

THINK IAS

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1 August 2024

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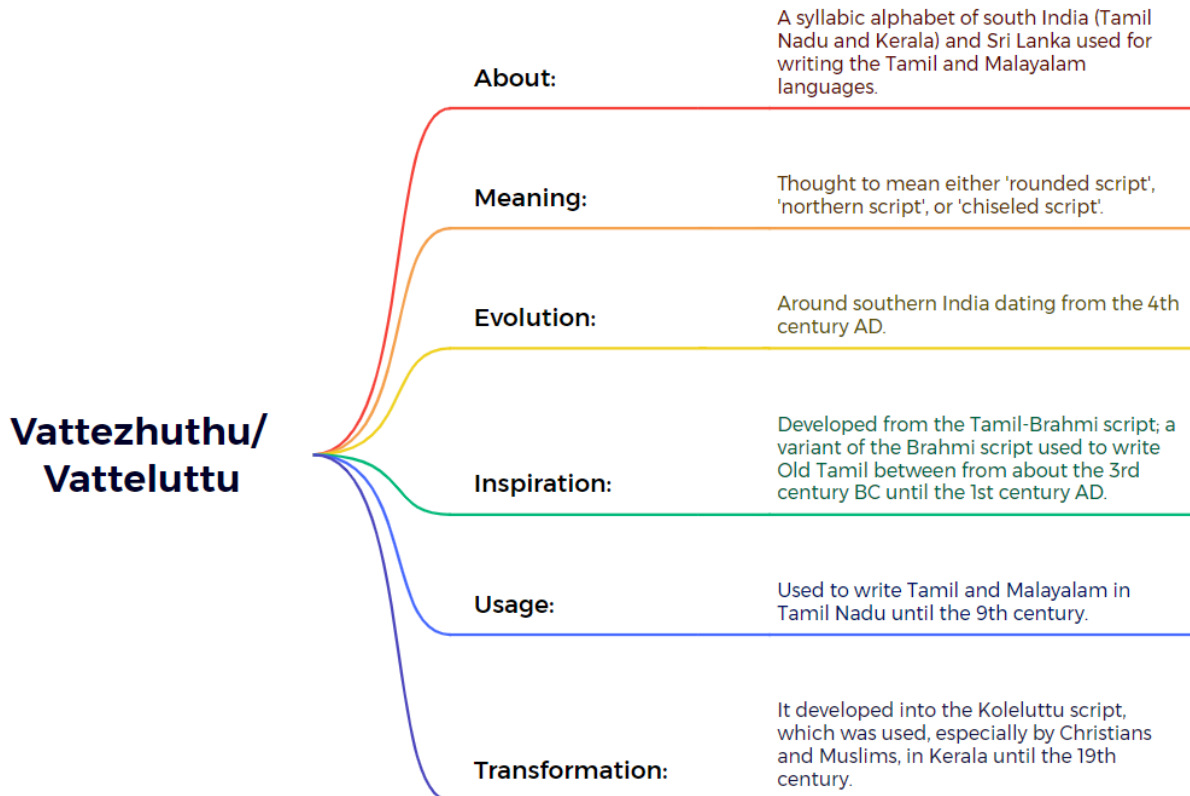
Art and Culture

1. Vattezhuthu Script - Indian Express

Context

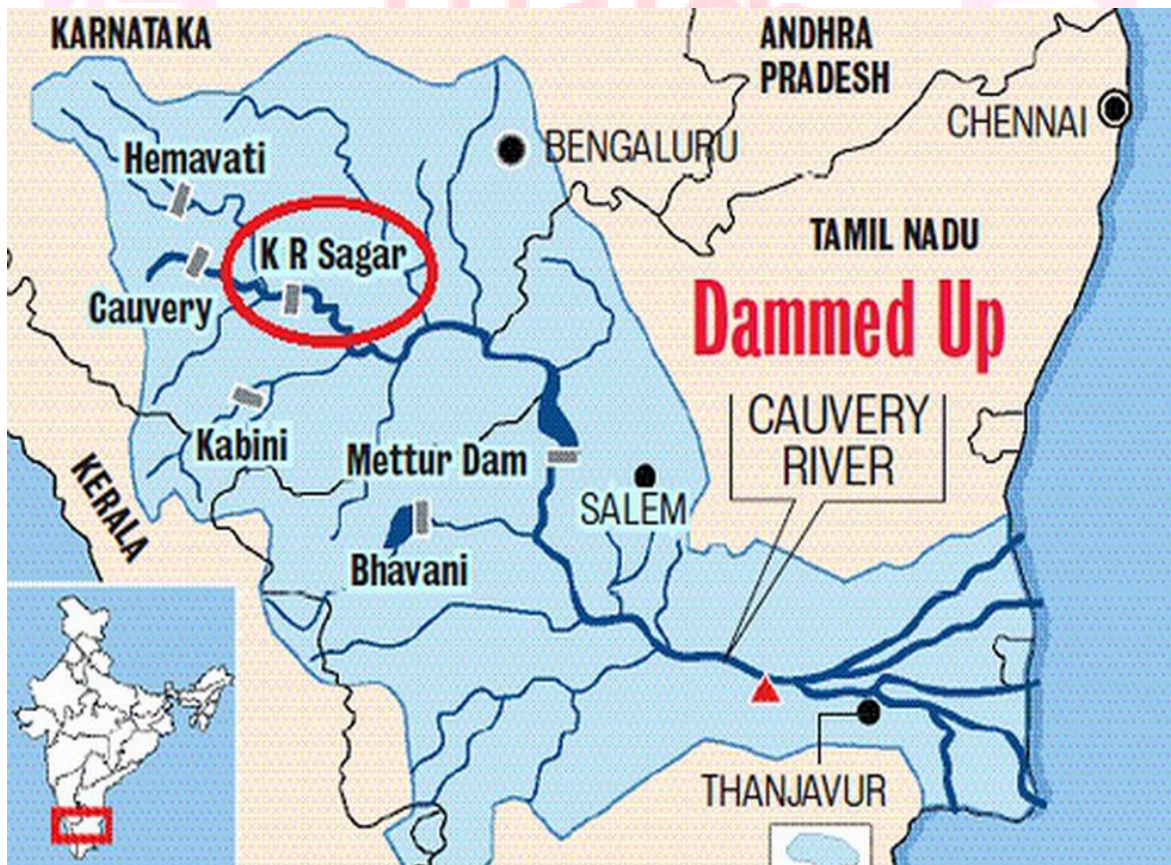
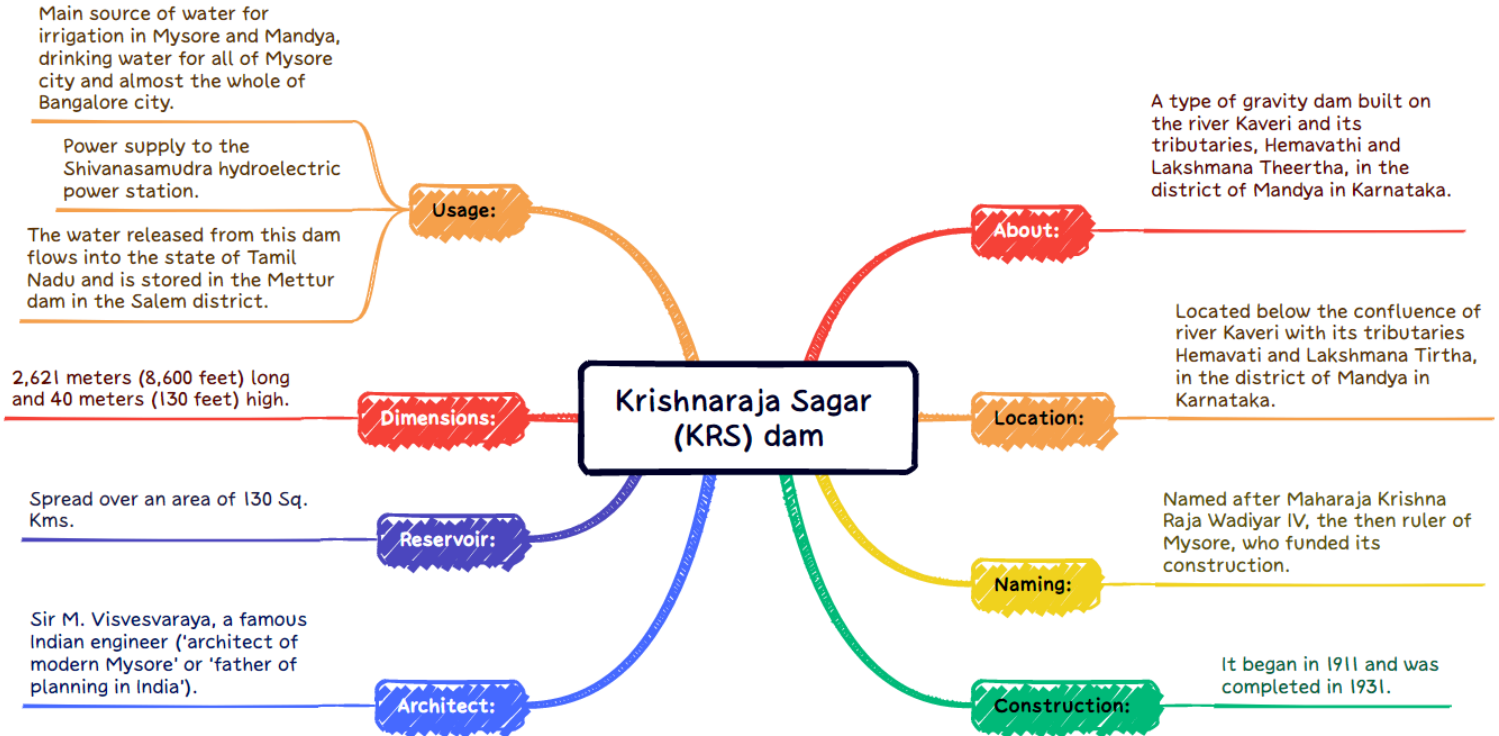
Archaeologists recently discovered a Vattezhuthu and eight Tamil inscriptions from the 1,00-year-old Thalikiswarar temple in Tirupur district, Tamil Nadu.

Vattezhuthu/ Vatteluttu



Geography

2. Krishnaraja Sagar (KRS) dam - The Hindu



3. Kabini dam - The Hindu

Bandipur tiger reserve located between the Kabini river in the north and the Moyar river in the south.

Conservation reserve:

About:

Built on the River Kabini in the district of Mysore.

Kabani, Kabini or Kapila which flows from Wayanad from the confluence of Panamram River and Mananthavady River.

River:

Kabini dam

Dimensions:

696 meters in length

Construction:

1974

2141.90 sq kms.

Catchment area:

Location:

Near village Beechanahally, (Taluk) Heggadadevanakote.



Society

4. What 'equivalence' among school boards means - Indian Express

Context

PARAKH, a standard-setting body under the NCERT, has recently submitted to the Ministry of Education an 'equivalence' report, which makes recommendations on how equivalence can be achieved across different school boards in the country, in keeping with a mention of it in the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

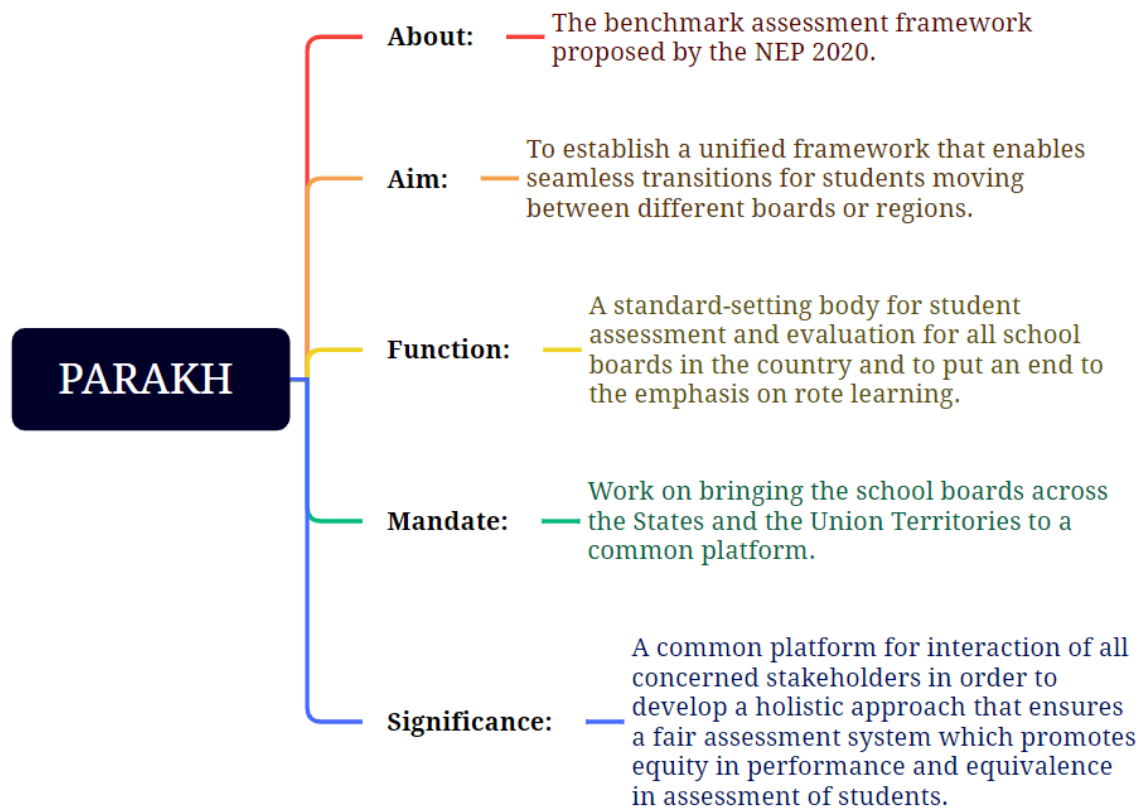
Equivalence across boards

- **Equivalence report:** It sets standards for the boards across five categories – administration, curriculum, assessment, inclusiveness, and infrastructure.
- Aim behind pursuing equivalence: To ensure that “every learner who enrolls in a school affiliated in any board should get certain standardised, benchmarked facilities for performance.”

Recommendations by PARAKH

- **Recommendation in terms of assessment:** The Class 12 report card is envisaged as a 'cumulative' one, and a weight of 15% for Class 9, 20% for Class 10, 25% for Class 11, and 40% for Class 12 will go into Class 12 results.
- **Assessments to be in terms of credits in each grade:** The student will earn a certain number of credits for each subject, for pursuing online courses, and for activities that are part of the holistic progress card – a progress card which will include the student's evaluation of themselves in aspects like 'time management' and 'plans after school', the teacher's assessment of the student in group project work, and peer feedback.
- **Boards to develop a cadre of 'professional paper setters':** Teachers who will be trained to prepare question papers, to ensure standardisation in the assessments in classes 9, 10, 11 and 12.
- **Standardisation of question papers:** PARAKH recommends that for classes 9 and 11, boards develop a question bank for all subjects offered. Question paper blueprints have also been suggested for Class 10 and 12.
- **Administration:** PARAKH has suggested that the guidelines for school affiliation specified by the boards be finalised according to its recommendations.
- **Boards to conduct periodic reviews of affiliated schools:** Affiliations should be granted for a maximum period of three years only.
- **Mandate on boards:** Boards to develop a mechanism to prevent cheating in examinations, implement protocol for handling exam papers, and conduct digital assessments where applicable.
- **Curriculum:** Boards are to incorporate digital literacy in affiliated schools, including training in coding and cybersecurity, and adhere to the National Curriculum Framework for School Education.

- **Infrastructure of affiliated schools:** The boards are to ensure availability of basic infrastructure – toilets for girls and boys, internet, library, strongroom for question papers, labs, ramps, or elevators.



World Affairs

5. India, China hold 30th round of border talks; both agree to uphold peace, tranquillity - The Hindu

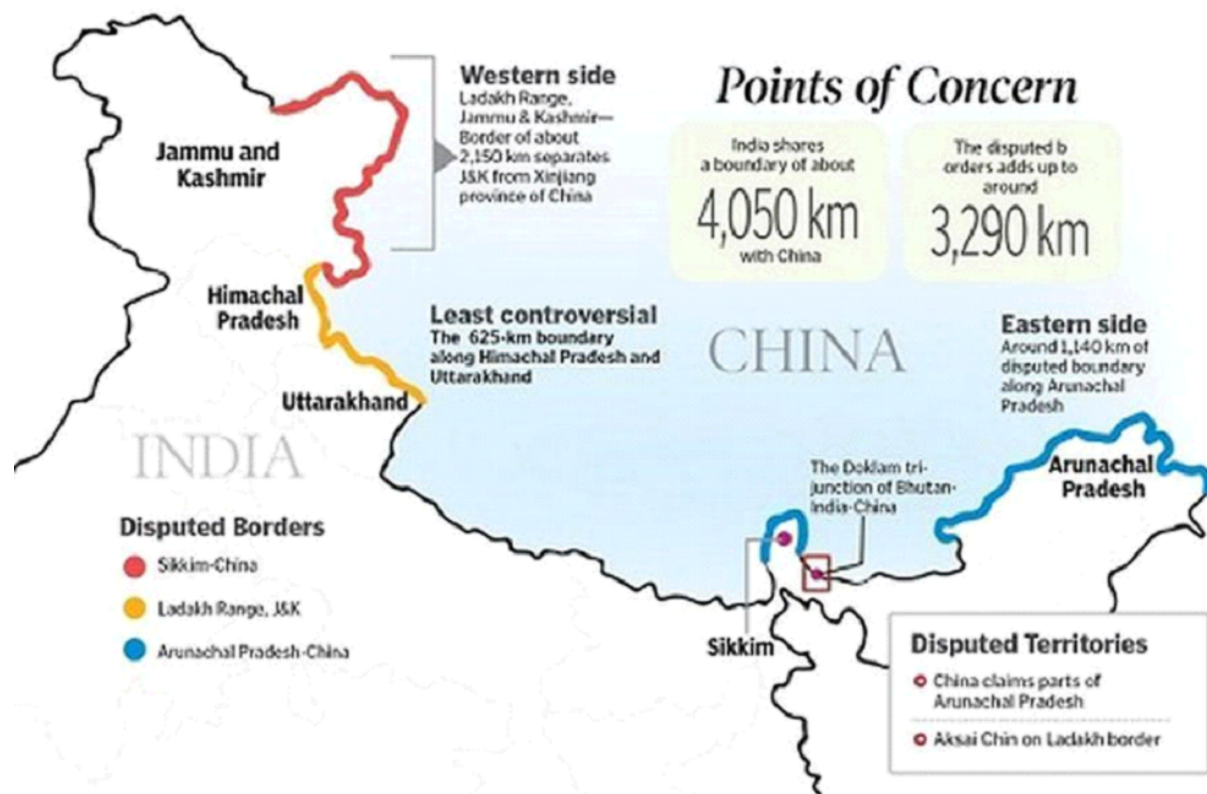
Context

India and China recently held the 30th meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC) in New Delhi during which the discussion was “in-depth, constructive and forward-looking”, and both sides agreed to maintain the momentum through established diplomatic and military channels.

Issues discussed

- **Review of the current situation along the LAC:** Restoration of peace and tranquillity, and respect for the LAC are an essential basis for restoration of normalcy in bilateral relations.
- **Agreement on the need to jointly uphold peace and tranquillity:** In accordance with bilateral agreements and protocols reached between the two governments, the statement added.

India China Boundary Dispute



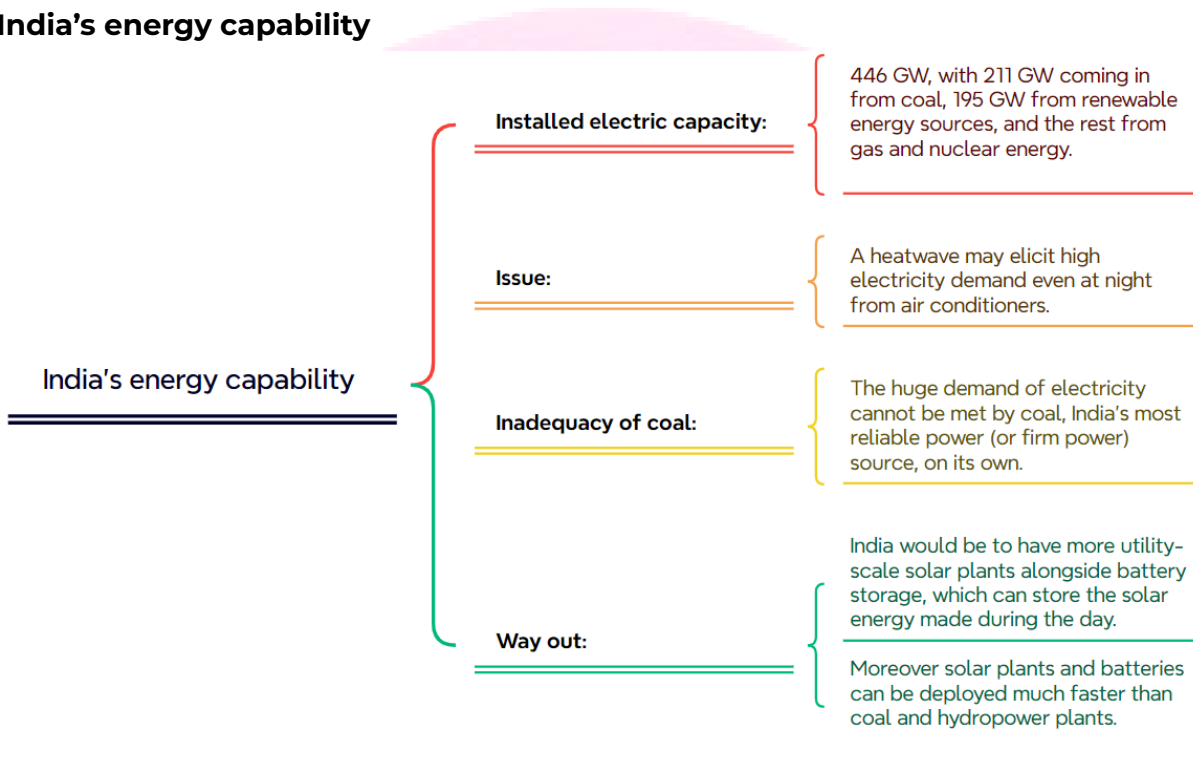
Economy

6. In 3 years, power cuts in India will rise, says report - The Hindu

Context

India's rising electricity needs will likely be accompanied by increasing evening power cuts by 2027 because of insufficient renewable energy-powered back-up, says a research report from the India Energy and Climate Centre, University of California (Berkeley).

India's energy capability



7. On discarding indexation for LTCG - The Hindu

Context

The changes in the long-term capital gains (LTCG) tax regime, particularly the withdrawal of the indexation benefit, has emerged as one of the most contentious decisions announced in the Union Budget for 2024-25. The announcement initially led to confusion and trepidation among various sections, prompting the government to issue a string of clarifications and explanations, claiming that it will be beneficial in most cases.

Indexation

Indexation

About:

Process of adjusting the original purchase price of an asset or investment in order to neutralise the impact of inflation on it. It involves revising upward the cost of acquisition of an asset based on inflation over period for which it was held.

Impact:

Indexation helps in arriving at the cost of acquisition with the impact of inflation over the holding period factored in.

Significance:

Without indexation, particularly in cases where the asset was held for an extended period, the gains may appear extremely high, but they may not paint a realistic picture.

Capital gains tax

- **About:** A tax imposed on the sale of an asset calculated as the difference between the sale price of the property and its purchase price.
- **Types:** Short-term Capital Gains and Long-term Capital Gains.

8. SDG India Index 2023-24 - The Hindu

Context

The NITI (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog recently released its latest Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) India Index, 2023-24, showing significant progress in sustainable development across states and UTs.

SDG India Index

SDG India Index		
About:	A tool developed by NITI Aayog to measure and track India's progress towards the SDGs set by the United Nations.	
Significance:	A benchmark for policymakers to identify gaps and prioritise actions towards achieving sustainable development by 2030.	
Methodology:	Assesses the performance of states and UTs across 16 SDGs using a set of indicators aligned with national priorities.	
Indicators:	Uses 113 indicators aligned to the National Indicator Framework.	
Scores:	Range from 0-100, with higher scores indicating greater progress toward SDG targets.	
Categorisation of State/UTs:	Aspirant: 0-49	
	Performer: 50-64	
	Front-Runner: 65-99	
	Achiever: 100	
Key Highlights of the SDG India Index, 2023-24	Progress:	India's overall SDG score improved to 71 in 2023-24 from 66 in 2020-21 and 57 in 2018.
	Top Performers:	Kerala and Uttarakhand, each scoring 79 points.
	Lowest Performer:	Bihar lagged behind with a score of 57 points, followed by Jharkhand at 62 points.
	Front-Runner States:	32 states and UTs are in the front-runner category, with 10 new entrants including Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, and Uttar Pradesh.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- **Official name:** Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- **Goals and indicators:** 17 Sustainable Development Goals, associated 169 targets and 304 indicators.



Environment

9. Achanakmar Tiger Reserve - Indian Express

- **Location:** Bilaspur district of Chhattisgarh.

- **Establishment:**

In 1975 and was declared a tiger reserve in 2009.

- **Area:** 553.286 sq. km.

- **River:** Maniyari River flows right from the centre of this reserve.

- **Residing tribe:**

Baigas, a forest-dwelling tribal community classified as a "Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG)".

- **Vegetation:** Tropical moist deciduous vegetation.
- **Flora:** Sal, bija, saja, haldu, teak, tinsa, dhawara, lendia, khamar, and bamboo, along with over 600 species of medicinal plants.
- **Fauna:** Tiger, leopard, bison, flying squirrel, Indian giant squirrel, chinkara, wild dog, hyena, sambar, chital, and over 150 species of birds.

National Parks & Sanctuaries of Chhattisgarh



10. Shri Bhupender Yadav launches Ideas4LiFE portal for inviting ideas related to products and services for inducing behavioral changes related to environment-friendly lifestyles - PIB

Context

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change recently launched Ideas4LiFE.

Ideas4LiFE portal

- **About:** Launched for inviting ideas related to products and services, which induce behavioral changes related to environment-friendly lifestyles.
- **Aim:** To encourage and motivate students, faculty and research scholars to contribute their innovative ideas to the global initiative of Mission LiFE.

- **Significance:** A remarkable opportunity for inspired minds to participate in a global movement dedicated to environmental sustainability.

Mission LiFE or Lifestyle for Environment

Mission LiFE or Lifestyle for Environment	About:	An India-led global mass movement to nudge individual and community action to protect and preserve the environment.
	Launch:	At the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow in November 2021.
	Aim:	To "mobilize one billion Indians as well as people in other countries to become individuals who practice sustainable lifestyles.
	Basis:	It emboldens the spirit of the P3 model, i.e., Pro Planet People.
	3 -pronged approach:	nudging individuals to practice simple yet effective environment-friendly actions in their daily lives (demand)
		enabling industries and markets to respond swiftly to the changing demand (supply)
to influence government and industrial policy to support both sustainable consumption and production (policy).		



Sci and Tech

11. Scientists use magnetism to mind-control mice in world's first experiment - Indian Express

Context

In a world-first experiment, researchers at the Center for Nanomedicine within the Institute for Basic Science (IBS) and Yonsei University in South Korea have successfully demonstrated the ability to control specific brain regions in mice using magnetic fields. This breakthrough, known as Nano-MIND (Magnetogenetic Interface for NeuroDynamics) technology, opens up new possibilities for understanding and manipulating complex brain functions such as cognition, emotion, and motivation.

Nano-MIND (Magnetogenetic Interface for NeuroDynamics) Technology

A step forward in neuroscience research and could have far-reaching implications for the development of Brain-Computer Interfaces (BCIs) and the treatment of neurological disorders.

Significance:

Activation of inhibitory GABA receptors in the medial preoptic area (MPOA), which is responsible for maternal behaviours.

Successfully regulated feeding behaviours by targeting motivation circuits in the lateral hypothalamus.

Activation of inhibitory neurons resulted in a remarkable 100% increase in appetite and feeding behaviours in mice.

Conversely, when excitatory neurons were activated, the mice showed a more than 50% reduction in appetite and feeding behaviours.

Achievements:

Nano-MIND (Magnetogenetic Interface for NeuroDynamics) Technology

About:

Allows for wireless, remote, and precise modulation of specific deep brain neural circuits using magnetism.

Mechanism:

It leverages magnetic fields and magnetized nanoparticles to selectively activate targeted brain circuits, offering a significant advancement over existing methods of brain manipulation.

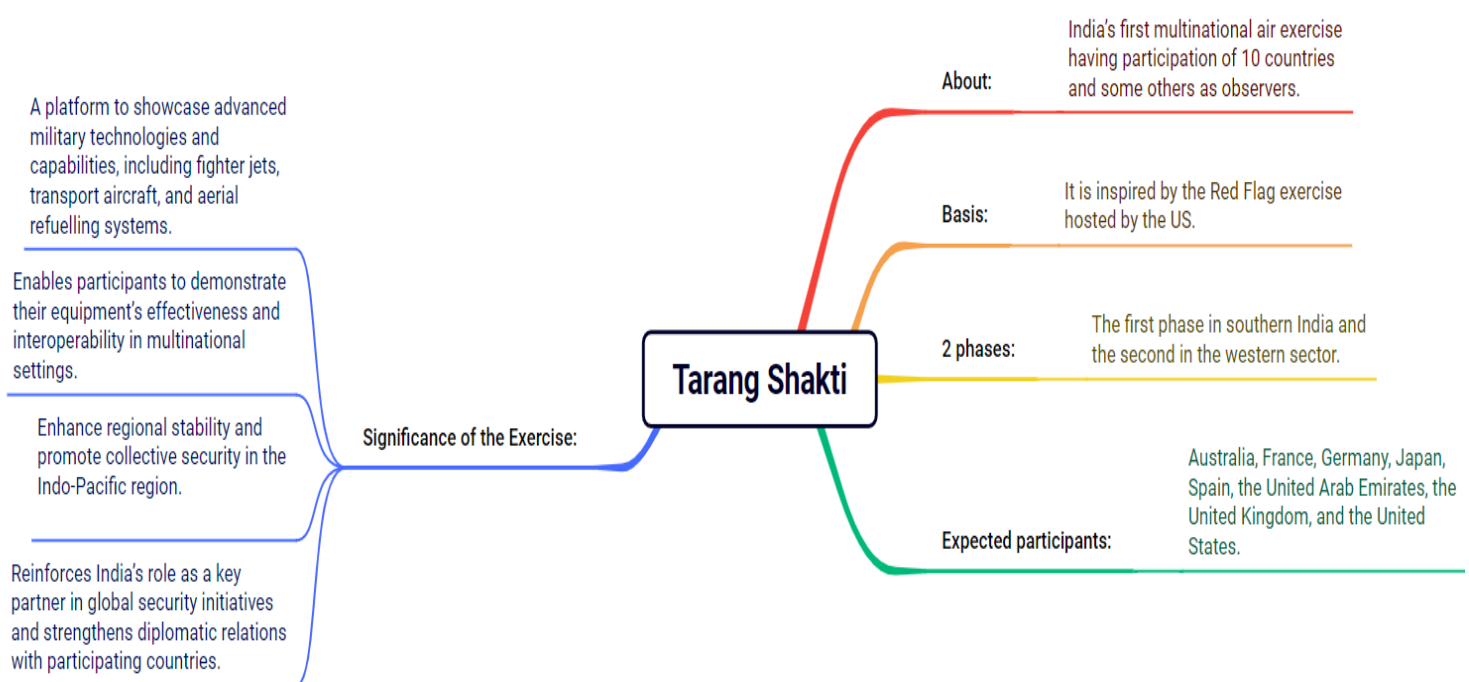
Defence

12. IAF's largest multilateral exercise to begin this month - The Hindu

Context

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is all set to host its largest multilateral exercise, Tarang Shakti, in two phases in August and September. Eighteen countries, 10 of them with air assets, will join the exercise, which will see a total of 150 aircraft, both foreign and IAF, soar into the skies over Sullur and Jodhpur.

Tarang Shakti

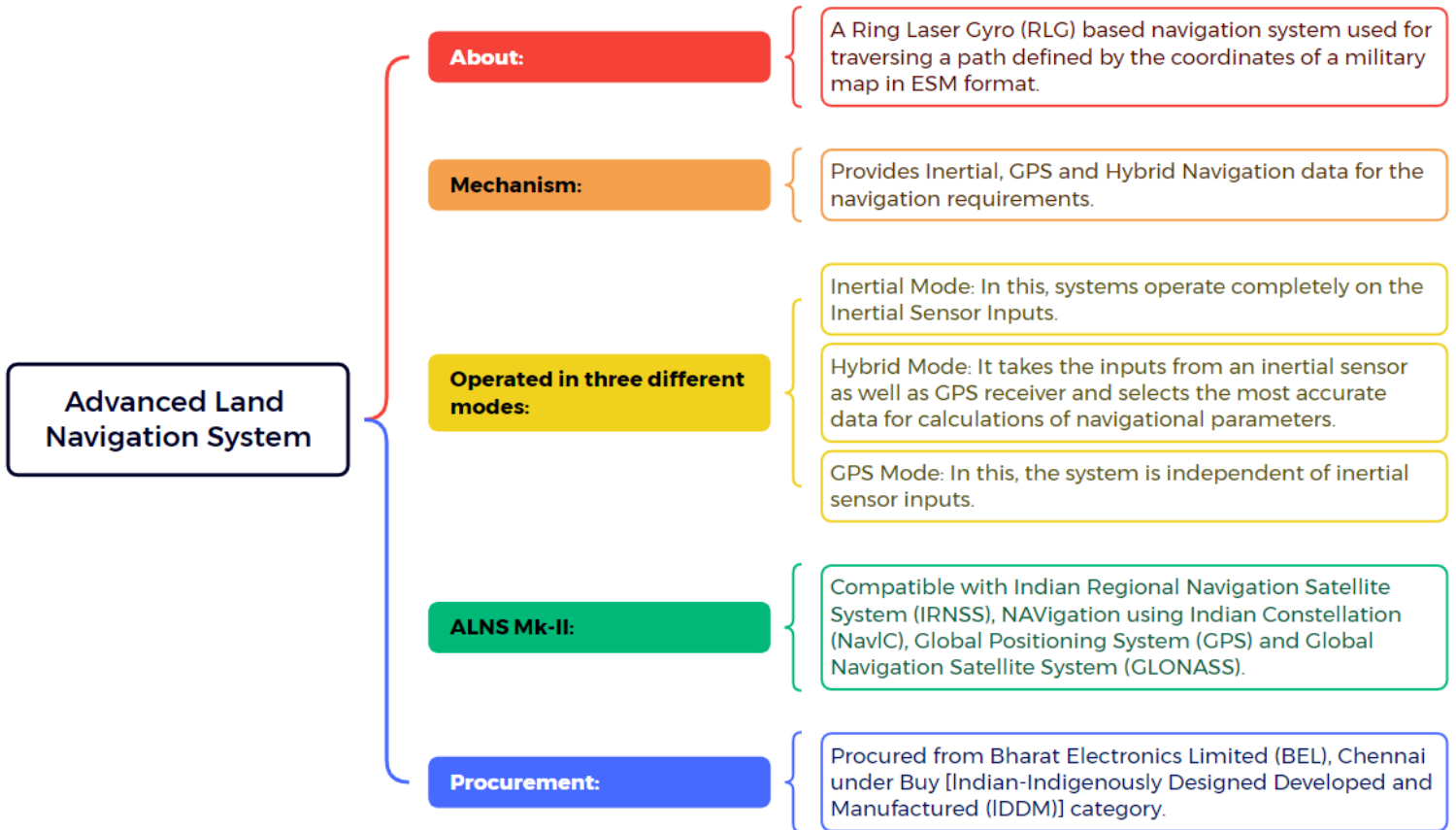


13. DAC clears capital acquisition proposals to enhance the capabilities of Indian Army & Indian Coast Guard - PIB

Context

A meeting of the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), under the chairmanship of Raksha Mantri took place recently, in which various capital acquisition proposals were considered. Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) was accorded to the procurement of Advanced Land Navigation System (ALNS) for Armoured Fighting Vehicles (AFVs) of the Indian Army.

Advanced Land Navigation System



Defence Acquisition Council (DAC)

- **About:** The highest decision-making body in the Defence Ministry for deciding on new policies and capital acquisitions for the three services (Army, Navy and Air Force) and the Indian Coast Guard.
- **Chairman:** Minister of Defence
- **Establishment:** Formed after the Group of Ministers recommendations on 'Reforming the National Security System', in 2001, post Kargil War (1999).

Miscellaneous

14. Preeti Sudan - The Hindu

Context

Former Union Health Secretary Preeti Sudan was appointed chairperson of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) after Manoj Soni resigned from the post earlier this month. She would take oath of office on August 1.



15. NATIONAL CULTURE FUND - PIB

Recently, the Union Minister for Culture and Tourism informed Lok Sabha about the National Culture Fund.

National Culture Fund (NCF)

- **About:** Established on 28th November, 1996 under the Charitable Endowment Act, 1890 to mobilize extra resources through PPP towards promoting, protecting and preserving India's tangible & intangible cultural heritage
- **Objectives of NCF:**
 - To administer and apply the Fund for conservation, maintenance, promotion, protection, preservation and up-gradation of monuments protected or otherwise;
 - To impart training and facilitate development of a cadre of specialists and cultural administrators
 - To facilitate in providing additional space in existing museums & construct new museums to accommodate or create new & special galleries.
 - Documentation of cultural expressions and forms that have lost their relevance in contemporary scenario and are either fading out or facing extinction.
- **Features:**
 - The NCF is managed and administered through a Governing Council chaired by the Hon'ble Minister of Culture and has a maximum strength of 25 members to decide the policies.
 - An Executive Committee headed by Secretary (Culture) and has a maximum strength of 11 Members, to execute those policies.
 - Donations to the National Culture Fund are eligible for 100% tax benefit under Section 80G (ii) of the Income Tax Act, 1961.
 - NCF's activities are covered under Schedule VII No. (v) of the Companies Act, 2013 as valid receptacle of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) contribution under protection of national

heritage, art and culture including restoration of buildings and sites of historical importance and works of art; setting up public libraries; promotion and development of traditional arts and handicrafts.”

- Annual Accounts are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.
- **Role of NCF:**
 - Forging partnerships with Corporates, NGOs etc. in getting the preservation & conservation related heritage projects implemented as per norms.
 - Provides the donor/sponsor the flexibility to indicate a project along with any specific location/aspect and also an implementing agency for execution of the project.



Rajasthan Current Affairs

1. Shri Haribhau Kisanrao Bagde takes oath as Governor of Rajasthan

- Shri Haribhau Kisanrao Bagde took oath as Governor of Rajasthan at Raj Bhavan on 31 July 2024.
- Chief Justice of Rajasthan High Court Shri Manindra Mohan Shrivastava administered the oath of office to Shri Bagde as Governor.
- State Chief Secretary Shri Sudhansh Pant read out the warrant of appointment of Governor issued by President Smt. Draupadi Murmu.
- Under Article 153 of the Indian Constitution, provision has been made for one Governor for each state.
- Note: A person can be appointed as the Governor of two or more states.
- According to Article 155 of the Constitution, provides that the Governor of a State shall be appointed by the President.
- Article 156 of the Indian Constitution deals with the Term of office of Governor.
- The Governor may, by writing under his hand addressed to the President, resign his office.

2. TSP fund increased to Rs 1,500 crore for development and empowerment of Scheduled Tribes

- The state government has constituted a Tribal Advisory Council for the development and empowerment of Scheduled Tribes.
- By taking decisions in accordance with the suggestions of this council, work will be done to bring about a change in the standard of living of the tribal community.
- In the first meeting of the Rajasthan Scheduled Tribe Advisory Council held on 30 July 2024 in the State Legislative Assembly, the TSP fund has been increased from Rs 1,000 crore to Rs 1,500 crore for the development and empowerment of Scheduled Tribes in the spirit of welfare of the tribal community.
- **Provisions made for the welfare of the tribal class:**
 - The Central and State Governments will develop 4,302 tribal dominated villages of the state in a phased manner under the Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana for the welfare of the tribal class.
 - In its first two phases, 1,566 villages will be identified and village development plans will be prepared for their all-round development.
 - Apart from this, an important announcement for the development of the tribal area in the state budget has been made by increasing the mess allowance in hostels and residential schools for boys and girls of the tribal class to Rs 3,000 per month and Rs 4,000 per month for sports hostels.
 - An announcement has been made to open 250 new Maa-Badi centers and increase the honorarium of Shiksha Sahayogis working at Maa-Badi centers by 10%.

- Development and conservation work will be done in community forest rights areas through Govind Guru Janjati Kshetra Vikas Yojana.

3. Rajasthan stood second in Junior National Wushu Competition

- Rajasthan Wushu team won a total of 19 medals including 8 gold, 4 silver and 7 bronze medals in the 23rd Junior National (Boys/Girls) Wushu Competition held in Tamil Nadu.
- Rajasthan team won the second place trophy in the overall team championship in the Sanshou category.
- Kaif Mansuri, Abhimanyu Pareek, Vaibhav Sharma, Saksham Khandelwal, Kiran Pareek, Priyanshi Gautam, Divyanshi, Renuka Sharma won gold medals.
- Shiv Kumar, Himalaya Jatwa, Hemendra Singh and Chhavi Kanwar won silver medals and Karamveer, Rudra Sharma, Rudraksh Ameria, Piyush Mahera, Priya Chauhan, Manisha Bhati, Dual Event (Vaidehi Pareek, Riddhi Pareek, Mahima Chaudhary) won bronze medals.

