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REGULATION OF SATELLITE INTERNET IN INDIA

Context

- The proposed entry of Starlink into India has brought attention to the challenges of regulating satellite-based internet services, particularly the need to balance digital connectivity and fair competition.

What Is Starlink?

- Starlink is a **satellite internet service** developed by **SpaceX,** designed to provide **high-speed, low-latency broadband access globally**, particularly in underserved and remote areas.
- It utilises a constellation of over **10,000 satellites** in **low Earth orbit (LEO)** to deliver internet services, where traditional infrastructure is limited or unavailable.
  - Currently it is licensed in over **165 countries.**

How Does Satellite Internet Work?

- **LEO satellites:** These orbits are close to the Earth and transfer internet data between users and the wider communications network.
- **User terminals:** Dedicated antennas are deployed at the user's location to communicate with the satellites and give Internet access.
- **Ground gateways:** These are the stations that connect satellite networks to the terrestrial internet infrastructure, while some systems also make use of inter-satellite links.

Regulatory Frameworks Apply to Starlink in India

- **Indian Telegraph Act, 1885:** Starlink needs to obtain a **Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) licence** from the Department of Telecommunications, as required under Section 4 of the Indian Telegraph Act, which gives the government exclusive control over communication services.
  - **Section 7** further authorises the government to frame rules governing such licences.
- **The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India Act, 1997** established the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), which plays an advisory and regulatory role.
  - **Section 11 outlines TRAI's functions,** including making recommendations on licensing terms, spectrum management, and ensuring fair competition.
- **The Telecommunications Act, 2023**, governs the allocation of satellite spectrum.
  - While it **permits administrative allocation,** it also requires Starlink to adhere to the security and pricing norms it outlines.
  - Starlink's use of **Ku- and Ka-band** frequencies is subject to the telecom department's spectrum regulations, which are aligned with **International Telecommunication Union** standards to prevent interference with other services.
- **The Satellite Communications Policy, 2000** and the **Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe)** require Starlink to coordinate satellite operations and orbital slot use to avoid conflicts with Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) assets and align with national space priorities.
- **The Information Technology Act, 2000 and the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023** impose obligations related to encryption, data storage, and cybersecurity.
- **National security concerns** require Starlink to comply with directives from the **Ministry of Home Affairs** and intelligence agencies, which may include requirements such as **real-time signal tracking and user verification.**

Why hasn't Starlink entered India yet?

- The **VSAT licensing** under the **Indian Telegraph Act, 1885,** is a rigorous process with detailed technical and financial scrutiny by the telecom department that often requires inter-ministerial cooperation.
- **The Telecommunications Act, 2023** does provide for administrative distribution of satellite spectrum **but the pricing and conditions,** especially for Ku and Ka bands, are still being discussed between the government and the TRAI.
- A thorough security clearance process led by the **Home Ministry and intelligence agencies** is underway, complicated by concerns about foreign ownership and potential misuse.
  - These agencies require extensive assurances on data protection and lawful usage before giving the green light.
- Coordination with Indian space infrastructure under **IN-SPACe** and compliance with the **Satellite Communications Policy, 2000**, add further procedural requirements.

Advantages of Starlink for India

- **Rural Connectivity:** It provides high-speed internet to places where standard fibre-optics or mobile towers are not feasible.
- **Economic Empowerment:** It can boost rural education, e-health, agri-tech and e-commerce ecosystems.
- **Strategic Value:** It would strengthen disaster communication, military connectivity and infrastructure in the border areas.
- **Digital Inclusion:** It is in sync with the ideals of Digital India and BharatNet, which promise equitable access.

Concerns Raised over the Starlink Entry

- Starlink is expected to launch its satellite internet service in India at a **premium price** due to its **high capital expenditure** and regulatory obligations.
- **The hardware required** to access Starlink's services, including the satellite dish (user terminal), router, and related equipment, is also expected to be expensive for most rural households.
- The service is likely to **initially target institutions, remote businesses, and high-net-worth individuals** in underserved regions, rather than the rural populations it eventually aims to serve.
- There are concerns of devices being exploited for unlawful activities that have alarmed authorities.

Concluding remarks

- Satellite internet is not merely about connecting places but also about connecting people to opportunities.
- Starlink's entry into India could help bridge the digital divide by extending connectivity to underserved regions, provided technological progress goes hand in hand with affordability, accessibility and national security.

Source: TH, TH

INDIAN PRISONS OVERCROWDED BY UNDERTRIALS

Context

- India jails fewer people than most countries i.e. **about 41 for every 1,00,000 people,** yet more than three-quarters of its prisoners in 2022 were awaiting trial.

About

- India is **fourth in the world** in the share of undertrials in its prison population.
- The Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 created the **National Legal Services Authority** to provide free legal services to weaker sections of society.
  - But due to **limited outreach, low awareness and uneven quality** many undertrials still go without timely help.
- The **latest Prison Statistics report** released by the **National Crime Records Bureau** shows that the **occupancy rate in Indian jails fell to a decade-low of 112.7% in 2024.**
  - However, **overcrowding remains a persisting problem** in Indian prisons driven largely by a high share of undertrials.

Major Highlights

- **Overcrowding in Jail:** At the end of 2024, India had about 1,333 jails with a capacity of 4.53 lakh inmates.
  - However, with an **inmate population of over 5.11 lakh,** prisons continued to be overcrowded.
- **Occupancy Rate in States:** More than half of the States had an occupancy rate of **over 100% in 2024. Delhi recorded the highest occupancy rate** in the country at 194% in 2024.
  - **Occupancy rate of any jail** is defined as the number of prisoners held against the sanctioned holding capacity of 100. If the occupancy rate is more than 100, the jail is called overcrowded.
- **High Number of Undertrials:** The overcrowding of prisons can be attributed to the disproportionately higher share of **undertrials who accounted for about 73% of the total inmate population in 2024.**
  - With over 87% of its inmates being undertrials, **Delhi and Bihar were the two major States/ UTs to have the highest share** of undertrial population in its prisons.

Reasons Behind Rising Prison Overcrowding in India

- **Judicial Delays:** Large pendency of criminal cases results in prolonged incarceration of undertrial prisoners.
- **Overcriminalization:** Excessive use of imprisonment for minor offences contributes to congestion in prisons.

- **Bail-Related Challenges:** Economically weaker sections often fail to secure bail due to financial constraints. Lack of awareness and inadequate legal assistance further prolong the detention.
- **Inadequate Prison Infrastructure:** Prison infrastructure expansion has not kept pace with the growing inmate population.

Concerns

- **Fails to meet Basic Needs:** Overcrowding undermines the ability of prison systems to meet the basic needs of prisoners, **such as healthcare, food, and accommodation.**
- **Against Basic Rights:** This also endangers the basic rights of prisoners, including the right to have adequate standards of living and the right to the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health.
- **Security and Health Problems:** It not only creates security problems but also causes severe strain on the essential services, results in serious health hazards and disrupts penal reformation and rehabilitation programmes.
- **Administration Issue:** In an overcrowded prison segregation of hardened criminals and their separation from mild offenders become impossible.
- **International Standards:** Prison overcrowding compels prisoners to be kept under conditions unacceptable to the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for treatment of offenders to which India is a signatory.

Committees on Prison Reforms

- **Justice A.N. Mulla Committee:** Formally the **All India Committee on Jail Reforms (1980–83)** recommended Separation of undertrial prisoners from convicts and improvement of prison conditions, nutrition, and sanitation.
- **Justice Amitava Roy Committee:** It recommended decongestion of prisons, speedy trials and legal aid reforms and use of technology for prison management.
- **Krishna Iyer Committee:** It advocated for separate jail facilities for women to prevent exploitation.

Judicial Interventions

- **Hussainara Khatoon v. State of Bihar:** The Supreme Court held that the right to a speedy trial is a fundamental right under Article 21.
- **In State of Rajasthan vs. Balchand**, the Supreme Court of India, established the foundational legal principle that "bail is the rule and jail is the exception," reinforcing Article 21 regarding personal liberty.

Government Initiatives

- **The Ministry of Home Affairs** had prepared a '**Model Prisons and Correctional Services Act' in the year 2023.**
  - The Model Act has appropriate provisions for reformation, rehabilitation and integration of prisoners in the society.
  - It also has provision for **'Welfare Programs for Prisoners' and 'After-Care and Rehabilitation Services'**, as an integral part of institutional care.
- **Undertrial Review Committees (UTRCs):** It is established in every district following directions of the Supreme Court. It periodically reviews cases of undertrial prisoners eligible for release on bail or personal bonds and helps reduce prolonged detention and prison congestion.
- **e-Prisons Project:** It is a Mission Mode Project under the National e-Governance Plan. It digitizes prison records and integrates prisons with courts, police, and legal services authorities.
  - It facilitates faster processing of bail, parole, and release orders, reducing delays.
- **Open Prisons/Open Correctional Institutions:** They encourage eligible prisoners to serve sentences in less restrictive environments.
  - Reduces pressure on conventional prisons while promoting rehabilitation and social reintegration.
- **Legal Aid and Bail Reforms:** Through the National Legal Services Authority and State Legal Services Authorities, free legal aid is provided to indigent prisoners.
  - The "Support to Poor Prisoners Scheme" assists prisoners who cannot afford bail bonds or fines, enabling their release.
- **Expansion of Prison Infrastructure:** Several states have initiated projects for new correctional facilities and modernization of existing prisons.

Way Ahead

- **Technology Integration:** Digital prison management systems must be implemented for better record-keeping, monitoring, and transparency.

  - Video conferencing must be expanded to facilitate court hearings and reduce delays.
- **Social reintegration of prisoners:** Prison systems must prioritize vocational training and skill development programmes to enhance employability of inmates after release.
- **Strengthening Legal Aid:** Legal aid mechanisms must be strengthened to ensure timely and effective representation for prisoners, particularly undertrials and economically weaker sections.
- **Alternatives to Imprisonment:** Community service, probation, and non-custodial punishments should be encouraged for minor offences.
  - Open prison models should be expanded across states to reduce congestion and support rehabilitation.

Source: TH

STATES SEEK URGENT FUNDS TO SUSTAIN URBAN LIVELIHOOD MISSION

Context

- At least five states have written to the Centre highlighting that lack of clarity over **financial support to the flagship urban livelihood mission** will adversely impact social protection of the urban poor.

About

- **The Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY-NULM),** ran from **2014 until 2024,** creating **over 10 lakh women's self-help groups.**
  - The Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation had been implementing a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) since 1997.** It has been restructured as **DAY-NULM since 2013.**
- MoHUA carried out a pilot project, **Deendayal Jan Aajeevika Yojana – Shehari (DJAY-S), until December 2025.**
  - This pilot was meant to pave the way for a new scheme, but sources said it was no longer under consideration.

Key Features of DAY-NULM

- **Formation of SHGs:** It organised urban poor women into self-help groups to promote collective action and financial independence.
- **Financial assistance:** Provided a revolving fund of ₹10,000 per eligible SHG, along with access to subsidised credit and bank linkages.
- **Skill development:** Supported employment through skill training, placement and assistance in establishing micro-enterprises.
- **Social empowerment:** Strengthened community institutions and improved access to formal financial services for vulnerable urban households.

Major Concerns Arising from the Transition

- **Funding Uncertainty:** Several states, including Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka, have reported exhausted funds, pending liabilities or uncertainty over the payment of staff salaries.
- **Disruption of livelihoods:** Delayed funding may affect SHG operations, bank linkages, interest subsidies and access to institutional credit for urban poor households.
- **Risk to community institutions:** The discontinuation of financial and administrative support could weaken SHGs and federations built over a decade.
- **Uncertainty over staff continuity:** States have sought clarity on funding salaries and administrative costs during the transition, while the Centre has indicated that states and urban local bodies should initially meet these expenses from available resources.
- **Uneven state-level implementation:** Differences in states' financial capacities may affect the continuity and quality of livelihood support across urban areas.

Government's Position

- MoHUA has stated that the experiences of the pilot project are being used to **explore a new urban livelihood programme.**
- **Existing SHGs are being integrated with other government initiatives,** including the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Swachh Bharat Mission, AMRUT, PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana and the PM Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises scheme.
- The Ministry has also emphasised th**e importance of retaining existing administrative structures** to ensure continuity of beneficiary support during the transition.

Way Forward

- **Ensure funding continuity:** The Centre should clarify the timeline and structure of the proposed mission and settle eligible committed liabilities.

- **Provide transitional financial support:** Dedicated funding can be made available for essential staff, SHG activities and beneficiary services until the new scheme is operational.
- **Institutionalise SHG convergence:** Link urban SHGs with municipal services, waste management, food processing, housing and renewable energy programmes to diversify livelihood opportunities.
- **Design an inclusive urban livelihood framework:** The new mission should combine the broad-based poverty alleviation approach of DAY-NULM with targeted support for vulnerable occupational groups identified under DJAY-S.

Conclusion:

- The transition from DAY-NULM to a new urban livelihood framework **must protect the community institutions and livelihood opportunities** created over the past decade.
- **Timely funding, policy clarity and effective Centre–State coordination** are essential to ensure that the urban poor do not lose access to established support systems.

Source: IE

INDIA'S CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR) PROGRAMME

In Context

- Recent reports indicate the annual **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) spend of Rs 40,794 cr** in 2024-25, contributed by **29,500 companies supporting 72,000 projects.**
  - **Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka and Delhi** together received **over Rs 20,000 crore.**

What is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)?

- CSR refers to the obligation of companies to contribute to **social and environmental development** beyond profit-making.
- Under **Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013**, companies crossing any one threshold (net worth Rs 500 crore, turnover Rs 1,000 crore or net profit Rs 5 crore) **must spend 2% of average net profit on CSR.**
- Activities are **listed in Schedule VII**, covering education, health, hunger, rural development, environment and skill development.
- India is among the few countries with a **mandatory CSR spending requirement.**

Significance

- **Supplementary development capital:** CSR adds to public spending, especially in social sectors with limited fiscal space. It is a supplement, not a substitute.
- **Private sector as development partner:** It links profit with purpose and strengthens a firm's social licence to operate.
- **Alignment with SDGs:** Spending on health, education and livelihoods supports SDGs 3, 4 and 8.
- **Innovation:** Thousands of projects allow local solutions to be tested, and successful ones can be scaled up by the government.
- **Collaborative potential:** The law already permits pooling of funds and efforts, which can enable large, district-level transformation.

Concerns

- **Regional skew:** Funds follow corporate location, not development need. Aspirational districts and the Northeast remain underfunded.
- **Fragmentation:** Small, isolated projects give useful outputs but rarely change systems. Ten firms spending Rs 10 crore each on unrelated work achieve less than one pooled Rs 100 crore intervention.
- **Input-based accountability:** Outcome indicators are weak and non-standardised. Reporting captures how much was spent, not what changed.
- **Competence mismatch:** Companies often fund areas unrelated to their strengths, wasting their knowledge and networks. A food or agri firm may add more value in farmer productivity than in a generic education project.
- **Compliance mindset:** The 2% mandate can encourage box-ticking, where meeting the target matters more than results.

Way Ahead

- **Outcome-based framework:** For instance, instead of reporting 50 classrooms built, companies should report improvement in learning outcomes, with mandatory impact assessment for large projects.
- **Pooled funding:** Encourage consortiums around common themes and geographies, such as district transformation models.
- **Geographic rebalancing:** Use incentives or a national CSR platform to direct funds to aspirational districts and the Northeast. This would reduce

the concentration seen in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka and Delhi.

- **Core competency alignment:** Companies should deploy knowledge, networks and managerial capability along with money.
- **Convergence with government:** Align CSR with flagship missions and district plans to avoid duplication.
- **Strengthening the implementation ecosystem:** Build NGO capacity in monitoring and evaluation, and ensure transparent public data on projects and outcomes so that learning can be shared across sectors.

Source: IE

NEWS IN BRIEF

APPOINTMENT OF NEW DEPUTY ELECTION COMMISSIONER

Context

- Prakash Rajpurohit, an IAS officer of the 2010 batch, has been appointed as a **Deputy Election Commissioner** in the Election Commission of India (ECI).

Deputy Election Commissioner (DEC)

- A Deputy Election Commissioner (DEC) is a **senior officer who assists the Election Commission of India (ECI)** in managing and supervising election-related work across the country.
  - **Five or Six Deputy Election Commissioners and Director Generals** who are the senior officers in the Secretariat assist the Commission.
- **Appointment:** They are generally **senior civil servants appointed by the Central government.**
- **Administrative position:** They work under the overall supervision of the Election Commission of India and assist in implementing its decisions.
- **Difference from Election Commissioners:** The Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners are constitutional authorities under Article 324, whereas Deputy Election Commissioners are supporting administrative officers.

The Election Commission of India (ECI)

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) is a **constitutional body** established under **Article 324** of the Constitution.
  - It comprises the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and such number of Election Commissioners (ECs) as the President may decide.
- ECI is responsible for managing the **preparation of electoral rolls** and conducting elections to **Parliament, State Legislatures, and the offices of the President and Vice-President.**
- The Constitution specifies that the President will appoint the **CEC and ECs, subject to the provisions of an Act of Parliament.**

Source: TH

NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (NHRC)

Context

- The **National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)** celebrated its **33rd Foundation Day.**

About

- NHRC is a **statutory, autonomous body** established to protect and promote human rights in India.
- It was established on **12 October 1993** under the **Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA), 1993.**
  - The Act was enacted in line with the Paris Principles (1991), which prescribe standards for the status and functioning of national human rights institutions.
- **Headquarters:** New Delhi.
- The NHRC is concerned with **rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity** guaranteed by the Constitution or embodied in international covenants enforceable by Indian courts.
- **Composition of NHRC:** The Commission consists of a Chairperson and other members as prescribed under the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, as amended in 2019.
- **Appointment:** The President of India appoints the Chairperson and members on the recommendation of a six-member committee headed by the Prime Minister.
- **Tenure:** The Chairperson and members hold office for three years or until they attain the age of 70 years, whichever is earlier.
  - They are eligible for reappointment, subject to the provisions of the Act.

The NHRC performs the following functions

- **Inquiry and Investigation:** It investigates human rights violations and negligence in preventing

such violations by public servants, either on its own or upon a petition.
    - It can intervene in court proceedings involving human rights violations, with approval of the court.
    - It undertakes visits to jails and other institutions under government control to monitor conditions.
- **Promotion and Awareness:** It promotes human rights awareness through educational programs, seminars, and other outreach initiatives.
- **Research and Recommendations:** It reviews safeguards for human rights under the Constitution and recommends measures for their effective implementation.
    - It can recommend compensation or prosecution against guilty public servants and may approach the Supreme Court or High Court for directions.
- **Other Key Functions:** The NHRC can requisition public records and copies thereof from courts or offices.
    - It submits annual reports to the Central and State governments.
    - It monitors the functioning of mental hospitals and protection homes under Supreme Court remit.

Source: AIR

BIMSTEC'S DELHI DECLARATION

Context

- India hosted the first-ever BIMSTEC Home Ministers' meeting in New Delhi, which concluded with the **adoption of the Delhi Declaration.**

Delhi Declaration

- The declaration condemned terrorism, including cross-border terrorism, and called for stronger regional cooperation against terror financing, radicalisation, drug trafficking, human trafficking and money laundering.

What is BIMSTEC?

- The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a grouping of **seven Member States** lying in the littoral and adjacent areas of the Bay of Bengal.
- The organization was formed in **1997** with the signing of the **Bangkok Declaration.**
    - It unites South and Southeast Asian nations bordering the Bay of Bengal.
- **Objective:** To help countries in their economic growth, to support social development, and to encourage development in other areas, like science, technology, and economic development.
- **Founding Members:** Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.
- **Current Members (7):** Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.
- The BIMSTEC region represents approximately **1.7 billion people**, or **22%** of the world's population, with a combined GDP of around **US$5 trillion**.
- **BIMSTEC Secretariat:** Dhaka, Bangladesh.



Source: TH

LONG TERM CAPITAL GAINS (LTCG) TAX DEBATE

In News

- Long Term Capital Gains (LTCG) tax is back in debate as investors, markets and economists question whether it helps or hurts capital formation.

What is Long Term Capital Gains (LTCG) Tax?

- It is a tax on profit from selling a capital asset held beyond a specified period, which is 12 months for listed equity and 24 months for property and unlisted shares.
- **Current regime (Budget 2024):** LTCG on listed equity is 12.5% above Rs 1.25 lakh a year, up from 10% above Rs 1 lakh. Short term gains are taxed at 20%.
- **Indexation removed:** Property and other assets are taxed at a flat 12.5% without indexation. For property bought before 23 July 2024, resident individuals can choose the older 20% with indexation.

- Equity LTCG was exempt until 2018, when a 10% tax was introduced, partly offset by Securities Transaction Tax (STT) on trades.

Case for Reducing or Rationalising LTCG

- **Double taxation:** Gains arise from profits already taxed as corporate income, and STT is levied on top. Investors bear three layers of tax.
- **Hurts long term investing**: A higher rate lowers post tax returns and weakens the incentive to hold equity for long periods. This matters as household savings shift from gold and real estate to financial assets.
- **Global competitiveness:** Singapore, Hong Kong and the UAE levy no capital gains tax on equity, which pushes foreign portfolio investors toward them and can add to FPI outflows.

Source: TH

IMPROVED SOYBEAN VARIETIES NRC 268 AND NRC 270

In News

- The **ICAR–National Soybean Research Institute**, Indore, under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) showcased the yield potential of the improved **soybean Varieties NRC 268 and NRC 270.**

About

- Both varieties have shown yields of around **20 quintals per hectare, with the potential to reach 22–25 quintals** under favourable conditions.
- **NRC 270 has larger, heavier seeds** that may fetch better market prices.
- They are designed to better withstand **irregular rainfall, dry spells, pests and diseases.**

Soybean Production in India

- **Soybean (Glycine max)** belongs to the Fabaceae family. It is an important **Kharif oilseed crop grown** mainly during the southwest monsoon season
- **Madhya Pradesh is the leading soybean-producing state** in India, followed by Maharashtra.
- Soybean grows well in warm conditions and requires adequate soil moisture. Soybean is a leguminous crop that forms a symbiotic association with Rhizobium bacteria in its root nodules.
- The government also announces a **Minimum Support Price (MSP) for soybean**, while ICAR develops improved varieties to enhance productivity and resilience.

Source: PIB

'NAMERI WILD CLASSROOM' INITIATIVE

In News

- The Assam Forest and Climate Change Department launched the **'Nameri Wild Classroom' initiative** at **Nameri Tiger Reserve** to connect students with nature through hands-on learning.

About the Initiative

- It is a **residential environmental education programme** offering two- and three-day field camps inside **Nameri Tiger Reserve.**
- It aims to **inculcate scientific curiosity, environmental awareness and a sense of responsibility towards** wildlife conservation among school children from class 8 onwards.
- The initiative provides **field learning** like birdwatching, understanding of biodiversity & ecosystems and traditional practices of forest-dwelling communities.

About Nameri Tiger Reserve

- It is **located** in the Sonitpur district, Assam, in the foothills of the Eastern Himalayas.
- The **Jia-Bharali River, known as the Kameng River** in Arunachal Pradesh, flows through the region.
- In September 2026, Nameri Tiger Reserve received **Conservation Assured I Tiger Standards (CAITS) approved status** for meeting prescribed norms for tiger conservation and protected area management.
  - CAITS is a global framework for assessing the effectiveness of tiger reserve management and protection.
  - It was launched at the 1st Asian Parks Congress in Japan in 2013.

Source: TH

SOUTH KOREA TESTS INDIGENOUS HYPERSONIC GLIDE VEHICLE

Context

- South Korea has successfully test-fired its first domestically developed **Hypersonic Glide**

Vehicle (HGV), marking a step towards acquiring a new high-speed strike capability amid rising tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

What Are Hypersonic Weapons?

- Hypersonic weapons travel at speeds of **Mach 5 or higher**, equivalent to over five times the speed of sound.
- They are broadly classified into two types:
  - **Hypersonic Glide Vehicles (HGVs):** Rocket boosters propel them to high altitudes before they separate and glide towards their targets at hypersonic speeds, manoeuvring during flight.
  - **Hypersonic Cruise Missiles:** Powered by high-speed, air-breathing engines such as **scramjets**, they sustain hypersonic flight within the atmosphere and can manoeuvre at low altitudes.

Do you know?

- India's hypersonic programmes include the **Hypersonic Technology Demonstrator Vehicle (HSTDV)**, which demonstrated flight at approximately **Mach 6**, and the proposed **BrahMos-II**, designed to achieve speeds of around Mach 7.

Source: TOI

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NEXT IAS