

## DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

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## SEXUAL EQUALITY MUST BE A PART OF SCHOOL SYLLABUS

### Context

- The Supreme Court recently emphasized that sexual equality, along with moral and ethical training on respectful behavior towards women, must be integrated into the school curriculum.

### Need for Sexual Equality

- Address Deep-Rooted Patriarchy:** India continues to grapple with gender biases that limit opportunities for women in various fields.
- Economic Participation:** Gender disparity in education and employment contributes to lower economic growth.
  - Gender Gap in Education:** As per NFHS-5, **70.3% of females are literate**, compared to 84.7% of males.
  - Labor Force Participation:** In India, only around **37%** of women aged 15 years and above participate in the workforce (compared to about 73% of men).
- Constitutional Mandate:** Articles **14, 15, and 21** of the Indian Constitution uphold gender equality, and integrating it into education aligns with these principles.
- Gender-Based Violence:** Educating children on gender equality from an early age can help reduce incidents of gender-based violence, harassment, and discrimination.

### Challenges to Achieving Sexual Equality

- Deep-Rooted Patriarchy:** Societal norms and traditional biases reinforce gender stereotypes, limiting opportunities for women.
- Educational Gaps:** Lack of gender-sensitive curricula and inadequate teacher training hinder effective implementation of gender equality education.
- Workplace Disparities:** Wage gaps, underrepresentation in leadership roles, and gendered career preferences continue to perpetuate inequality.
- Violence Against Women:** Sexual harassment, domestic violence, and crimes against women persist despite legal frameworks aimed at protection and justice.
- Digital and Media Influence:** Objectification of women in media and unchecked cyber abuse contribute to gender biases.

### Global Efforts Towards Sexual Equality

- United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5:** Aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995):** The resolution adopted by the United Nations in 1995 outlines key commitments for gender equality worldwide.
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW):** Encourages policy reforms and legal protection against gender discrimination.

### National Efforts Towards Sexual Equality

- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP):** Promotes awareness and education of the girl child to combat gender biases.
- National Education Policy (NEP) 2020:** Recognizes gender inclusion as a key priority and promotes sensitization programs.
- Nirbhaya Fund:** Supports initiatives to ensure women's safety and security.
- Digital Literacy Programme for Women:** It is part of Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDISHA) and **empowers women to access e-governance services and financial platforms**, helping them participate in the digital economy.
- One Stop Centre Scheme (Sakhi Centres),** aims to facilitate women affected by violence with a range of integrated services under one roof such as Police facilitation, medical aid, legal aid and legal counseling, psycho-social counseling, temporary shelter, etc.

### Concluding remarks

- Integrating sexual equality into school education is crucial for fostering a just and equitable society.
- Implementing a well-structured and effective gender-sensitization curriculum can be a transformative step toward a more progressive and inclusive India.

Source: TH

## WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

### Context

- World Day of Social Justice is observed annually on **February 20th by the United Nations**.

### About

- Established by UNGA:** It was established by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) during the **62nd session on November 26, 2007**.
- Focus:** On addressing poverty, exclusion, unemployment, and promoting solidarity, equality, and opportunity.

- **Role of ILO:** The International Labour Organization (ILO) promotes social justice through the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization (2008) and the Decent Work Agenda.
- **Aligned with UN Initiatives:** Aligned with the UN's mission, including the Social Protection Floor launched in 2009, ensuring basic social guarantees for all.

### Evolution of Social Justice in India

- **World Day of Social Justice (2009):** India has observed this day since 2009, symbolizing its commitment to social justice.
- **Independence Movement Influence:** Social justice in India has roots in the struggle for independence, which laid the groundwork for equality, dignity, and justice.
- **Constitutional Foundation:** The Indian Constitution is the cornerstone of social justice, ensuring equality, dignity, and justice for all, especially marginalized communities.
- **Key Constitutional Provisions:**
- **Preamble:** Ensures social, economic, and political justice, guarantees equality, and promotes fraternity for national unity.
- **Fundamental Rights (Part III):**
  - ♦ Article 23: Prohibits human trafficking and forced labor.
  - ♦ Article 24: Bans child labor in hazardous occupations.
- **Directive Principles of State Policy (Part IV):**
  - ♦ Article 37: Highlights the importance of DPSPs in governance.
  - ♦ Article 38: Directs the State to reduce inequalities.
  - ♦ Article 39: Promotes equal livelihood, fair wages, and protection from exploitation.
  - ♦ Article 39A: Guarantees free legal aid.
  - ♦ Article 46: Focuses on education and economic upliftment for SCs, STs, and weaker sections.
- **Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment:** In 1985-86, the Ministry of Welfare was bifurcated into the Department of Women & Child Development and the Department of Welfare, incorporating divisions from the Ministries of Home Affairs and Law.
  - ♦ It was later renamed the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment in May 1998.
  - ♦ **Key focus Areas:** education, economic support, rehabilitation, and empowerment.
  - ♦ **Targeted Community Welfare:** Focuses on uplifting SCs, OBCs, senior citizens, victims

of substance abuse, transgender persons, DNTs, and EWS through policies and initiatives promoting equity and inclusion.

- **Union Budget 2025-26:** Allocation of Rs 13,611 crores for MoSJE, reflecting a 6% increase for welfare schemes aimed at empowering marginalized communities.

### Key Initiatives by the Government of India

- **Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM-AJAY):** It merges 3 schemes for skill development, income generation, and infrastructure in SC-dominated villages.
  - ♦ **Three Components:** Adarsh Gram development, Grants-in-Aid for socio-economic projects and Hostel construction in higher education institutions.
- **Scheme for Residential Education for Students in High Schools (SRESHTA):**
  - ♦ Provides financial assistance for SC students in classes 9-12 in high-quality residential schools.
  - ♦ Supports CBSE/State Board-affiliated private schools and NGOs/VOs running residential/non-residential schools and hostels.
  - ♦ Aims to bridge service gaps and promote socio-economic upliftment of SC communities.
- **Purple Fests (Festival of Inclusion):**
  - ♦ Organized by DEPwD, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment since 2023.
  - ♦ In 2024, over 10,000 Divyangjan and their escorts participated.
- **Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA, 2020):** Aims to make India drug-free by targeting 272 high-risk districts.
  - ♦ Follows a three-pronged approach: supply reduction (NCB), demand reduction (MoSJ&E), and treatment (Health Dept).
  - ♦ Reached 13.57 crore people, including 4.42 crore youth and 2.71 crore women, with participation from 3.85 lakh educational institutions.
- **PM-DAKSH Yojana (2021):**
  - ♦ Aims to enhance skill levels of marginalized communities (SCs, OBCs, EBCs, DNTs, Safai Karamcharis) for economic empowerment.
  - ♦ Provides free short-term and long-term training with a 450.25 crore budget (2021-26).
  - ♦ Ensures at least 70% placement in wage/self-employment, targeting individuals aged 18-45.
- **SMILE Scheme:**
  - ♦ Focuses on the rehabilitation of transgender individuals and people engaged in begging.



- ♦ Aims to create a "Begging-free India" through surveys, awareness campaigns, shelter homes, skills training, alternative livelihoods, and SHG formation.
- ♦ Active in 81 cities, with plans to expand to 50 more cities.
- **NAMASTE Scheme (2023-24):**
  - ♦ A joint initiative by MoSJ&E and MoHUA to ensure safety, dignity, and livelihood for sanitation workers in urban India.
  - ♦ Integrates the Self-Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS) and expands coverage to waste pickers from FY 2024-25.

Source: PIB

## RAGGING DEATHS IN INDIA

### Context

- Ragging remains a deeply entrenched issue in India's higher education institutions, despite Supreme Court guidelines and University Grants Commission (UGC) regulations aiming to curb it.

### What is Ragging?

- Ragging is any **act of physical or psychological abuse** usually by senior students toward juniors under the pretext of initiation or camaraderie.
- It ranges from verbal abuse and forced tasks to extreme physical torture and sexual exploitation.

### Menace of Ragging in Education institutions

- According to records accessed through the Right to Information (RTI) Act, **78** deaths have been attributed to ragging from **2012 to 2023**.
- The UGC's dedicated helpline has logged over **8,000 complaints** in the past decade, with cases rising by **208%** between **2012 and 2022**.

### Government Steps to Curb Ragging

- **Supreme Court Guidelines:** In **2009**, the Supreme Court of India ordered the implementation of a ragging prevention program. The program included the following steps:
  - ♦ **Anti-ragging helpline:** A toll-free helpline or call center to be set up.
  - ♦ **Regulations:** Directed the **University Grants Commission (UGC)** to frame regulations to curb ragging in higher education institutions.
  - ♦ **Anti-ragging committee:** Mandated the UGC to constitute an Anti-Ragging Committee and an Anti-Ragging Squad.
- In a landmark verdict, the **Vishwa Jagriti Mission v. Central Government & Others, 2001**, the Supreme Court made ragging a punishable

offense and mandated strict institutional measures.

- **Role of NGOs:** Organizations like **Society Against Violence in Education (SAVE)** actively track cases and push for legal action against institutions.
- **UGC Anti-Ragging Regulations (2009):** UGC established a **24x7** anti-ragging helpline and mandated annual affidavits from students and parents against ragging.
  - ♦ It allowed UGC to withdraw funding from non-compliant institutions.
- **Raghavan Committee in 2007** was constituted by the Supreme Court of India to address the menace of ragging in educational institutions.
  - ♦ The committee recommended treating ragging as a punishable criminal offense under the **Indian Penal Code (IPC)**.

### Reasons for Persisting Ragging

- **Lack of Stringent Implementation:** The Supreme Court issued anti-ragging guidelines **15 years ago**, but they have largely remained on paper.
  - ♦ **UGC regulations** mandate action against colleges that fail to prevent ragging, but the regulatory body has not invoked these provisions since the helpline's establishment in **2009**.
- **Unaccountable System:** Victims often struggle with an ad hoc, non-transparent process where complaints are not adequately addressed.
- **Institutional Inaction:** Despite the mandate for Anti-Ragging Squads and surprise inspections, the UGC does not maintain any record of actions taken.
- **Low Compliance:** UGC guidelines require students to submit anti-ragging affidavits annually, yet RTI data shows that only **4.49%** of students have done so in the past decade.
- **Failure in Legal Enforcement:** Institutions are required to file an FIR within 24 hours of a ragging complaint, but UGC does not track compliance with this directive.

### Way Ahead

- **Strict Enforcement of Guidelines:** Authorities must ensure full implementation of Supreme Court and UGC regulations, holding institutions accountable for lapses.
- **Technology-Based Solutions:** Expanded CCTV surveillance in campuses to deter ragging incidents.
  - ♦ Secure online portals and ID-based dashboards to enable anonymous reporting by victims.

- **Legal Clarity:** There is need for amendments in laws to ensure strict penalization of offenders, including faculty or management complicit in ignoring complaints.

Source: IE

## INDIA, CHINA WORKED HARD TO PROTECT G-20

### In News

- The External Affairs Minister of India emphasized that India and China worked hard to **preserve the G-20 as an institution amid global polarization.**

### About

- India and China discussed bilateral developments, particularly the situation on the Line of Actual Control (LAC).
- The two leaders reviewed bilateral relations, discussing the resumption of the Kailash Mansarovar pilgrimage, trans-border river talks, flight connectivity, and facilitating travel.

### Inception of the G20

- It was **founded in 1999** after the **Asian financial crisis (1997-1998)** as an informal forum for **Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors.**
- Initially focused on macroeconomic issues, but has expanded to include trade, climate change, health, agriculture, energy, and anti-corruption.
- **Membership:** Comprises 19 countries: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, UK, and US.
  - ♦ Also includes **two regional bodies:** the European Union (EU) and African Union (AU).
- **Presidency:** The G20 does not have a permanent secretariat.
  - ♦ The G20 Presidency rotates annually, and each country within a regional group takes a turn hosting the Presidency.

### Do you know ?

- The G20 brings together the countries with the **largest economies in the world.** The member states **meet annually** to discuss economic, political and social initiatives.
- Before the African Union (AU) joined, the G20 accounted for approximately **85% of global GDP, 75% of global trade,** and **two-thirds of the world's population.**

### Role of India in G20

- The G20 Leaders' Summit in 2023, showcased India's capacity as G20 president to create a platform for global discussions and reach a consensus through the Leaders' Declaration.
  - ♦ India placed inclusivity at the forefront, ensuring public concerns were heard through 11 Engagement Groups representing diverse segments like youth, women, private sector, and civil society.
- India's G20 presidency advocated for **Sustainable Development Goal 1 (SDG 1) – “no poverty”** – aligning with global development goals.
- India represents the **Global South in G20**, advocating for developing nations and addressing their challenges.

### Importance

- **India's economic strength** and diverse representation enable it to contribute to policies benefiting emerging economies.
- The G20 forum helps India **attract foreign investments**, spurring job creation, technological advancement, and infrastructure development.
- India's G20 leadership reflects its commitment to inclusivity and economic strength, aiming for tangible outcomes like increased investments, job opportunities, income growth, and poverty reduction.

### Challenges

- India faces challenges in navigating relations between major powers like the US, China, and Russia.
- India's rapid industrialization and development pose challenges in **balancing economic growth with climate goals.**
- The divide between developed and developing countries remains a challenge.

### Conclusion and Way Forward

- India's G20 participation elevates its global profile and strengthens its leadership in international affairs.
- Despite challenges, India's G20 role offers significant opportunities to drive global change, promote growth, and represent developing nations.
- India's global ascent, under G20 leadership, extends benefits to ordinary citizens, farmers, factory workers, and the urban middle class, ensuring equitable global prosperity.

Source :TH

## VIOLATION AND MISUSE OF THE FEMA

### Context

- Recently, the **Enforcement Directorate (ED)** has issued an adjudication order imposing a penalty of over ₹3.44 crore on **BBC World Service India (BBC WS India)** for alleged violations of the **Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) of 1999**.
  - BBC WS India, classified as a 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) company, was found to be in violation of Indian regulations that mandate a cap of 26% FDI for digital media entities under the government approval route.

### About the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999

- It was enacted to **replace** the **Foreign Exchange Regulation Act (FERA), 1973**, which was considered too restrictive.
- It was enacted in **response to India's economic liberalization** in the 1990s and aimed to ensure compliance with global financial norms, and **to facilitate external trade and payments** while ensuring the orderly development and maintenance of the **foreign exchange market in India**.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** and the **Enforcement Directorate (ED)** are the primary regulators enforcing FEMA.

### Key Provisions of FEMA

- Current and Capital Account Transactions:** While current account transactions (trade, remittances, etc.) are generally allowed, **capital account transactions (investment in foreign assets, debt instruments, etc.) require RBI approval**.
- Regulation of Foreign Exchange Holdings:** FEMA permits Indian residents to hold foreign exchange within specified limits but prohibits unauthorized dealings.
- Restrictions on Foreign Direct Investment (FDI):** FEMA governs the inflow and outflow of FDI in India through RBI and government policies.
- Penalties for Non-Compliance:** Violators face monetary fines, asset seizures, and, in severe cases, criminal action under the **Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)**.

### Penalties for Violations

- FEMA is a civil law**, meaning violations result in **monetary penalties, not criminal charges**.
  - The ED can impose penalties up to three times the amount involved in the violation.

- Compounding of Offenses:** FEMA violations can be settled through a compounding process under RBI's supervision, avoiding prolonged litigation.

### About Enforcement Directorate (ED)

- It is a specialized financial investigative agency under the **Department of Revenue, Union Ministry of Finance**.
- It investigates financial crimes, foreign exchange violations, and money laundering activities, playing a crucial role in ensuring economic security.
- It was established in 1956 and primarily enforces two key laws:
  - Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002;**
  - Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999;**

### Powers and Functions of ED Under FEMA

- Investigate suspected violations of foreign exchange regulations.
- Conduct searches, seizures, and summons for cases involving illegal forex transactions.
- Impose penalties for FEMA violations.
- Coordinate with other financial regulatory agencies like the RBI, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), and Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU-IND).

### Common Violations and Misuse of FEMA

- Hawala Transactions:** Hawala is an **illegal remittance system** used to transfer money outside the formal banking network, violating FEMA provisions.
- Round-Tripping:** It involves sending funds abroad and bringing them back as FDI to take advantage of tax benefits and hide the source of income.
  - It is particularly common in tax havens like Mauritius, the Cayman Islands, and Singapore.
- Unauthorized Foreign Remittances:** Many businesses and individuals violate FEMA by remitting funds abroad without RBI permission.
  - For instance, some companies invest in offshore entities without reporting to the authorities, leading to foreign exchange loss for India.
- Money Laundering Through Shell Companies:** Shell companies are used to disguise illegal foreign investments.

- ♦ FEMA violations often involve creating bogus companies abroad, routing illicit funds, and repatriating them under the guise of legitimate transactions.
- **Crypto-Related Violations:** With the rise of cryptocurrency, many individuals and entities use digital assets to transfer funds **outside India without RBI approval**, violating FEMA norms.
- **Violation of Liberalized Remittance Scheme (LRS):** An Indian resident can remit up to \$250,000 per financial year for permissible foreign transactions under LRS.
  - ♦ However, many individuals misuse LRS by exceeding limits or using funds for speculative trading in foreign stock markets without proper declarations.

### Challenges in Enforcing FEMA

- **Difficulty in Tracking Offshore Transactions:** Many violations involve complex money flows through multiple offshore accounts, making it difficult for Indian regulators to track illicit activities.
- **Limited Coordination Between Agencies:** While FEMA is regulated by RBI and ED, coordination with tax authorities, SEBI, and other regulatory bodies remains a challenge.
  - ♦ Multiple agencies like RBI, SEBI, and CBI also regulate forex violations, leading to bureaucratic hurdles.
- **Use of New-Age Financial Instruments:** The rise of digital banking, cryptocurrencies, and fintech startups has created new avenues for FEMA violations that traditional enforcement mechanisms struggle to address.
- **Globalization and Tax Havens:** India's high net-worth individuals (HNIs) and corporates often use tax havens to evade FEMA regulations, requiring stronger global cooperation to tackle violations.

### Recommended Reforms

- **Stricter Penalties:** Higher financial penalties and stringent criminal actions against offenders can deter future violations.
- **Better Surveillance Mechanisms:** AI and big data analytics can be used to track suspicious foreign transactions.
- **Stronger International Cooperation:** India should enhance collaboration with global financial regulators to track money laundering.
- **Regulation of Cryptocurrencies:** Clear guidelines and regulations are needed to prevent crypto-related FEMA violations.

Source: TH

## ARMY TO STRENGTHEN ITS AIR DEFENCE AMID DRONES AND SECURITY THREATS

### Context

- The Indian Army is moving to strengthen its **air defence as evolving aerial threats**, including drones and low-flying aircraft, challenge traditional defence systems.

### About

- A contract for the indigenously developed Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM) system is expected to be concluded within 4-5 months.
  - ♦ **QRSAM, developed by DRDO**, has a range of 30 km and is a priority for the Army.
  - ♦ The **Akash SAM** has three regiments in service, and two regiments of the **Akash-NG** have been contracted, with enhanced prototypes expected for trials in 45 days.
- The rise in drone usage, especially in the Ukraine war, is challenging air defence quantification and quality of threats.

### Drones

- Drones, also known as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), are aircraft that are operated without a human pilot onboard.
- They come in various sizes and are used for a wide range of applications, from military to civilian purposes.
- **Military Applications:**
  - ♦ **Surveillance and Reconnaissance:** Drones are widely used for gathering intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) without putting human pilots at risk.
  - ♦ **Targeted Strikes:** Larger military drones, such as the MQ-9 Reaper, can carry missiles or bombs and conduct airstrikes on enemy targets.
  - ♦ **Real-time Intelligence:** Advanced sensors provide live battlefield data.
  - ♦ **Psychological Warfare:** Persistent UAV presence creates fear and deterrence.
  - ♦ **Logistics and Resupply:** Drones can deliver supplies to troops in remote or difficult-to-access locations.
  - ♦ **Law Enforcement:** Assist in crowd monitoring, surveillance, and rescue ops.
  - ♦ **Precision Strikes:** Laser-guided missiles ensure surgical hits, minimizing collateral damage.



### Need to Strengthen Aerial Defence

- **Used by adversaries:** India has faced instances where drones were used to drop weapons or conduct surveillance along its borders.
  - ♦ Drones have been used to infiltrate Indian airspace, especially near critical installations, military bases, and borders, raising concerns about their potential to carry out strikes.
- **Enhanced warfare tactics:** Drones ability to carry loitering munitions, conduct surveillance, and disrupt enemy operations presents new challenges for air defence systems.
- **Surveillance concerns:** Drones are also increasingly being used for civilian purposes, such as delivery services or surveillance. However, their misuse for espionage, smuggling, or disrupting public events has raised security concerns.

### India's Efforts

- **Air defence upgrades:** India's air defence systems are being modernized to address drone threats, with the introduction of smart ammunition, counter-drone systems, and new anti-aircraft guns.
  - ♦ Efforts are underway to induct advanced systems like the Quick Reaction Surface to Air Missile (QRSAM) and smart ammunition.
- **Technological advancements:** India is developing counter-drone systems to detect, track, and neutralize threats from drones.
- **Regulation:** Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) for drones, to control their use in the civilian sector.
  - ♦ The new Drone (Amendment) Rules 2023 for drone pilots, effective from the 27th of September 2023.
  - ♦ The move aims to further liberalise, promote and facilitate drone operations across the country and make India a global drone hub by 2030.
- **Indigenous technology:** India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and other agencies are working on developing homegrown technologies to address the emerging drone threat.
  - ♦ This includes advanced radar systems, anti-drone weapons, and missile systems designed to counter UAVs.

### Conclusion

- Drones are versatile and powerful tools used across various sectors.

- Their growing role in both military and civilian fields has revolutionized industries, but it also presents new challenges, especially in terms of regulation and security.

Source: TH

## NEWS IN SHORT

### JHUMOUR BINANDINI DANCE

#### In News

- More than 8,000 artists from tea garden areas across Assam will participate in a spectacular performance of the traditional **Jhumour dance**.

#### About Jhumour Binandini dance

- It is a traditional folk dance performed primarily by the Adivasi tea tribes during the harvest season.



- It is accompanied by traditional instruments like the Madal, Dhol, Taal and Flute.
- It involves performers standing in rows, holding each other's waists and swaying rhythmically while singing couplets and clapping hands.
- The dance is a celebration of community, culture and the rich heritage of the tea tribes.

Source :TH

### PRO-TEM SPEAKER

#### Context

- Arvinder Singh Lovely has been appointed as the **Pro-tem Speaker of the Delhi Assembly**.

#### About

- A Pro Tem Speaker is a **temporary speaker** appointed to preside over the **proceedings of the Lok Sabha or the Legislative Assembly of a state**.
  - ♦ Appointed typically **during the initial phase of the first session** after a general election or during special circumstances when the Speaker's office is vacant.



- **Role:** Performs the functions of the Speaker, including administering the oath to newly elected members, conducting the election of the new Speaker, and ensuring smooth parliamentary proceedings in the interim.
- **Appointment:** The President/Governor appoints the Pro Tem Speaker, usually from among the **senior-most members of the House**.
- **Duration:** The Pro Tem Speaker serves for a very short period, generally until the new Speaker is elected.
- **The Constitution does not mention the post.** However, the official 'Handbook on the Working of Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs' speaks about the 'Appointment and Swearing in of Speaker pro tem'.

Source: ET

## USD-INR SWAP DEAL

### In News

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) decided to inject liquidity into the system through a \$10 billion **dollar-rupee buy-sell swap arrangement**.

### Background

- India's banking system faced a severe liquidity crunch in January 2025, with a deficit of Rs 3.15 lakh crore, its worst in over a decade.
- The deficit was caused by **tax outflows, GST payments, and RBI forex interventions to stabilize the rupee**.
- This led to higher dependence on market borrowing by banks and higher interbank call money rates.

### Dollar-rupee buy-sell swap arrangement.

- It is a forex tool used by the central bank to manage currency liquidity.
- The RBI conducts a buy-sell foreign exchange swap where a bank sells US dollars to the RBI and agrees to buy the same amount after the swap period.
- The first leg of the transaction involves the sale of dollars to RBI, with rupee funds credited to the bidder's account.
- In the reverse leg, the bank returns the rupee funds and pays a swap premium to get dollars back.

### Importance

- The swap mechanism helps stabilize the rupee by providing immediate liquidity support.
- It prevents excessive volatility in exchange rates and strengthens market confidence.

- The swap also increases the RBI's dollar reserves to stabilize the rupee amid foreign fund outflows.
- The recent move aims to provide a durable solution to liquidity issues, stabilize the rupee, and boost India's foreign exchange reserves.

### Do you know ?

- Over the last five weeks, the RBI injected over Rs 3.6 lakh crore of liquidity through debt purchases, forex swaps, and longer-duration repos.
- The RBI took several measures, including variable rate repo (VRR) auctions, a \$5 billion swap, open market operations (OMO), and a VRR auction in February to address liquidity tightness.

Source :TH

## BHARAT TECH TRIUMPH PROGRAM

### In Context

- The **Bharat Tech Triumph Program** is a significant initiative aimed at fostering India's digital and online gaming industry.

### Key Highlights

- **Launched by:** Interactive Entertainment and Innovation Council (IEIC), in partnership with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB).
- **Objective:** To identify and showcase India's gaming talent on the global stage.
- **Significance:** Provides Indian innovators a global platform to highlight their expertise.
  - ♦ Expands India's presence in the international gaming industry.
  - ♦ Encourages technological advancements and innovations in the gaming sector.

Source: PIB

## VULTURE POPULATION INCREASES

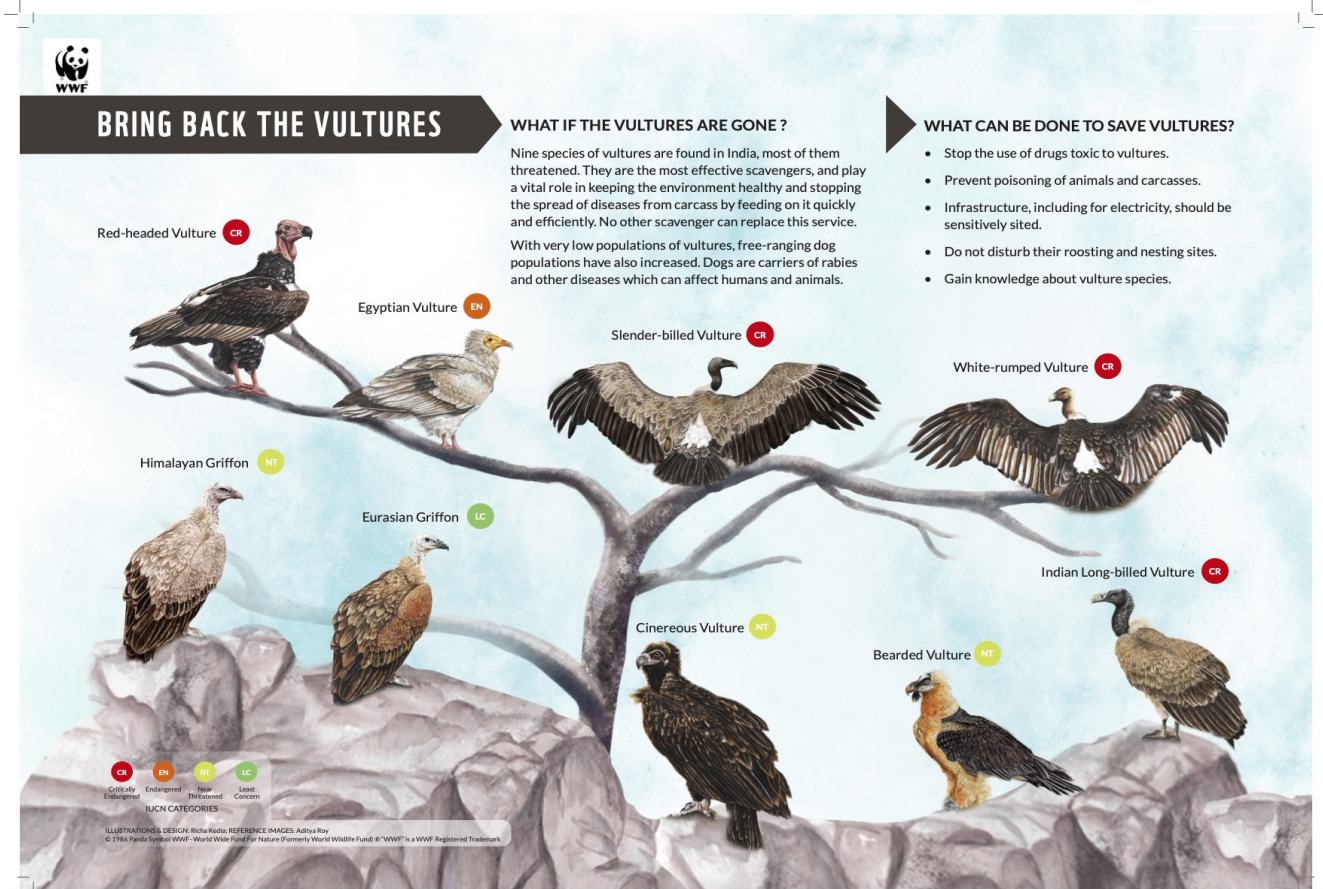
### In News

- Madhya Pradesh now has the highest number of vultures in India, with a population of 12,981 vultures, as per the recent state-level census.

### About Vultures

- Vultures are large, social raptors that **live on every continent except Antarctica and Australia**.
- They live predominantly in the **tropics and subtropics**.
- There are 23 species of vultures found in the world out of **which 9 species are found in India**.

## • Nine species and their IUCN Status:



### Importance

- They are nature's efficient scavengers and play a crucial role in the ecosystem by removing carrion, such as cattle carcasses, keeping the environment clean.
- They are the primary natural animal disposal system in India.
- A decrease in vulture population can lead to an increase in rats and feral dogs, raising the risk of disease spread.

Source: AIR

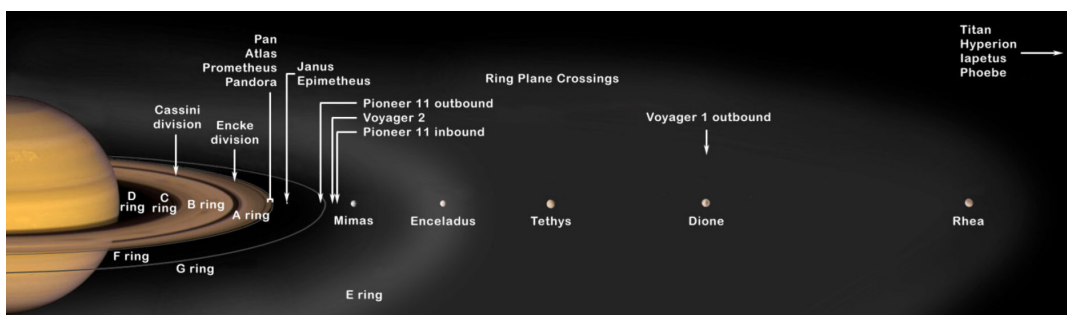
## SATURN'S RINGS

### Context

- The age and formation of the saturn rings have been a subject of ongoing debate among scientists.

### About Saturn

- Saturn, is the **second-largest planet** in the Solar System and the **6th** closest planet to the sun.
- **Saturn's rings** are composed mainly of water ice, with a minor component of rocky material.
- **Moons of Saturn:** As of February **2025**, Saturn has **146 moons**, more than any other planet.
  - ♦ **Titan:** The largest moon of Saturn, larger than Mercury and Pluto.
  - ♦ **Enceladus:** Has a global ocean under an icy shell.
  - ♦ **Mimas:** Has a large crater that's a quarter of the moon's diameter.
  - ♦ **Shepherd moons:** Orbit in or near Saturn's rings, using their gravity to keep the rings stable



### Space Missions in Saturn's Study

- **Pioneer 11** provided the first close-up images of Saturn and its rings in **1979**.
- **Voyager 1 & 2** provided detailed observations of the ring system and discovered several new moons during 1980-1981.
- **Cassini-Huygens** was a joint mission by **NASA**, the **European Space Agency (ESA)**, and the **Italian Space Agency (ASI)** to study Saturn and its moons.
  - ♦ The mission included a spacecraft called Cassini and a probe called Huygens.
  - ♦ In **2004** the Cassini spacecraft reached Saturn and the Huygens probe landed on Titan. They studied the planet, its moons, and rings until **2017**.
- **James Webb Space Telescope (JWST)**: The Webb telescope continues to capture high-resolution images of Saturn's rings, aiding in further understanding of their structure and evolution.

Source: TH

## VIENNA CONVENTION

### Context

- The Ministry of External Affairs has asked Kenya to revoke the immunity of a Kenyan diplomat's son so that he can be prosecuted for the alleged sexual assault of a minor girl.

### About

- The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations is a key international treaty that **governs the conduct of diplomacy between independent states**.
- It was adopted in **1961, and came into force in 1964**.
- It provides a framework for the functioning of diplomatic missions, the protection of diplomats, and the maintenance of peaceful relations between states.
- **Privileges and Immunities**: Diplomats cannot be arrested or detained and are exempt from the jurisdiction of the host country's courts in most cases.

- ♦ Family members of a diplomat who live with them and are not citizens of the host country receive the same immunity as the diplomat.
- ♦ The immunity can only be waived by the sending country.
- **Responsibilities of Diplomats**:
  - ♦ While diplomats enjoy privileges, they must also respect the laws and regulations of the host country.
  - ♦ Any actions that are inconsistent with the diplomatic purpose can lead to the recall or expulsion of the diplomat.

Source: IE

## TIME'S WOMEN OF THE YEAR 2025 LIST

### Context

- A biologist from Assam, Purnima Devi Barman, was featured on the **Time's Women Of The Year 2025 list**.

### About

- Purnima Devi Barman is the **only Indian woman on Time's 2025 Women of the Year list**.
- ♦ The list includes notable women such as actress Nicole Kidman and Gisele Pelicot, a survivor of sexual violence who became an advocate for the cause.
- In 2007, Barman's intervened to save a tree home to **greater adjutant storks** in Assam, inspired by the birds' vulnerability.
- ♦ She found the **Hargila Army**, a group of 20,000 women who protect the **storks' nests and educate about their conservation**.
- ♦ The population of greater adjutant storks in Assam grew from **450 in 2007 to over 1,800 in 2023**, with the **bird's conservation status** improved from **"endangered"** to **"near threatened"**.
- Time's Women of the Year is an **annual recognition by Time magazine** that highlights women making significant changes in the face of challenges like gender violence, climate issues, and women's rights.

Source: TM

