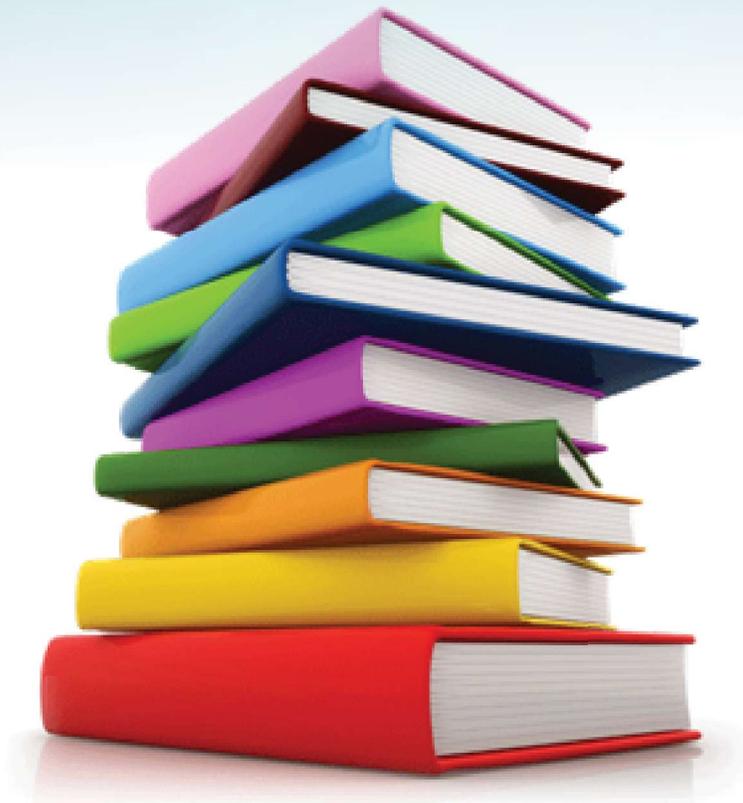




# **PLUTUS IAS**

## **Weekly CURRENT AFFAIRS**



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# CURRENT AFFAIRS

## SEPTEMBER 2022

### Court allows hearing of Hindu plea for the right to pray in Gyanvapi mosque

**Prelim:** International and national and Indian history and culture

**Mains Examination:** GS paper II: Structure, organization, and functioning of the Executive and the Judiciary

**Why it is in the news?**

Varanasi court allows hearing of Hindu plea for the right to pray in Gyanvapi mosque



**The backstory :**

- The Gyanvapi Mosque was built during the reign of the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, in 1669,
- He ordered the demolition of the existing **Vishweshwar temple** at the site, and build a mosque in place of it.
- This is mentioned in the 1937 book, 'History of Benares: From the Earliest Times Down to 1937', by A S Altekar,

- The pedestal of the temple was not changed and served as the courtyard of the mosque.
- One of the walls too was spared, and it became the qibla wall of the mosque, a wall in a mosque that faces Mecca.
- Debris from the destroyed temple was used to build the mosque, evidence of which can still be seen.
- The name of the mosque is said to have derived from an adjoining wall, the Gyanvapi, or Well of Knowledge.
- An old sculpture of the Nandi bull inside the compound of the present Kashi Vishwanath Temple faces the wall of the mosque instead of the sanctum sanctorum of the temple.
- It is believed that Nandi is in fact, facing the sanctum sanctorum of the original Vishweshwar temple.

### **About the Temple**

- For more than a century, after the mosque was built by Aurangzeb in 1669, there was no temple at the site.
- The present Kashi Vishwanath Temple was built by Rani Ahilyabai Holkar of Indore, immediately to the south of the mosque, in the 18th century.
- It is a long belief of the Hindu community, the original lingam of the erstwhile Vishweshwar temple was hidden by the priest inside the GyanVapi well, during Aurangzeb's raid.

### **The present story -**

- On August 18, 2021, in Varanasi court, five women filed a petition demanding to worship in the temple of Mother Makeup Gauri, a hearing to which the court constituted a commission to know more about the present situation of the Makeup Gauri Temple.
- In this regard, the court had asked the commission head, Vijay Shankar Rastogi, to give the survey report by video graphing the idol of Makeup Gauri and the Gyanvapi complex, brought a cause to outburst, raising questions about the impartiality of the court commissioner appointed by the Muslim side for the survey.
- Vijay Shankar Rastogi, appearing on behalf of Hindus, has submitted a map of the entire Gyanvapi complex as evidence in the court, which mentions the temples of Hindu deities around after the entrance of the mosque, as well as the Vishweshwar temple, Gyankoop, the big Nandi and the basement of the Vyas family. There has been a controversy over the survey and videography of this basement.

- In the meanwhile, the Muslim side says that no decision can be given on the dispute under the Religious Places Act of 1991.

### What is The Religious Place Act of 1991 ?

The act states that,“An Act to prohibit conversion of any place of worship and to provide for the maintenance of the religious character of any place of worship as it existed on the 15th day of August, 1947, and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

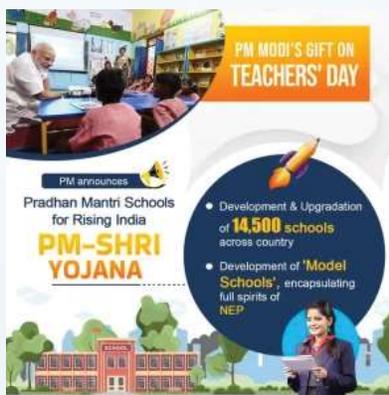
### The provisions of The Religious Place Act of 1991

- **Section 3:** Section 3 of this Act, bars the conversion, in full or part, of a place of worship of any religious denomination into a place of worship of a different religious denomination or even a different segment of the same religious denomination.
- **Section 4(1):** It states that the religious character of a place of worship “shall continue to be the same as it existed” on 15th August 1947.
- **Section 4(2):** It says any suit or legal proceeding with respect to the conversion of the religious character of any place of worship existing on 15th August 1947, pending before any court, shall abate and no fresh suit or legal proceedings shall be instituted.
- **Section 5:** It specifies that the Act shall not apply to the Ramjanmabhoomi-Babri Masjid case, and to any suit, appeal, or proceeding relating to it.

Farhin

## PM-SHRI Yojana

### PM announces PM-SHRI Yojana



## Development and Upgradation of 14,500 schools across India under the Pradhan Mantri Schools For Rising India (PM-SHRI) Yojana

**Why in News:** On the occasion of Teacher's Day today, the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi has announced development and upgradation of 14,500 schools across India under the Pradhan Mantri Schools For Rising India (PM-SHRI) Yojana.

The PM-SHRI schools will have a modern, transformational and holistic method of imparting education. Shri Modi said that he is certain that the PM-SHRI schools will further benefit lakhs of students across India in the spirit of NEP.

**The Prime Minister tweeted;** "Today, on #TeachersDay I am glad to announce a new initiative – the development and upgradation of 14,500 schools across India under the Pradhan Mantri Schools For Rising India (PM-SHRI) Yojana. These will become model schools which will encapsulate the full spirit of NEP."

"The PM-SHRI schools will have a modern, transformational and holistic method of imparting education. Emphasis will be on a discovery oriented, learning centric way of teaching. Focus will also be on modern infra including latest technology, smart classrooms, sports and more."

"The National Education Policy has transformed the education sector in recent years. I am certain that the PM-SHRI schools will further benefit lakhs of students across India in the spirit of NEP." These will become model schools which will encapsulate the full spirit of NEP.

### In News

The Prime Minister has announced that under the PM SHRI Scheme, as many as 14,500 schools will be "upgraded" across India to showcase the components of the National Education Policy, 2020.

### What is the PM SHRI scheme?

- 14,500 schools across states and Union Territories will be redeveloped to reflect the key features of the NEP, 2020 under the centrally sponsored scheme known as PM SHRI Schools (PM Schools for Rising India).
- The plan was first discussed with the education ministers of states and UTs during a conference organized by the Ministry of Education in June at Gandhinagar in Gujarat.
- While there are exemplary schools like Navodaya Vidyalayas, Kendriya Vidyalayas, the PM SHRI will act as "NEP labs".

### Features of NEP in school education

- The NEP envisages a curricular structure and teaching style divided into various

stages – foundational, preparatory, middle and secondary.

- The foundational years (pre-school and grades I, II) will involve play-based learning.
- At the preparatory level (III-V), light textbooks are to be introduced along with some formal classroom teaching. Subject teachers are to be introduced at the middle level (VI-VIII).
- The secondary stage (IX-XII) will be multidisciplinary in nature with no hard separation between arts and sciences or other disciplines.

### **How will PM SHRI schools be different from Kendriya Vidyalayas or Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas?**

- Kendriya Vidyalayas or Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas come entirely under the Center's Ministry of Education and are fully funded by the Union government under Central Sector Schemes.
- While KVs largely cater to children of Union government employees posted in states and UTs, JNVs were set up to nurture talented students in rural parts of the country.
- In contrast, PM SHRI schools will be an upgrade of existing schools run by the Center, states, UTs and local bodies.
- This essentially means that PM SHRI schools can either be KVs, JNVs, state government schools or even those run by municipal corporations.

### **Where will the PM SHRI schools come up?**

- The Center has not yet released the list of schools that have been chosen for this purpose though it has been announced that the PM SHRI schools will also “offer mentorship” to other schools in their vicinity.
- These schools will be equipped with modern infrastructure including labs, smart classrooms, libraries, sports equipment, art room etc.
- It shall also be developed as green schools with water conservation, waste recycling, energy-efficient infrastructure and integration of organic lifestyle in curriculum.

### **What is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme?**

- A centrally sponsored scheme is one where the cost of implementation is likely to split in the 60:40 ratio among the Union government and the states/Union Territories.
- For instance, the mid-day meal scheme (PM Poshan) or the PM Awas Yojana are examples of centrally sponsored schemes.

- In the case of the Northeastern states, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir and UTs without legislatures, the Centre's contribution can go up to 90 per cent.

**Puneet Bhatia**

## **“Triple Dip” La Nina**

### **Why is it in the news?**

The occurrence of the La Nina phenomenon for the third consecutive year in the Pacific Ocean, confirmed by The Australian Bureau of Meteorology

For the very first time in this century, spanning three consecutive northern hemisphere winters to become a 'triple dip' La Nina, stated by The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) on August 31.

**Paper :**GS-I: Geography (Climatology, Important Geophysical Phenomena),  
GS-III: Environment and Ecology (Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Impact of Climate Change)

### **What are La- Nina and El-Nino?**

- El- Nino which means “the boy” and La – Nina which means “the girl” in Spanish are two mutually opposite phenomena.
- During the occurrence of this phenomenon, an abnormal rise or cooling of sea surface temperatures is observed in the Pacific Ocean along the equator, off the coast of South America.
- Together they constitute, called as El Niño-Southern Oscillation system, or ENSO
- The impact of ENSO conditions can affect both temperatures and rainfall globally, due to their strong interference with global atmospheric circulations.

- Usually, it has been seen that El Nino and La Nina occur every four to five years.
- El Nino is more frequent than La Nina.
- Neutral: These years are not associated with any of the above phenomena.

### **La Nina.**



- La Nina is a complex weather pattern that occurs in an interval of 4 to 5 years, as a consequence of variations in ocean temperatures in the Equatorial Pacific.
- It is a coupled ocean-atmosphere occurrence, which is the colder counterpart of El Niño, as part of the broader EL Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) climate pattern.
- An appearance of La Nina can continue for at least 5 months.
- During a period of La Nina, the sea surface temperature over the equatorial Eastern Central Pacific Ocean will be lower than normal by 3 to 5 °C.
- An appearance of La Nina persists for at least five months.
- It has extensive effects on the global weather, particularly in North America, even affecting the Atlantic and Pacific hurricane seasons, in which more tropical cyclones occur in the Atlantic basin due to low wind shear and warmer sea surface temperatures, while reducing tropical cyclogenesis in the Pacific Ocean.
- It comes out as strong winds blow warm water at the ocean's surface from South America across the Pacific Ocean towards Indonesia.
- As this warm water moves towards the west, cold water from the deep sea rises to the surface near South America.

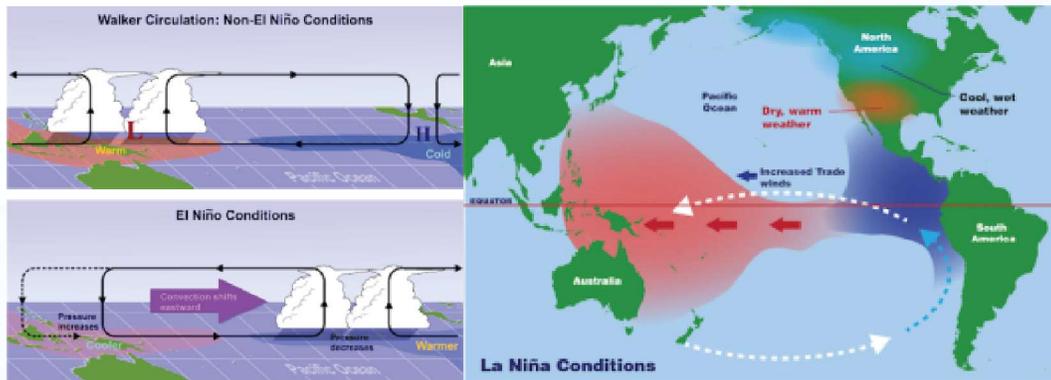
- Consequently, it is considered to be the cold phase of the broader El Niño–Southern Oscillation weather pattern and the opposite of the El Niño weather pattern.
- La Niño impacts the global climate and disrupts normal weather patterns, which as a result can lead to intense storms in some places and droughts in others.

### **El-Niño**

- The warming phase of the sea temperature is known as El Niño and is linked to a band of warm ocean water that evolves in the central and east-central equatorial Pacific, including the area off the Pacific coast of South America.
- El Niño is accompanied by high air pressure in the western Pacific and low air pressure in the eastern Pacific.
- During the evolution of El Niño, rain falls between September–November.

### **ENSO**

- El Niño and the Southern Oscillation, also known as ENSO, is a periodic disturbance in sea surface temperature (El Niño) and the air pressure of the overlying atmosphere (Southern Oscillation) across the equatorial Pacific Ocean.
- The ENSO is the cycle of warm and cold sea surface temperature (SST) of the tropical central and eastern Pacific oceans.
- The cool phase of ENSO is La Niña, with SSTs in the eastern Pacific below average, and air pressure high in the eastern Pacific and low in the western Pacific.
- The ENSO cycle, including El Niño and La Niña, causes global changes in temperature and rainfall.



## Impact of ENSO on the Indian Subcontinent

- Weather:
  - El-Niño causes temperature rise and reduces rainfall over the Indian subcontinent, during the monsoon season. On the other hand, la-Niña brings rainfall and decreases the temperature. Hence, this is why La-Niña is heartily welcomed in the Indian subcontinent.
- Environmental Disasters like Drought and Floods:
  - Although El-Niño leads to drought events in the subcontinent, La-Niña is primarily associated with flood events. These disasters affect the socio-economic status of the affected countries.
- Health:
  - El-Niño brings droughts to lead to forest fires, and wildfires, thus aggravating respiratory causes by air pollution. While, La-Niña brings flooding, as well as water-borne diseases like Cholera, Malaria, Jaundice, etc.
- Irrigation:
  - The irrigated area accounts for 48.8% of the total agricultural area of the country. The remaining 51.2% is rainfed. This rainfed area is primarily dependent upon monsoonal rains. Therefore, the El-Niño-induced rainfall-deficit year brings worries for Indian farmers, while La-Niña induced surplus year is widely welcomed by the Indian farmers.
- Economy:
  - As Indian agriculture primarily depends upon the monsoons, also the fact that India is a primarily agricultural country, impacts the Indian economy.

- ENSO affects the Indian economy in a major way. Better agricultural output means better returns for the Indian farmers and rural population. This induces demand and raises the economic output of the country. Since the ENSO impacts farmers and rural poor more, it also has an important role in the reduction or exacerbation of inequality in the country.
- Ecosystem: ENSO causes warmer and colder temperatures in the sea surface waters. Since the corals are a delicate ecosystem, the temperature change potentially affects their ecosystem.

### **Why have La Nina conditions continued for 3 years?**

- This behavior is termed “abnormal “by the scientist.
- It is surprising that it has continued for the last three years. It may be good for India but not for some other countries.
- Under climate change conditions, one must expect more such instances. Climate change could be a factor driving such anomalous conditions.

**Farhin**

## **NASA’s mission to protect Earth from the hazardous asteroid that could pose a threat to it in the future**

### **Why it is in the news?**

Paper: GS paper III, science and technology.

**NASA’s DART** spacecraft is scheduled to crash into the asteroid **Dimorphos** at approximately 7.14 PM EDT on September 26 (4.44 AM IST on September 27).

### **About the DART Mission**

- NASA’s DART which stands for Double Asteroid Redirection Test is the world’s first full-scale mission developed in defence of Earth
- It is a planetary defense-driven test of technologies for defence against an

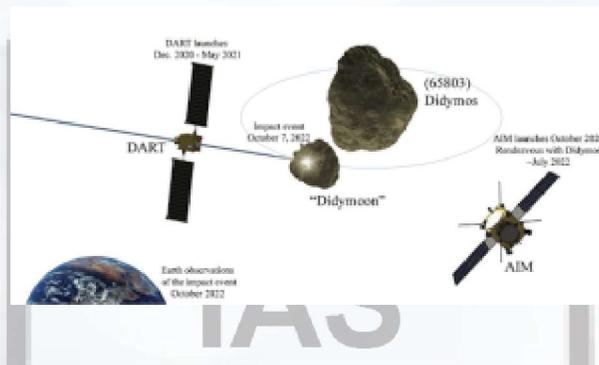
impact on Earth by a hazardous asteroid.

- The spacecraft was launched on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California on 24th November 2021.

### Objectives of DART:

- DART is the first technology that exhibits the kinetic impact or technique that could be used to mitigate the threat of an asteroid hitting Earth.
- The kinetic impactor mitigation technique is the impulsive deflection of the asteroid through the sudden addition of momentum. In simpler terms, DART is being sent to collide with an asteroid to change its orbital period

### Configuration of DART:



### Weight :

- It is a low-cost spacecraft DART, weighs about 610 KG at the time of its launch and will discard some of its weight during its flight and will weigh around 550 KG during the impact.

### Structure:

- The main structure is a box holding dimensions  $1.2 \times 1.3 \times 1.3$  meters.
- It has two solar arrays and uses hydrazine propellant for maneuvering the spacecraft.
- The spacecraft has been attached with a high-resolution imager called **Didymos Reconnaissance and Asteroid Camera for Optical Navigation (DRACO)** which is expected to provide precise images and information to the scientists to study the impact of the collision on the trajectory of the asteroid.

- DART will also carry a small satellite which is a CubeSat named LICIAcube (Light Italian CubeSat for Imaging of Asteroids).

### **DART's Target**

- DART is programmed to target Dimorphos, the much smaller “moonlet” of a binary (two-body) asteroid system.
- Dimorphos orbits a larger asteroid named Didymos which means Greek for “twin” with a diameter of 780 meters.

### **Importance of DART's crash with Dimorphos**

- Didymos is a perfect system to examine the mission because it is an eclipsing binary which means it has a moonlet that regularly orbits the asteroid and it can be seen when it passes in front of the main asteroid.
- With the help of a telescope from Earth, it can study this variation in brightness to understand how long it takes Dimorphos to orbit Didymos.

### **Does Earth really need a planetary defence system?**

NASA has set up the Planetary Defense Coordination Office (PDCO) to look after its ongoing mission of planetary defence.

- The PDCO's aims are to give early detection of potentially hazardous objects, track and characterize the objects, study strategies, and technologies for mitigating possible impacts, and play a leading role in U.S. government response planning for an actual impact.
- DART is the first planetary defence test mission for PDCO.

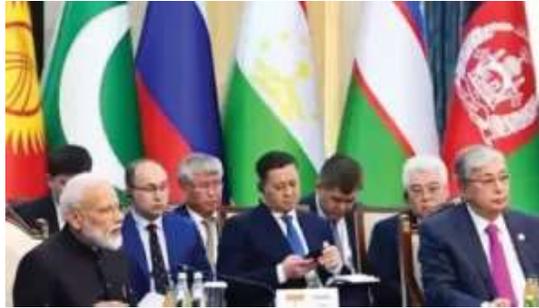
**Farhin**

## **INDIA AND SCO**

### **Context**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will land in Samarkand, Uzbekistan today to attend the 22nd Heads of State Summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). The PM is also likely to meet Russian President Vladimir Putin as well as Iranian President

Ebrahim Raisi.



## What is Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

SCO is a permanent international intergovernmental Organization headquartered at Beijing, China and was formed in 2001 by China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Russia and Tajikistan. India and Pakistan became permanent members in 2017 in the SCO Astana Summit. As of now, it includes 9 Permanent members, 3 observer states as members and 6 dialogue partner states.

### Aims and Objectives of SCO

SCO was formed with the objective of promoting **political, economic and security cooperation** among its member nations. It aims to **safeguard regional peace, security, and stability** and create a democratic and equitable international, political and economic order. It has a multi dimensional approach to ensure cooperation and synergy in the field of political affairs, trade, education, culture, energy, transport, tourism and environment protection.

### Organizational Structure:

The major bodies of SCO are given below:

- **The Heads of State Council (HSC):** It is the supreme decision making body of SCO which meets once a year. It decides the major areas of functioning of SCO and also determines its internal functioning as well as its dealings with other states and international organizations.
- **The Heads of Government Council:** is the second-highest organ of SCO, with a dual mandate to decide on budgetary matters and devise details of economic cooperation.
- **The Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs:** Considers issues related to day-to-day activities and holding of consultations on international problems within the Organization.

- **Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS):** Established to fight against terrorism, separatism and extremism.

### Importance of the SCO meet

- **Rebuilding economy:** It is the first in-person meeting of Heads of SCO after the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Countries will have to find a way to come out of the economic recession hitting the world.
- **Combating terrorism:** With the coming of Taliban into power in Afghanistan coupled with the rise of extreme fundamentalist groups and terrorism sparked by ISIS and other groups, states will have to come together to combat security threats.
- **Resolving Ukraine- Russia conflicts:** The Ukraine-Russia military escalations pose a threat to global stability. The SCO meet needs to address this.
- **De-escalation of Taiwan-China tensions :** The relations have strained all the more ever since US speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan which was eyed with suspicion by China. There is growing fear of a Chinese invasion as military tensions increased in the Taiwan Strait and USA is considering imposing sanctions against China.
- **Finding solutions to Iran Nuclear Deal:** The negotiations between USA and Iran have continuously reached no conclusion with the USA now imposing new sanctions against Iran.

### Significance of SCO for India

- **Support for permanent membership of the UN Security Council:** India can channelize SCO to gain support for permanent seat in UNSC. Uzbekistan already sports India's candidature for it.
- **Connectivity to Central Asia and harnessing relations with Iran:** India showed support to admit Iran as a full member in SCO . Further, during the foreign ministerial meeting of SCO last year, India highlighted the important role of Chabahar Port in increasing the connectivity in the region.
- **Trade and Investment:** India has the opportunity for development of startups, exchange of science and technology and traditional medicine with SCO member states. India is already a major source of medicines and pharmaceuticals in Tajikistan.
- **Natural Resources:** The Central Asian region is rich in natural resources like crude oil, natural gas, gold, iron, aluminum, and copper.
- **Security and stability:** The issues arising from Taliban takeover and conflicts in West Asia can cause spillover effects in India. SCO is a strong platform to resolve such challenges.

- **Combating terrorism, narcotics trade and weapons trafficking:** India has earlier called for “zero tolerance for terrorism in all its manifestations”. The RATS of SCO offers a mechanism to deal with terrorism and address issues of state sponsored terrorism also.
- **Tourism diplomacy:** SCO Heads of State have already expressed their admiration for India’s joint digital exhibition on Shared Buddhist Heritage earlier. There can be further expansion of tourism in terms of Buddhist connections.

### Way Forward

With more than 22% of global GDP and 45% of global population, SCO has immense potential to decide the future world order and balance of power. It can play a significant role in Asia and counter the influence of western countries in the region. Hence, it is imperative for India to utilize SCO in line with India’s policy of “**multi-alignments**”. With India hosting the next SCO summit by assuming the rotational presidency, it can demonstrate its ability of being a responsible great power.

PLUTUS

Saumya khedwal

SC no to Ganesh puja at Bengaluru Idgah ground, HC allows it in Hubli

### Preliminary Examination:

Indian Polity and Governance-Constitution, Political System, Panchayati Raj, Public Policy, Rights Issues, etc.

### Mains Examination:

General Studies I: Communalism, Regionalism & Secularism.

General Studies II: Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

## Why is it in the news?



The Supreme court of India didn't permit the celebration of Ganesh Chaturthi at the Idgah Ground in Bengaluru.

At the same time, the Dharwad bench of the Karnataka high court, declined the stay order of the Hubli Mayor, allowing the celebration at Idgah maidan in Hubli.

## What is an idgah?

Idgah is a term used in south Asian Islamic culture to refer to an open-air enclosure, usually outside the city. The land is reserved for eid prayers, offered in the morning of eid-al-Fitr and eid-al-adha

These reserved lands are usually not used for daily prayers at other times of the year.

**Idgah Maidan** in Bangalore is 2.1 acres of land in the heart of Chamrajpet, one of the oldest localities of Bengaluru.

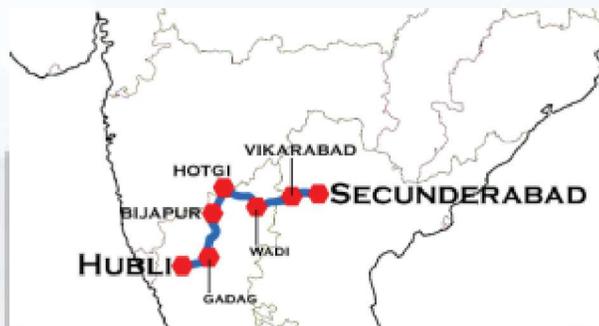
The ground is used as a playground, with an Idgah for prayers on the festivals of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.

The map of Bengaluru and documents from 1871 and 1938 also state that the land has an Idgah and burial ground.

## What are the controversies?

- The particular land was secured by the Hubli Municipality in the early years of the 20th century.

- In 1921, the Anjuman-e-Islam petitioned the municipality to authorities the Muslim community to hold prayers in the maidan.
- The municipality accepted the representation, and the land was leased to the Anjuman for 999 years. The lease agreement was subsequently confirmed by the then government of the Bombay Presidency.
- But recently, the revenue minister of Karnataka R. Ashoka, stated that “The land, which is referred to by different names by people, actually belongs to the revenue department. The revenue records show that it does not belong to the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) or any ‘Board’”.



### What is Anjuman-e-Islam?

Dr. Badruddin Tyabji, 1st acting chief justice of Bombay High court and, the 3rd president of the Indian national congress was the founder of the Anjuman –I-Islam, he founded this educational and social organization in India in 1874, with a vision of providing better educational and social opportunities to the Muslim community.

### What Anjuman-e-Islam and 999 years lease agreement?

- The government permitted the Anjuman-e-Islam, in the 1960s to construct a commercial building on the land, under some specified terms and conditions.
- In 1972, the Anjuman-e-Islam tried to execute the commercial plan under the guidelines given by the government, and subsequently, a structure was erected,
- But there came legal challenges to The Anuman-e-Islam’s executions of the permissions from the government, stating, that the lease agreement does not include any construction work, and the matter went through

many decades of litigation.

- In the supreme court in 2010, Court confirmed the order of the Karnataka High Court and the lower courts, ruling that the Idgah maidan was the exclusive property of the Hubli-Dharwad Municipal Corporation and that the Anjuman had the license only to hold prayers on the ground twice a year, and not to build any permanent structure on it.

### **The current situation**

Recently The High Court has seen that the Idgah maidan in Hubballi actually belongs to the Hubballi Dharwad Municipal Corporation and that the land has been leased for 999 years to the Anjuman-i-Islam, is true.

So the High court has declared that HDMC has all the rights over the use of land.

### **What is a Wakf property?**

The Wakf Act defines Wakf as a permanent dedication by a person professing Islam, of any movable or immovable property for any purpose recognized by Muslim law as pious, religious, or charitable.

**Farhin**

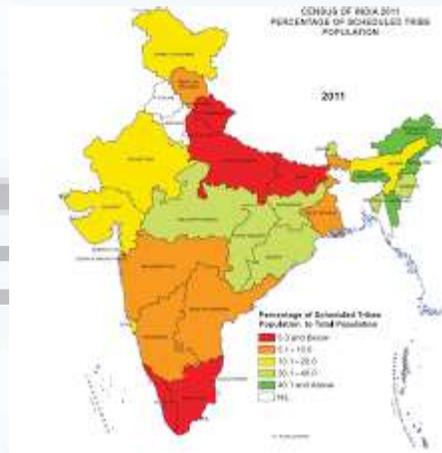
## **Cabinet approves addition of 4 tribes to ST list**

### **Context**

The Union Cabinet approved the addition of 4 tribes from Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Chhattisgarh to the Scheduled Tribe list. These include **Hatti tribe of Himachal Pradesh, Binjhia tribe of Chhattisgarh, and Narikoravan and Kurivikkaran hill tribes of Tamil Nadu**. The move is in continuation of **Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order (Amendment) Bill 2022** which was earlier passed by the Parliament to amend the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 for the inclusion of certain communities in the list of Scheduled Tribes in relation to the State of Tripura.

## What are Scheduled Tribes (STs)?

Due to the **social, economic and educational backwardness and exclusion** of certain communities in India, the framers of the Constitution recognized the need to grant these communities special consideration for safeguarding their interests and for their accelerated socio-economic development. These communities were notified as Scheduled Tribes as per provisions contained in **Article 342** of the Constitution of India. **As per Census 2011**, the ST population in the country is **104 million** which accounts for **8.6%** of the nation's total population.



## Criteria to be identified as ST

Government of India has adopted the following five criteria to identify a community as a Scheduled Tribe:

- (i) indications of primitive traits,
- (ii) distinctive culture,
- (iii) geographical isolation,
- (iv) shyness of contact with the community at large, and
- (v) backwardness

## How are STs notified?

According to the Constitution of India, under **Article 342(1)**, The **Presi-**

**dent of India**, may with respect to any State or Union territory, and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor thereof, by public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which shall for the purposes of this Constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State or Union territory.

However, under **Article 342(2)**, the **Parliament of India** by law can include or exclude the above-mentioned groups from the list of Scheduled Tribes specified in a notification issued under clause(1)

Based on Article 342, Parliament enacted **The Constitution (Scheduled Tribe) Order, 1950** which contains a list of tribes designated as Scheduled Tribes.

### **National Commission of Scheduled Tribes (NCST)**

The National Commission of Scheduled Tribes(NCST) is a **constitutional body** formed through the **89th Constitution Amendment Act, 2003** by insertion of **Article 338A** in the Constitution. It essentially works to protect and promote interests and welfare of STs by monitoring safeguards for them, inquiring into complaints of deprivation of rights of STs and making recommendations for their socio-economic development. Additionally, it also presents annual report to the President upon working of safeguards for STs.

### **Issues faced by STs**

**Land alienation:** STs were traditionally land holders. Due to fast paced development and stringent laws, their land has been taken away for industrial and mining purposes. They have also been ousted due to laws regulating wildlife sanctuaries and reserve forests

**Loss of community forest rights:** The Tribal rely on minor forest produce for their sustenance, fuel, fodder and livelihood. British rule led to them losing these rights.

**Poverty and exploitation:** They do not possess employment opportunities and often live in poverty and indebtedness. Due to their seclusion, they are often exploited and forced into bonded labor or trafficking.

**Low level of Health and Nutrition:** There is a high infant mortality rate and low levels of life expectancy among STs and prevalence of disease burden like anemia, malaria, cholera, tuberculosis, etc due to poor nutrition.

**Loss of identity:** The modern institutions and laws are different from the traditional laws and lifestyle of tribal. There is also extinction of their language and dialect in some cases which all culminates to feelings of alienation and loss of identity.

### **Way Forward:**

There needs to be understanding and respect of tribal culture and practices and promote them. Economic development should not exclude tribal population and it should not be at the cost of uprooting them. Various constitutional and legal safeguards in the form of insertion of 5th and 6th Schedule in the Constitution, creation of Tribal Advisory Council, the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006 which recognizes the rights of the forest dwelling tribal communities and other traditional forest dwellers to forest resources, Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY), etc go a long way in promoting their welfare.

**Saumya Khedwal**

## **Statuette of Annabhau Sathe,**

### **Why it is in news?**

Recently, statuette Activist-author Annabhau Sathe is unveiled by Devendra Fadnavis in Moscow.

The unveiling of the statuette is a part of the celebration of 75 years of independence of India, and also to celebrate India -Russia's relationship.



### **Who was Annabhau Sathe ?**

- Annabhau Sathe, who was originally named, Tukaram Bhauro, Sathe.
- He was born to a Dalit family in wategaon village, of Satara district of Maharashtra on 1st August 1920.
- 10 years later in 1930, he along with his family moved to Mumbai, where he did some odd jobs like a porter, a hawker, and also a cotton mill helper.
- In 1934, he participated in a worker's strike, under the leadership of Lal Batwa mill workers Union, where he met an associate of Dr. Ambedkar in the famous "Chavdar lake Satyagraha" at Mahad, R.B More.
- Under his influence, he joined the labour study circle, where he first learned to read and write.

### **His journey from a laborer to an author.**

- He developed his interest to write poems when he was in the labour camp.
- His 1st poem was on the menace of the mosquitoes in the labour camp.
- Then he formed a Dalit Yuvak Sangh, a cultural group that used to perform in front of mill gates during worker's protests, on the poems written by him
- At the same time, the progressive writers association was formed, with writers like Premchand, Faiz Ahmad Faiz, Manto, Ismat Chughtai, Rahul Sankrutyayan, and Mulkraj Anand as its members.
- The association would translate the Russian work of Maxim Gorky, Anton Chekhov,

Leo Tolstoy, and Ivan Turgenev into Marathi, by which Sathe got inspired.

- It put an ideological impact on him, and he got the inspiration of writing street plays, stories, and novels. Etc.
- He wrote his first *ballad* (a long song or poem that tells a story, often about love) 'Spanish Povada', in 1939

### **The popularity of his work**

- He lived for 49 years, he began to write when he was 20 years old.
- In just 29 years, of his writing, he penned about, 32 novels, 13 collections of short stories, four plays, a travelogue, and 11 Povadas(ballad).
- Along this, he and his group traveled across Mumbai campaigning for workers' rights.
- Several of his works like 'Aklechi Goshta,' 'Stalingradacha Povada,' 'Mazi Maina Gavar Rahili,' and 'And Jag Badal Ghaluni Ghav' were popular across the state. Almost six of his novels were turned into films and many were translated into other languages, including Russian. His 'Bangalchi Hak' (Bengal's Call) on the Bengal famine was translated into Bengali and later presented at London's Royal Theatre. His literature depicted the caste and class reality of Indian society at that time.
- Many of his works like 'Aklechi Goshta,' 'Stalingradacha Povada,' 'Mazi Maina Gavar Rahili,' and 'And Jag Badal Ghaluni Ghav' were well-liked across the state.
- About 6 of his novels were turned into films and many of them were translated into many other Indian languages and foreign languages, including Russian.
- One of his famous literary creations, 'Bangalchi Hak' on the Bengal famine was translated into Bengali and later presented at London's Royal Theatre.
- His works depict the caste and class reality of Indian society at that time.
- In 1943, he formed the Lal Bawta Kala Pathak, along with Amar Sheikh and Datta Gavhankar.
- The group traveled across the Maharashtra, presenting awareness programs on caste atrocities, class conflicts, and workers' rights.
- He dedicated his most popular novel "Fakira" to his Idol Dr. Ambedkar.
- He was also associated with the formation of the Indian People's Theatre Association in 1943 and became the president in 1949.
- His works were highly influenced by Marxism, but he also portrayed the harsh real-

ities of the caste system

### **The Russian connection of Annabhau**

- Sathe was greatly stimulated by Gorky's 'The Mother' and the Russian revolution, which can be seen in his writings.
- So once Annabhau was called Sathe, the Maxim Gorky of Maharashtra by The Famous Marathi Poet Baburao Bagul.
- As per Associate Professor of Russian Head, Department of Foreign Languages, Shivaji University, Kolhapur, Dr. Megha Pansare, Annabhau's literature has a very close resemblance to the then Communist Russian literature which was a mixture of reality and art.
- In that era, Russia use to invite representative Indian literature translated into Russian.
- Some of the writings of Sathe's like Chitra and his famous Stalingradcha Povada based on the battle of Stalingrad battle were translated into Russian.
- In 1961, Sathe visited Russia.
- 'Maza Russiacha Pravas' (My Travel to Russia), his travelogue, in which he wrote about how workers of India has come to see him off and how the worker wanted him to go and see slums to Russia and describe them after he returned back to home.
- He was well known in Russia because of his translation and received a warm reception there.

### **What was the reason behind the statue in Moscow?**

- Sathe hails from a Dalit community called Matang.
- The failure to negotiate Annabhau's artistic legacy, Sathe is now confined as a symbol of a separate community.
- The ruling party is aiming to get the credit for making the Sathe global icon.
- Installing Sathe's oil painting at the Indian consulate in Moscow also shows that the central government, utilized this occasion to increase cultural dialogue between the two countries.

**Farhin**

# After more than 70 years, Cheetahs will again walk on the Indian soil

## Context

After more than 7 decades of extinction from India, Cheetahs have returned to Indian soil. This morning saw a landmark event – the arrival of 8 African Cheetahs in India. The Cheetahs arrived from Namibia and landed in Gwalior for being taken to the Kuno Palpur National Park. Out of the 8 Cheetahs that arrived, 5 are females while 3 are male.



(Image Courtesy: livemint)

## Background

- Cheetahs have an ancient history in India with the first reference dating back to the Neolithic period. A Neolithic cave painting at Chaturbunj Nala in MP depicts a 'slender spotted feline being hunted'.
- 'Cheetah' is believed to have originated from Sanskrit word chitrak, which means 'the spotted one'.
- In the medieval era, the Mughal emperor Akbar is believed to possess 1,000 cheetahs which were used for hunting blackbucks and gazelles. This move was continued by Jahangir.
- The British rule didn't help for protection of Cheetahs either and some British even shot them for trophy hunting.
- By the beginning of the 20th century, only a few hundred Indian Cheetahs were left, rest were wiped out.
- Maharaja Ramanuj Pratap Singh Deo of Koriya princely state is believed to have hunted down and shot the last three recorded Asiatic cheetahs in India.
- In 1952, The cheetah was officially declared extinct by the Indian government.



## Re-introduction and Project Cheetah

- India has been trying to bring back Cheetah since a long time. Talks were carried out with Iran in 1970s to bring Asiatic cheetah to India in exchange for Asiatic lions but this couldn't manifest into any action.
- Attempts were again made in 2009 when the then Environment Minister endorsed plan to reintroduce Cheetah but this was stayed by the Supreme Court citing that a detailed study needs to be conducted and produced before taking this big step.
- Project Cheetah is an ambitious project undertaken by the Government of India with the objective to re-establish the species in its historical range in India. This was approved by the Supreme Court as a pilot program and allowed reintroduction of cheetahs on an "experimental basis"
- India signed an MOU with the Republic of Namibia in 2020 whereby the latter agreed to donate the eight Cheetahs to start the program. Another batch is expected to arrive from South Africa once details between the two countries are finalized.
- Amongst the 10 surveyed sites of the central Indian states, Kuno Palpur National Park (KNP) in Madhya Pradesh was identified as the best suited one. The reasons for this were its suitable habitat and adequate prey base, lack of human settlements and ample deciduous open forest landscape.

## Translocation and associated issues

Translocation is not a rare phenomena and is often done to preserve species and re-populate its old habit or that of a similar kind. For example the southern white rhinos were transported in various places in Africa from KwaZulu-Natal. Similarly, Kaziranga Rhinos were translocated to Manas to build a new population in recent times. Such have been success stories. However, inter-continental translocations are no so common and certain risks are associated with translocation namely:

- **Genetic Diversity:** A genetically diverse population of species is ideally suited for building a new population elsewhere. But when the source population is itself small in number, it becomes difficult to build a new population of genetically suitable animals due to lack of gene diversity and inbreeding further increases health risks.

- **Habitat:** The habitat should match the original one from where the animals are brought as any difference can cause stress and difficulty to cope in the new environment.
- **Prey Base:** There should be sufficient prey base and density for the Carnivorous population to survive.
- **Area:** a single cheetah requires 100 sq km as its territory. Due to large scale construction, deforestation and industrialisation, it may become difficult to sustain a stable cheetah population.
- **Homing instinct:** It refers to an animal's innate ability to return to its territory after traveling away from it. This can lead to man-animal conflict as the animal displaced from its original site wanders in new areas in search of its old habitat. This was witnessed in 2009 when a young tiger was moved from Pench to Panna and it set its journey of over 400 km to travel back to Pench when authorities had to intervene to intercept it and bring it back to Panna.

### **Preparations made for successful Cheetah Translocation**

- Extensive health check ups were done of the 8 Cheetahs in Namibia to ensure they were fit to be flown to India. They were checked for diseases and completion of vaccination.
- Indian forest officers and wildlife experts were trained by expert teams from Namibia and South Africa on the handling, breeding, rehabilitation, medical treatment and conservation of cheetahs.
- After arrival, they will be radio collared and monitoring would be done through satellites
- Each Cheetah will have a dedicated monitoring unit 24 hours a day.
- Heavy security arrangements are made like presence of drone squads and military personnel to prevent poaching
- Government has launched the 'Cheetah Mitra' campaign whereby volunteers would work to increase awareness about Cheetah among people.
- Cheetahs will be first released into a quarantine enclosure where they will be kept for a month after which they will be shifted to bigger enclosure till they adapt to the new environment before being released into Kuno Palpur National Park

### **Significance of the Cheetah reintroduction**

- It will help Restore India's historic evolutionary balance. Cheetah had been an integral part of India and this move will restore it to its historic glory.
- It will help in developing a Cheetah metapopulation within India and contribute to increasing the global Cheetah number.
- The cheetah is a flagship grassland species and its conservation will also help to preserve other grassland species in the predator food chain.

- It will also help to protect the grasslands of India which is the habitat of Cheetahs

### **Way Forward**

While a successful Cheetah diplomacy has ensured in getting the big cat back to India, the future course will be determined by proactive conservation efforts and coordination of all stakeholders. Once the population in Kuno National Park adapts to the region and population increases, the Indian government will expand the efforts to reserves in other parts of the country also. It is hoped that Project Cheetah will follow the footsteps of Project Tiger to be a success story.

**Saumya Khedwal**

