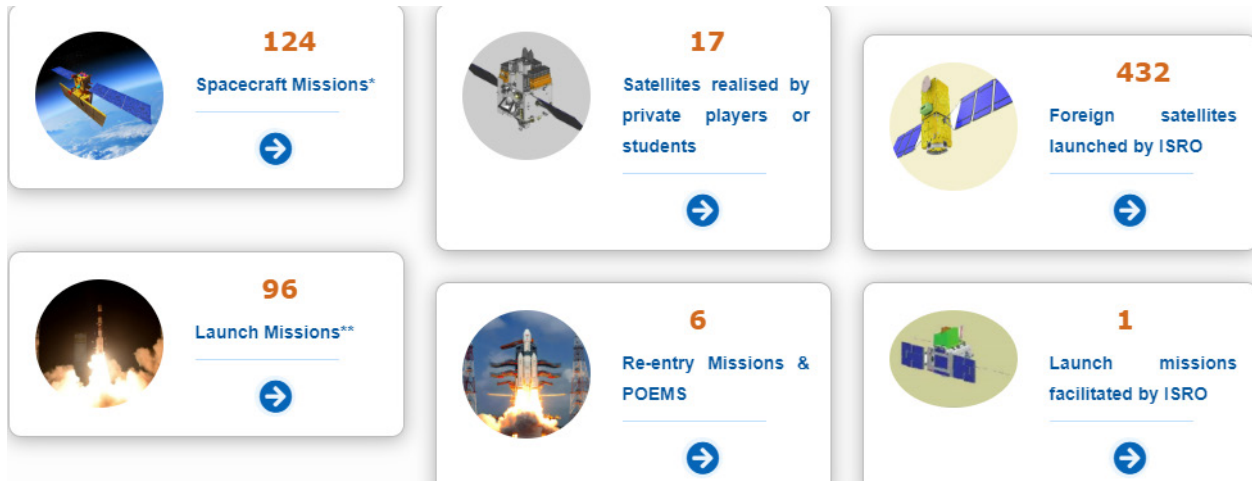
- The Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), in collaboration with UNICEF, is providing "School in a Box" kits to children aged 6-18 in flood-affected relief camps.

About

- These kits contain learning materials to ensure continuity of education despite displacement and trauma. The initiative is a response to the devastating floods and landslides in Assam, aiming to address the psychological impact of displacement on children and teenagers.
- The program initially focused on children up to 6 years old, but now includes older children, providing them with notebooks, drawing books, pencils, and other learning materials.

How beneficial is this initiative?

- **Educational Continuity of Children:** Ensures that children's education is not disrupted due to displacement, allowing them to continue learning and maintain a sense of normalcy.
- **Developmental Support:** The learning materials cater to different age groups, ensuring age-appropriate educational activities that support cognitive and emotional development.



- India has made significant strides in cutting-edge technologies, as evidenced by successful missions like **Chandrayaan-3, Aditya-L1, and XpoSat**.
- With the Mars Orbiter Mission or the Mangalyaan 2013, India became the **1st nation to reach Martian orbit in its first attempt**.
- India's Space Technology is virtually touching every person's life, with **application of Space Technology in different sectors** like Disaster Management, SVAMITVA, PM Gati Shakti, Infrastructure such as Railways, Highways & Smart Cities, Agriculture, Water Mapping, Telemedicine and Robotic Surgery.
- The **Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS)**, also known as NavIC, provides accurate positioning information over India and the surrounding region.
- The infrastructure for manufacturing** and testing satellites and components is not as extensive or advanced as in countries like the USA or European nations.
- Regulatory frameworks** and bureaucratic processes can hinder private sector growth and innovation.
- Indian companies and ISRO face challenges in competing on a global scale due to resource constraints and technology gaps.

Initiatives

Upcoming missions

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (Isro) will launch the **Gaganyaan** mission in 2025.
- ISRO is planning a mission to study **Venus**, focusing on its surface and atmosphere, which could provide valuable scientific data.
- NISAR is a joint Earth-observing mission** between NASA and the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).
 - NISAR will be the first radar of its kind in space to systematically map Earth

Challenges

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) operates on a **limited budget** compared to other major space agencies.
 - This restricts the scale and pace of its space missions and satellite launches.

- The government has announced the **Indian Space Policy 2023**, which enables end-to-end participation of Non-Governmental Entities (NGEs) in all domains of Space activities.
- The **Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre or IN-SPACE** was created to support private sector participation in space activities.
- Today India has nearly **200 private Space Startups** after opening up of the sector while the earlier ones have even turned entrepreneurs.
- There has been an **investment of over Rs.1,000 crore by private Space Startups** in the current financial year from April to December 2023.
- NewSpace India Limited (NSIL)**, serving as the commercial arm of ISRO under DoS, helps NGEs commercialise their space technologies and platforms
- Amendment to the FDI policy: 100 percent Foreign Direct Investment** has been allowed for manufacturing and operation of satellites, satellite data products and ground segment and user segment, out of which up to 74 per cent will be through the automatic route and government approval will be required for investment beyond 74 per cent.

Conclusion and way ahead

- India's space sector is at a pivotal juncture and by harnessing the collective potential of ISRO, NSIL, IN-SPACe, and its thriving startup ecosystem, India can not only become a major player in the global space economy but also unlock transformative applications for its citizens and the world.
- Much of the success of India's space economy shall depend on government support and guidance as space tech entrepreneurs take their initial steps of private participation in the space sector.
- With strategic investments in infrastructure and manufacturing, alongside fostering innovation and education, India can achieve its goal of a US\$44 billion space economy by 2033, enhancing its position as a global leader in space technology and services.

Source: AIR

NEWS IN SHORT

11 CANDIDATES APPLY TO VERIFY EVM BURNT MEMORY

Context

- The Election Commission of India has received 11 requests for memory verification of Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trails (VVPAT) from the recently concluded Lok Sabha and Assembly polls.

About

- These requests essentially mean **rematching the votes polled in 5% of the EVMs in each of these constituencies.**
- This is the **first time** that such requests have been received since the Supreme Court order of April 24 **allowing verification on the request of the runners-up in any election.**
- The candidates would **have to bear expenses of the verification process**, but they would be refunded if any tampering was found.

Procedure Laid down by the ECI:

- The **District Election Officer (DEO)** will be responsible for the process.

- Both the **second and third candidates** will have the opportunity to request that **up to 5%** of the EVMs and VVPATs per Assembly constituency/ Assembly segment of a Lok Sabha constituency be checked.
- The candidates have to make the **request in writing** to the respective DEOs and deposit Rs 40,000 (plus GST of 18%) per set of EVM to the manufacturer concerned.
- The checking will commence **at the end of the 45-day period** after declaration of results, during which **Election Petitions** against the outcome can be filed by any candidate or elector.

Source: IE

RECOGNITION OF PALESTINE

In News

- Armenia has become the latest nation to recognise Palestine.

About Palestine

- Palestine is the land between the Jordan River in the east and the Mediterranean Sea in the west.
- The State of Palestine, formally declared by the **Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) on 15 November 1988**, claims sovereignty over the remaining parts of historic Palestine that Israel occupied in 1967:
 - ♦ the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip.
- The State of Palestine was recognised by the vast majority of Member States of the United Nations.
 - ♦ Recently ,Norway, Spain and Ireland had recognised a state of Palestine.

India's Position

- India has reiterated its support at the United Nations for a **two-state solution** that allows Palestinians to live freely in an independent nation within secure borders, while also addressing Israel's legitimate security concerns.
- India was the **first non-Arab State to recognise the Palestine Liberation Organisation** as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people in 1974. India was also one of the first countries to recognise the State of Palestine in **1988.**

Source: TH

WORLD INVESTMENT REPORT 2024

Context

- The **World Investment Report 2024** has been released by the **UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)**.

Major Findings

- Environment for Investment:** The global environment for international investment remains challenging in 2024.
 - ◆ Weakening growth prospects, economic fracturing trends, trade and geopolitical tensions, industrial policies and supply chain diversification are reshaping FDI patterns, causing some multinational enterprises (MNEs) to adopt a cautious approach to overseas expansion.
- International project finance and cross-border mergers and acquisitions (M&As)** were especially weak in 2023.
 - ◆ M&As, which mostly affect FDI in developed countries, **fell by 46 percent in value**.
- Greenfield investment projects:** Project numbers increased by 2 percent, growth was concentrated in developing countries, where the number of projects was up by 15 percent.
 - ◆ In developed countries new project announcements were down 6 percent.
 - ◆ The largest greenfield announcement in 2023 was a green hydrogen project in Mauritania, which is anticipated to bring in \$34 billion in investment.
- FDI in developing Asia** fell by 8 percent, China, the second largest FDI recipient in the world, saw a rare decline in inflows.
 - ◆ Sizeable declines were recorded in India and in West and Central Asia.

Source: **DTE**

IBERIAN LYNX

In News

The Iberian lynx, one of the rarest cat species globally, has moved from being 'endangered' to '**vulnerable**' on The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List.

- This change reflects a significant increase in its population.

About Iberian Lynx

- It is a medium-sized nocturnal cat with a short tail, a short body, long legs, tufted ears, and a relatively small head.



- It is the world's most endangered cat
- Diet :** It mostly depends on wild rabbits to feed, but it will also eat ducks, young deer
- Distribution:** In the early 19th century the Iberian lynx was found in Spain, Portugal and Southern France
 - ◆ Currently, there are over 2,000 lynxes, including young ones, across Spain and Portugal.
- Threats:** It is susceptible to diseases from domestic cats, poaching and road kills, as well as habitat alterations related to climate change.
- Conservation Status**
 - ◆ **IUCN status:** 'Vulnerable'
 - ◆ The Iberian Lynx is fully protected in Spain and Portugal, listed on CITES Appendix I, and on Appendix II of the Bern Convention

Source: **IE**

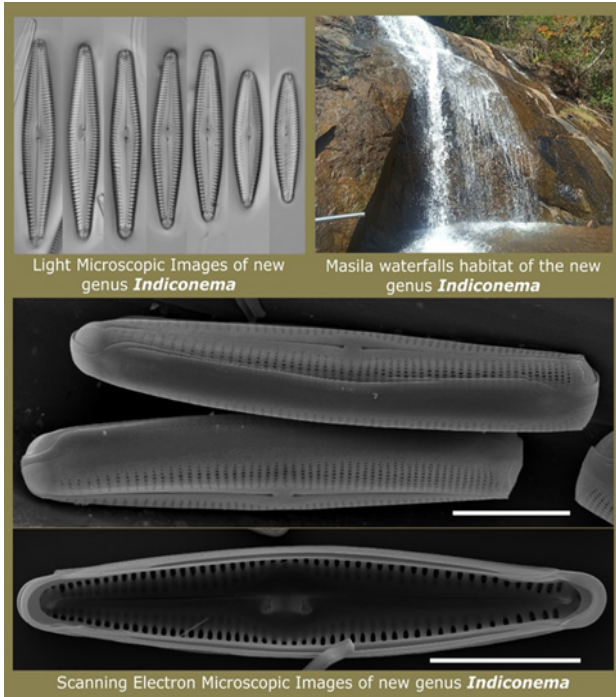
INDICONEMA: A NEW FRESHWATER DIATOM GENUS

Context

- Recently, researchers have discovered a **new genus, named Indiconema**, of the **Gomphonemoid Diatom group** found in the clean water river of the **Eastern and Western Ghats**.

About the Indiconema

- Valve Symmetry:** Indiconema differs from other Gomphonemoid diatoms by having a pore field at both the head and foot poles, rather than just at the foot pole.



- **Restricted Distribution:** The name “Indiconema” reflects its limited distribution within India.
- **Biogeography:** One species of *Indiconema* was found in the Eastern Ghats, and another in the Western Ghats.
 - ◆ This pattern of sharing endemic elements between two mountain systems is similar to what has been observed for other endemic-rich groups.

What Are Diatoms?

- These are **microscopic algae** that play a crucial role in our everyday lives.
- They produce **approximately 25% of global oxygen**, which means every fourth breath you take owes its existence to these tiny organisms.
- They form the **base of the aquatic food chain** and serve as **excellent indicators of aquatic health** due to their sensitivity to water chemistry changes.
- The **evolution of monsoons** structured the **rainforest biome** across the Indian Peninsula and the associated **varying wetness**, which has a **direct role in shaping the diatom flora**.

Implications for Biodiversity

- India’s unique biodiversity is shaped by its diverse landscapes, and diatoms contribute significantly to this richness.
- Approximately 30% of diatom taxa in India are endemic, emphasising the country’s ecological importance.

- The evolution of monsoons and varying wetness across the Indian Peninsula directly influences the diatom flora.

Source: PIB

67TH MEETING OF THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY (GEF)

Context

- Recently, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), in its 67th meeting, approved \$736.4 million for nature protection and renewal projects.

About the GEF

- It was established on the eve of the **1992 Rio Earth Summit**.
- Its mission extends beyond mere environmental action; it serves as a catalyst for addressing the planet’s most pressing issues.
- **Unique Partnership:** The GEF collaborates with 18 agencies, including United Nations bodies, multilateral development banks, national entities, and international NGOs. Together, they work with 183 countries to tackle environmental challenges.
- **Financial Mechanism:** The GEF acts as the financial mechanism for five major international environmental conventions:
 - ◆ **Minamata Convention on Mercury;**
 - ◆ **Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs);**
 - ◆ **United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD);**
 - ◆ **United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD);**
 - ◆ **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);**
- **Innovator and Catalyst:** The GEF supports multi-stakeholder alliances to **Preserve threatened ecosystems on land and in oceans; Build greener cities; Boost food security; Promote clean energy.**
 - ◆ It leverages \$5.2 in additional financing for every \$1 invested.
- **GEF Trust Fund:** It assists developing countries and economies in transition. It helps them meet the objectives of international environmental conventions and agreements.
- **Impressive Impact:** Over the past three decades, the GEF has provided more than \$22 billion in financing and mobilised another \$120 billion for 5,000+ national and regional projects.

Key Highlights of the 67th Meeting of GEF

- A total of 34 nature protection and renewal projects received funding, that includes: GEF Trust Fund; Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF); Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF); Multi-Trust fund; Blended finance project
- **GBFF Work Programme:** GBFF approved its first work programme, allocating \$37.8 million for protected area management in Brazil and Mexico.

- ♦ Focus on improving sustainability across 30 million hectares of protected areas on land and at sea, with support for indigenous-led conservation.

GEF Trust Fund Projects in India

- **Enhancing biodiversity conservation to meet global targets:** \$6.7 million for expanding India's protected area network and community conservation.
- Conservation of wetlands, forests, and grasslands along the Central Asian Flyway: \$10.7 million.

Source: DTE

