

DAILY PT POINTERS

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Indian Express-GS2(Governance)-Page8

PREVIOUS CHAIRMAN COMPLETED TERM ON JUNE 1

Ex-SC judge V Ramasubramanian appointed new NHRC chairperson

Was part of several benches in key cases, including one that upheld demonetisation

AJOY SINHA KARPURAM
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

FORMER SUPREME Court judge V Ramasubramanian has been appointed as the 9th Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) for a tenure of three years until December 2027.

Justice Ramasubramanian was informed about the appointment through a letter signed by Ministry of Home Affairs Joint Secretary Niraj Kumar Bansod. "Respected sir, I enclose herewith the warrant signed by the Hon'ble President of India for the appointment as Chairperson, National Human Rights Commission in terms of Section 3(2)(a) of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993. You are requested to kindly join the Commission at the earliest," the letter states.



Retired as SC judge on June 29, 2023

Justice Ramasubramanian retired on June 29, 2023, after serving for over three years as a Supreme Court judge. During his tenure, he was part of several benches in important cases, including the five-judge bench that upheld the Centre's demonetisation scheme in 2023 and the decision to set aside an RBI circular that stated it would not provide services to individuals and businesses dealing with cryptocurrency.

His legal career began after he completed his LLB from Madras Law College in 1983. He practised at the Madras High Court for 23 years before he was

appointed as a judge of the same court on July 31, 2006.

At his own request, he was transferred to the High Court for the states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh in April 2016 and remained in Hyderabad after the court was bifurcated and served as a judge of the Telangana High Court until he was appointed as the Chief Justice of the Himachal Pradesh High Court on June 22, 2019. Three months later, on September 23, he was elevated to the Supreme Court of India.

The previous NHRC chairman, Justice Arun Mishra, completed his term on June 1, 2024. It has since been functioning under the aegis of Acting Chairperson Vijaya Bharati Sayani. The NHRC is empowered to investigate allegations of human rights violations, either of its own accord or after receiving a petition from a victim (or

someone on their behalf). It may also intervene as a party in ongoing cases concerning human rights violations, make recommendations aimed at protecting human rights, and conduct or promote research in related fields.

Previous chairpersons also include former Chief Justices of India Ranganath Mishra (the first NHRC Chairperson), M N Venkatachaliah, JS Verma, AS Anand, S Rajendra Babu, K G Balakrishnan and H L Dattu.

Until 2019 only former Chief Justices of India could be appointed as NHRC chairperson. However, in July 2019, the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, was amended to also allow former SC judges for the post.

Following Justice Mishra, Justice Ramasubramanian will now be the second NHRC chairperson to have never served as Chief Justice of India.

- Former Supreme Court judge V Ramasubramanian has been appointed as the 9th Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) for a tenure of three years until December 2027.
- 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.
- 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.

Indian Express-GS2(Governance)-Page8

ACROSS 12 STATES AND UTs

PM tells ministers to attend property card distribution events on Dec 27

57 lakh cards to be distributed under SVAMITVA, a property survey scheme

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi has asked all Union ministers to attend the public events to be held to distribute 57 lakh property cards among a dozen states and UTs on December 27, under SVAMITVA, a central sector scheme, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

The move is being seen as a big push to the implementation of the scheme that aims to provide 'Record of Rights' to owners possessing houses in inhabited areas in villages, and issue legal ownership rights through property cards or title deeds.

It is learnt that the Prime Minister has asked ministers to attend the events, at a meeting of the Cabinet on December 20.

According to sources, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has

ordinate with BJP-ruled states, said a source.

SVAMITVA, a property survey and mapping scheme, was launched by the Prime Minister on the occasion of National Panchayati Raj Day on April 24, 2020, and distribution of property cards began on October 11 that year. So far, 2 crore property cards have been issued, said an official, adding that all households have been covered in several states like Haryana and Uttarakhand. The scheme aims to cover the entire country by the end of financial year 2025-26.

According to the Panchayati Raj Ministry, the scheme will benefit rural people in many ways. First, it will enable rural households to use their property as a financial asset for taking loans and other financial benefits. Second, it will help in determination of property tax, which would accrue to the Gram Panchayats directly

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Indian Express-GS3(Space)-Page11

ISRO to launch its key Spadex mission on December 30

ANONNA DUTT
NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 23

JUST AS it had started the year, the Indian Space Research Organisation will end it with its key Spadex mission — the launch of two small satellites to demonstrate docking in space — at 9:58 pm on December 30 from the first launch pad at the country's only spaceport at Sriharikota. Docking is a process where two satellites are aligned and then joined in space — a necessity for missions that the space agency hoped to achieve in the future such as Chandrayaan-4 or setting up the Bharatiya Antariksh Station.

The Spadex mission will see two satellites — SDX01 or Chaser and SDX02 or Target — align in the same orbit, reduce distance between each other, join and transfer electrical power between them, and then separate. After they separate, payloads on board both the satellites will continue

The Chaser satellite will then continue to approach the Target satellite, progressively reducing the distance between them to 5km, 1.5 km, 500 m, 225 m, 15 m, 3m, and then docking together.

Once the satellites have docked, electrical power transfer between the two will be demonstrated. They will also demonstrate the control of both the spacecraft together. Then the satellites will separate and start operating their payloads.

The Chaser or SDX01 satellite has a high resolution camera on board — a miniature version of a surveillance camera. The Target or SDX02 satellite will carry a multi-spectral payload that will be used for monitoring natural resources and vegetation along with a radiation monitor that will study space radiation and create a database. Due to the small size and mass of the satellites, docking is more challenging, requiring finer precision as compared to larger spacecraft.

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will end the year with its Spadex mission on December 30, launching two small satellites from Sriharikota. The mission aims to demonstrate satellite docking in space, a key capability for future missions like Chandrayaan-4 and the Bharatiya Antariksh Station.
- The two satellites, SDX01 (Chaser) and SDX02 (Target), will dock in space, transfer electrical power, and then separate.

The Hindu-IR (GSII)-Page1

Bangladesh writes to India seeking Hasina's extradition

Kallol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

Bangladesh has sent India a *note verbale* seeking the extradition of its deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the adviser on foreign affairs to the interim government Touhid Hossein informed the media in Dhaka on Monday.

The confirmation came hours after Lieutenant-General Mohammad Jahangir Alam Chowdhury (retd.), adviser on home affairs, informed that the interim Bangladesh government has written to the Government of India seeking the extradition of Ms. Hasina. The Ministry of External Affairs confirmed receiving the request.

"We have sent a letter to the Foreign Ministry seeking repatriation of Sheikh Hasina. The matter is being processed. We have an extradition treaty with In-



Sheikh Hasina

dia," he told presspersons in Dhaka.

Following the communication from Bangladesh, official spokesperson of Ministry of External Affairs, Randhir Jaiswal said, "We confirm that we have received a *note verbale* from the Bangladesh High Commission today in connection with an extradition request. At this time, we have no comment to offer on this matter."

CONTINUED ON

- Bangladesh has sent India a *note verbale* seeking the extradition of its deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina,
- INDIA AND Bangladesh signed an extradition treaty in 2013, in the context of several Indian and Bangladesh fugitives hiding and operating out of the other country.
- The India-Bangladesh extradition treaty has provisions for refusing requests, including if the offence is of "political nature", or an accusation has not been "made in good faith in the interests of justice", or military offences which are not "an offence under the general criminal law".

The Hindu-IR(GSII)-Page8

India's reliance on China for critical minerals

Does China have unparalleled dominance in the critical minerals sector? How was it able to do so? What are the minerals for which India is heavily dependent on China? Why has India not been able to excavate the lithium reserves found in Jammu and Kashmir?

EXPLAINER

Rakshith Shetty

The story so far:

The Ministry of Mines in 2023 identified 30 critical minerals deemed essential for the nation's economic development and national security. While the report highlighted India's complete import dependency for 10 critical minerals, it did not fully address a more pressing concern – the extent and nature of dependency on China.

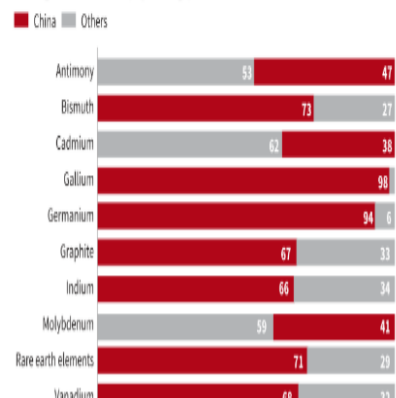
Is China a dominant player?

China's unparalleled dominance in critical minerals stems from its vast resource base and strategic investments across the value chain. As the world's largest mining

China, a leading player in critical minerals

China's dominance in critical minerals stems from its vast resource base and strategic investments across the value chain. As the world's largest mining nation, China has discovered 173 types of minerals

China's global market share (in percentage) across various minerals as of 2022



batteries and steel production, faces supply constraints as China controls 67.2% of global output, including battery-grade material.

Why does India rely on imports?

Despite being endowed with significant mineral resources, India's heavy reliance on imports stems from several structural challenges in its mining and processing ecosystem. Many critical minerals are deep-seated, requiring high-risk investments in exploration and mining technologies – a factor that has deterred private sector participation in the absence of adequate incentives and policy support. The country's processing capabilities are also limited. This is particularly evident in the case of the recently discovered lithium deposits in Jammu and Kashmir, where despite the presence of 5.9 million tonnes of

THE GIST

China's dominance extends beyond reserves to include processing and refining, with control over 87% of rare earth processing, 58% of lithium refining, and 68% of silicon processing.

An in-depth examination of import data of 30 critical minerals spanning 2019 to 2024 reveals India's acute vulnerability to Chinese supplies, particularly for six critical minerals where dependency exceeds 40%.

- In 2023, the Ministry of Mines identified 30 critical minerals essential for economic development and national security.
 - Highlighted India's complete import dependency for 10 critical minerals without fully addressing dependency on China.

China's Dominance: China dominates critical minerals due to its vast resources and strategic investments. Controls significant portions of global processing and refining: 87% of rare earths, 58% of lithium, and 68% of silicon.

India's dependency on Chinese supplies exceeds 40% for six critical minerals: bismuth (85.6%), lithium (82%), silicon (76%), titanium (50.6%), tellurium (48.8%), and graphite (42.4%).

India is reducing dependency on China through various initiatives: KABIL joint venture to secure overseas mineral assets. Participation in strategic initiatives like the Minerals Security Partnership.

Investment in research and promotion of recycling and circular economy practices.

The Hindu-IR (GSII)-Page13

'MFN not to hit India-EFTA pact'

The Switzerland government's decision to suspend the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status will not delay ratification and implementation of the four-nation EFTA-India Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA)

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Swiss decision to suspend the most favoured nation clause in the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement will not delay the ratification and implementation of the already signed trade agreement between India and the EFTA bloc, Switzerland has said.



On track: MFN decision does not negatively hit investments from

be implemented.

"No, the decision will not delay the ratification and implementation of EFTA-India TEPA," the Embassy of Switzerland in India said in a response to PTI queries on the matter.

The decision does not negatively hit investments from Switzerland to India.

"The current suspension from the Swiss side of

the free trade agreement under which New Delhi received an investment commitment of \$100 billion in 15 years from the grouping while allowing several products like Swiss watches, chocolates and cut and polished diamonds at lower or zero duties.

In 2023-24, India's imports from Switzerland stood at \$21.4 billion.

- The Swiss decision to suspend the most favoured nation clause in the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement will not delay the ratification and implementation of the already signed trade agreement between India and the EFTA bloc, Switzerland has said.
- The Swiss government has suspended the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status, which could potentially impact Swiss investments in India and lead to higher taxes on Indian companies operating in the European nation.
- India and the four-nation European Free Trade Association (EFTA) signed the pact, officially dubbed as TEPA (Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement), in March. Its members are Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland.
- India and the four-nation European bloc signed a free trade agreement under which New Delhi received an investment commitment of \$100 billion in 15 years from the grouping while allowing several products like Swiss watches, chocolates and cut and polished diamonds at lower or zero duties.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Air -Governance(GSII)

Centre Ends No-Detention Policy For Classes 5 & 8 To Improve Learning Outcomes



- The central government has scrapped the no-detention policy for classes five and eight.
- Speaking to the media, Education Secretary Sanjay Kumar said that students who failed in the annual examination of classes five and eight will have a chance to retake the test within two months.
- After the retest, if they fail again, they will not be promoted. He added that these students will not be expelled from any school till the completion of their elementary education. The secretary added that this decision has been taken to improve the learning outcome among children.