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ONE CLOCK FOR INDIA: GOVT MANDATES IST FOR OFFICIAL & COMMERCIAL USE

Context

- Recently, the Union Consumer Affairs Ministry notified the **Legal Metrology (Indian Standard Time) Rules, 2026**, making IST the **sole official time reference** for India.
 - These rules were notified under **Section 52 of Legal Metrology Act, 2009**.

Legal Metrology Act, 2009

- It is the principal legislation governing standards of **weights and measures** and matters connected with their use in India.
- It **came into force in 2011**, replacing the earlier Standards of Weights and Measures Act, 1976 and Standards of Weights and Measures (Enforcement) Act, 1985.
- Key provisions** of the Act include standardisation, legal units based on the International System of Units (SI), verification & stamping, manufacture & sale, packaged commodities, consumer protection, offences & penalties, enforcement machinery, and Inter-State uniformity.

What Do the New Rules Provide?

- The rules seek to institutionalise the **'One Nation, One Time'** framework announced in 2025.
 - They mandate government departments and critical sectors to use a **traceable and authorised Indian Standard Time (IST) reference**.
- The rules will come into force **180 days after publication in the Official Gazette**, allowing institutions to upgrade systems and ensure compliance.
- IST is maintained by the **CSIR–National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL)**, India's national timekeeper.
- NPL maintains **UTC (NPLI)**, India's realisation of **Coordinated Universal Time (UTC)**, with IST being **UTC (NPLI) + 5:30 hours**.

Why Does Precise Time Synchronisation Matter?

- Modern digital infrastructure depends not merely on correct time, but on **highly precise and synchronised timestamps**.
- Banking and digital payments:** Timestamps establish when transactions were initiated and processed.

- Capital markets:** Precise time helps determine the sequence of orders and trades and assists regulatory investigations.
- Telecommunications:** Synchronised clocks help correlate server logs and identify events such as the use of an IP address at a particular time.
- Power grids:** Accurate timestamps help coordinate operations and reconstruct failures.
- Transport:** Railways and airports require coordinated scheduling across geographically dispersed systems.
- Government and legal records:** A common reference strengthens the reliability of official records.
- Cybersecurity:** Synchronised logs can help reconstruct the sequence of events during cyber incidents.
 - Thus, **time synchronisation is increasingly an infrastructure and national-security requirement**, rather than merely a matter of clocks.

How Will India Disseminate IST?

- The **CSIR-NPL** will remain the source of the national reference time, while dissemination infrastructure will extend IST to critical users.
- Time-dissemination laboratories are being established at **five Regional Reference Standard Laboratories (RRSLs)** i.e. Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Bhubaneswar, Faridabad and Guwahati in collaboration with NPL and ISRO.
- A key development is the **White Rabbit Technology-based IST Dissemination Demonstration Network** recently commissioned at Bengaluru.

What is White Rabbit Technology?

- White Rabbit is an **open-source technology** for **sub-nanosecond-level clock synchronisation over fibre-optic networks**.
- It measures signal-propagation delays and compensates for them, enabling geographically separated computers to maintain highly precise synchronisation.
- Its fibre-based architecture also reduces dependence on satellite signals at every location, which is significant because satellite navigation signals can be susceptible to **jamming and spoofing**.

Role of NavIC and Strategic Significance

- The rules permit **Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC)** and other approved Indian timing sources for dissemination. It creates a more resilient architecture combining:
 - ♦ **NPL atomic-clock reference → terrestrial fibre networks/White Rabbit + NavIC → synchronised critical infrastructure**
- The approach can reduce excessive dependence on foreign satellite-navigation systems and strengthen **India's strategic autonomy, cybersecurity and critical-infrastructure resilience.**

Issues & Concerns With One Clock

- **Solar-time Mismatch:** Clock time may differ significantly from sunrise/sunset in eastern and western regions.
- **Regional Inconvenience:** Fixed IST may not suit local work/school schedules.
- **Productivity Concerns:** Daylight availability may vary substantially across regions.
- **Centralisation Risk:** Excessive dependence on one national reference requires robust backup systems.
- **Implementation Costs:** Upgrading legacy systems and ensuring compliance can be expensive.
- **Geographical Limitation:** A single zone is less responsive to India's wide east-west geographical spread.
- Implementation will require:
 - ♦ Upgrading legacy clocks and IT infrastructure;
 - ♦ Establishing interoperable timing standards across sectors;
 - ♦ Ensuring cybersecurity of the timing network;
 - ♦ Maintaining backup timing sources during network disruptions;
 - ♦ Managing compliance costs for smaller institutions.

Way Forward

- Implementation of One-Clock requires sector-specific technical standards, reliable backup sources, cybersecurity safeguards and interoperability across public and private systems.
- The objective should not merely be '**one clock**', but a **resilient, secure and traceable national timing ecosystem.**

Source: BS

INDIA'S GDP GROWTH OVERSHOT EXPECTATIONS AMID GLOBAL UNCERTAINTIES

Context

- India recorded **7.8% real GDP growth** in Q1 (April-June) of 2026-27, exceeding the RBI's 7% estimate, highlighting the **economy's resilience despite global uncertainties.**

Factors Driving Economic Growth

- **Manufacturing and Services Growth:** Manufacturing grew by **9.2%**, compared with 8.3% in the corresponding quarter of the previous year. Services expanded by 10%, up from 8% a year earlier.
 - ♦ Agriculture remained relatively subdued at **3.6%**, compared with 4.4% a year ago. However, the strong performance of manufacturing and services compensated for the moderation in agriculture.
- **Strong Domestic Demand:** Rural and urban consumption remained buoyant, as reflected in strong **GST collections, higher automobile sales across two-, three- and four-wheelers, and growth in core exports** (excluding oil, gems and jewellery).
 - ♦ Rural demand was supported by measures such as **PM-KISAN, higher MSPs and affordable fertilisers.**
 - ♦ **Continued consumption growth** provided a strong demand-side foundation for GDP expansion.
- **Sharp Rise in Investment:** Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) grew by **11.9%**, more than double the 5.8% growth recorded a year earlier.
 - ♦ At current prices, GFCF grew by 20.4%, raising its share in GDP to **34.3%**, compared with 31.4% a year earlier.

Key Economic Concepts

Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

- GDP is the **total monetary value of all final goods and services** produced within a **country's domestic territory** during a specific period (usually a quarter or a year).
- **Current base year:** 2022-23
- **Released By:** National Statistical Office (NSO), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

Nominal Vs Real GDP

- **Nominal GDP** measures a country's economic output at current market prices, thereby **incorporating the effects of inflation** and making it useful for assessing the economy's size in present-value terms.
- **Real GDP** adjusts for inflation by **valuing output at constant base-year prices**, providing a more accurate measure of actual growth in production over time.

What is Base Year?

- A base year is a **benchmark year** used for comparison in **economic and statistical calculations**.
- India's current base year for calculating **GDP estimates is 2022–23**.
- It provides a **reference point** against which current values of indicators like GDP, CPI, and IIP are measured to track real changes over time.
- **Significance:**
 - ♦ It allows us to remove **the effect of inflation** and see real growth.
 - ♦ Ensures that the data reflects the **current structure of the economy**, consumption patterns, and prices.

What are the challenges?

- **Energy Prices:** Escalation of the West Asia conflict might affect crude oil supplies and keep Brent prices elevated.
 - ♦ Higher prices of petroleum and natural gas can increase India's import bill, inflationary pressures and manufacturing costs.
- **Agricultural and Food-Inflation Risks:** Agriculture increased just 3.6%, so weather-related risks remain.
 - ♦ Lower agricultural output could lead to higher food inflation and lower purchasing power in rural areas.

Way Ahead

- There is a need to improve **infrastructure, logistics, skills and ease of doing business** to sustain manufacturing-led growth and enhance export competitiveness.
- **Promote climate-resilient agriculture**, irrigation, crop diversification and better water management to minimise weather-related risks to agricultural output.

- **Expand trade partnerships** and integrate further into global value chains to reduce the impact of weak demand in individual markets.

Source: IE

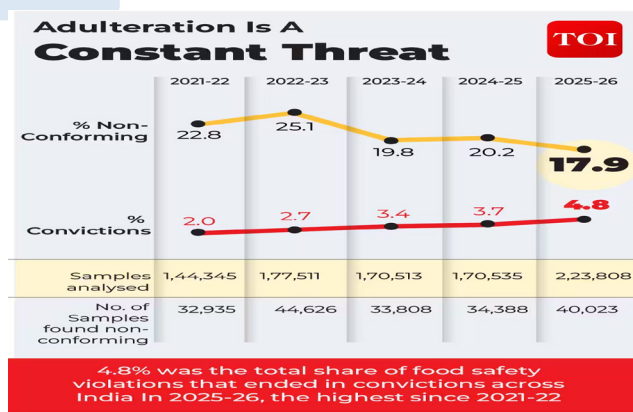
PROBLEM OF FOOD ADULTERATION IN INDIA

Context

- Maharashtra's Food and Drug Administration is leading an aggressive crackdown on food adulteration, highlighting the growing food safety concerns and need for stricter enforcement in India.

Food Adulteration

- It is a process by which substances are **either intentionally added to food items or food gets contaminated** due to negligence or poor handling practices.
- Adulterants could be **harmful chemicals or harmless fillers**, which can be added at any stage of the production process. For instance, the dilution of milk by farmers or the mixing of edible oil with mineral oil are examples of food adulteration.
- The issue of food adulteration is present in both organised and unorganised sectors.



Impact

- Food adulteration can cause a **range of health issues**, including digestive disorders, allergic reactions, nutritional deficiencies, weakened immune system, and chronic diseases like cancer and liver damage.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that each year worldwide, unsafe food causes 600 million cases of foodborne diseases and 420,000 deaths.

- **Children under five** bear around **40% of the global foodborne disease burden**, despite constituting only about 9% of the world's population.

Key international standards and frameworks governing food safety

- **FAOLEX:** It is one of the world's largest digital collections of national laws and regulations on food, agriculture and renewable natural resources.
- **Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS):** It sets out the basic rules for food safety and animal and plant health standards. It allows countries to set their standards. SPS agreement entered into force with the establishment of the World Trade Organization on 1 January 1995.
- **Codex Alimentarius:** Also known as the "Food Code," it is a collection of standards, guidelines, and codes of practice adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission. The Codex Alimentarius Commission is a joint intergovernmental body of the FAO and WHO. Currently, it has 189 members and India is a member.
- **International Plant Protection Convention (IPCC):** It aims to protect the world's plants, agricultural products, and natural resources from plant pests. It is an intergovernmental treaty. It has been ratified by 185 contracting parties, and India is also a contracting party to it.

Indian Framework

- **Food Safety and Standard Act, 2006:** It aims to establish a single reference point for all matters relating to food safety and standards, by moving from multi-level, multi-departmental control to a single line of command. The Act established Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and the State Food Safety Authorities for each State.
- **FSSAI:** Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India is the administrative Ministry of FSSAI. Its headquarters is in Delhi. The FSSAI is responsible for regulating and overseeing food safety. It conducts periodic pan-India surveillance of food products, especially staple food and commodities that are prone to adulteration.
- **Food Safety and Standards Rule, 2011:** It provides for the Food Safety Appellate Tribunal and the Registrar of the Appellate Tribunal, food safety standards for organic food, and regulates food advertising.

Important Initiatives For Food Safety in India

- **Eat Right India Movement:** To transform the country's food system to ensure safe, healthy, and sustainable food for all Indians. It is aligned with the **National Health Policy 2017** with its focus on preventive and promotive healthcare and flagship programmes like Ayushman Bharat, POSHAN Abhiyaan, Anemia Mukh Bharat, and Swachh Bharat Mission.
- **Eat Right Station Certification:** It is awarded by FSSAI to railway stations that have set benchmarks (as per the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006) in providing safe and wholesome food to passengers.
- **State Food Safety Index (SFSI):** Developed by the FSSAI, the index aims to measure the performance of states and Union Territories on selected "parameters" of food safety. The SFSI is released annually for a financial year. SFSI measures the performance of states on five parameters of food safety. The parameters include human resources and institutional data, compliance, food testing, infrastructure and surveillance, training and capacity building, and consumer empowerment.
- **Hexagonal Warning Labels:** The FSSAI has proposed red, hexagonal warning labels on packaged foods high in **sugar, salt or saturated fat** to help consumers make informed choices.
- Also, in recent reforms, the Street vendors already registered under the Street Vendors Act, 2014 are now automatically deemed FSSAI registered, removing duplication.

Challenges

- **Weak testing infrastructure:** Less laboratories nationwide, many lacking capacity for heavy metal, pesticide, or bacterial testing (Standing Committee).
- **Poor surveillance:** A Parliamentary Committee flagged that just 2% of inspections reported non-compliance, an implausibly low figure suggesting under-detection rather than genuine safety.
 - ♦ **Vast informal sector** remains largely **outside effective monitoring**.
- **Resource Crunches:** Shortage of Food Safety Officers undermines enforcement despite a strong legal framework.
- **Deceptive marketing:** Like in the nutraceutical and supplement space exploits regulatory gaps using unsubstantiated claims like "clinically tested" or "Ayurvedic."

Conclusion

- India's food safety architecture must balance deregulation for **ease of business with stronger enforcement**.
- Priorities should include expanding** accredited testing laboratories, filling vacancies of Food Safety Officers, integrating supply chain traceability, and formalising informal food vendors through **simplified registration already enabled by the 2026 reforms**.

World Food Safety Day

- World Food Safety Day is observed annually on **June 7** to draw attention and inspire action to prevent, detect, and manage foodborne risks.
- The **United Nations General Assembly** established World Food Safety Day in **2018** to raise awareness of this important issue.
- WHO and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations jointly facilitate the observance of World Food Safety Day, in collaboration with the Member States and other stakeholders.
- The **theme** for World Food Safety Day 2026 is "From burden to solutions – safe food everywhere."

Source: IE

SEMICON 2.0

Context

- The government notified the **Semicon 2.0 scheme** with an outlay of Rs 1.27 lakh crore to boost the **chip manufacturing ecosystem in the country**.

India Semiconductor Mission 1.0

- India Semiconductor Mission 1.0 is a flagship programme launched in **2021** under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** to develop a comprehensive semiconductor and display manufacturing ecosystem in India.
- The Mission is supported by an incentive framework of **₹76,000 crore**, offering fiscal support of up to **50 percent** for silicon fabs, compound semiconductor facilities, assembly and testing units, and chip design.
- As many as **12 semiconductor** manufacturing projects have been approved with an investment pipeline of about **₹1.64 lakh crore** under the mission.

- These include **silicon fabrication units, silicon carbide fabs, advanced and memory packaging facilities, and specialised assembly and testing infrastructure**.

India Semiconductor Mission 2.0

- It was announced in the Union Budget **2026–27**.
- ISM 2.0** will focus on **producing semiconductor equipment and materials in India**, designing full stack Indian semiconductor intellectual property, and fortifying both domestic and global supply chains.



- Semicon 2.0 seeks to build the semiconductor ecosystem through **six pillars- Design, Machines and materials, Setting up more fabs, Further strengthening the ATMP-OSAT industry, Research and Development and Talent development**.

Pillars of Semicon 2.0

- First pillar:** Expand India's semiconductor design capabilities by promoting chip IPs, system designs, and innovation, building on the success of around 105 chip-design startups.
- Second pillar:** Incentivize manufacturing and R&D of semiconductor equipment, materials, chemicals, and gases to create a robust domestic ecosystem.
- Third pillar:** Efforts will be made to attract more manufacturers to come to India and set up fabs to manufacture chips. This will include silicon fabs, compound semiconductor fabs, discrete component fabs, display fabs, etc.
- Fourth pillar:** Encourage advanced Assembly, Testing, Marking, and Packaging (ATMP) and Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test (OSAT) units to strengthen backend manufacturing.
- Fifth pillar:** Move beyond 28–110 nm technology nodes by developing advanced process nodes and next-generation semiconductor technologies.

- **Sixth pillar:** With 315 universities training students on complex chip design using the latest EDA tools, around 68,000 students have already been trained. It will be developed further and deepen the level of training while in college.

Why are Semiconductors Strategically Important?

- **Foundation of the Digital Economy:** Semiconductors form the core component of almost every modern electronic device and digital technology.
- **National Security:** Semiconductor chips are indispensable for defence equipment, surveillance systems, satellites, cybersecurity infrastructure and strategic communication networks.
- **Industrial Competitiveness:** Countries with strong semiconductor manufacturing capabilities are leveraging technological leadership and industrial competitiveness.
- **Technological Sovereignty:** Domestic semiconductor production is necessary to reduce the dependence on foreign suppliers and strengthen self-reliance.



Indigenous Microprocessors and Core Semiconductor Technologies

- Microprocessors form the **foundational layer** of modern digital infrastructure, **powering devices and systems across telecommunications, mobility, healthcare, industry, defence, and space.**
- India has made **focused investments to build sovereign capabilities** in advanced processor design as a core pillar of semiconductor self-reliance.
- A key milestone in this journey is the launch of **DHRUV64**, a fully indigenous **64-bit microprocessor** developed by C-DAC under the **Microprocessor Development Programme (MDP).**

Schemes under ISM

- **Semiconductor Fabs Scheme:** Provides up to 50 per cent fiscal support for setting up semiconductor wafer fabrication units, covering advanced and mature technology nodes.
- **Display Fabs Scheme:** Offers up to 50 per cent financial support to establish AMOLED and LCD display fabrication units in India.
- **Compound Semiconductors and ATMP/OSAT Scheme:** Supports compound semiconductor and chip assembly, testing and packaging units with up to 50 per cent capital assistance.
- **Design Linked Incentive Scheme:** With an outlay of ₹1,000 crore, supports chip design startups and MSMEs through R&D support and incentives of up to ₹15 crore per company.

What are the Challenges?

- **High Capital Investment:** The establishment of semiconductor fabrication plants requires investments of several billion dollars and long gestation periods.
- **Technology-Intensive Industry:** Semiconductor manufacturing requires highly sophisticated technologies that are continuously evolving.
- **Dependence on Imported Equipment:** India remains dependent on foreign suppliers for advanced semiconductor manufacturing equipment and specialised machinery.
- **Infrastructure Requirements:** Semiconductor fabrication requires uninterrupted electricity, ultra-pure water and highly reliable logistics infrastructure.
- **Skill Gaps:** The industry requires a highly specialised workforce trained in semiconductor engineering, fabrication processes and chip design.

Conclusion

- India Semiconductor Mission 2.0 marks a decisive shift from **ecosystem creation to ecosystem consolidation** and global integration.
- By deepening support for manufacturing, design, and advanced skills, ISM 2.0 **positions semiconductors as a strategic national capability**—central to economic resilience, digital infrastructure, and technological sovereignty.

Source: AIR

N-MODELS OF WASTE MANAGEMENT

Context

- The **Majuli (Assam) and Tawang (Arunachal Pradesh) models of waste management** demonstrated how community participation, decentralised systems and locally adapted financing models can improve waste management.

About Majuli and Tawang Rural Waste Management Models

- **Majuli Model:**
 - ♦ **Central Material Collection Facilities (CMCFs)** were established across most panchayats, along with village-level collection facilities.
 - ♦ **Decentralised sorting:** Non-biodegradable waste is segregated before being sent to scrap dealers and recyclers.
 - ♦ **Government-NGO partnership:** Government agencies provide infrastructure and vehicles, while organisations such as Saahas support staffing and capacity building.
- **Tawang Model:**
 - ♦ **Swachhata Divas:** Instead of expensive door-to-door collection, villagers collectively bring waste to a designated location and sort it.
 - ♦ **Multi-category segregation:** Waste is initially sorted into 22 categories and subsequently into around 35 categories at Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs).
 - ♦ **User charges:** Households pay around 50 per month, while shops and cafés pay around ₹100, creating a local financing mechanism.

Solid Waste Generation in India

- **In FY 2021–22, India generated 170,000 tonnes of municipal solid waste per day**, about 156,000 tonnes were collected, of which nearly **54% was treated, and 24% was deposited in landfills**.
 - ♦ The **remaining 22% was unaccounted** for due to leakages in the waste supply chain.
- Indian cities will generate **approximately 435 million tonnes of solid waste by 2050 (MoHUA 2021)**.
- There are **only 645 landfills in operation** and the total number of existing dumpsites in the country is 2,452.

What are the difficulties in managing waste?

- **Changing patterns of consumption:** The rising penetration of packaged food, beverages, personal-care products and multi-layered plastics has increased non-biodegradable waste in villages.
- **High collection costs:** Collection and transportation are costly because of dispersed settlements, difficult terrain, poor roads and long distances to recyclers.

- **Open dumping:** In the absence of formal systems, waste is dumped in fields, water bodies or openly burnt, leading to soil, water and air pollution.
- **Poor segregation at source:** Wet, dry, sanitary and hazardous wastes are often mixed at the household level, making recycling, composting and scientific treatment difficult.

Government initiatives

- **Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016:** Mandates segregation of waste at source into biodegradable, non-biodegradable, and domestic hazardous waste.
 - ♦ Promotes waste processing through composting, bio-methanation, and waste-to-energy technologies.
 - ♦ Encourages bulk waste generators (housing societies, hotels, etc.) to process their own waste.
- **Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM): SBM-Urban** focuses on 100% door-to-door waste collection and encourages source segregation.
 - ♦ **SBM-Rural** promotes biodegradable waste composting and bio-gas plants in villages.
- **Waste-to-Energy Projects:** The government is encouraging waste-to-energy plants to convert non-recyclable waste into electricity.
- **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR):** Under EPR rules, manufacturers and producers must take responsibility for managing post-consumer waste (e.g., plastic waste, e-waste).
- **NAMASTE Scheme (National Action for Mechanized Sanitation Ecosystem):** A formal initiative to recognize and include waste pickers in the sanitation and waste management strategy.
 - ♦ Provides occupational safety training, health insurance (under Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY), and capital subsidies for waste collectors.

Way Ahead

- **Community ownership:** Treat citizens as active participants rather than merely beneficiaries.
- **Local adaptation:** Use door-to-door collection where feasible and community collection where settlements are scattered.
- **User financing:** Introduce affordable and locally determined waste-management fees.
- **Government-community partnership:** Combine public infrastructure and funding with community ownership.

- **Market linkages:** Establish reliable connections with recyclers and scrap dealers.
- **Data generation:** Maintain reliable data on waste generation, collection, processing and costs.

Source: TH

NEWS IN SHORT

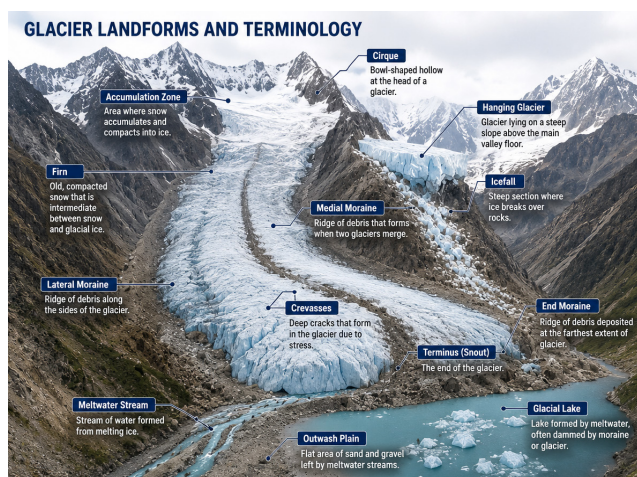
HANGING GLACIERS

Context

- As rising temperatures and shifting regional precipitation patterns reduce the stability of the Himalayan glaciers, some of them could evolve into “hanging glaciers”.

Hanging Glaciers

- **Hanging Glaciers** are the **ice masses perched on steep slopes** that can **detach and trigger massive avalanches**.
 - ♦ As per a recent study there are as many as **219 hanging glaciers in the Alaknanda basin** of the Garhwal Himalayas.
 - ♦ Himalayan glaciers are increasingly exhibiting “**geometric and dynamic instability**” owing to rapid warming and climate variability.
- **Hanging glaciers pose a significant risk of break-offs**. The break-offs from hanging glaciers can also trigger **secondary hazards such as glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs)**.



Source: IE

BALTIC WAY MOVEMENT

In News

- **Baltic Way** remains both a **symbol of national freedom** and a **contemporary example** of the global influence of Gandhian thought.

Baltic states

- They are an area in **north-eastern Europe**, comprising Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania on the eastern banks of the Baltic Sea.
- To the west and north they border the **Baltic Sea**, to the east Russia, to the southeast Belarus, and to the southwest Poland and a Russian exclave.
- These countries have similar trajectories, from **independence, to Soviet occupation and re-independence in the early 1990s**.
- After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Baltic republics became market economies and linked with Western Europe, joining the **European Union and NATO in 2004**.



Cooperation with India

- Mahatma Gandhi's influence was strengthened by **cultural links** between India and the Baltics, including Lithuania-born Hermann Kallenbach, Vydūnas, Antanas Poška and translations of Gandhi's works.
- ♦ **Leaders such as Gražina Miniotaitė promoted non-violent civilian defence**, while the 1982 film Gandhi was broadcast on Lithuanian television to educate people about peaceful resistance.
- India-Baltic relations expanded into trade, technology, sustainability, the blue economy and culture.
- The Government of India's Ministry of Commerce and Industry estimates show that India's total bilateral trade with Lithuania reached \$490.61 million; with Latvia, \$475.66 million, and with Estonia, \$219.69 million in 2025-26.

Baltic Way

- The Baltic Way was a historic **non-violent protest** organised on August 23, 1989, during the **Singing Revolution (1986–91) in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia**.

- ♦ It became a landmark of the Singing Revolution (1986–91) and the Baltic states' peaceful struggle for independence from Soviet rule.
- Around two million people formed a **675-km human chain linking Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius to demand freedom from Soviet rule.**
- It was organised on the **50th anniversary of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact**, it exposed the secret protocol that had enabled the Soviet annexation of the Baltic states.
- It was inspired partly by Mahatma Gandhi's principles of ahimsa, satyagraha, non-cooperation and civil resistance

Source: TH

DISTINGUISHED JURIST

Context

- **Article 124(3)** allows **distinguished jurists** to be **appointed as Supreme Court judges**, but no one has taken this route in 76 years.

About

- **Article 124** sets out how the **Supreme Court is constituted.**
- **Article 124(3)** lists who can be appointed as a judge, i.e., a citizen of India who has either **served as a High Court judge for five years**, practised as an **advocate for ten years**, or "is, in the **opinion of the President**, a **distinguished jurist.**"
 - ♦ Most judges have been elevated from the **High Courts**, while a smaller number of lawyers have been **appointed directly from the Bar.**
- A "**distinguished jurist**" is generally understood to be anyone engaged in serious work in the practice, teaching or research of law, including those who do not require courtroom experience to fit the description.

Why No Distinguished Jurist has been Appointed?

- **The Bar Council rules** generally prevent full-time law teachers from practising law.
- **Appointments today are initiated through the collegium system**, meaning that a jurist would first have to be recommended by the Supreme Court collegium before the appointment goes to the government.

Source: IE

INDUS WATER TREATY

Context

- India has rejected the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA), The Hague's ruling on the **Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)**, asserting that the arbitral body was illegally constituted and lacks jurisdiction over India.

About

- India decided to put the IWT in abeyance as part of a series of diplomatic and economic measures unveiled soon after the Pahalgam terror attack.
- The PCA held that the **Indus Waters Treaty remains fully in force** and that India must continue to comply with its obligations under the treaty.
- The tribunal ordered India to limit construction on the **Ratle Hydro-Electric Plant in Kashmir**, prohibiting work on the dam wall and power intake structure above certain levels

What is the Indus Water Treaty?

- In **1960**, India and Pakistan signed the Indus Waters Treaty with the **World Bank** as a signatory of the pact.
- Under the treaty, **India got control** over the three eastern rivers **Beas, Ravi, and Sutlej** while **Pakistan got control** of the western rivers **Indus, Jhelum, and the Chenab.**
- According to the treaty, India has the right to generate hydroelectricity through the **run-of-the-river (RoR) projects on the western rivers** which are subject to specific criteria for design and operation.

Division of rivers as per Indus Waters Treaty

Eastern rivers to India: Sutlej, Beas, Ravi | Western rivers to Pakistan: Chenab, Jhelum and Indus



Source: TH

RAMON MAGSAYSAY AWARD 2026

Context

- Tommy Koh (Singapore), Runa Khan (Bangladesh), and Bo Kyi (Myanmar) have been honoured with the Ramon Magsaysay Award 2026.

About Ramon Magsaysay

- **Established:** 1958, in memory of Ramon Magsaysay, the 7th President of the Philippines, known for his integrity, courage, and democratic leadership.
- **Instituted by:** The Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF), in partnership with the Philippine government.
- **Administered by:** The Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (RMAF), Manila.

- **Nature:** Recognizes individuals or organizations in Asia who show selfless service and transformative leadership.
- **Prestige:** Considered Asia's highest honour, equivalent in stature to the Nobel Prize in Asia.
- From **1958 to 2008**, the Award was given in **six categories annually, these are:**
 - ♦ Government Service, Public Service, Community Leadership, Journalism, Literature, Creative Communication Arts, Peace and International Understanding, and Emergent Leadership.
 - ♦ Starting in **2009**, the Ramon Magsaysay Award is no longer being given in fixed Award categories, except for **Emergent Leadership**.

Source: TH

