

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS (DCA)

Time: 45 Min

Date: 18-03-2026

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WEST ASIA CONFLICT TAKES A TOLL ON MEDICAL TOURISM INDUSTRY IN INDIA

Context

- India's state-of-the-art healthcare has attracted patients from across the world over the last few decades, but the **travel disruptions caused by the ongoing conflict in West Asia are creating new challenges.**

What is Medical Tourism?

- Medical tourism refers to the **practice of traveling** to another country or region for medical treatment, procedures, or health-related services.
- Reasons:**
 - Individuals seek medical care in countries where the quality of treatment is high, but the costs are significantly lower than in their home country.
 - Travel for specialized treatments not available locally or for services that have long wait times.

Medical Tourism in India

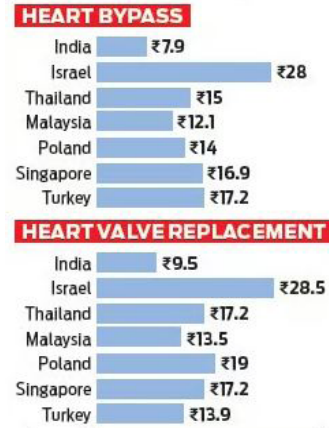
- The medical tourism industry** in India is valued at **approximately \$9 billion**, the country attracts patients from across the globe for **advanced treatments in cardiology, orthopedics, oncology, and organ transplants.**
- Medical tourism in India increased by around **33% year-on-year in 2023.**
- Popular destinations for medical tourism in India** include cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore, and Hyderabad, which are home to premier healthcare facilities.
- India has been ranked 10th** in the Medical Tourism Index (MTI) for 2020-21 out of 46 destinations in the world by the Medical Tourism Association.

Factors Responsible for the Growth of Medical Tourism in India

- Cost-Effective Treatment:** India offers medical procedures at a fraction of the cost compared to countries like the US or Europe.
- High-Quality Healthcare:** India has a well-established healthcare infrastructure with internationally accredited hospitals and skilled medical professionals.
- Availability of Advanced Medical Technology:** Indian hospitals are equipped with state-of-the-art

medical technology and cutting-edge treatments, particularly in fields like cardiology, oncology, and orthopedics.

COST ANALYSIS OF MAJOR TREATMENTS IN INDIA COMPARED TO EMERGING NATIONS OF MEDICAL TOURISM (IN LAKH)



- Shorter Wait Times:** Medical tourists can access timely treatment, often avoiding long wait times common in some Western healthcare systems.
- Government Support and Policies:** The Indian government has implemented policies that encourage medical tourism, including medical visa facilitation and promoting the sector internationally.
- Significance for India**
 - Economic Growth:** It boosts the economy by generating revenue from international patients, contributing to the healthcare sector and related industries (e.g., hospitality, transportation).
 - Improved Healthcare Infrastructure:** To cater to medical tourists, hospitals invest in state-of-the-art facilities, which also benefits local patients by improving overall healthcare quality.
 - Promotion of India's Global Image:** It enhances India's reputation as a global healthcare destination, attracting more foreign investment and partnerships in the medical field.
 - Technological Advancements:** The demand for advanced treatments and international standards of care drives innovation and the adoption of new medical technologies in Indian healthcare.
 - Skill Development:** It fosters the development of a highly skilled workforce, as healthcare professionals gain exposure to international standards and diverse patient needs.
 - Diplomatic Ties:** As patients from different nations seek treatment in India, they are exposed to rich cultural heritage and hospitality.

- ♦ This exchange of experiences can foster greater understanding and goodwill between nations, paving the way for strengthened diplomatic ties.

Challenges

- **Strong competition** from Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore.
- Most of the medical care is **not covered by insurance** and it makes medical value travel (MVT) less attractive.
- **The MVT facilitators are not well organized** and accredited. Many unprofessional agents exploit the travellers.
- **Lack of Regulations:** There are no comprehensive regulations to govern the MVT sector, which leaves the sector unorganised and lacks monitoring of the quality of services.
- **Lack of Promotion:** Individual Hospitals are carrying out their publicity but there is no effective campaign to establish India as a brand for medical value travel.
- **Accreditation:** India maintains a robust accreditation system through National Accreditation Board for Hospitals and Healthcare Providers (NABH).
 - ♦ There is not much awareness about NABH in foreign countries and international patients still attach much greater value to Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditation.

Way Ahead

- **Opportunities for India:**
 - ♦ **Demand from Countries with Aging Population:** There will be increased demand for healthcare services from countries with an aging population.
 - ♦ **Long waiting periods in Developed Countries:** In many developed countries, there is a shortage of supply, which results in long waiting periods.
- India has invested heavily in AYUSH and is in a unique position to attract medical value travellers for a cure through AYUSH and also for enhancing wellness.
- There is a need for greater support from the Government towards regulation, facilitation and marketing of India as a Medical Value Travel destination.

Source: TH

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES AS WATCHDOGS OF FISCAL GOVERNANCE

Context

- A Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance report has criticized the Ministry of Planning and NITI Aayog for underutilisation of funds and poor financial management, with spending falling below 36% in FY24 and FY25.

What are Parliamentary Standing Committees?

- Parliamentary Standing Committees (PSCs) are **permanent committees of Parliament** constituted to examine, scrutinise, and oversee the functioning of the executive.
- These committees **continue to function throughout the year**, unlike ad hoc committees which are temporary.
- **Types of Parliamentary Standing Committees:**
 - ♦ **Department-Related Standing Committees (DRSCs):** It examines demands for Grants of ministries, bills referred to them and policy issues. Example: Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance
 - ♦ **Financial Committees:** Public Accounts Committee (PAC), Estimates Committee and Committee on Public Undertakings.
 - ♦ **Other Standing Committees:** Business Advisory Committee, Committee on Privileges and Rules Committee.

Role of Parliamentary Standing Committees

- **Detailed Financial Scrutiny Beyond Parliament:** Parliamentary debates often lack time for detailed examination of budgetary provisions.
 - ♦ Standing Committees undertake **granular scrutiny of Demands for Grants**, expenditure trends, and utilisation patterns.
- **Evidence-Based and Non-Partisan Oversight:** Committees function in a non-partisan manner, relying on **expert inputs and data-driven analysis**. Their reports provide **objective evaluation of policy implementation and fiscal discipline**.
- **Monitoring of Executive Functioning:** Committees operate throughout the year and ensure continuous oversight over ministries and departments. This enhances transparency and accountability in governance.

Challenges in India's Budgetary Forecasting and Utilisation

- **Unrealistic and Inflated Budgetary Forecasting:** Ministries often project expenditure requirements without realistic assessment of implementation capacity.
 - ♦ The continuous rise in allocations despite poor utilisation reflects weak forecasting mechanisms.
- **Underutilisation of Allocated Funds:** There exists a significant gap between Budget Estimates (BE) and Actual Expenditure (AE). Underutilisation leads to idle public resources and delayed developmental outcomes.
- **Incremental Budgeting without Outcome Orientation:** Budget allocations continue to rise annually without linking them to past performance or outcomes.
 - ♦ This reflects the dominance of input-based budgeting rather than outcome-based budgeting.
- **Fiscal Indiscipline:** Ministries resort to excessive spending in the final quarter to exhaust allocated funds. Such spending **violates Quarterly Expenditure Plan (QEP)** norms and fiscal prudence principles.

Way Ahead

- The observations of the Parliamentary Committee reaffirm its critical role in **ensuring executive accountability** and fiscal prudence.
- Strengthening outcome-based budgeting, adherence to QEP norms, and integration of policy with finance is essential for improving **governance outcomes and restoring credibility** to India's fiscal framework.

Source: TH

PROTEST RALLIES IN LADAKH OVER STATEHOOD, SIXTH SCHEDULE DEMANDS

Context

- Protest rallies were held in Ladakh recently for **Statehood status and inclusion in the Sixth Schedule**.

Background

- **Ladakh** became a Union Territory in **2019** without a Legislative Assembly after **Article 370** of the Constitution was struck down by the Parliament.

- A year later, the region comprising Buddhist-dominated Leh and Muslim-dominated Kargil districts erupted in protests, **demanding constitutional safeguards such as statehood for Ladakh, inclusion in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution to grant it tribal status, job reservation for locals**, and separate parliamentary seats for Leh and Kargil.

Sixth Schedule of the Constitution

- **The Sixth Schedule** was adopted under **Article 244** of the Constitution with provisions for formation of **autonomous administrative divisions within a state**.
 - ♦ The Sixth Schedule is applicable to what are officially called as 'tribal areas' in the States of **Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura**. There are 10 such 'tribal areas' at present in these four States.
 - ♦ These divisions, in the form of ADCs, were granted certain **legislative, judicial and administrative autonomy** within the state.
- **Composition:** According to the Sixth Schedule, the ADCs administering a region within a state have **30 members** with a **term of five years**.
 - ♦ **The Bodoland Territorial Council** in Assam is an exception to this with more **than 40 members** and rights to make laws on **39 issues**.
- **Jurisdiction:** ADCs can make laws, rules and regulations with regard to land, forest, water, agriculture, village councils, health, sanitation, village and town level policing, inheritance of property, marriage and divorce, social customs, and mining, among other issues.
 - ♦ ADCs also have **powers to form courts to hear cases** where both parties are members of Scheduled Tribes and the maximum sentence is less than **5 years in prison**.
- **The Governor** is the central authority for the functioning of Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) and Regional Councils.

Major Concerns of People of Ladakh

- **Lack of Political Autonomy:** As a Union Territory without an assembly, all major decisions are taken by the Lieutenant Governor and central ministries, which limits local involvement.

- **Demographic Changes:** There is fear of a demographic imbalance due to migration, which could threaten the cultural and ethnic composition of the region.
- **Environmental Degradation:** Rapid infrastructure development and mass tourism have led to depletion of water sources, waste problems, and ecological stress.
- **Youth Discontent:** High unemployment and lack of educational and professional opportunities are fueling frustration among youth.

Key Demands

- **Constitutional Safeguards (Sixth Schedule):** Ladakhis seek inclusion under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, which provides autonomy and land protection for tribal areas.
- **Full-fledged Statehood or Legislative Assembly:** Currently, Ladakh is a Union Territory without a legislative assembly.
 - ♦ There is a demand for greater political representation and democratic governance through either full statehood or a legislature for better local decision-making.
- **Job Reservation and Local Employment Opportunities:** Concerns about outsiders occupying government and private posts have led to calls for exclusive job quotas.
- **Environmental Protection Laws:** Given Ladakh's fragile ecosystem, there is a demand for strict environmental regulations to curb unplanned tourism and infrastructure projects.
- **Protection of Cultural and Religious Heritage:** The Buddhist population, particularly in Leh, seeks protection of Tibetan-Buddhist heritage and monastic traditions.
- **Economic Development with Local Participation:** There are demands for inclusive development that benefits local communities, especially in sectors like tourism, solar energy, and agriculture.

Way Ahead

- A sustainable and peaceful future for Ladakh requires a **careful balancing of national interests with local aspirations.**
- Recognizing the unique cultural, geographical, and demographic characteristics of the region and embedding these into governance structures will be key to **ensuring long-term stability and satisfaction among Ladakh's people.**

Source: TH

UNCERTAINTY AROUND INDIA'S CARBON CREDIT PLAN

Context

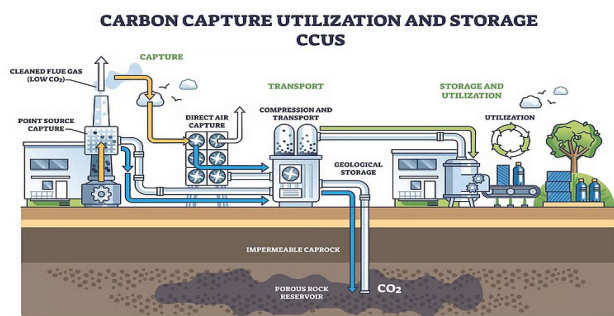
- The **₹20,000 crore carbon credit programme announced in Union Budget 2026** led to widespread debate, whether the allocation is meant for industrial decarbonisation (CCUS) or farmer-based carbon credit generation through sustainable agriculture.

About Carbon Credit Programme

- Under the Union Budget 2026-27, the Union government announced a **Rs 20,000 crore** outlay over the next five years through a dedicated scheme for **Carbon Capture, Storage and Utilisation (CCUS)**.
- The scheme will support CCUS initiatives to aid the decarbonisation goals of five industrial sectors of the economy, namely, **power, steel, cement, refineries and chemicals.**

Carbon Capture, Storage and Utilisation (CCUS)

- CCUS refers to a set of technologies that **capture carbon dioxide emissions from industrial processes** or power plants and either reuse them or store them safely underground, helping reduce the amount of climate-warming gases released into the atmosphere.
- In practice, this involves capturing CO₂ at the source, transporting it via pipelines or other means, and then either using it in industrial applications or **storing it deep underground** to prevent its release into the atmosphere.



Roadmap on CCUS

- The roadmap proposes a **three-phase R&D strategy** for developing CCUS technologies in India.
 - ♦ **First, near-term efforts** focus on scaling up and deploying existing, proven carbon capture and storage technologies across industrial sectors.

- ♦ **Second**, mid-term work prioritises the demonstration and validation of next-generation capture, utilisation and storage solutions that improve performance and cost efficiency.
- ♦ **Third**, long-term investments support fundamental research into breakthrough concepts and disruptive innovations that could transform CCUS capabilities and reduce costs over time.

Concern over Carbon Credit Plan

- The **carbon credit programme** created an impression that it would have a broad, economy-wide scope, including sectors such as agriculture.
- However, in practice, the budgetary provisions are primarily aligned with the **CCUS (Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage)** roadmap.
- This has led to confusion because the term **carbon credit programme** is commonly associated with agriculture-based carbon markets, where farmers can earn income through practices like **soil carbon sequestration and agroforestry**.

Why Agriculture is Not Included?

- The roadmap excludes agriculture from the scope of CCUS, despite recognising it as a contributor to greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Reasons:**
 - ♦ Agricultural emissions are **largely diffuse in nature**, arising from dispersed sources such as **fields, livestock, and soil processes**.
 - ♦ These emissions are biologically mediated, primarily in the form of **methane and nitrous oxide**, which cannot be captured using point-source technologies.
- As a result, agriculture falls under **Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR)** rather than CCUS, where the focus is on removing existing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere instead of capturing new emissions.
 - ♦ This is achieved through practices such as **soil carbon sequestration, agroforestry, and biochar application**, which enhance carbon storage in natural ecosystems.

Way Ahead

- India must adopt a **multi-sectoral and clearly demarcated strategy** that distinctly addresses both industrial decarbonisation and agricultural carbon sequestration to avoid policy overlap and confusion.

- The government should promote carbon farming practices by providing **financial incentives, capacity building, and strong institutional support**, so that farmers can effectively participate in emerging carbon markets and generate additional income.

Source: TH

CARA ISSUES NATIONWIDE DIRECTIONS TO STRENGTHEN ADOPTION PROCEDURES

Context

- The **Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)** has issued **three important Office Memorandums** to all State Adoption Resource Agencies (SARAs) to reinforce compliance with adoption procedures.

CARA Directions

- **Aim:** To strengthen transparency, accountability and child protection within the adoption ecosystem.
- **First Memorandum:** No orphan or abandoned child can be declared legally free for adoption without the completion of due inquiry.
 - ♦ In case of surrendered children, the mandatory reconsideration period of two months must be strictly followed.
- **Second Memorandum:** The states and Union territories have been asked to ensure that all physical and digital records are securely preserved and transferred to the designated authority or institution.
- **Third Memorandum:** CARA directed the states and UTs to ensure strict compliance with Section 74, which prohibits disclosure of the identity of children in conflict with law or those in need of care and protection.

Child Adoption Regulations in India

- **Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act (HAMA), 1956:** Applies to Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, and Sikhs.
 - ♦ Does not require court involvement.
 - ♦ Governed by personal laws, but must follow certain conditions under HAMA.
- **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (JJ Act):** Applies to all Indian citizens (irrespective of religion).

- ◆ Covers adoption through court orders and is administered by **Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)** under Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- ◆ CARA is the statutory body that monitors and regulates adoption of orphaned, abandoned, and surrendered children through recognized adoption agencies.

Adoption Under CARA

- **Children must be:**
 - ◆ Declared legally free for adoption by a Child Welfare Committee (CWC).
 - ◆ Below 18 years of age.
 - ◆ Either abandoned, surrendered, or orphaned.
- **Eligibility for a Parent Under JJ Act (via CARA):** Any Indian citizen (including NRIs, OCI cardholders).
 - ◆ Married couples (minimum 2 years of stable marriage).
 - ◆ Single individuals (unmarried, divorced, widowed).
 - ◆ The age difference between adoptive parent and child should be a minimum of 25 years.
 - ◆ Maximum composite age limits (for both spouses combined or a single parent) are up to 45 years for adopting a child below 4 years.
 - ◆ Up to 50 years for children aged 4–8 years.
 - ◆ Up to 55 years for children aged 8–18 years.
- **Exception:** The age criteria for prospective adoptive parents shall not be applicable in case of **relative adoptions and adoption by step-parent**.
- **Non-commercial:** Any sale or payment for adoption is illegal.
- **Prohibited Categories:** Live-in couples and same-sex couples are currently not eligible under CARA guidelines.

Source: PIB

NEWS IN SHORT

GAJAPATI INSCRIPTION IN GUNTUR

Context

- A medieval inscription linked to the **Gajapati Dynasty** has been discovered at the Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Temple in Guntur, Andhra Pradesh.

Key Findings

- The inscription is engraved on a stone pillar in the temple mandapa.
- It mentions **Kumaraguru Mahapatra**, an officer serving under Purushottama Deva in the 15th century CE.
- The record indicates that the idol of Lord Narasimha and the mandapa pillars were relocated from Kondaveedu Fort following invasions in the region.
 - ◆ The inscription was originally dedicated to Lord Mallikarjuna of Kondaveedu but was later shifted to the Guntur temple.
- It also refers to temple rituals such as milk offerings and mentions the management of cows by local communities.
- The findings reflect the practice of **Hari-Hara worship**, indicating a syncretic tradition combining Shaiva and Vaishnava beliefs.

Gajapati Dynasty

- The Gajapati Dynasty was a powerful medieval kingdom that originated in **Odisha** and flourished during the 15th–16th centuries.
- It was founded by **Kapilendra Deva** after the decline of the Eastern Ganga dynasty.
- At its peak, the empire extended from parts of present-day West Bengal to Tiruchirappalli in Tamil Nadu, with its capital at **Kataka** (modern-day Cuttack).
- The Gajapati rulers were known for their patronage of art, architecture, and literature, and they maintained continuous rivalry with the **Vijayanagara Empire**.



Source: DC

LADAKH MAGMATIC ARC

In News

- Scientists from the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology have recently decoded the evolution of the Ladakh Magmatic Arc (LMA) in the North-West Himalaya.

About

- The Ladakh Magmatic Arc is a belt of igneous rocks located in the Trans-Himalayan region of India (mainly Ladakh).
- It represents a long-extinct volcanic arc system.
- The present-day Ladakh region once lay above the Neo-Tethys Ocean. Beneath this ocean, the oceanic crust of the Indian Plate was moving towards the Eurasian Plate.
- The denser oceanic plate subducted (sank) beneath the Eurasian Plate. This process led to melting of mantle material, formation of magma & rise of magma to form volcanic arcs.

Source: TH

ADOPTIVE MOTHERS GET EQUAL MATERNITY RIGHTS

Context

- The Supreme Court of India held that all female employees adopting children are entitled to **12 weeks** of paid maternity leave, regardless of the child's age.

Background

- The legal framework governing maternity benefits in India originates from the **Maternity Benefit Act, 1961** and through the **2017 Amendment** for the first time, adoptive and commissioning mothers were granted **12 weeks of maternity leave**.
- However, a restrictive condition was introduced that maternity leave was available only if the adopted child was **below 3 months of age**.
 - ♦ This provision was later incorporated into the **Code on Social Security, 2020 under Section 60(4)**.

Supreme court ruling

- **Concern:** India's adoption process, governed by **Central Adoption Resource Authority guidelines**, rarely permits adoption of children below three months.

- ♦ As a result, **most adoptive mothers were effectively denied maternity benefits**, rendering the provision largely illusory.
- **The court ruled that** age-based classification was discriminatory and **violative of Articles 14 and 21** of the Constitution, emphasising that adoption is an equally valid pathway to parenthood and cannot be treated differently from biological childbirth.

Source: HT

CHOLESTEROL AND CANCER METASTASIS LINK

Context

- A recent study has identified a novel link between cholesterol accumulation in the nuclear membrane and increased cancer metastasis, especially in Melanoma.

What is Melanoma and Metastasis?

- Melanoma is an aggressive **skin cancer** originating in melanocytes (melanin-producing cells).
- **Metastasis** refers to the spread of cancer cells from the primary site to distant organs.
- **Cancer progression involves** uncontrolled cell division, evasion of immune destruction, ability to invade and spread to other tissues.

Role of Cholesterol in Nuclear Structure

- Cholesterol accumulation in the nuclear envelope leads to **increased nuclear deformability**, making the nucleus more "squishy" in nature.
- This increased deformability enhances the **ability of cancer cells to pass through** tight tissue spaces.

Lamin B Receptor (LBR)

- **LBR is a protein** located in the **inner nuclear membrane** that performs dual functions.
 - ♦ It helps in **anchoring DNA** to the nuclear structure, thereby maintaining nuclear organization.
 - ♦ It also plays a role in **promoting cholesterol synthesis** within the cell.
- **Overexpression of LBR** in cancer cells leads to **increased cholesterol levels** in the nuclear membrane.
- In contrast, **reduction of LBR strengthens the nuclear envelope** and reduces its deformability.

What is Cholesterol?

- Cholesterol is a **fat-like (lipid) substance** that is essential for the normal functioning of the human body. It is a key structural component of cell membranes and required for the synthesis of:
 - ◆ Hormones such as steroids (e.g., estrogen and testosterone).
 - ◆ Vitamin D.
 - ◆ Bile acids, which aid in digestion of fats.
- The body produces most of its cholesterol in the **liver**, while a smaller portion is obtained from **dietary sources** such as animal-based foods.
- Cholesterol is transported in the blood through lipoproteins, mainly:
 - ◆ **Low-Density Lipoprotein (LDL)**, often termed “bad cholesterol” due to its role in plaque formation.
 - ◆ **High-Density Lipoprotein (HDL)**, known as “good cholesterol” as it helps remove excess cholesterol from the bloodstream.
- While cholesterol is essential, excessive levels, especially of LDL, can lead to health issues such as cardiovascular diseases.

Source: TH

INDIA LEADS GLOBAL COCONUT PRODUCTION

Context

- India is the world’s largest producer of coconuts contributing to 30.37% of the Global coconut production.

About

- **Type of Plant:** Coconut is a perennial plantation crop and a **monocotyledonous palm** belonging to the family **Arecaceae**.
 - ◆ Coconut is native to the **Indo-Pacific region**, with its origin commonly traced to **Southeast Asia**.
- **Climatic Requirements:** Coconut requires a warm and humid tropical climate for optimal growth. It grows best in regions with temperatures ranging between 25°C and 30°C and requires high and evenly distributed rainfall.
- **Soil Requirements:** Coconut thrives in **well-drained sandy loam, alluvial, laterite**, and coastal soils.

- **Distribution in India:** It predominantly grows in **Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Goa, and West Bengal**.

Do you know?

- **Coconut Promotion Scheme (Budget 2026–27):** Aims to boost production by replanting old trees with improved varieties.
 - ◆ The initiative is part of a broader ₹350 crore allocation for high-value agriculture, which includes coconut, cashew, and cocoa.

Source: PIB

DIMETHYL ETHER (DME)

Context

- Scientists at the CSIR-National Chemical Laboratory have developed indigenous technology to produce Dimethyl Ether (DME) as an alternative to LPG amid supply disruptions.

Dimethyl Ether (DME)

- DME is a **colourless, clean-burning gas** produced from **biomass, methanol, or fossil fuels**.
- **Key Features:** Emits significantly lower **soot, NOx, SOx, and particulate matter** than conventional fuels and offers **thermal efficiency** comparable to LPG.
- **Regulation & Adoption:**
 - ◆ Recognized under the **National Policy on Biofuels, 2018** as an alternative fuel.
 - ◆ Bureau of Indian Standards permits use under **IS 18698:2024**, allowing up to **20% blending with LPG**.
 - ◆ Up to **8% blending requires no modification** in existing LPG infrastructure like cylinders, regulators, or burners.
- **Economic Impact:** Replacing **8% LPG with DME** can save about **₹9,500 crore annually** in foreign exchange.
- **Other Uses:** Can be used as an **automotive fuel (diesel substitute)** and as an **aerosol propellant replacing CFCs**.

Source: ET

CHINA'S NEW 'ETHNIC UNITY' LAW

Context

- China’s top legislative body adopted a law for securing **“unity and harmony” among the country’s ethnic groups**.

About

- **Objective:** Outlawing discrimination and promoting inter-community marriages, it also seeks to punish acts that undermine ethnic unity and create ethnic division.
 - ♦ It further advocates for **Mandarin** as the **nation's common language and script.**
- It speaks of a **common historical “heroic” struggle** to save the nation and **“jointly resisting foreign aggression,”** referencing colonial control over parts of Imperial China in the 19th century.
- It further recognises the **Communist Party of China as “the vanguard”** of the working class and of the Chinese people.

- **No organisation or individual may interfere with the freedom of marriage** on grounds such as ethnic identity, customs, or religious beliefs.

What is China's Ethnic Composition?

- China recognises 56 ethnic groups, including the Hans, the Uyghurs (primarily in the northwestern region of Xinjiang), the Tibetans, the Manchus and the Mongols.
- The Han Chinese constitute over **90% of the total population.**
 - ♦ The Hans are also the largest group in Taiwan, which China claims as its own region, and in Hong Kong, which is China's Special Administrative Region.

Source: IE

