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NEED FOR REFORMS IN UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES PREVENTION ACT (UAPA), 1967

Context

- The death anniversary of Professor G.N. Saibaba brings renewed attention to concerns surrounding prolonged pre-trial detention and the protection of civil liberties under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967.

What is Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA)?

- The UAPA gives powers to the government to probe and prosecute people for acts of terrorism, and to designate an organization as an “unlawful association” or a “**terrorist organization**”, or an individual as a “**terrorist**”.
- It was enacted on the recommendation of the **National Integration Council**, set up in **1961** to find ways to counter problems that were dividing the country.
 - However, in its original form, the Act largely dealt with secessionist activities, with no explicit mention of terrorism.
- Key Provisions:**
 - Sections 38 and 39** criminalise specified association with and support for terrorist organisations, subject to the statutory requirements.
 - Section 35** empowers the Central Government to designate an organisation or an individual as a terrorist, subject to the provisions of the Act.
 - Section 43D(5):** The court must deny bail if, after examining the police report or case diary, it finds reasonable grounds to believe that the allegations against the accused are **prima facie true** (appear to be true at first glance).

Amendments of the Act

- In **2004**, the Act was amended for the first time, with “and for dealing with terrorist activities” added to its title.
- After the 26/11 Mumbai attacks in 2008**, another set of amendments broadened the definition of terrorism in the Act and introduced longer incarceration and more stringent bail conditions.

- In **2012**, the UAPA was amended to include “**economic security**” of the country in the ambit of terrorism.
 - Under this, the statute went on to designate production, smuggling and distribution of counterfeit Indian currency as a terrorist act.
- The **2019** amendment gave the government the powers to designate an individual as a terrorist. Until then, only organizations could be designated as “terrorist”.
 - This was criticized as overturning the founding principle of the criminal justice system that presumes innocence until proven guilty for every suspect.

Concerns associated with the UAPA Act

- Stringent Bail Provisions:** The UAPA restricts a judge from granting bail if, after reviewing police reports, there are “reasonable grounds for believing that the accusation is prima facie true.”
 - This provision introduces elements of **criminal trial into the bail stage**, which contradicts the principle of presumption of innocence.
- Extended Detention:** The UAPA allows prolonged detention without formal charges, extending the period of pre-trial incarceration.
 - This conflicts with **Article 21** of the Constitution, which guarantees the right to life and personal liberty.
- Vagueness in Definition:** The definition of “unlawful activity” and “terrorist act” under UAPA is broad and ambiguous, leading to potential misuse.
- Freedom of Expression:** UAPA has been invoked against activists, journalists, and students, raising concerns about stifling dissent.
 - This could be seen as a violation of **Article 19**, which guarantees freedom of speech and expression.
- Highly Discretionary:** It confers upon the government broad discretionary powers and also authorises the creation of special courts with the ability to use secret witnesses and to hold closed-door hearings.

Key Judicial Interventions

- National Investigation Agency v. Zahoor Ahmad Shah Watali (2019):** The SC held that courts must examine whether the accusations are prima facie true while deciding bail under **Section 43D(5) of the UAPA**, without conducting a detailed trial at this stage.

- **Union of India v. K.A. Najeeb (2021):** The SC held that prolonged imprisonment and unreasonable trial delays can justify bail under **Article 21**, despite the strict bail conditions under **Section 43D(5) of the UAPA**.
- **Thwaha Fasal v. Union of India (2021):** Mere association with a terrorist organisation is insufficient for conviction under **Sections 38 and 39** unless the intention required by the relevant provision is established.

Way Ahead

- **Legal Reforms:** Amendment to the UAPA is needed to ensure clearer definitions of offences and reduce the harsh bail restrictions.
- **Judicial Oversight:** There is a need to establish mechanisms for periodic judicial review to prevent misuse.
- **Safeguard Freedom of Expression:** Introduce guidelines to prevent the misuse of the law against dissenting voices.

Concluding remarks

- While the UAPA serves a critical role in safeguarding national security, its stringent provisions raise concerns about civil liberties and due process.
- A balanced approach through reforms and judicial safeguards is essential to uphold constitutional values while addressing security threats effectively.

Source: TH

PREVENTIVE DETENTION AND RIGHT TO PROTEST

Context

- Amid large-scale detentions across the national capital, legal experts questioned the basis on which Delhi Police detained protesters beyond the New Delhi district.

About

- Delhi Police has maintained that detentions in the capital followed **violations of prohibitory orders imposed under Section 163 of the BNSS**, which bar unauthorized public assemblies, demonstrations and protests.
 - ♦ Section 163 of the BNSS **empowers an executive magistrate to issue prohibitory orders** where immediate prevention or speedy remedy is desirable.

- However, there was **no clarity on the legal authority invoked** to detain protesters from areas where such orders were not in force.

Right to Protest and Restrictions

- **Article 19(1)(a)** of the Constitution protects the **right to free speech and expression**. Clause (b) guarantees the **right to assemble peacefully** and without arms.
 - ♦ These provisions protect a citizen's ability to gather and express dissent. **But neither right is absolute.**
- **Article 19(2) permits restrictions** on speech on specific grounds, including public order, while 19(3) allows "reasonable restrictions" on peaceful assembly in the interest of public order.
- **Police guidelines on protests:** The Delhi Police guidelines set out a procedure for seeking permission to hold demonstrations at Jantar Mantar.
 - ♦ Applications must ordinarily be submitted to the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) at least **10 days before the proposed event**.
 - The DCP has to consider whether the demonstration is likely to obstruct traffic, endanger human safety or public tranquillity.
 - The gathering cannot exceed 1,000 people at Jantar Mantar. Beyond this threshold, the venue of the protest can be at Ramlila Ground.
- **Denial of Permission:** If an organiser believes that the refusal is arbitrary, they can approach the Delhi High Court under Article 226 of the Constitution.
 - If the protest continues despite denial or in violation of the prohibitory order, anyone violating it could be booked under Section 223 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, which deals with knowingly disobeying a lawful order issued by a public servant.

What is Preventive Detention?

- **Preventive detention** means to detain a person so that to **prevent that person** from committing any possible crime.
- **The grounds for Preventive detention are:**
 - ♦ Security of state, maintenance of public order,
 - ♦ Maintenance of supplies and essential services and defense,
 - ♦ Foreign affairs or security of India.

Punitive Detention

- It is to punish a person for an offence committed by him/her after trial and conviction in a court.

Safeguards Provided By The Constitution

- **Article 22** of the Indian Constitution provides certain safeguards regarding arrests and detentions.
 - ♦ **Right to be Presented before Magistrate:** An arrested person must be produced before the nearest magistrate within 24 hours of their arrest.
 - ♦ **Right to Consult a Legal Practitioner:** It grants the right to consult and be defended by a legal practitioner of their choice.
 - ♦ **Communication of Grounds for Arrest:** An arrested person must be informed of the grounds for their arrest and detention.
 - ♦ **Time for Detention:** A person can be taken to preventive custody **only for 3 months at the first instance**. If the period of detention is extended beyond 3 months, the case must be referred to an **Advisory Board**.

Arguments in Favour of Preventive Detention

- **National Security:** India faces various internal and external security threats, including terrorism, insurgency, and organized crime.
 - ♦ Preventive detention is a necessary tool to address these threats by allowing law enforcement agencies to detain individuals suspected of involvement in activities that pose a risk to national security.
- **Maintaining Public Order:** In situations of civil unrest, communal tensions, or public disturbances, preventive detention is used to prevent further escalation of violence and maintain public order.
- **Deterrence:** The existence of preventive detention laws and their occasional use serve as a deterrent to individuals or groups considering engaging in unlawful activities.
- **Constitutional Recognition:** Article 22(3)–(7) of the Constitution recognises preventive detention and lays down a framework for its regulation, reflecting the constitutional understanding that individual liberty may need to be balanced against security concerns.

- **Safeguarding Collective Welfare:** The State has a responsibility to protect the lives, safety and rights of the wider population. Preventive measures may be justified where credible threats pose serious risks to these interests.

Arguments Against Preventive Detention

- **Colonial Law:** Preventive detention was introduced to India during the colonial period and was largely used to target freedom fighters.
- **Misuse of the Law:** The state may refuse to divulge the grounds of detention if it is in the public interest to do so. This power conferred on the state leaves scope for arbitrary action on the part of the authorities.
- **Detention on the Basis of Suspicion:** The law authorizes the executive to arrest any person from whom reasonable suspicion arises that he can commit any cognizable offense and the police can arrest that person without warrant which is arbitrary in nature.
- **Circumvention of Criminal Justice:** Preventive detention may be used as an alternative to ordinary criminal proceedings, potentially bypassing established safeguards such as a fair trial, access to evidence and the opportunity to defend oneself.
- **Chilling Effect on Fundamental Freedoms:** The fear of detention may discourage people from exercising their rights to freedom of speech, peaceful assembly and association under Article 19, particularly when authorities interpret dissent as a threat to public order.

Supreme Court Take on Preventive Detention

- **Rekha v. State of Tamil Nadu (2011):** The Court stressed that preventive detention cannot be used as a substitute for ordinary criminal law when its requirements are not satisfied.
- **The Court's broader approach:** Detention orders may be challenged where there is failure to follow mandatory safeguards, or other legally established defects.

Way Ahead

- Preventive detention creates a tension between collective security and individual liberty.
- While it may be necessary in exceptional circumstances, its use should remain strictly limited, proportionate and subject to rigorous judicial scrutiny.

- Strict compliance with Article 22 safeguards, effective access to remedies and preference for ordinary criminal law wherever adequate are essential to prevent arbitrary deprivation of liberty.

Source: TH

AATMANIRBHARTA IN PULSES

Syllabus: GS3/ Economy

In Context

- India is the world's largest producer of pulses, yet it **remains a major importer**.

About

- Pulses contribute significantly to **India's agricultural exports and remain a vital part of Indian diets**, ensuring nutritional security.
- Recognising this importance, the government launched the '**Mission for Aatmanirbharta**

in Pulses' on October 11, 2025 with financial allocation of 11,440 crore spanning 2025–26 to 2030–31.

Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses: Key Features

- Under the Mission, by 2030-31, production is expected to reach nearly **350 lakh tonnes**, with yield rising to 1,130 kg per hectare.
- Focus on enhancing production of **Tur, Urad and Masoor**
- Promotion of **climate-resilient seeds and improved seed quality**
- Distribution of 87.5 lakh free seed kits and 126 lakh quintals of certified seeds over six years
- Expands pulse cultivation area by 35 lakh hectares to reach a total targeted area of 310 lakh hectares by 2030–31.
- Cluster-based approach covering 489 districts to intensify production
- Establishment of 1,000 processing units (dal mills)



Technology and Governance

- **Traceability:** The SATHI portal tracks seeds from production to sale, curbing spurious seed supply.
- **Farm-level data:** Krishi Mapper geo-tags demonstrations, while AgriStack with Digital Crop Survey links Farmer IDs, soil health and verified plots for accurate forecasting.
- **Market linkage:** E-Samridhi and Vistaar enable direct payments and price information.
- **Monitoring:** A three-tier Steering Committee oversees implementation from national to district level.

Significance

- **Nutritional security:** Pulses are the main affordable protein source for a largely vegetarian population. Higher domestic output reduces protein deficiency and supports schemes like PDS and PM POSHAN.
- **Farmer income:** Assured procurement removes the price risk that has pushed farmers towards wheat and rice. Pulses also fix nitrogen, lowering fertilizer needs and subsidy burden.
- **External stability:** Lower imports conserve foreign exchange and insulate India from volatile supplier countries and export bans.
- **Inflation control:** Domestic supply reduces the recurrent spikes in pulse prices that raise food inflation.
- **Sustainability:** Rice-fallow cultivation and crop diversification improve land use, soil health and climate resilience.

Challenges

- **Low productivity:** Pulses are grown mostly on rainfed, marginal land, so yields remain below Canada and Myanmar and fluctuate with monsoon variability.
- **Procurement gaps:** Only about 60% of registered farmers have benefited so far, and procurement is concentrated in a few States. The MSP-based support historically favoured wheat and rice, so awareness and logistics for pulses remain weak.
- **Uneven price signals:** Masur's modest MSP hike may discourage its cultivation, which risks undermining the Mission's own crop targets.
- **Import and trade policy volatility:** Frequent shifts in import duties and stock limits create uncertainty for farmers and traders.
- **Seed and extension weaknesses:** Slow seed replacement, limited high-yielding variety coverage and weak extension services restrict yield gains.
- **Post-harvest losses:** Inadequate storage and fragmented processing reduce farmer realisation. Only 18 of 23 approved PMKSY pulse units are complete.
- **Climate stress:** Heat and erratic rainfall threaten yield, especially during flowering.

Way Forward

- **Technology and breeding:** Expand short-duration, pest-resistant and heat-tolerant varieties, backed by ICAR research and seed hubs.
- **Stable policy:** Align import duties with the sowing calendar and avoid abrupt changes, so farmers get predictable price signals.
- **Procurement reform:** Widen coverage to more States and farmers, and consider price deficiency payments as a complement.
- **Value chain:** Speed up dal mill creation and invest in warehousing, FPO aggregation and e-NAM linkage.
- **Cropping system integration:** Promote pulses as intercroops and in rice-fallow lands, with incentives linked to water and fertiliser savings.
- **Demand side:** Strengthen pulses inclusion in PDS and nutrition programmes to build a stable market.

Source: PIB

RBI TIGHTENS FOREX DERIVATIVES RULES: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE INDIAN ECONOMY

Context

- Recently, RBI has tightened forex derivatives regulations to curb speculation and stabilize the currency market with the **rupee approaching ₹97 per US dollar** (Rupee Depreciation) and **crude oil prices exceeding \$100 per barrel**.

Key Economic Indicators

- **Forex Reserves:** The foreign exchange reserves **fell by 12.95 billion dollars**, the figure then being 734.60 billion dollars.
- **Inflation Outlook:** The outlook for inflation indicates that retail inflation will be 5.2% in fiscal year 2026–27.
- **Monetary Policy:** The RBI **increased the repo rate by 25 basis points**, making it **5.50%**.
- **Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Bank) Deposit Inflows:** The amount of foreign currency deposits made by non-residents in banks under the FCNR scheme, even if it **exceeds \$143 billion**, has not removed the pressures leading to depreciation.

Major Regulatory Changes by RBI

- **Reduction in Exposure Threshold:** The threshold for undertaking qualifying forex derivative transactions without establishing underlying exposure has been **reduced from \$100 million to \$5 million, a 95% reduction.**
 - ♦ The corresponding threshold for **exchange-traded rupee derivatives** has been **reduced to \$5 million** across recognised stock exchanges.
- **Restrictions on Rebooking:** Cancelled rupee-involving derivative contracts cannot be rebooked with authorised dealers after the directions take effect.
 - ♦ However, rolling over contracts at maturity remains permissible, subject to existing regulations.
- **Prevention of Double Hedging:** Banks need to obtain and retain undertakings confirming that the same underlying exposure has not been hedged through another authorised dealer.
- **Foreign Exchange Risk Reserve (FERR):** Authorised dealers need to maintain a cash reserve with the RBI equal to 20% of the rupee equivalent of the notional amount of specified covered derivatives exceeding \$2 million.
 - ♦ It is a reserve requirement on banks, not a direct 20% fee on customers.

Why Has the RBI Taken These Measures?

- **Curb Speculation:** Prevent excessive derivative positions that increase pressure on depreciation.
- **Reduce Volatility:** Reduce volatility by discouraging the repeated cancellation and rebooking of contracts in order to take advantage of changes in the market.
- **Protect External Stability:** Ensure external stability by dealing with the pressures caused by adverse capital flows, the demand for currency hedging, and the cost of importing crude oil.
- **Strengthen Transparency:** Enhance transparency by making sure that derivative transactions are more closely linked to the real economic exposures.
- **Contain Inflation:** Keep inflation under control by restricting currency movements that have a destabilising effect and which increase the cost in rupees of imported goods, especially petroleum.

Implications for the Indian Economy

- **Positive Implications:**
 - ♦ There should be greater discipline and more transparency in the foreign exchange markets.
 - ♦ There is less room for speculative behaviour and for hedging that is redundant.
 - ♦ There will be better risk management and the exchange rate may become less volatile.
 - ♦ There would be greater financial stability and more efficient regulatory oversight.
- **Potential Challenges:**
 - ♦ Banks and businesses face higher costs in terms of compliance and hedging.
 - ♦ Market participants such as exporters, importers, and others who are legitimate will have less flexibility.
 - ♦ Possible pressure on market liquidity and derivative pricing.
 - ♦ The ongoing risk of depreciation remains, since the regulations are unable to counteract unfavourable global capital flows or high oil prices.

Way Forward

- The RBI should adopt a calibrated, data-driven regulatory approach that distinguishes genuine hedging from excessive speculation.
- It should monitor market liquidity, transaction costs and the impact on exporters and importers while strengthening surveillance and coordination with SEBI.
- Diversifying energy imports, promoting exports, attracting stable capital inflows and building resilient foreign exchange reserves are equally important.

Source: IE

WORLD'S FIRST NUCLEAR CLOCK

Context

- Scientists in Vienna and Beijing have independently developed the world's first two operating nuclear clocks.

What is a nuclear clock?

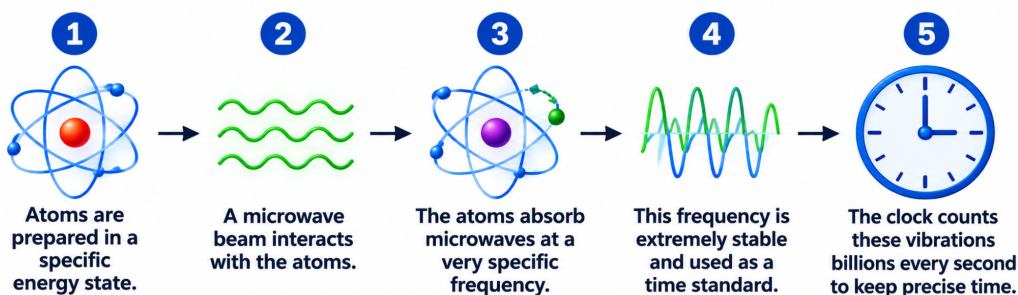
- Nuclear clocks are **precision timekeeping devices** that measure time using the frequency of energy transitions within an atomic nucleus.

- ♦ They are not powered by nuclear **fission or fusion**. The term 'nuclear' refers to the part of the atom that acts as the timekeeping reference.
- It measures time by using lasers to make subatomic particles **called protons and neutrons jump back and forth between energy levels** inside the nucleus of an atom, in this case **thorium-229**.
- ♦ Both the Vienna and Beijing teams used **thorium-229**, a particular isotope of the radioactive element thorium, embedded in **calcium fluoride crystals**.
- ♦ Unlike most atomic nuclei, which require extremely high-energy radiation to excite them, **thorium-229 has a relatively low-energy nuclear transition** that can be stimulated using laser light.

How Is a Nuclear Clock Different from an Atomic Clock?

- First developed in **1949**, atomic clocks are **among the most accurate timekeeping devices** ever developed.
- ♦ Unlike ordinary clocks, which measure time through mechanical movements or the vibrations of quartz crystals, atomic clocks rely on the behaviour of atoms.
- **Conventional atomic clocks** measure time by **using lasers or microwaves** to make subatomic particles called **electrons jump back and forth between two energy levels** in an atom's shell, using elements such as **cesium or strontium**.
- ♦ In fact, the internationally recognised definition of a second is based on a specific energy transition in the **caesium-133 atom**.

How Does It Work?



ATOMIC CLOCKS VS NUCLEAR CLOCKS

	Atomic Clocks (Today's Best Timekeepers)	Nuclear Clocks (The Next Generation)
What they use	Measure energy transitions of electrons in an atom (usually caesium, rubidium, strontium, etc.).	Measure energy transitions inside the atomic nucleus (using thorium-229).
Transition Energy	Relatively low energy. Can be controlled using microwaves or visible lasers.	Very low nuclear transition energy in thorium-229, activated using ultraviolet (148 nm) lasers.
Sensitivity to Environment	More affected by external electric and magnetic fields, temperature changes, and other environmental noise.	Far less affected by external disturbances. The nucleus is deeply shielded, making it inherently more stable.
Stability & Accuracy	Extremely accurate. Current best lose about 1 second in 15 billion years.	Potentially even more accurate than the best atomic clocks. Could lose 1 second in trillions of years.
Technology Maturity	Well-developed and used worldwide in labs, satellites, and navigation systems.	Very new technology. First working nuclear clocks just demonstrated in labs (China & Europe, 2024).
Practical Use/ Application	Used in GPS, telecom, financial systems, space missions, and scientific research.	Ultra-precise navigation, gravitational sensing, dark matter searches, and tests of fundamental physics.
Key Advantage	Proven technology with excellent accuracy and reliability.	Next-generation potential with higher stability and groundbreaking possibilities.

Potential Applications

- Systems such as **GPS determine a receiver's position** by measuring the time taken by signals to travel from satellites.
 - ♦ Even tiny timing errors can translate into significant positioning errors, making more precise clocks potentially valuable for navigation systems.
- Precise timing synchronises data transmission across **mobile networks, fibre-optic infrastructure and communication systems**.
- Accurate time synchronisation helps establish the chronological order of transactions and supports **reliable operation of financial networks**.
- Nuclear clocks could help scientists investigate interactions between **ultralight dark matter and ordinary matter**, as well as test whether fundamental constants of nature vary over time.

Challenges in Developing Nuclear Clocks

- **Limited performance:** Current nuclear clocks have not yet surpassed the most accurate existing atomic and optical clocks.
- **Laser technology:** Generating and stabilising the required vacuum-ultraviolet laser light is technically demanding.
- **Material requirements:** Developing crystals with suitable optical properties and sufficient thorium concentration remains important for improving performance.
- **Experimental complexity:** Researchers need to improve stability, reproducibility and the ability to operate the clocks reliably in practical conditions.
- **Limited immediate applications:** Their use in navigation, communications and other operational systems remains prospective rather than established.

Source: IT

NEWS IN SHORT

LOKNAYAK JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

Context

- The Prime Minister has remembered **Loknayak Jayaprakash Narayan on his birth anniversary**.

About

- Jayaprakash Narayan was born on October 11, 1902 and died on October 8, 1979.

- He was an Indian political leader, socialist thinker, and independence activist.
- He was popularly known as **Lok Nayak ("People's Leader")** not only because of his advocacy for social and economic equality but also for his refusal of political power.

Early Life and Freedom Struggle

- **Congress Socialist Party:** In 1934, he became one of the prominent founders of the Congress Socialist Party, a socialist group within the Indian National Congress.
- **Quit India Movement (1942):** He was imprisoned by the British during the movement and escaped from Hazaribagh Central Jail in Bihar in 1942. He subsequently helped organise resistance against British rule.
- **Socialist politics:** After independence, he became an important voice in socialist politics but gradually moved away from electoral party politics towards constructive social work.

Contribution to Indian Society and Politics

- **Bhoodan and Sarvodaya movements:** From the 1950s, he associated himself with Vinoba Bhave's Bhoodan movement, which encouraged landowners to voluntarily donate land to the landless.
- **Total Revolution Movement (1974):** On 5 June 1974, he gave the call for Total Revolution at a massive rally at Gandhi Maidan, Patna.
 - ♦ He called for greater public participation, accountability in government and the fight against corruption. His movement also demanded the resignation of the government in Bihar.
- **Participatory democracy:** He advocated decentralisation of power, stronger village-level institutions and greater involvement of citizens in decision-making.
- **Ethical politics:** He emphasised integrity in public life, accountability of political leaders and the need to prevent the concentration of power.
- **Non-violent social change:** He supported peaceful mass mobilisation and sought transformation through public participation rather than armed revolution.

Awards and Recognition

- In 1965 he received the **Ramon Magsaysay Award**, an honor named for a former Philippine president and given for exceptional service in Asia.
- He was posthumously awarded the **Bharat Ratna**, the highest civilian award in India, in 1998.

Source: PIB

KULSI RIVER

Context

- Villagers living along the Kuls River in Assam and Meghalaya are protesting for a proposed 55-MW hydropower-cum-irrigation project citing concerns over displacement, indigenous rights and ecological damage.

About

- The Kuls River is a tributary of the **Brahmaputra River**, flowing through Meghalaya and Assam.
- It originates in the **West Khasi Hills of Meghalaya**, where its upper course is known as the **Khir River**.
- After flowing through Meghalaya, it enters Assam and flows through Kamrup district, where it is known as the **Kuls**.
- It joins the Brahmaputra near Nagarbera in Assam.

Do you know?

- The Kuls River is a natural habitat of the endangered **Gangetic river dolphin (Platanista gangetica)**, which was declared India's National Aquatic Animal in 2009.

Source: TH

WHO PREQUALIFIES HPV VACCINE CERVAVAC

Context

- The Serum Institute of India's indigenously developed quadrivalent human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, **CERVAVAC**, has received **prequalification** from the World Health Organization (WHO).

About

- **CERVAVAC** is India's **first** indigenously developed **gender-neutral** quadrivalent HPV vaccine and targets HPV types 6, 11, 16 and 18.

- It is licensed in India for girls and boys aged 9 to 26 years.
- The qualification will allow the vaccine to be **procured by United Nations agencies** and potentially supplied to countries running HPV immunisation programmes.
- The development is significant for **India as well as the global effort to prevent cervical cancer**.

Cervical Cancer

- **Cervical cancer** is cancer that starts in the **cells of the cervix**.
 - The cervix is the lower, narrow end of the uterus (womb). The cervix connects the uterus to the vagina.
- **Spread:** Almost all cervical cancer cases (99%) are linked to infection with high-risk human papillomaviruses (HPV), an extremely common virus transmitted through sexual contact.
 - Although most infections with HPV resolve spontaneously and cause no symptoms, persistent infection can cause cervical cancer in women.
- **Prevalence:** Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer in women.
 - It is the **second most common** type of cancer in India for women following breast cancer.
- **Prevention:** Effective primary (HPV vaccination) and secondary prevention approaches (screening for, and treating precancerous lesions) prevents most cervical cancer cases.
- **Global Burden:** Globally, cervical cancer caused an estimated 604,000 new cases and 342,000 deaths in 2020.
- **Vaccination in India:** In India the national HPV vaccination programme was launched on February 28, 2026, targeting about 1.2 crore 14-year-old girls.
 - A free single dose of more than 80 lakh doses had been administered by this year.
 - India also has an indigenous quadrivalent vaccine, CERVAVAC and access to other HPV vaccines, including Gardasil 9 and Cervarix, through the private market.

Source: TH

MAHARAJA AGRASEN

Context

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tribute to Maharaja Agrasen on his birth anniversary.

About

- Maharaja Agrasen is regarded as an **ancient Indian king associated with Agroha, in present-day Haryana**.
 - ♦ His birth anniversary is observed as **Maharaja Agrasen Jayanti** and is observed according to the Hindu lunar calendar, generally around September or October.
- **Lineage:** According to traditional accounts, he belonged to the Suryavansha (Solar dynasty) and was associated with the kingdom of Agroha.
 - ♦ He is traditionally regarded as the founder of Agroha, which became an important centre associated with the Agrawal community.
- **Religious tradition:** He is associated with the worship of Goddess Lakshmi and is remembered for promoting prosperity through ethical trade and social responsibility.
- **Historical evidence:** Details of his life, reign and chronology are rooted largely in community traditions and legends. His exact historical period and the details of his biography are not firmly established by contemporary historical evidence.
- **Agroha Dham in Haryana** is a major religious and cultural centre associated with Maharaja Agrasen and Goddess Mahalakshmi.

Source: AIR

ORANGUTAN

Context

- The Indonesian authorities successfully moved eight orangutans to a safe location after the wildfires in the forests of Borneo.

About Orangutan

- **Characteristics:** Orangutans are the **largest arboreal mammal**, spending most of their time in trees.
 - ♦ They are the closest living relatives of humans and they share **96.4%** of Human genes and are highly intelligent creatures.

- **There are three species of Orangutan** – the Bornean, Sumatran and Tapanuli – which differ a little in appearance and behavior.
- **Eating habitats :** Orangutans mainly eat fruits, such as mangoes, lychees and figs, but they also feed on young leaves, flowers, insects, and even small mammals.
- **Habitat and Distribution:** They can occur up to **1,500m** above sea level, most are found in lowland areas and prefer forests in river valleys or floodplains.
 - ♦ These great apes are **only found** in the wild on the islands of Borneo and Sumatra.
- **IUCN status:** All three orangutan species are **critically endangered**.



Source: THE PRINT

INDIA'S ANTI-DUMPING PROBE INTO PENICILLIN G IMPORTS

Context

- India has initiated an anti-dumping investigation into imports of **Penicillin G and its salts from China** after domestic manufacturer Lyfius Pharma alleged that the imports were causing material retardation to the industry.

About Penicillin G

- Penicillin G is a **beta-lactam antibiotic** used to treat bacterial infections.
- It serves as a **key starting material (KSM)** and an **active pharmaceutical ingredient (API)** in the manufacture of medicines.
- It is used in the treatment of infections such as **pneumonia, meningitis, diphtheria** and certain dental infections.

What Is Anti-Dumping Duty?

- An anti-dumping duty is **an additional customs duty imposed on imports** when a product is **exported at a price below its normal value** and the dumping causes or threatens material injury to the domestic industry.
- ♦ The duty aims to **address unfair price competition** rather than prevent imports altogether.
- In India, the **Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR)**, under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, **investigates and recommends anti-dumping duties**, while the **Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance**, decides whether to impose them.

Source: TH

