

**NEXT IAS**

**DAILY NEWS**

**ANALYSIS**



**5th July**

## Explained

1. Nipah virus
2. India-USA tariff issue
3. Collegium system
4. HAM Radio

## Decoded

5. Indian diaspora

Playlist Link:



What to Read: <https://bit.ly/3FYdutC>

Daily News Analysis: <https://bit.ly/4ge9BgF>

[www.nextias.com](http://www.nextias.com)

## Nipah virus resurfaces in Kerala, two cases reported

**Abdul Latheef Naha**  
MALAPPURAM

Nipah virus has returned to Kerala, sparking fresh fear in the State. An 18-year-old girl who succumbed to acute encephalitis syndrome (AES) in Kozhikode two days ago and a 38-year-old woman from Thachanattukara in Palakkad district currently undergoing treatment at a private hospital at Perinthalmanna in Malappuram district have tested positive for the virus.

The National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, on Friday confirmed Nipah infection in the 38-year-old

woman. The scare has resurfaced in the State two months after the previous case.

A 42-year-old woman from Valanchery in Malappuram district tested positive and was admitted to a private hospital at Perinthalmanna in the first week of May. She is still recovering.

Following the 18-year-old girl's death, a post-mortem examination was conducted at the Government Medical College Hospital, Kozhikode.

### Staff quarantined

As her test result came positive for the Nipah virus,



The latest Nipah case has surfaced in Kerala two months after a 42-year-old woman in Malappuram tested positive. FILE PHOTO/PTI

the doctors and the health-care personnel who treated her as well as those who conducted her post-mortem examination have

been quarantined.

A total of 345 people have been put on the Nipah contact list in the State, Health Minister Vee-

na George said in a statement after a high-level meeting on Friday. They include 211 people in Malappuram, 91 in Palakkad, and 43 in Kozhikode.

The Health department had initiated all control measures in Palakkad even before the official confirmation of the disease came.

The route map of the Nipah-positive person in Palakkad has now been released and Palakkad, Malappuram and Kozhikode districts have been put on alert.

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**Backdrop:** Nipah virus has returned to Kerala, sparking fresh fear in the State

**Relevance:** GS2 - Issues relating to development and management of social services relating to health

## Nipah Virus Resurfaces in Kerala

- **Two new cases reported:**
  - An **18-year-old girl** from Kozhikode, who died of acute encephalitis syndrome (AES), tested positive post-mortem.
  - A **38-year-old woman** from Thachanattukara, Palakkad, under treatment in a Malappuram hospital, also tested positive (confirmed by NIV, Pune).
- **A previous case** in May 2025:
  - A **42-year-old woman** from Valanchery, Malappuram, remains in recovery.

## Control Measures

- **345 people** are on the Nipah **contact list**:
- **Doctors and health staff** who treated the deceased girl and conducted her post-mortem have been **quarantined**.
- **Districts on alert**: Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode.
- **Route map** of the infected patient in Palakkad has been released.
- **Contact tracing and quarantine** measures initiated even before official confirmation.
- **26 coordination committees** formed across the three affected districts to coordinate measures and prevent spread of virus

## Steps taken by Health Ministry

- **Nipah protocol** implemented proactively.
- **Police assistance** sought for tracing contacts.
- **State and district-level control rooms** have been set up.
- **Helplines and containment zones** to be established.
- **District Collectors** to monitor containment measures.

## Overview of Nipah Virus (NiV)

- **Nipah virus (NiV) is a zoonotic virus (transmitted from animals to humans) and can also be transmitted through contaminated food or directly between people.**
- Belongs to the **Paramyxoviridae** family, **Henipavirus** genus.

## Paramyxoviridae Family

- A family of **enveloped, negative-sense single-stranded RNA viruses** infecting humans, mammals, birds, and fish.
- Includes major human and animal pathogens like **measles, mumps, parainfluenza, RSV, canine distemper, and Newcastle disease.**

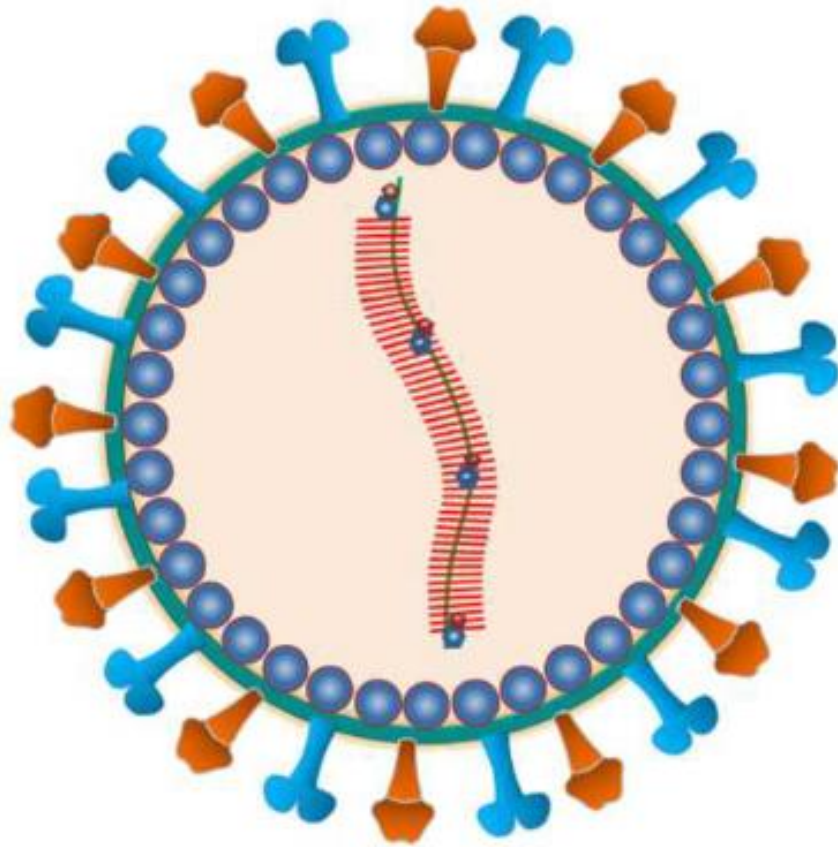
## Key Characteristics:









- **Enveloped:** Surrounded by a lipid membrane.
- **Negative-sense RNA:** Requires transcription to positive-sense RNA before protein synthesis.
- **Helical nucleocapsid:** RNA is enclosed in a helical protein shell.
- **Pleomorphic:** Variable in shape, often spherical or irregular.
- **Transmission:** Mainly via **respiratory droplets**.
- **Antigenic stability:** due to their non-segmented genome, making it difficult for them to undergo antigenic shift.
- **Wide host range:** Affects a broad spectrum of **vertebrates**.

## Structure of NiV

- Enclosed structure with **matrix proteins, fusion proteins, and glycoproteins**.
- Nipah virus (NiV) possesses a negative-sense, single-stranded RNA genome that encodes six structural proteins: **N, P, M, F, G, and L**.





-  -Glycoprotein (G)
-  -Fusion protein (F)
-  -Lipid bilayer
-  -Matrix protein (M)
-  -Nucleocapsid (N)
-  -Viral RNA
-  -Phosphoprotein (P)
-  -RNA Polymerase (L)

## Modes of Transmission



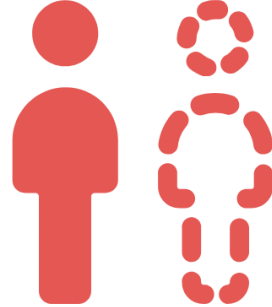
### Direct Contact

Transmission through infected animals or fluids.



### Contaminated Food

Transmission via consumption of contaminated food.

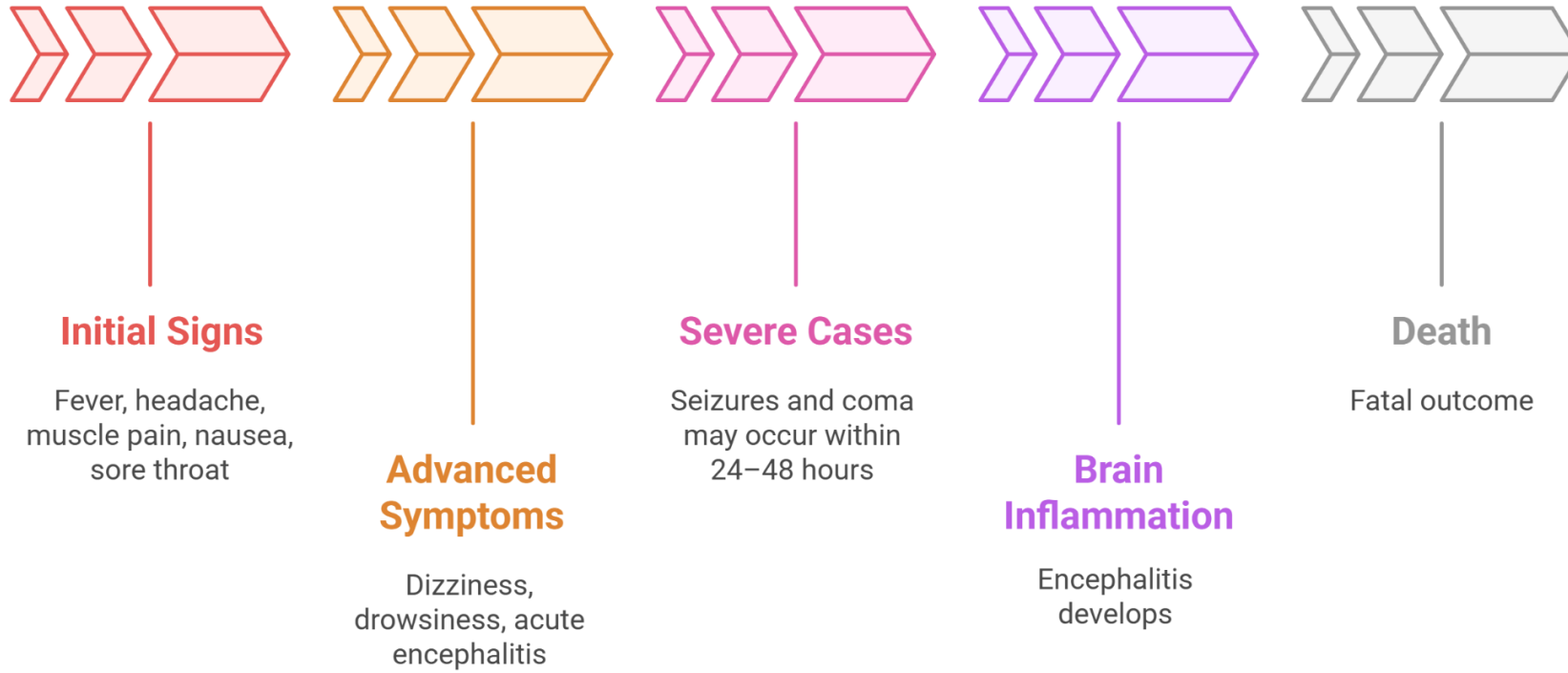


### Human-to-human

Transmission through bodily fluids or droplets.



## Progression of Symptoms



## Testing Methods

- RT-PCR (Real-Time Polymerase Chain Reaction)
- Immunohistochemistry (IHC)
- ELISA (Enzyme-linked Immunosorbent Assay)
- Serum Neutralisation Test (SNT)

## Treatment

- **No specific treatment or vaccine** currently exists.
- **Ribavirin** (antiviral) may reduce mortality in encephalitis cases.
- **Supportive care** and symptom management are the primary approaches.

## Future Strategies for Prevention of Nipah Virus

- **Exploring new technologies:** Invest in new technologies or techniques to curtail the spread of the virus among bat populations, like the use of drones for surveillance.
- **Prompt detection:** Develop and improve tools to detect the virus early in communities and livestock.
- **Strict enforcement of guidelines:** Follow the strict guidelines in healthcare environments to prevent the virus from spreading from person to person.
- **Promotion of Public awareness:** Educate the populations that are at higher risk and show the signs, symptoms, and risks associated with NiV.
- **Identification of Flying fox habitats:** NiV outbreaks are more likely in areas with flying fox habitats (genus Pteropus). Residents and visitors to these areas should take precautions similar to those taken in areas with known NiV incidents



## PRACTICE QUESTION

**Q1. With reference to the Nipah Virus (NiV), consider the following statements:**

1. It is a positive-sense, single-stranded RNA virus.
2. It can be transmitted through direct contact with infected animals, contaminated food, or human-to-human contact.
3. Currently, there is no approved vaccine or specific treatment available for Nipah virus infection.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 2 and 3**
- (b) 1, 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 only
- (d) 2 and 3 only

## India tells WTO it may levy retaliatory tariffs worth \$724 mn on U.S. imports

**T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan**  
NEW DELHI

The Indian government has notified the World Trade Organization (WTO) of its proposal to levy retaliatory tariffs amounting to nearly \$724 million on the U.S. in response to that country's increased tariffs on the import of particular automobiles and parts from India.

The move comes at a time when India and the U.S. are in advanced stages of finalising an initial mini-



trade deal. India's negotiation team, led by Special Secretary in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry Rajesh Agarwal, returned from the U.S. on Monday.

The U.S. on March 26, imposed a tariff increase of 25% ad valorem on passenger vehicles, light trucks, and certain automobile parts originating in India.

In a communication to the WTO dated July 3, India said that even though the U.S.' measures had not been notified to the WTO, they were in essence safeguard measures. It added that India's position on the matter was that the U.S. tariffs were not in accordance with the General Agreement on Tariffs and

Trade 1994, the agreement at the core of the WTO, and the Agreement on Safeguards (AoS). "As consultations provided for under Article 12.3, AoS have not taken place, India reserves the right to suspend concessions or other obligations under Article 8, AoS that are substantially equivalent to the adverse effects of the measure to India's trade," India said in its communication.

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**Backdrop:** The Indian government has notified the WTO of its proposal to levy retaliatory tariffs on U.S.

**Relevance:** GS 3 - Effects of liberalisation in economy, Trade etc

- India has **notified the WTO** of its plan to **levy retaliatory tariffs worth \$724 million** on **U.S. imports**.
- The move is in response to the **U.S. imposing 25% tariffs** on **passenger vehicles, light trucks, and certain auto parts** from India (effective March 26).
- The announcement comes as **India and the U.S. are nearing a mini trade deal**.

### Retaliatory tariffs

These are import duties imposed by a country in response to tariffs levied by another country on its exports. They serve as a countermeasure against perceived **unfair trade practices**, aiming to **exert pressure** on the other nation to reduce its tariffs or offer trade concessions.

### India's Stand at the WTO

- India considers the **U.S. tariffs as safeguard measures** not in compliance with:
  - **General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) 1994**
  - **Agreement on Safeguards (AoS)**

- India stated that **no consultations** (as per Article 12.3 of AoS) were held by the U.S.
- Hence, under **Article 8 of AoS**, India **reserves the right to suspend concessions** equivalent to the adverse trade impact.

### Economic Impact

- The U.S. tariffs affect **\$2.895 billion** worth of Indian exports.
- Resulting in **\$723.75 million in duties** imposed on Indian goods.
- India proposes to **recover an equivalent amount** by **increasing tariffs on select U.S. products**.

### Previous Retaliation Proposal

- In **May 2025**, India also notified WTO of a **\$1.91 billion retaliation plan** against **U.S. tariffs on steel and aluminium**.

### World Trade Organization (WTO)

- World Trade Organisation is a global multilateral organisation established in 1995 for the rules based trading between the nations of the world.
- It is a global membership group that promotes and manages free trade.
- It serves as a forum for governments to negotiate trade agreements and settle trade disputes.

- It is an International body that sets and enforces rules for global trade.
- It came into existence on **1st January 1995**, under the **Marrakesh Agreement** signed on **15 April 1994** by **123 countries**.
- Succeeded the **General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)**, which was active since 1948.

### Headquarters & Membership

- **Location:** Geneva, Switzerland.
- **Members:** **166 countries**, accounting for **98% of global trade**.



## WTO vs GATT

Basis of Difference	General Agreements on Trade and Tariff	World Trade Organisation
<b>Institutional of Foundation</b>	A series of rules, a multilateral agreement without an institutional foundation and with just an ad hoc secretariat, originating from the attempt to establish an International Trade organisation in the 1940s.	A permanent institution with its own secretariat.
<b>Applicability</b>	GATT rules applied to trade in goods only.	The WTO covers trade in goods as well as services and also trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights.
<b>Disputes Settlement System</b>	GATT has less powerful dispute settlement system which is also slow and less efficient, and its ruling could be easily blocked.	The dispute settlement system of the WTO is based on automatic mechanism, and not on dilatory mechanisms. It is also quicker and binding on the members.

# Structures of WTO



## Ministerial Conference (MC)

- Supreme decision-making body of the WTO.
- Comprises trade ministers from all member countries.
- Meets **every 2 years**.
- Appoints the **Director General**.

## General Council (GC)

- This is the WTO's highest-level decision-making body in Geneva, meeting regularly to carry out the functions of the WTO.
- Executes day-to-day functions on behalf of the MC.
- Composed of representatives from all members.
- Also functions as:
  - **Dispute Settlement Body (DSB)**
  - **Trade Policy Review Body (TPRB)**

## Three Councils under GC

- Council for Trade in Goods
- Council for Trade in Services
- Council for TRIPS (Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights)

## Director General (DG)

- Heads the WTO Secretariat.
- Appointed by the MC for a **4-year term**.

## Trade Policy Review Body (TPRB)

- The WTO General Council meets as the TPRB to undertake trade policy reviews of Members under the TPRM and to consider the Director-General's regular reports on trade policy development

## Dispute Settlement Body (DSB)

- Another function of the General Council.
- It is responsible for overseeing the WTO's dispute settlement process.
- It has the authority to establish panels, adopt panel and Appellate Body reports, maintain surveillance of implementation of rulings and recommendations
- It authorizes the suspension of concessions or other obligations.

## Appellate Body

- Created in **1995** under **Article 17 of Understanding on Rules and Procedures Governing the Settlement of Disputes (DSU)**
- Hears appeals against panel reports.
- Permanent body of **7 members**, each serving **4-year terms**.
- Can **uphold, modify, or reverse** panel rulings.

## Major WTO Agreements

- **TRIMS** (Trade-Related Investment Measures):
  - Prohibits trade policies like **local content requirements** that discriminate against foreign goods.
- **TRIPS** (Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights):
  - Protects **IP rights** and provides a mechanism for resolving disputes over them.
- **AoA** (Agreement on Agriculture):
  - Promotes liberalization of **agricultural trade**, focusing on **market access** and **domestic subsidies**.



## PRACTICE QUESTION



**Q2. Which of the following best describes *retaliatory tariffs*?**

- (a) Tariffs imposed to protect domestic industries from foreign competition.
- (b) Tariffs levied by a country to raise revenue from international trade.
- (c) Import duties imposed in response to another country's tariffs, intended to counter perceived unfair trade practices.**
- (d) Export duties imposed to control the outflow of scarce domestic goods.

## CJI assures 'complete transparency' in the collegium system for appointments

**The Hindu Bureau**  
MUMBAI

Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai on Friday said the collegium system for appointment of judges would uphold the principles of merit, transparency, and inclusive representation, and the process would not be compromised by external pressures.

Speaking at a felicitation event hosted by the Bombay Bar Association in his honour, the CJI said, "We will adopt a procedure of complete transparency. Merit will never be compromised. We will have re-



B.R. Gavai

presentatives from all sections of society."

He noted that efforts to increase transparency within the collegium had already been under way during the tenure of his predecessor, Justice Sanjiv Khanna. He also addressed

recent concerns raised publicly by Justice Dipankar Datta about alleged interference in the collegium's functioning, stating that all names recommended would be duly followed up and considered fairly.

Reflecting on his own elevation to the Supreme Court in 2019, CJI Gavai revealed that not all members of the collegium were initially in support. "One of the collegium judges had some reservations, thinking my elevation might lead to unrest among senior members of the Mumbai Bar," he said. "But several senior lawyers met the

judge in Delhi and clarified the matter."

He expressed gratitude to the Bombay Bar Association, saying, "I will always remain indebted. My elevation to the Supreme Court, and now as Chief Justice of India, would not have been possible without the Bar's support."

The Chief Justice also clarified that the Supreme Court should not be viewed as being centred around one individual. "The Supreme Court is not a CJI-centric court. The Chief Justice is only the first among equals," he said.

**Backdrop:** The CJI pledges to ensure inclusive representation and fairness in appointments, while speaking at a felicitation event of the Bombay Bar Association.

**Relevance:** GS2- Structure, Organisation and Functioning of Judiciary



CJI B.R. Gavai stated that the collegium system for judge appointments will uphold merit, transparency, and inclusive representation, remaining unaffected by external pressures.

## CJI Gavai on Collegium System

- **Transparency & Merit:** Assured *complete transparency* in the collegium system; merit will not be compromised.
- **Inclusive Representation:** Appointments will include representation from *all sections of society*.
- **Resisting External Pressure:** Asserted the appointment process will remain *independent and fair*, unaffected by outside influence.
- **Continuity of Reform:** Stated that *transparency reforms* began under his predecessor, Justice Sanjiv Khanna.

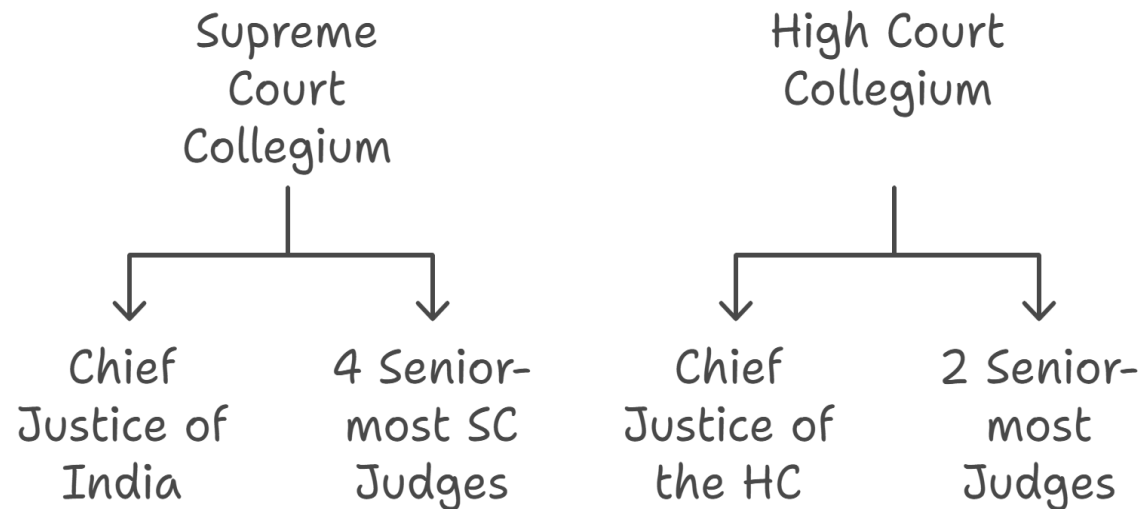
## Remarks on the Judiciary & Constitution

- Emphasized that *the Constitution is supreme* and all three wings of democracy function under it.
- Clarified that the *Supreme Court is not CJI-centric*; the CJI is only the “*first among equals*.”

## Collegium System in Indian Judiciary

- The **Collegium System** governs the appointment and transfer of judges in the **Supreme Court and High Courts**.
- It has **evolved through Supreme Court judgments**, not through any **constitutional provision or parliamentary law**.
- It is **not mentioned in the Constitution**; it evolved through **Supreme Court judgments**.

### Collegium Composition Flowchart



## Constitutional Provisions



### Article 124

SC judges are appointed by the President after consulting with the CJI and other judges.



### Article 217

HC judges are appointed by the President after consulting with the CJI, Governor, and HC Chief Justice.

## Evolution of Collegium System:

### First Judges Case (1981)

- Held that the **CJI's recommendation** could be overridden for **valid reasons**.
- Gave **primacy to the Executive** in judicial appointments.

### Second Judges Case (1993)

- Introduced the **Collegium System**.
- Defined “**consultation**” with the CJI as “**concurrence**” of the judiciary.
- Emphasized it should be the **institutional opinion** of the CJI and the **two senior-most judges**.

### Third Judges Case (1998)

- On a Presidential reference (under **Article 143**), the SC **expanded the Collegium**.
- Made it a **five-member body**: the CJI and the **four senior-most SC judges**.

## Issues with the Collegium System

- **Exclusion of Executive**
  - Judiciary appoints judges without executive involvement.
  - Lack of accountability may lead to poor or biased appointments.
- **Risk of Nepotism and Favouritism**
  - No fixed criteria for evaluating candidates.
  - Increases scope for subjective decisions and lack of transparency.
- **Violates Checks and Balances**
  - Excessive concentration of power in the judiciary.
  - Undermines the balance among the three organs of government.
- **Opaque Decision-Making**
  - No official secretariat or documentation.
  - Collegium meetings and decisions lack transparency and public scrutiny.
- **Unequal Representation**
  - Women and other marginalized groups are underrepresented in the higher judiciary.

## Steps taken to improve the judicial appointments in India

- **99th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2014:** It aimed to replace the collegium system with the **National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC)**. However, the Supreme Court struck it down for undermining judicial independence.
- **Memorandum of Procedure (MoP):** Jointly framed by the judiciary and the government, the MoP outlines the process for appointing Supreme Court and High Court judges.
  - The **current MoP (since 1999)** mandates that the Supreme Court Collegium — comprising the Chief Justice of India and the four senior-most judges — recommends appointments, which are then forwarded by the Law Minister to the Prime Minister, and finally to the President for approval.



## PRACTICE QUESTION

**Q3. With reference to the Collegium System in the Indian Judiciary, consider the following statements:**

1. The Collegium System is explicitly mentioned in the Constitution of India.
2. The Supreme Court Collegium consists of the Chief Justice of India and four senior-most judges of the Supreme Court.
3. The NJAC Act, 2014 was upheld by the Supreme Court as a constitutional replacement for the collegium system.

Which of the statements given above is/are **correct**?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only**
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 2 and 3 only



## HAM RADIO

A licensed radio service used for personal, recreational, and emergency communication, including in space

**ANJALI MARAR**  
BENGALURU, JULY 4

INDIAN ASTRONAUT Shubhanshu Shukla, currently aboard the International Space Station (ISS), interacted with students using a ham radio on Friday. The event was organised by U R Rao Satellite Centre (URSC), which is the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO's) centre in Bangalore for the design, development, and construction of Indian satellites.



Amateur radio equipment, Seattle, 1957. *Wikimedia Commons*

### What is a ham radio?

Ham radio, also known as amateur radio, is a licensed radio service that relies on radio waves for personal, recreational, and emergency communication. Using a dedicated frequency, a transceiver and an antenna, the service can be set up between two licensed ham radios by trained ham operators.

The communication can be hyper-local, global, and in space. In India, any individual above the age of 12 is permitted to operate a ham radio. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology issues licences for ham radio.

The term "ham" was initially used as a pejorative by landline telegraphers in the early 20th Century to describe an operator "who lacks ability" or who had poor or "ham-fisted" skills. With the advent of radio, professional radio operators began to use the term to describe amateur radio operators who would jam operations in an area.

Subsequently, the amateur radio community began to call itself ham, with the term losing its pejorative connotations by the mid-20th Century.

### How is ham radio used in space?

Crew members on NASA's space shuttle Columbia first used an amateur radio to communicate with Earth in 1983.

In October 2000, amateur radio equipment was launched to the ISS along

with its first crew members. Known as the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS), the space station's ham radio is used by astronauts to not only make calls around the world but also to interact with students.

"It [the interaction] provides the opportunity for educators and ham operators to encourage and inspire their students with STEM topics culminating in a real-time conversation with astronauts living and working on the space station," NASA astronaut Kjell Lindgren had said in 2023.

Typically, there is a nine-minute window to make contact with the ISS while it revolves around the planet.

### Why use ham radio?

Even though technology to establish communications has advanced, the radio service remains one of the most reliable and stable modes of communication.

It has often come to the rescue when traditional communication lines have broken down, either due to man-made scenarios (like wars) or natural disasters such as earthquakes, cyclones, and floods.

In India, ham radio was used for making emergency communications during the Bhuj earthquake (2001), the Indian Ocean tsunami (2004), the floods of Uttarakhand (2013), and other such calamities.

**Backdrop:** Recently, HAM radio was used by Indian Astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla to interact with students.

**Relevance:** GS3 /Science & Technology

Indian Astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla, currently aboard the International Space Station (ISS), interacted with students using a ham radio on 4th July. The event was organized by **U R Rao Satellite Centre (URSC)**, which is ISRO's centre in Bangalore for the design, development, and construction of Indian satellites.

### What is a ham radio?

- Ham radio, also known as amateur radio, is a licensed radio service that relies on **radio waves** for personal, recreational, and emergency communication
- Using a dedicated frequency, a transceiver and an antenna, the service can be set up between two licensed ham radios by trained ham operators.

### How Does It Work?

- It is a two-way communication system using **radio frequencies**.
- It involves transmitting and receiving radio waves using licensed radio equipment, allowing for global and local communication, often with the use of repeaters for extended range.
- Communication can be:
  - **Hyper-local** (within a community),
  - **Global** (across countries),
  - Or even **in space** (e.g., with satellites or the ISS).

## Eligibility and Licensing in India

- Any individual **above 12 years** of age can operate a ham radio in India.
- A **license is issued by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology** after proper training and examination.

## Origin of the Term “Ham”

- The term "**ham**" originated in the **early 20th century** as a **derogatory term** used by professional telegraphers for **unskilled operators**.
- With the rise of amateur radio, the community adopted the term, and by the **mid-20th century**, it had lost its negative meaning.

## History of Ham Radio Uses in Space

- **First used in space** by crew members of NASA's **Space Shuttle Columbia** in **1983** to communicate with Earth.
- Since **October 2000**, ham radio equipment has been operational on the **International Space Station (ISS)**.
  - The initiative is called **Amateur Radio on the International Space Station**
  - **(ARISS)**, allowing astronauts to:
    - Make **voice contact** with people on Earth.
    - **Interact with students** around the world.

- Communication is time-bound; there's typically a **9-minute window** to contact the ISS as it orbits Earth.

## Applications of Ham Radio

- **Space Communication**

- Used by astronauts aboard the **International Space Station (ISS)**.
- Facilitates **voice contact with Earth** and **STEM educational outreach** for students via real-time conversations with astronauts.

- **Emergency and Natural Disaster Communication**

- Proven reliable during **natural disasters and crises** when regular communication networks fail.
- **Examples in India:**
  - **2001 Bhuj earthquake** – Enabled emergency rescue coordination.
  - **2004 Indian Ocean tsunami** – Used for disaster response.
  - **2013 Uttarakhand floods** – Supported rescue and relief operations.
  - Also used during **cyclones, landslides, and war-like situations**.

- **Education and Training**

- Used to teach **basic electronics, physics, and communication skills**.
- Connects students with **scientific activities in space** (e.g., ARISS educational contacts).

- **Recreational and Personal Use**

- Enthusiasts use it for **long-distance communication (DXing)** and experimenting with **radio technology**.

## **Why Use Ham Radio?**

- **Reliable and Resilient Communication**

- Functions **without internet, cell towers, or satellites**.
- Remains operational during **blackouts, network failures, or infrastructure collapse**.

- **Emergency Lifeline:** Can be quickly set up and used for **coordination, search and rescue, and disaster alerts**.

- **Community Service:** Ham operators often work as **volunteers** during public emergencies or government drills.

- **Accessible and Regulated:** Open to **any individual above 12 years** in India after licensing.



## PRACTICE QUESTION

**Q4. With reference to HAM Radio, consider the following statements:**

1. It does not require internet or mobile networks.
2. It is used for medium-range communication.
3. Any individual above 12 years of age can operate a ham radio in India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 2 only
- (d) All of the above**



# PM Modi hails 35 million diaspora as India's pride



## PM Modi hails 35 million diaspora as India's pride

6th generation Indian-origin citizens of Trinidad and Tobago will receive OCI cards soon, he says; PM refers to close cultural link between Girmitya community in the Caribbean nation and India

**Kallol Bhattacharjee**  
NEW DELHI

**T**hirty-five million members of the Indian diaspora spread across the world are India's "pride", said Prime Minister Narendra Modi at an event of the people of Indian origin in Trinidad and Tobago on Friday. Addressing the event, Mr. Modi outlined various cultural, educational and financial measures that India is undertaking to strengthen links between the homeland and the diasporic Indians and announced that sixth generation Indian-origin citizens of Trinidad and Tobago will receive the Overseas Citizens of India (OCI) card soon.

### 'Ambassadors of India'

"We deeply value the strength and support of our diaspora. With over 35 million people spread across the world, the Indian diaspora is our pride. As I have often said, each one of you is a *Rashtradoot* – an ambassador of India's values, culture and heritage," said Mr. Modi, highlighting the religious connection of the community with India and the Maha



**Warm welcome:** Prime Minister Modi is welcomed by the Indian diaspora at the airport in Port of Spain on Thursday. Trinidad and Tobago Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar is also seen. PMO

Kumbh that took place in Prayagraj earlier this year. Mr. Modi said the Government of India was working to strengthen ties with the Girmityas – the former indentured labourers who were taken from India during the colonial period to Indo-Pacific islands such as Mauritius, Fiji, southern Africa and the Caribbeans.

The Prime Minister re-

ferred to the close cultural connection between the strong Girmitya community of Trinidad and Tobago and India, especially with Bihar, which is recognised – along with eastern Uttar Pradesh – as the homeland of much of the Bhojpuri-speaking members of the Indian diaspora in the Caribbeans, southern Africa and in the Pacific islands of Fiji and Indian Ocean is-

lands like Mauritius.

Mr. Modi announced that the Government of India was "mapping the past" and reiterated that a number of initiatives were launched during the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas to "honour and connect with the Girmitya community across the world".

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**Backdrop:** PM Narendra Modi's historic tour to Ghana, Trinidad & Tobago, Argentina, Brazil, and Namibia.

**Relevance:** GS 2/Indian Diaspora



PM Modi was recently in **Trinidad and Tobago**, a country with deep-rooted ties to India through the **Girmitiya** (indentured labour) community. The visit comes ahead of the **180th anniversary (in 2025)** of the arrival of Indian indentured labourers to the Caribbean.

He especially mentioned the **Girmitiya community**, the people taken as indentured labourers to countries like Fiji, Mauritius, South Africa, and Trinidad and Tobago during colonial rule.

### Indian Diaspora

Indian diaspora refers to individuals of Indian origin who reside outside India, including both Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs).

- As per the **Ministry of External Affairs (Nov 2024)**, the global Indian diaspora population stands at **over 35.4 million**.
- PM Modi describes the Indian diaspora as India's “**pride**” and “**Rashtradoots**” (ambassadors of Indian culture and values).
- **Top Host Countries: USA** (5.4 million), **UAE** (3.6 million), and **Malaysia** (2.9 million)

## Categories of the Indian Diaspora

- 1 **Non-Resident Indians (NRIs):** Indian **citizens** living abroad **temporarily** for work, studies, or other purposes.
- 2 **Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs):** **Foreign nationals** of Indian ancestry who may have migrated generations ago but retain cultural and emotional ties to India.
- 3 **Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs):** **Foreign citizens of Indian origin** granted special privileges and long-term visa rights via the **OCI card**.

## Significance of the Indian Diaspora

### Political and Strategic Significance

- **Influence in Host Country Politics:** Actively participates in local politics, influencing policy in favour of India.
  - **E.g.,** the Indian-American lobby in the U.S. Congress supports stronger India–U.S. ties.
- **Electoral Support & Diplomacy:** Diaspora mobilization during PM Modi's foreign visits has created global visibility.
  - **E.g.,** “**Howdy Modi**” event in Houston (2019) and “**Namaste Trump**” in India (2020).

- **Support India's Strategic Interest:**

- **E.g.**, Indian diaspora in the U.S. played a key role in signing of **India–U.S. Civil Nuclear Deal** (2008).

## **Economic Significance**

- **Remittances:** India is the **top recipient of global remittances**, receiving **\$125 billion in 2023** (World Bank).
  - **E.g.**, Kerala, UP, and Bihar are heavily reliant on remittances from Gulf countries.
- **Investment and Entrepreneurship:** Contributes to the Indian economy via **FDI, startups**, and philanthropy.
  - **E.g.**, Google's **\$10 billion India Digitization Fund**, spearheaded by Pichai, supports Indian startups.
- **Trade Links:** Indian-origin businesspersons act as bridges between India and their host countries.
  - **E.g.**, Indian-origin business houses like the **Manji Group**, **Bidco Africa**, and **Chandaria Group** have helped build trade ties between India and Kenya in textiles, FMCG, and chemicals.

## Cultural and Civilizational Significance

- **Preservation of Indian Culture:** Diaspora preserves Indian languages, festivals, food, and values abroad.
  - **E.g., Diwali, Yoga Day, and Bhojpuri language** being promoted in Mauritius and Fiji.
- **Cultural Soft Power:** Helps spread Indian music, films, art, and spirituality.
  - **E.g.,**Global popularity of **Bollywood** and **International Day of Yoga** celebrated in over 180 countries.

## Technological and Knowledge Transfer

- **Brain Gain:** Contributes to India through mentoring, collaboration, and return migration.
  - **E.g.,**Programs like **Vaibhav Summit** harness knowledge from Indian experts abroad.

## Tourism and Heritage Diplomacy

- **Boost to Inbound Tourism:** Diaspora visiting their ancestral homeland boosts cultural and economic tourism.
  - **E.g.,** Visits to **Kumbh Mela, Golden Temple**, or ancestral villages in Bihar and Punjab.

## Challenges Faced by the Indian Diaspora

- **Identity Crisis and Cultural Assimilation:** Especially 2nd and 3rd generations, face challenges in **retaining Indian identity** while integrating into host country cultures.
  - **E.g.,** Indian youth in the **US or UK** may struggle with balancing Indian traditions with Western lifestyles.
- **Racial Discrimination and Xenophobia**
  - **E.g., Attacks on Indian students in Australia (2009–2010).**
- **Legal and Political Barriers:** Especially in **Gulf countries**, they lack permanent residency or political rights.
  - **E.g., Indian workers in Saudi Arabia or UAE have no political representation,** and face restrictions under the **Kafala system** (sponsorship-based employment).
- **Labour Exploitation and Poor Working Conditions,** especially in the **Middle East**.
  - **E.g., Migrant workers from Kerala or Bihar in Qatar or UAE** face exploitative contracts, wage delays, and poor living conditions.
- **Economic Insecurity is especially prevalent among** Low-income diaspora communities.
  - **E.g., Thousands of Indian workers were repatriated during COVID-19** due to job losses in the construction and hospitality sectors.

## Key Initiatives by India for Welfare of the Diaspora



### Legal and Identity Initiatives

- **OCI (Overseas Citizenship of India) Expansion:** OCI cards now extended to **6th-generation Indian-origin people** (e.g., Trinidad & Tobago – 2025 announcement by PM Modi).
  - Simplified OCI card renewal procedures and merged PIO cards with OCI for ease.
- **e-Sanad & Online Documentation:** Digital verification and attestation of educational and civil documents for NRIs and OCI holders.

## Overseas Citizens of India (OCI)

- An **OCI** is a **foreign national of Indian origin** who has been granted certain rights and privileges in India.
- Introduced under the **Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2005**.
- Administered by the **Ministry of Home Affairs**, Government of India.

## Benefits of OCI Cardholders

- **Lifelong Visa Privilege:** Enjoys a **multi-purpose, lifelong visa** with **unlimited entries** into India.
- **Parity with NRIs** in **economic, financial, and educational fields** (except for buying agricultural or plantation land).
- **Adoption Rights:** Eligible for **inter-country adoption** on the same terms as NRIs.
- **Travel Concessions:** Entitled to **domestic airfare** rates similar to those for **Indian residents**.
- Allowed to practice regulated professions like **Medicine, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy, Law, architecture, accountancy** Subject to qualifications and tests (e.g., NEET or relevant entrance exams).

## Initiatives For Cultural & Heritage Linkage Preservation

- **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD):** Held every **January 9** to celebrate the contributions of the diaspora.
- **World Girmitiya Conference (Planned):** Proposed to connect with descendants of indentured labourers from **Fiji, Mauritius, Trinidad, etc.**
- **Mapping Girmitiya Heritage(Planned):** Documenting villages and cities in India from which Girmitiyas migrated, preserving oral histories, and tracking settlement patterns.

## Welfare and Protection of Indian Workers

- **MADAD Portal:** Online platform to register grievances related to consular services, especially in the Gulf.
- **e-Migrate System:** A Transparent recruitment system for Indian workers migrating abroad to avoid exploitation.
- **Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF):** Used by Indian missions to assist distressed Indians abroad (legal aid, shelter, repatriation).



## Economic and Digital Engagement

- **Launch of UPI in Foreign Countries**
  - UPI launched in **UAE, Singapore, Nepal, and France** to facilitate digital payments for NRIs and tourists.
  - **Trinidad and Tobago (2025)** became the **first Caribbean country** to adopt India's UPI.
- **CEPA with UAE (2022): Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement** benefits Indian diaspora-led businesses and trade.

## Diaspora Engagement & Recognition

- **VAIBHAV Summit:** Brings together Indian-origin scientists and technocrats for collaborative research with Indian institutions.
- **Know India Programme (KIP):** Short-term immersion programs for youth of Indian origin (18–30 years) to experience India's heritage and institutions
- **Overseas Indian Centre (OIC) Network:** Facilitation centres in multiple countries to help NRIs and PIOs with education, legal support, and cultural integration.

## Emergency Support and Evacuation

- **Vande Bharat Mission (2020–21):** One of the largest evacuation operations during COVID-19; **over 60 lakh Indians** repatriated

## Conclusion

The Indian diaspora is a **strategic asset** for India, contributing across multiple spheres. Effective engagement with the diaspora is critical for realizing India's vision of **Viksit Bharat @2047** and **global leadership** in the 21st century.



## PRACTICE QUESTION



**Q. "The Indian diaspora can be a powerful vehicle for India's soft power projection." Analyze in light of recent developments such as the launch of UPI abroad and the Vaibhav Summit.**

***(15 marks)***