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DAILY NEWS ANALYSIS

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House disruptions have reduced, productivity has improved: Birla

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Thursday said that frequent disruptions in Parliament, once a recurring feature, had significantly declined, paving the way for improved productivity and more substantive debate.

Speaking at the inaugural session of the first national conference of the heads of urban local bodies from the States and Union Territories in Manesar, Haryana, Mr. Birla said the Lok Sabha had increasingly witnessed late-night sittings and prolonged discussions, reflecting what he described as a "matured and responsible democratic culture".

He urged urban local bodies to institutionalise structured procedures such as regular sittings, robust committee systems, and citizen engagement mechanisms to strengthen grassroots democracy.

The two-day conference on "Role of urban local bodies in strengthening constitutional democracy and nation building" aims to serve as a platform to define the role of urban local bodies in a rapidly urbanising India and to highlight innovative models of contemporary urban governance.

Referring to India's ancient traditions of village assemblies and community deliberations, Mr. Birla said that India had long been recognised as the "mother of democracy".

"These are the roots of our democratic functioning, which we have inherited over centuries. Today, there is a need for municipal body meetings to carry forward our rich democratic tradition," he said, adding that the functioning of municipal bodies should be "dignified, rule-bound, and regular".

'Hold Question Hour'

Mr. Birla proposed that municipal bodies incorporate procedures such as Question Hour and Zero Hour to allow elected representatives to raise issues concerning their constituencies. Such mechanisms, he said, would enhance accountability, improve transparency, and facilitate more effective monitoring of administrative work.

"I have observed that in many municipalities, councils, and corporations, meetings are not held throughout the year. Sometimes, only a budget meeting takes place, which is adjourned within half-an-hour amid chaos. This is not a healthy democratic tradition," Mr. Birla said. He added that municipal meetings should be day-long affairs with detailed deliberations on proposals and plans.

"There should also be extensive discussion on the budget, so that schemes are made in the interest of the public and their impact is visible on the ground," he said.

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Saini, addressing the gathering, described urban local bodies as foundational institutions and "the first school and nursery of democracy". "A developed India and a developed Haryana can only be achieved through developed cities," he said.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla addressing a gathering in Manesar on Thursday. PTI

Backdrop: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla addressed the first National Conference of Urban Local Body Chairpersons at ICAT, Manesar, Gurugram.

Relevance: GS 2- Conduct of business and functioning of Parliament.

GS 4 - Accountability, Ethics in Public Office

- Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said that frequent disruptions in Parliament have significantly reduced, leading to better productivity and debate quality.

- Speaking at a national conference in Manesar, he also urged urban local bodies to adopt structured procedures and strengthen committee systems.

Magnitude of the Problem

Wasted Time

- **16th Lok Sabha (2014–2019):**

  o *Lok Sabha lost 16%* of its scheduled time to disruptions.

  o *Rajya Sabha lost 36%* of its time.

- **17th Lok Sabha (till 2023):**

  o Winter Session 2021 saw **70% productivity loss**.

  o Budget Session 2023: Rajya Sabha functioned only **24%**, Lok Sabha around **34%**.
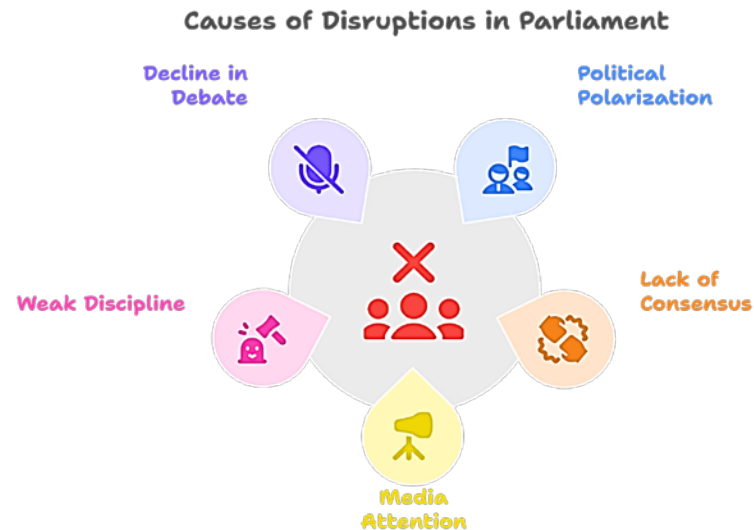
Economic Cost

- As per PRS Legislative Research (2018), every minute of Parliament costs over **₹2.5 lakh**.

- Disruptions lead to **crores in taxpayer money wasted** per session.

Constitutional and Parliamentary Expectations

- **Article 107-111**: Deals with legislative procedures.

- **Rules of Procedure** (Lok Sabha & Rajya Sabha): Mandate orderly conduct.

- **Speaker/Chairman powers**: To suspend unruly members and adjourn proceedings.

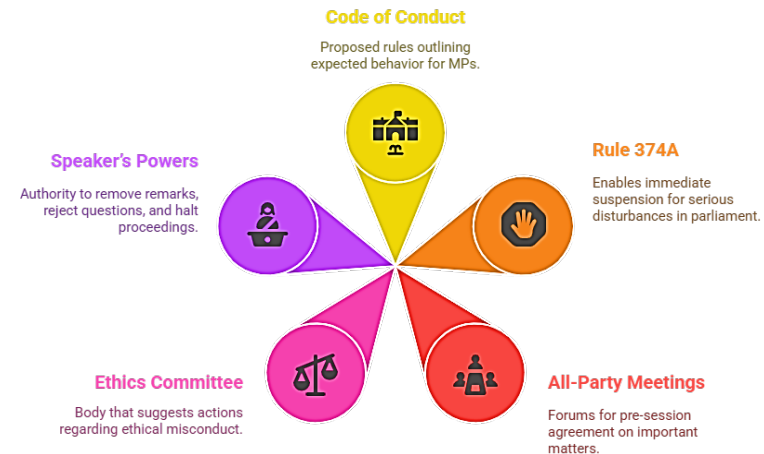Despite these, frequent disruptions **undermine parliamentary accountability**.

Causes of Disruptions in Parliament

Decline in Debate

Political Polarization

Weak Discipline

Lack of Consensus

Media Attention

Consequences of Parliamentary Disruption:

- **Legislative Paralysis**: Delays key bills; increases ordinance use.

- **Executive Unaccountability**: Question and Zero Hour often lost.

- **Erodes Democratic Trust**: Parliament seen as ineffective; institutions lose credibility.

- **Poor Policymaking**: Laws passed hastily; committees neglected.

Examples of Notable Disruptions

- **Winter 2010**: Washed out over 2G scam protests.

- **Budget 2018**: 22 days lost over Andhra Pradesh special status.

- **Monsoon 2021**: Pegasus row caused repeated adjournments.

Efforts to curb disruptions in parliament

Code of Conduct
Proposed rules outlining expected behavior for MPs.

Rule 374A
Enables immediate suspension for serious disturbances in parliament.

Speaker's Powers
Authority to remove remarks, reject questions, and halt proceedings.

Ethics Committee
Body that suggests actions regarding ethical misconduct.

All-Party Meetings
Forums for pre-session agreement on important matters.

Q1. **Which of the following provisions empower the presiding officers of Parliament to suspend members for disorderly conduct?**

(a)   Article 110

(b)   Rule 374 and Rule 374A

(c)   Rule 266

(d)   Article 108

Centre to gather support to remove Justice Varma

Process to obtain signatures for motion seeking removal of the Allahabad HC judge to commence soon, says Union Minister Rijiju; major political parties have extended support to the initiative

Nistula Hebbar
NEW DELHI

With the Monsoon Session of Parliament scheduled from July 21, the Centre is set to begin the process of collecting signatures for a motion seeking the removal of Allahabad High Court judge Justice Yashwant Varma over the discovery of burnt currency notes at his official residence. Several major political parties have expressed their willingness, in principle, to support the initiative.

Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju on Thursday said that while the process of obtaining signatures would commence shortly, a decision was yet to be taken on whether the motion would be introduced in the Lok Sabha or the Rajya Sabha. Support of a minimum of 100 members are required for the Lok Sabha, and at least 50 members for the Rajya Sabha, for such a motion to be admitted.

Even if the motion is introduced during the upcoming session, it is unlikely to reach a conclusion within the same period. Under the Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968, once a motion for the removal of a judge is admitted in either House, the presiding officer is required to constitute a three-member committee – composed of a Supreme Court judge, a High Court Chief Justice, and a distinguished jurist – to investigate the matter, and submit a report within three months.

Responding to speculation regarding the findings of an in-house panel formed by former Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna to probe the case, Mr. Rijiju clarified that such a report alone could not suffice to proceed with a removal motion in Parliament. He noted that the panel had not indicted Justice Varma, but had recommended the appropriate next steps, as the constitutional authority to remove a judge rests solely with Parliament.

Curious case

Half-burnt notes were found at the official residence of Justice Yashwant Varma in New Delhi after a blaze on March 14

March 22: Then-Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna constitutes 3-member in-house panel to probe the issue

March 28: Centre notifies transfer of Justice Varma to Allahabad High Court; SC tells Chief Justice not to assign any judicial work to the judge

May 4: In-house panel submits its report dated May 3 to the CJI

May 8: SC issues statement saying it had forwarded the panel's report and Justice Varma's response dated May 6 to the Prime Minister and the President

The constitutional authority to remove a judge rests solely with Parliament

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Backdrop: The Government is set to begin the process of collecting signatures for a motion seeking the removal of Allahabad High Court judge Justice Yashwant Varma.

Relevance: GS2- Structure, organisation and functioning of Judiciary

- Government to initiate removal motion against Justice Yashwant Varma.

- Kiren Rijiju says signature process to commence soon; final decision on House of introduction pending.

Removal Process of High Court Judges

Constitutional Basis

Removal of High Court judges in India is governed by **Articles 217(1)(b) and 218** of the Constitution, along with the **Judges (Inquiry) Act, 1968** and **Judges (Inquiry) Rules, 1969.**

Tenure and Removal Clause

- **Tenure**: A High Court judge holds office until the age of **62 years**.

- **Removal grounds**: A judge can only be removed on the grounds of:

  o **Proved misbehaviour** or **Incapacity**

    ▪ Not defined in the Constitution but are subject to **parliamentary procedure and judicial review**.

Procedure for Removal (Impeachment)

The removal process mirrors that of a Supreme Court judge (Article 124(4)) and follows these **stages**:

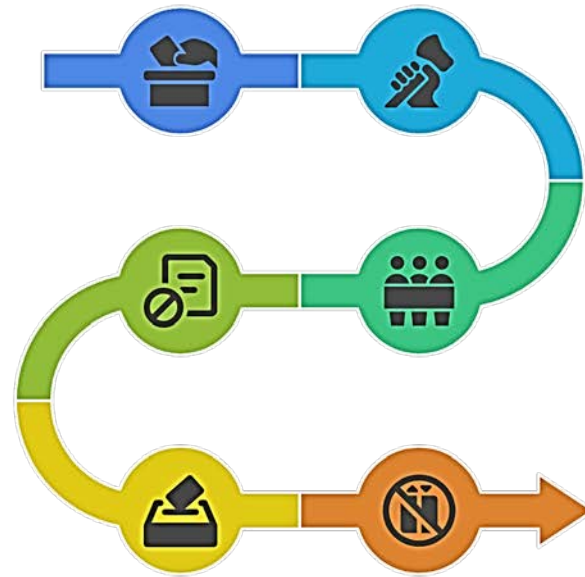## The Process of Removing a Judge in India

Initiation of Motion

100 Lok Sabha MPs or 50 Rajya Sabha MPs sign motion

Admission of Motion

Speaker or Chairman may admit motion

Report of the Committee

Committee finds judge guilty or not guilty

Constitution of Inquiry Committee

Three-member committee formed

Parliamentary Approval

Motion passed by majority in both Houses

Presidential Assent

President orders removal of judge

Inquiry Committee to examine charges - comprising of

- A Supreme Court judge

- A High Court Chief Justice

- A distinguished jurist

Removal requires approval by both Houses with a majority of the total membership and a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.

Judges Removed So Far

As of now, **no High Court judge** has been removed **successfully through this process**, although there have been attempts:

Notable Cases:

- **Justice V. Ramaswami (1993)**: First judge to face impeachment; motion failed in Lok Sabha due to abstentions.

- **Justice Soumitra Sen (2011)**: Rajya Sabha passed motion; resigned before Lok Sabha vote.

- **Justice P.D. Dinakaran**: Resigned before inquiry concluded.

Q2. Consider the following statements regarding the removal of High Court judges in India:

1. A judge of a High Court can be removed by the President on his own discretion.

2. The procedure for removal of High Court judges is the same as for Supreme Court judges.

3. The grounds for removal are proved misbehaviour or incapacity.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

(a)   1 and 2 only

(b)   2 and 3 only

(c)   1 and 3 only

(d)   1, 2 and 3

ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons holds Asia Meeting in New Delhi, 1st - 3rd July, 2025

Posted On: 03 JUL 2025 3:15PM by PIB Delhi

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) came into force in 1997, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) is the implementing body for the Chemical Weapons Convention, with its 193 Member States, it oversees the global endeavour to permanently and verifiably eliminate chemical weapons. The OPCW was awarded the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize for its extensive efforts in eliminating chemical weapons.

India is an original signatory to the Convention. The National Authority Chemical Weapons Convention (NACWC) is the national authority responsible for implementing the Convention in India. In 2024, NACWC successfully mentored the Kenya National Authority under the OPCW Mentorship/ Partnership Programme to strengthen its implementation capacity.

The Indian Chemical Council (ICC), India's oldest Chemical Industry Association works closely with the NACWC for reaching out to industry. ICC brought laurels for India as it was awarded the OPCW-The Hague Award 2024, as a co-recipient, for its role in promoting chemical safety, compliance with the Convention, and enhancing industry-wide security practices in India. This is the first time globally, that a chemical industry body was honoured with this award. The 'OPCW-The Hague Award' recognizes individuals and organizations that play a significant role in advancing the goals of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Regional Meetings of National Authorities are organised by OPCW annually to support implementation of the Convention through capacity building of National Authorities. This annual meeting provides an opportunity to exchange experiences, information and best practices for CWC implementation, and also provides a platform to present and discuss issues and solutions for complying with obligations under the Convention that are of particular importance to the National Authorities regionally. This interaction fosters bilateral and regional cooperation and bolster networks among National Authorities.

The 23rd Regional Meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Asia, organised by the OPCW and hosted by National Authority Chemical Weapons Convention (NACWC) India, opened on 1st July at Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi in the presence of senior officials from the OPCW, international delegates from National Authorities across Asia, senior officials from the Ministry of External Affairs, Govt. of India and the NACWC, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of India.

The meeting was attended by 38 delegates from 24 States Parties (countries) from the Asia region including Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, Cambodia, Iraq, India, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Malaysia, Myanmar, Maldives, Philippines, Oman, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and Vietnam along with officials from the OPCW and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD).

During this Regional Meeting, the delegates shared their experiences, discussed national implementation challenges, best practices, and opportunities for further cooperation. The sessions covered discussions on the legislative frameworks, chemical safety and security, role stakeholders including the chemical industry and the use of Artificial Intelligence. The OPCW provided important updates on synergies between United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 and the CWC as well as discussions on future Mentorship Partnership Programmes.

The 3 days Regional Meeting is expected to strengthen regional cooperation between Asian countries in implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Backdrop: Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons holds Asia Meeting in New Delhi, 1st - 3rd July, 2025.

Relevance: GS2 - Agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests
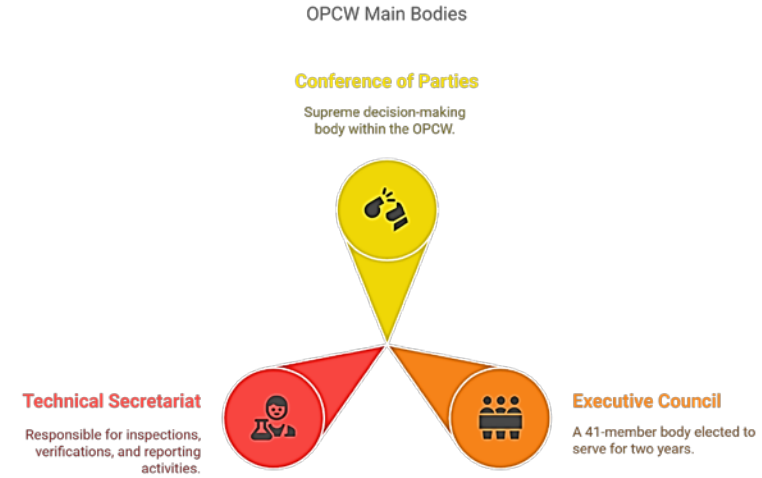
- OPCW(Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons) held the 23rd Regional Meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Asia in New Delhi from 1st to 3rd July 2025.

- It was hosted by India's National Authority Chemical Weapons Convention (NACWC).

Historical Background

- **Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)** was adopted in **1992** and came into force in **1997**.

- The CWC is a **legally binding treaty** that outlaws the **production, stockpiling, and use of chemical weapons** and their precursors.

- The OPCW (Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons) was established on **29 April 1997** to **implement** the CWC.

  - Objectives: Eliminate chemical weapons, prevent their use, promote peaceful chemistry, and ensure CWC compliance.

  - Functions: Conduct inspections, provide technical aid, build safety capacity, and monitor dual-use chemicals..

- **Nobel Peace Prize 2013**: OPCW was awarded this prize for its efforts to **eliminate chemical weapons globally**, especially after its involvement in Syria.

Headquarters and Structure

- **Headquarter of OPCW**: The Hague, Netherlands.
- **Members**: 193 States Parties (as of 2024), including India.

OPCW Main Bodies

Conference of Parties
Supreme decision-making body within the OPCW.

Technical Secretariat
Responsible for inspections, verifications, and reporting activities.

Executive Council
A 41-member body elected to serve for two years.

Global Achievements

- As of **2023**, **99% of declared chemical weapons stockpiles** have been destroyed under OPCW verification.
- OPCW has conducted over **7,000 on-site inspections** in 90 countries.
- Played a critical role in the **destruction of Syria's chemical weapons** (post-2013).
- Engaged in emergency response to chemical attacks (e.g., Douma attack, Skripal poisoning).

Global Achievements

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India and OPCW

- **India** signed the **CWC in 1993** and ratified it in **1996**.

- India was the **first country to completely destroy** its declared chemical weapons stockpile **under OPCW verification (2009)**.

- India hosts the **National Authority for Chemical Weapons Convention (NACWC)** under the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers.

- Actively participates in capacity-building, technical workshops, and international cooperation under OPCW.

- India is an original signatory to the Convention. The National Authority Chemical Weapons Convention (NACWC) is the national authority responsible for implementing the Convention in India.

Challenges Faced

- **Non-universal adherence**: Some states (e.g., North Korea) are not party to CWC.

- **Verification of undeclared sites**: Especially in conflict zones.

- **Use by non-state actors**: Harder to monitor and prevent.

- **Dual-use chemicals**: Used both in industry and warfare.

- **Geopolitical divisions**: Affect investigation transparency and cooperation.

Q3. Which of the following statements is/are correct regarding the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)?

1. It is a United Nations agency headquartered in Geneva.

2. India was the first country to completely destroy its declared chemical weapons stockpile under OPCW verification.

3. OPCW was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013.

Select the correct answer using the code below:

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 and 3 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2 and 3

Q. **Disruption in the Parliament affects not only the lawmaking function but also the accountability of the executive. Discuss with examples. Suggest reforms to ensure smooth functioning of the Parliament.**

(250 words)

Tamal, the last imported warship

Built in Kaliningrad, Russia, *INS Tamal* is set to be the last Indian warship purchased from a foreign country. This is a result of decades of efforts by the Navy at achieving maximum indigenisation in shipbuilding

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

WITH THE commissioning of *INS Tamal* at the Yantar Shipyard in Kaliningrad, Russia on Tuesday, the Indian Navy has likely inducted its last foreign-built warship.

This is a major milestone for the Navy, which has, over the years, progressively indigenised shipbuilding, increasing bit by bit the indigenous content in warships, as well as designing them in India.

INS Tamal is the eighth Talwar-class frigate — these are improved versions of the Krivak III-class frigates — built by Russia for the Indian Navy as a part of Project 1135.6.

It is also the second of four additional follow-on ships of the class that were ordered in 2018. The first, *INS Tushil*, was commissioned in Kaliningrad in December last year. The final two, *Triput* and *Tavasya*, are being built in India by the Goa Shipyard Limited with transfer of technology and design assistance from Russia.

Triput, which was launched into sea last July and is expected to be commissioned in 2026, will be India's first indigenously built Talwar-class frigate.

This is the story of *INS Tamal*, and the Indian Navy's journey towards indigenisation.

Tamal: A moving sea fortress

INS Tamal is a multirole frigate with a displacement of 4,035 long tonnes (1 long tonne = 1,016 kg) at full load, a length of 124.8 m, and a beam (width at its widest point) of 15.2 m. It has a maximum speed of 30 knots (56 km/h), and a range of upto 4,850 nautical miles (8,980 km). The ship will be manned by a crew of 250 sailors and 26 officers.

The Navy describes *INS Tamal* as a "formidable moving fortress at sea", and says that it is capable of carrying out blue water operations in all four dimensions of modern naval warfare – air, surface, underwater and electromagnetic.

AIR: *INS Tamal* carries two kinds of anti-aircraft missiles — 24 vertically-launched Shtil surface-to-air missiles with a range of upto 70 km, and eight short-range Igla missiles. At close range, incoming aircraft and missiles can also be fended off by the ship's two AK-630s: fully-automated 30 mm rotary cannons that can fire more than 5,000 rounds per minute.

SURFACE: *INS Tamal's* anti-ship/ land attack capabilities are centred around the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile. The ship carries a complement of eight such missiles which boast an operational range in the hundreds of kilometres, and can fly at speeds of upto Mach 3 (3,700 km/h). The frigate also has one 100 mm A-190E main gun; this can fire 25 kg shells to distances of more than 20 km.

UNDERWATER: For anti-submarine warfare (ASW), *INS Tamal* has a RBU ASW rocket-launcher, which can fire salvos of upto 12 rockets equipped with depth charges at a time. The frigate also has two 533 mm torpedo tubes, capable of launching heavy-weight torpedoes.

EW: *INS Tamal* boasts a complement of advanced electronic warfare (EW) suite and advanced Electro-Optical/Infra-Red systems, which act as ears and eyes of the platform. EW suite includes decoy launching systems which disrupt enemy radar, and jammers.

The warship can also accommodate the upgraded Anti-submarine and Airborne Early Warning helicopters, the Kamov 28 and Kamov 31, which, according to the Navy, act as "major force multipliers".

The Navy had previously stated that *INS Tamal's* design provides it with enhanced stealth features and greater stability characteristics, and that it is equipped with complex automated systems for nuclear, biological and chemical defence, including damage control and firefighting that can be operated centrally from sheltered posts.

"These complex systems aid in minimising casualties, achieve rapid restoration of combat effectiveness, enhancing combat capability and survivability," the Navy had said.

INS Tamal will soon set sail for its home port in Karwar, Karnataka.

Towards indigenisation

The Navy has said that *INS Tamal* will be the last imported warship to be inducted into its fleet. This is the culmination of a decades-long push towards indigenisation of naval shipbuilding, and a major milestone in the road to *aatmanirbharta* (self-reliance) in defence.

In the early years after Independence, India neither had the know-how to build its own ships, nor the resources to develop this capability. It was thus compelled to acquire frigates and destroyers from other countries, mostly the UK and the erstwhile USSR.

Nonetheless, even at that time, the Navy understood the importance of indigenous shipbuilding, and took continuous steps to make this a reality. *INS Ajay*, a small patrol vessel commissioned in 1960, was the first indigenously-built ship in India.

Leander-class frigates started being produced in Mazagon Docks with British collaboration in the late 1960s. But at this time, the indigenous content of these ships (that is, the components and materials which were actually produced in India rather than imported and simply assembled) remained minimal.

For instance, Leander-class frigates of the 1970s had just 15% indigenous content. This would steadily increase over the years. Kolkata-class destroyers produced in the 2000s boasted 59% indigenous content, while the latest Vishakhapatnam and Nilgiri classes are more than 75% indigenous.

The Navy also made efforts to design ships in India. It set up the Central Design Office (CDO) in 1964, which eventually grew to be the Directorate of Naval Design (DND) in 1970. By the 1990s, this was designing aircraft carriers, submarines, and guided missile destroyers.

The Directorate of Indigenisation was established at the naval headquarters in New Delhi in 2005. This was followed by the creation of indigenous development field units at Mumbai and Visakhapatnam in March 2010.

The Navy's way forward

Today, the majority of the Navy's warships are built indigenously, using more than 75% indigenous components. Several Indian shipyards, both public-sector and privately held, build ships for the Navy.

In the seventh and latest volume of the Naval History Project, titled *A Decade of Transformation: The Indian Navy 2011-21*, Captain M Doraibabu and Commander Amrut Dilip Godbole write about the steady growth in India's shipbuilding capabilities.

They wrote that during 2001–11, the Navy added 57,000 tonnes and 33 ships to its inventory. This grew to 92,000 tonnes and 40 ships from 2011-21, mostly from indigenous sources. Of the 39 ships built for the Navy in 2011-21, 33 were built in Indian shipyards, and of the 39 ships on order as of 2021, 37 are being built in India — the two exceptions being *INS Tushil*, which was commissioned last year, and *Tamal*.

Even these two frigates built in Russia have a sizable indigenous component — *INS Tamal* is built with 26% indigenous components. Between June and December this year, the Navy is set to commission 9-10 warships. It is learnt that several more will be commissioned over the next four to five years.

All of these will be built in India.

FRIGATE: SHORT HISTORY OF A MULTIROLE NAVAL VESSEL

- During Europe's Age of Sail, the term "frigate" was used to describe fully-rigged ships (with three or more masts) built primarily for speed and manoeuverability, and intended to be used in scouting, escort, and patrol roles.
  While designs varied, these ships were smaller than ships of the line, the mainstays of naval battle in this era, and typically had only one gun deck.

- The term fell out of use as warships without sails appeared on the scene in the second half of the 19th century. Naval tactics evolved, and frigates were effectively replaced by "cruisers" with different levels of armour and armament.

- Frigates re-entered the naval lexicon during World War II. The Royal Navy used the term to describe vessels that were larger than corvettes but smaller than destroyers. They were primarily used as anti-submarine escort vessels: protecting Allied mercantile ships from German u-boat attacks in the Atlantic.
  Apart from their names, these modern frigates did not share much in common with models from past centuries.

- The post-War development of missile technology made it possible for relatively small ships to pack tremendous firepower, further spurring the return of frigates to navies around the world.

- Today, frigates are primarily meant to serve as platforms for guided missile systems. They can serve in a variety of roles, from anti-submarine, anti-ship, and anti-aircraft warfare to land attacks, and can fight either solo or as part of a larger naval formation.

INS Tamal in Kaliningrad during trials. *Screengrab from video/ X/ @indiannavy*

Backdrop: Recent commissioning of INS Tamal at the Yantar Shipyard in Kaliningrad, Russia.

Relevance: GS 3/Defence

INS Tamal is set to be the last Indian warship purchased from a foreign country. This is a result of decades of efforts by the Navy to achieve maximum indigenisation in shipbuilding.

INS Tamal

- **Class**: Eighth **Talwar-class** frigate (Project 1135.6); improved version of the Russian Krivak III-class.

- **Batch**: Second of four follow-on ships ordered in 2018.

  o The first was **INS Tushil** (commissioned in 2024)

  o The remaining two, **Triput** and **Tavasya,** are being built in **India (Goa Shipyard)** with Russian assistance.

  o Triput, which was launched into the sea last July and is expected to be **commissioned in 2026,** will be India's **first indigenously built Talwar-class** frigate.

Technical Specifications

- **Displacement**: 4,035 long tonnes at full load (1 long tonne = 1,016 kg)

- **Length**: 124.8 m

- **Maximum Speed**: 30 knots (56 km/h)

- **Range**: 4,850 nautical miles (8,980 km)

- **Crew**: 250 sailors, 26 officers

Combat Capabilities

Multi-role blue-water frigate capable of operations in air, surface, underwater, and electronic warfare domains.

- **Air Defence**:
  - 24 *Shtil* surface-to-air missiles (range: 70 km)
  - 8 *Igla* short-range missiles
  - 2 × AK-630 rotary cannons (For close-in defence)
- **Surface Attack**:
  - *8 × BrahMos* supersonic cruise missiles
  - **100 mm *A-190E main gun*** (20+ km range)

- **Underwater Warfare**:
  - o *RBU* anti-submarine rocket launchers
  - o 2 × 533 mm torpedo tubes for launching heavyweight torpedoes.
- **Electronic Warfare**:
  - o Advanced electronic warfare (**EW) suite**, jammers, decoy launchers
  - o Electro-optical/infrared systems for surveillance
- **Aviation Support**:
  - o Capable of operating Anti-submarine and Airborne Early Warning helicopters, the **Kamov 28 and Kamov 31**.

Advanced Features

- INS Tamal's design provides it with enhanced **stealth features and greater stability** characteristics.
- Equipped with complex automated systems for **nuclear, biological and chemical** defence.
- Centralised **automated damage control & fire suppression**
- Built with **26% indigenous components**, showcasing India's defence manufacturing rise

Journey Towards Indigenisation

Past Reliance: Post-independence, India relied on imports from the UK and USSR due to a lack of shipbuilding infrastructure.

Initial Steps:

- **INS Ajay (1960)**: First indigenously built patrol vessel
- *Leander-class frigates* **(1970s)**: Built with British help, only 15% indigenous content

- **Progress**:
  - *Kolkata-class destroyers* **(2000s)**: 59% indigenous
  - *Visakhapatnam & Nilgiri-class***:** Over 75% indigenous

- **Institutional Support**:
  - **Central Design Office (1964)** became the **Directorate of Naval Design** (1970)
    - Designed aircraft carriers, submarines, and guided missile destroyers.
  - **Directorate of Indigenisation** (2005)
  - Indigenous development field units in **Mumbai & Visakhapatnam** (2010)

Navy's Way Forward

The Indian Navy is now largely self-reliant in shipbuilding, with over **75% indigenous components** used in most warships. Both public and private Indian shipyards are actively contributing to naval construction.

- **2001–2011**: 33 ships, 57,000 tonnes added.

- **2011–2021**: 40 ships, 92,000 tonnes added—mostly indigenously built.

- **Out of 39 ships built (2011–21)**, 33 were made in India.

- **Out of 39 ships on order (as of 2021)**, 37 are being constructed in India, with **only INS Tushil and INS Tamal** as exceptions (built in Russia).

Even so, **INS Tamal has 26% indigenous content**. Going forward, **9–10 warships** are expected to be commissioned by the end of this year, with many more to follow over the next 4–5 years—**all domestically built**, reinforcing India's commitment to **Aatmanirbharta (self-reliance)** in defence.

Frigate –a Multi-Role Naval Vessel

Frigates are versatile, missile-equipped warships capable of performing multiple roles—anti-submarine, anti-ship, anti-aircraft, and land-attack operating independently or in fleet formations.

Q4. With reference to INS Tamal, recently commissioned into the Indian Navy, consider the following statements:

1. It belongs to the Talwar-class (Project 1135.6) frigate

2. It was entirely built in India by Goa Shipyard Limited

3. It will be the first indigenously built Talwar-class frigate

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

(a)   1 only

(b)   1 and 3 only

(c)   2 and 3 only

(d)   All of the above

Africa's goals are our priorities, says PM as India and Ghana elevate ties

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, JULY 3

INDIA AND Ghana elevated their bilateral relationship to a "comprehensive partnership" on Wednesday as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Ghanaian President John Mahama met in Accra. The two leaders decided to double bilateral trade in five years and increase cooperation in areas such as defence and healthcare.

Modi also addressed the Ghanaian Parliament later in the day, saying: "Africa's goals are our priorities. Our approach is to grow together as equals."

Underlining Africa's importance for India, he told the Parliament: "Our development partnership with Africa is demand-driven. It is focused on building local capacities and creating local opportunities. Our objective is not just to invest, but to empower. To help develop self-sustaining ecosystems."

This was the first state visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Ghana in three decades.

The West African country conferred the Order of the Star of Ghana on Modi, citing his "global statesmanship and in

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the Parliament of Ghana; and *(right)* is conferred with the Order of the Star of Ghana, the West African nation's second-highest award. *AP, ANI*

recognition of his contribution to the global peace and stability".

During the Modi-Mahama talks, both sides exchanged four MoUs on culture, standards, ayurveda and traditional medicine, and a joint commission mechanism for engagement between the two Foreign Ministries. A statement by India's Ministry of External Affairs said: "Both leaders... discussed ways to expand cooperation in key areas including trade and investment, agriculture, capacity building, digital technology, infrastructure, and

people-to-people ties."

Modi said after the talks: "Today, the President and I have decided to elevate our bilateral relationship into a 'Comprehensive Partnership'. In Ghana's journey of nation building, India is not just a supporter, but a fellow traveller."

Modi said bilateral trade with Ghana had crossed $3 billion, and Indian companies had invested around $2 billion across 900 projects. "Today, we've set a target to double our bilateral trade over the next five years. In the area of Fintech, India is ready to share its

experience with UPI," he said.

The PM said development partnership was a key pillar of the ties. "We assure India's complete support and cooperation towards President Mahama's efforts of economic restructuring."

Modi announced a doubling in the number of scholarships, a skill development centre for vocational training, and support in agriculture as well.

"India is proposing to provide affordable healthcare and reliable care to the citizens of Ghana through Jan Aushadhi Kendras.

We've discussed cooperation in vaccine production," the Prime Minister said.

In the area of defence and security, he said: "We will move forward with the mantra of security through stability. Cooperation will be extended in areas such as training of armed forces, maritime security, defence supplies and cyber security."

He also said Indian companies will cooperate with Ghana in the exploration and mining of critical minerals.

On terrorism, he said: "We also held discussions on regional and international issues, including the Sahel region. We are united in our view that terrorism is the enemy of humanity. We have decided to strengthen our cooperation in counter-terrorism efforts." Modi also thanked Mahama for his support over the Pahalgam terror attack.

The PM said: "We both have expressed deep concern over the ongoing conflicts in West Asia and Europe. Issues must be resolved through dialogue."

The PM also paid homage to Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's founding President. Modi has left for Trinidad and Tobago for the second-leg of his five-nation tour.

Backdrop: Prime Minister receives the National Honour of Ghana

Relevance: GS II/International Relations

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred Ghana's national honour, the ***Officer of the Order of the Star of Ghana,*** by President John Dramani Mahama. The award recognizes his distinguished statesmanship and global leadership. Accepting it on behalf of 1.4 billion Indians, PM Modi dedicated the honour to India's youth, cultural diversity, and the historical ties between India and Ghana.

India-Africa Relations

India and Africa share a historic and civilizational connection rooted in trade, cultural exchange, anti-colonial solidarity, and a shared vision for development. In recent decades, this relationship has evolved into a strategic partnership encompassing economic cooperation, defense collaboration, capacity-building, and people-to-people ties.

"India's development partnership with Africa is guided by African priorities." – PM Narendra Modi

Evolution of India-Africa Relations

Historical Perspective

- **Ancient ties**: Trade between the Indus Valley Civilization and East Africa (Swahili Coast) through the Indian Ocean.

- **Colonial era**: Indians migrated to Africa (mainly East and South Africa) as traders and laborers.

- **Anti-colonial solidarity**: Shared struggles against imperialism; leaders like Gandhi began their political work in Africa.

- **Post-Independence**: India supported African countries in their liberation movements through diplomatic and moral support.

Modern India-Africa Relations

2008 Onwards: Institutionalization

India–Africa Forum Summits (IAFS) became the main diplomatic platform:

Year	Summit	Location	Outcome
2008	IAFS-I	New Delhi	Focus on development partnerships
2011	IAFS-II	Addis Ababa	Emphasis on capacity-building
2015	IAFS-III	New Delhi	Attended by all 54 African nations

IAFS-IV is expected soon with renewed emphasis on health, agriculture, digital economy, and security.

India's Africa Policy: Key Pillars

- **People-centric diplomacy** – Cultural exchange, diaspora ties

- **Security partnership** – Counter-terrorism, peacekeeping, maritime safety

- **Development partnership** – Infrastructure, health, education

- **Economic engagement** – Trade, investment, digital economy

- **Political solidarity** – UN reforms, multilateral cooperation

Trade and Economic Engagement

Bilateral Trade

- India is **Africa's third-largest trading partner**.

- Bilateral trade has grown to **$103 billion** in the last decade.

- **African exports** to India: Oil (Nigeria, Angola), gold, cotton, fruits, etc

- **Indian exports**: Pharmaceuticals, refined petroleum, textiles, automobiles, Machinery, vehicles, etc.

- **Duty-Free Tariff Preference Scheme (DFTP)**: Offers preferential access to Indian markets for Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

Investments

- India is among the top **5 investors** in Africa [Averaged **$26.39 billion (2018– 2022)**]

  o Investments in sectors like energy, agriculture, telecom, and mining.

  o Indian firms (e.g., Bharti Airtel, Tata Motors, ONGC Videsh) have a strong presence.

Defense and Security Cooperation

- **Maritime Security**: Joint naval exercises with countries like Mozambique and, Seychelles.

- **Anti-piracy patrols** in the Gulf of Aden and Western Indian Ocean.

- Capacity-building through **training African armed forces** at Indian military institutions (e.g., NDA, IMA).

- **Defence attachés** are deployed in several African countries.

- India's **peacekeeping role in Africa**: India's **peacekeeping role in Africa** through the UN in countries like Sudan, Congo, and South Sudan.

Capacity Building and Development Assistance

- **Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC)**

  o Flagship program offering **training, scholarships, and technical support**

  o Over **50,000 African students** trained in Indian institutions.

- **Lines of Credit (LOCs)**

  o Over **$12 billion** worth of concessional LOCs extended for infrastructure, energy, and agriculture projects.

- **Education and Healthcare**

  o India is a preferred destination for **higher education** and **medical tourism** for African citizens.

  o **Pan-African e-Network Project (PAeNP)**: Connects African countries to Indian universities and hospitals.

  o **Tele-medicine and tele-education** under e-VidyaBharati and e-ArogyaBharati (e-VBAB) initiative.

Sustainable Development Cooperation

- India's development partnership focuses on **sustainability, inclusivity, and African ownership**.

Key sectors:

- Agriculture and food security
- Renewable energy (International Solar Alliance)
- Climate change mitigation
- Women and child development
- Affordable healthcare (e.g., generic medicines, vaccines)

Multilateral and Global Cooperation

- Cooperation in platforms such as:
    - **African Union–India**
    - **BRICS**, **IBSA**, **ISA**, **G-77**
    - **UN Reforms**: Africa supports India's bid for a permanent seat in UNSC.
- **Voice of Global South**: India and Africa jointly raise issues of the Global South (food security, debt distress, vaccine equity).

Challenges & Setbacks:
- **Lack of High-Level Political Engagement:**
  - No **India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS)** since **2015**.
  - In contrast, **China, US, EU, Russia, Türkiye** have held regular summits.
  - African diplomats perceive this as **low prioritization** by India.

- **Competing Strategic Priorities:**
  - India's focus lies on:
    - Neighbourhood (South Asia)
    - China tensions
    - Gulf nations (UAE)
    - Western partners (US, France, UK)
  - The Ministry of External Affairs has **limited capacity**, diluting focus on Africa.

- **Decline in Development Cooperation:**
  - The **IDEAS concessional finance scheme** has stagnated.
  - **Grant spending and infrastructure loans** have declined since 2014.
  - Fewer development contracts awarded to Indian firms.
  - E-education/health projects (e-VBAB) are mostly rebranded versions of older schemes.
  - **Vaccine diplomacy setback** in 2021—India halted exports during its own COVID crisis, harming goodwill.

Changing African Landscape

- Africa faces multiple crises:

    - **Commodity shocks (2015)**, **COVID-19**, **Ukraine war** → inflation & slowed growth.

    - **GDP growth dropped**, **FDI declined** (2023), and **SDG progress stalled**.

    - Severe **security threats** with over **35 ongoing conflicts**.

- **Logistical constraints**: Limited direct shipping lines and banking channels.

- **Bureaucratic hurdles**: LOCs are often underutilized due to slow implementation.

Chinese threat to India-Africa Relations

- **Economic Overpowering**

    - **Trade imbalance**: China Africa trade crossed **$280 billion**, far ahead of India's ~$82 billion.

    - **Infrastructure dominance**: China's **Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)** builds ports, railways, and roads, creating a physical and economic presence India can't match in scale.

- **Diplomatic Edge**
  - **Regular summits**: FOCAC (Forum on China-Africa Cooperation) held every 3 years vs. India's IAFS (last held in 2015).
  - China has **embassies in almost every African country**, while India is still expanding its diplomatic footprint.
- **Strategic and Military Expansion**
  - China has a **military base in Djibouti**; strategic control of ports in East and West Africa.
  - India's military cooperation remains limited to naval exercises and training.
- **Debt Diplomacy Influence**
  - China offers **easy loans**, leading to **strategic dependency** (e.g., Hambantota-like risks).
  - Indian model (grants/LoCs) is more sustainable but **less attractive in the short term**.
- **Speed and Scale of Delivery**
  - Chinese companies often **execute large projects quickly**, while Indian development projects face **bureaucratic delays** and funding constraints.

- **Soft Power Competition**
  - China promotes **Confucius Institutes**, media houses, and cultural diplomacy.
  - India's **soft power** (Bollywood, yoga, ITEC) is strong but under-leveraged due to **limited outreach capacity**.

India-Africa Relations & their Contribution to the Global South

- **Collective Voice for the Global South**
  - India and Africa **jointly advocate** for a more equitable global order, including **UNSC reform**, **climate justice**, and **fair trade rules**.
  - India's push for the **African Union's** inclusion in the **G20 (2023)** gave Africa a **seat at the table** in global decision-making.

- **South–South Cooperation in Action**
  - Partnerships based on **mutual respect**, **non-interference**, and **shared development goals**.

- **Economic Empowerment**
  - Bilateral trade (~$82 billion) and Indian investments in **pharma, IT, agri-tech**, and **infrastructure** promote **self-reliant growth models** in Africa.

- **Technology and Human Capital Development**

  o Emphasis on **skills, education** (**e-VidyaBharati**)**, and health** helps build long-term **human development capacity** a key Global South priority.

- **Climate & Energy Partnership**

  o Collaboration in **renewables** via the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)**, co-founded by India, enhances energy equity for developing countries.

Way forward

- **Strategic Course Correction**

- Increase presence through new embassies, defence attachés, and military training.

- Conduct regular **India–Africa naval/military exercises** for maritime security.

- **India must urgently host IAFS-IV to rejuvenate the partnership. The summit should focus on a forward-looking agenda, not just historical ties.**

  o **A detailed roadmap for capacity building, digital cooperation, and labour force development is essential.**

Agriculture Cooperation

- Agriculture makes up **35% of Africa's GDP**.

- India can share **agri-tech expertise**:

  o **Drones, AI, yield forecasting** and soil health tracking.

  o Encourage **agricultural digitalisation** and smallholder productivity.

  o Collaborate on models like **e-NAM** for agricultural market unification.

Digital Infrastructure Support

- India's **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)** experience can benefit Africa:

  o Example: **DigiLocker** for trade documentation.

  o It can streamline customs, reduce red tape, and improve trust in the system.

African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

o It covers **1.2 billion people**, with a combined **GDP of $3.4 trillion**.

o By aligning its Africa policy with AfCFTA's goals, India can strengthen South-South cooperation and drive shared prosperity.

Enhance People-to-People Ties

- Expand **scholarships, ITEC training**, and **cultural exchanges**.

- Promote African studies in India and vice versa.

Joint Climate & Energy Initiatives

- Deepen cooperation in **solar energy (ISA)**, water security, and climate adaptation.

- Partner on **sustainable agriculture** and food security innovations.

Conclusion

India must move beyond symbolic solidarity and build a **future-ready, tech-driven, people-centric partnership** with Africa rooted in shared values, mutual respect, and the vision of a strong Global South.

Q5. **Which of the following statements is/are correct about India-Africa relations?**

1.   India is the largest trading partner of Africa.

2.   India has extended concessional Lines of Credit worth more than $10 billion to Africa.

3.   The India-Africa Forum Summit is held every year.

Correct answer:

(a) 1 and 2 only

(b) 2 only

(c) 1 and 3 only

(d) 1, 2, and 3

Q. **"India–Africa relations are based on principles of equality, mutual respect, and development partnership." Discuss the strategic significance of Africa in India's foreign policy in the 21st century.** *(250 words)*