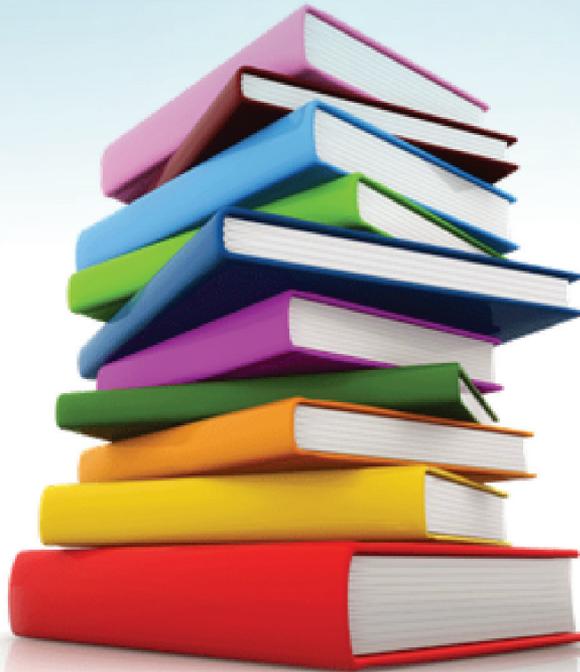




# PLUTUS IAS

## Weekly CURRENT AFFAIRS



**PLUTUS IAS WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS 16-1-2023 to 22-1-2023**

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# CONTENTS

S. No	Topics	Page No
1.	INDIA CHINA TRADE DEFICIT	1 - 5
2.	LOCAL BUBBLE	6 - 8
3.	ISRO SETTING BACK THE “SHUKRAYAAN” VENUS MISSION TO 2031	9 - 11
4.	DOPPLER WEATHER RADAR NETWORK BY IMD	12 - 15
5.	EPIGRAPHY	16 - 17
6.	DEMAND FOR THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN” REAL MONEY GAMES” AND “VIDEO GAMES”	18 - 22
7.	GEOPOLITICS OF EURASIA FOR INDIA	23 - 26
8.	ANNUAL STATUS OF EDUCATION REPORT (ASER)	27 - 30



# CURRENT AFFAIRS

## JANUARY 2023

### INDIA CHINA TRADE DEFICIT

*This article covers “Daily current events” and the topic is about the ‘India China trade deficit’ which is in news, it covers “International relations” In GS-2 and GS-3, and the following content has relevance for UPSC.*

**For Prelims:** India china trade ties, major import and export items

**For Mains:** GS-2, GS-3, India and its neighborhood, Growth, and development

#### HOW DO THE TRADE TIES BETWEEN CHINA AND INDIA STAND.....

- China is India’s second-largest trading partner after the US. One of the Biggest Partners.
- About 20 years ago, China’s ranking among trading partners was 10, but since 2002 or 2003, it has moved up the list.
- In 2011–12, 2013–14, 2017–18, and 2020–21, China was India’s largest trading partner.
- For the years 2021–22, the US and China were India’s top two commercial partners, followed by the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Singapore, Hong Kong, Indonesia, South Korea, and Australia.

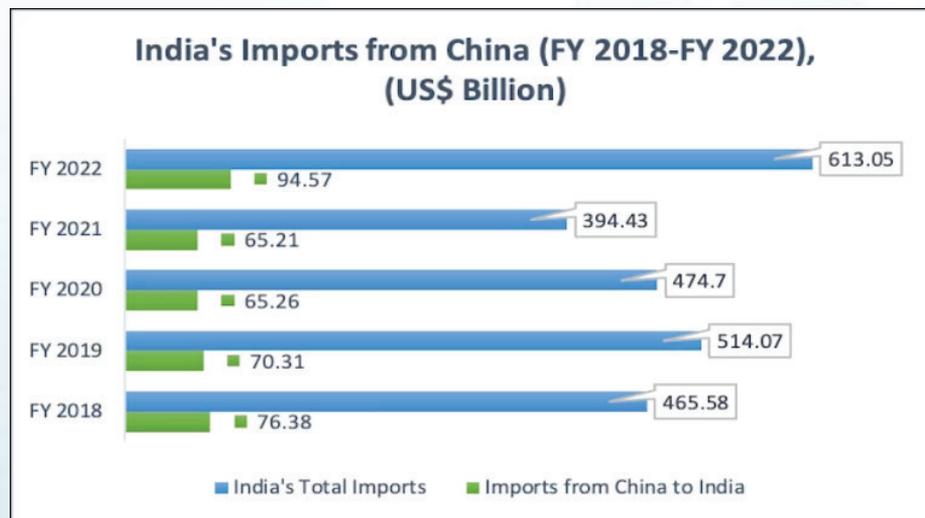
<b>India’s imports from China</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• India’s imports from China are \$118.5 billion, an increase from \$97.5 billion.</li><li>• Over 21% more Chinese items were imported into India last year.</li></ul>
<b>India’s exports to China</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• From \$28.1 billion to \$17.48 billion, India’s exports to China decreased.</li><li>• From \$69.4 billion in 2021, the trade imbalance increased by 45% to \$101.02 billion in 2022.</li></ul>

## Trade overall

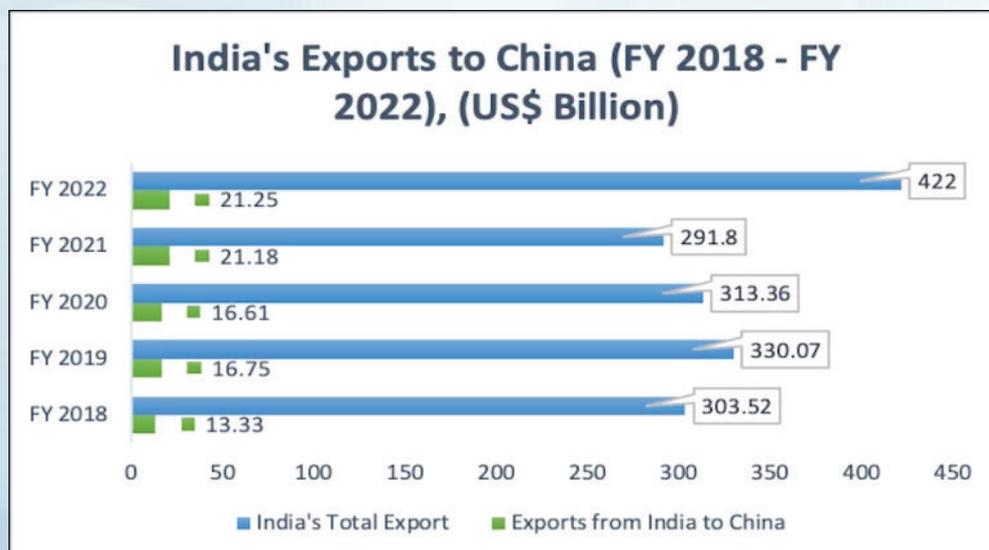
- In 2022, India and China's bilateral trade hit a record \$135.98 billion.
- 8.4% more people had it last year.

## DIFFERENCES IN THE TRADE BETWEEN INDIA WITH CHINA AND THE US

- The biggest difference in India's trade with the US and China is that while it has a trade surplus with the US (USD 32.85 billion in 2021-2022), it has the largest trade deficit with China (USD 73.31 billion in 2021-2022) of any nation.
- While India's imports from China climbed from USD 2 billion to USD 94.57 billion between 2001-02 and 2021-2020, the country's exports to China increased just marginally, from roughly USD 1 billion to USD 21 billion.



## India China trade



## Exports to China

### Major Imports:

The top Chinese exports to India are:	most valuable Chinese imports:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Electrical devices and parts thereof</li><li>▪ television image and sound recorders,</li><li>▪ reproduction devices, and accessories</li><li>▪ Boilers, machinery, and other mechanical devices and parts of thereof organic substances</li><li>▪ Plastic and items made of plastic</li><li>▪ Fertilizers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Personal computers (laptops, palmtops, etc.),</li><li>▪ monolithic integrated circuits for digital devices,</li><li>▪ lithium-ion batteries,</li><li>▪ solar cells, and</li><li>▪ Urea</li></ul>

## CHINA'S HEAVY IMPORT DEPENDENCE IMPLY

- The state's difficulties in terms of politics and security are exacerbated, in the eyes of the administration, by its reliance on importing goods from hostile nations.
- The majority of the active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) used in India are imported. The majority of the Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) used by India's pharmaceutical sector are imported from China. Chinese APIs are less expensive than Indian ones, even in the Indian market.
- When supplies of Chinese APIs to India were temporarily halted due to travel restrictions during the Covid-19 outbreak, India had to reduce its own exports of APIs as a result, exposing the extent of the issue.
- It's possible that 24% of the coal energy produced in India comes from facilities that use essential Chinese imports. So while this might not be a clear-cut case of strategic reliance, it is unquestionably a security challenge.
- Although there are calls to restrict or even ban such imports from China, doing so would just result in the private Indian power companies having to bear greater expenses.

## WHAT HAS INDIA DONE TO COMBAT CHINA'S OVER-RELIANCE?

- Chinese apps are prohibited
- Considering Chinese investments carefully and excluding Chinese companies from 5G testing

- Limiting opportunistic acquisition of domestic companies: FDI limit on China
- Promoting bulk drug parks and the PLI Scheme will reduce API import needs.
- Chinese power equipment imports are effectively prohibited
- Anti-dumping taxes were imposed on some chemicals and aluminum products for a period of five years in order to protect domestic manufacturers.
- Identification of 12 industries that can help India become a global supplier and reduce import costs:

Food processing, organic farming, iron, aluminum, copper, agrochemicals, electronics, industrial machinery, furniture, leather goods, shoes, auto components, textiles, as well as coveralls, masks, sanitizers, and ventilators, are some of these industries.

### **CURRENT ACCOUNTS DEFICIT (CAD)**

It is the difference between the amount of money coming in via exports and the amount leaving the country through imports. It calculates the difference between the amount of money coming into and leaving the country through the exchange of products and services, as well as the movement of funds from domestically owned manufacturing equipment to foreign countries.

### **DIFFERENT FROM THE TRADE BALANCE**

- It differs slightly from the Balance of Trade, which simply calculates the difference between income and expenses for exports and imports of goods and services.
- While the current account also takes payments from local capital sent abroad into account.
- For instance, the current account would be used to calculate the rental income from an Indian's home in the UK, but not in the balance of trade.

### **MAJOR EXPORTS**

**India exported 5% of its total shipments to China in 2021-2022.**

**Among the biggest exports were :**

- Ores, slag, and ash.
- Mineral fuels/oils and their distillation byproducts, bituminous compounds, and mineral waxes;
- steel and iron
- Articles of aluminum
- Cotton

- Light Naphtha was **India's most valuable export** among individual goods.

### **REASONS**

- Exchange rate in effect, amount of consumer spending, capital inflow, inflation level, and current interest rate.
- Imports of crude oil and gold are the main causes of India's huge current account deficit.

### **IMPLICATIONS**

- Depending on why an economy is running a deficit, the current account deficit may be a positive or bad indicator for that country.
- In the short run, it might be beneficial for a debtor country, but in the long run, it might cause investors to worry about getting a sufficient return on their investments.

### **WAY AHEAD OF INDIA CHINA TRADE**

- By increasing exports and reducing imports of non-essential goods like electronics, gold, and mobile phones, it might be decreased.
- It would also be helpful to make it simpler for manufacturing companies to raise overseas capital and hedge their currency exposure.
- Among other things, the government and RBI may look into reviewing the FPI debt investment limits.
- India still has to import the majority of its essential goods to maintain its strategic competitiveness. It may, however, diversify this dependence by minimizing China's contribution to it.
- By collaborating more with the United States, Europe, South Korea, and Japan, India can diversify its reliance. It will become more dependent on nations with whom it already has cordial political ties as a result.
- A wise course of action is to further encourage self-reliance in key areas where India is a net importer, and where technology and money will play a significant role.

# LOCAL BUBBLE

*This article covers “Daily current events “and the topic is about ‘Local bubble’ which is in news, it covers “Science and Technology” In GS-3, and the following content has relevance for UPSC.*

**For Prelims:** Facts about local bubbles

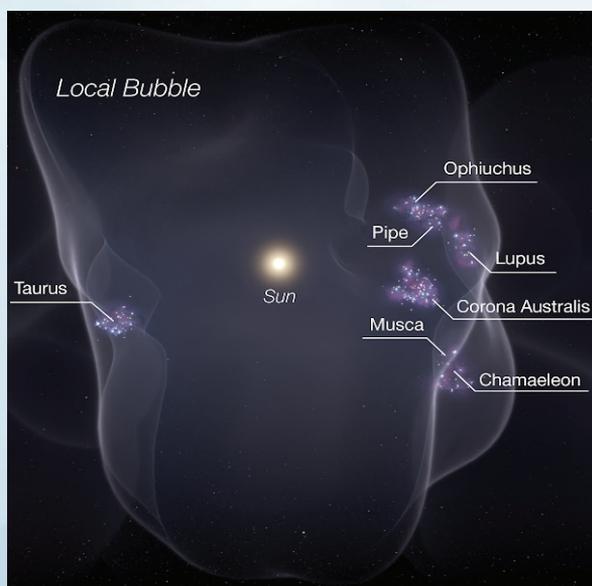
**For Mains:** GS-3,Space technology

## Why in News

- The origins of stars and other mysteries of the cosmos may be revealed by recent research on a vast cosmic void that surrounds the solar system.
- A 3D magnetic map of the hollow known as the Local Bubble has been created by researchers from the Center for Astrophysics (CfA) | Harvard & Smithsonian.

## ABOUT LOCAL BUBBLE

- The Local Bubble is a superbubble with a diameter of 1,000 light-years. There are further superbubbles in the Milky Way.
- The Local Bubble is a sizable, low-density area in the Milky Way’s interstellar medium (ISM).
- The substance that encloses the void between stars is known as the interstellar medium.
- A succession of supernova explosions that took place between 30 and 50 million years ago is likely to have formed the cavity that is responsible for it.



## Local Bubble

### WHAT IS A SUPERNOVA

- After a large star's existence, a supernova is a strong and bright explosion.
- A significant amount of energy can be released when the star's core collapses, which is what causes it.
- In addition, supernovae play a key role in the spread of cosmic rays and the enriching of the interstellar medium with heavy metals.

### SUPERNOVA OFTEN FALLS INTO TWO CATEGORIES

- **Type I:** This white dwarf star, which is a member of a binary system, thermonuclear exploded, resulting in a supernova.

When the white dwarf's mass reaches a particular point, it becomes unstable and explodes. The white dwarf accretes material from its companion star.

- **Type II:** It results from the gravitational collapse of a big star's core. When a star's nuclear fuel runs gone, the outer layers of the star collapse inward, causing the core to become extremely hot and dense.

The star explodes as a result of the enormous amount of energy released as a result.

For a moment, the explosion's brightness can temporarily eclipse the entire galaxy, and the explosion's debris can lead to the production of nebulae, dust, and heavy elements.

### HOW WAS A 3D MAP OF A HUGE CAVERN FILLED WITH NEARBY BUBBLES OBSERVED

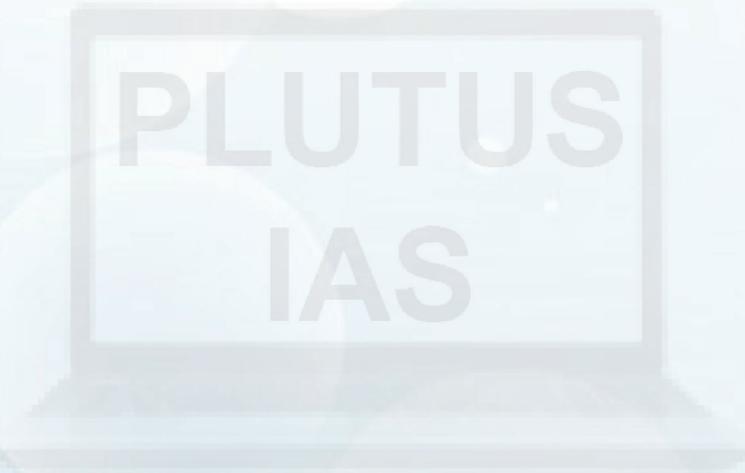
- They made use of the Gaia and Planck space-based observatories that the European Space Agency had launched (ESA).
- To pinpoint the location and local concentration of cosmic dust, Gaia was employed.
- This enabled them to identify the Local Bubble's perimeter.
- The magnetic alignment of cosmic dust was revealed by Planck.
- This alignment can help researchers create a 3D magnetic field orientation on the surface of the Local Bubble by indicating the direction of the magnetic field acting on the dust particles.

**UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year's Question (PYQs)**

**Q. Recently, scientists observed the merger of giant 'black holes' billions of light-years away from the Earth. What is the significance of this observation? (2019)**

- (a) 'Higgs boson particles' were detected.
- (b) 'Gravitational waves' were detected.
- (c) Possibility of intergalactic space travel through a 'wormhole' was confirmed.
- (d) It enabled the scientists to understand 'singularity'

**Ans: (b)**



# ISRO SETTING BACK THE “SHUKRAYAAN” VENUS MISSION TO 2031

*This article covers “Daily current events “and the topic is about the ‘Shukrayaan Mission in 2031’ which is in news, it covers “Science and Technology” In GS-3, the following content has relevance for UPSC.*

**For Prelims:** Facts about the Shukrayaan mission

**For Mains:** GS-3, Space technology, Significance and challenges associated with it.

## **Why in news:**

- A professor at the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and advisor to its space research program stated in a talk that the organization has not yet received Indian government approval for the Venus trip and that the project may therefore be delayed until 2031.
- Shukrayaan I, the name of ISRO’s Venus mission, was slated to go off in December 2024. The concept was conceived in 2012, and after the Department of Space got a 23% increase in funding for the 2017–2018 budget, ISRO started preliminary research five years later. In April 2017, the organization asked research institutions for payload proposals.

## **ABOUT SHUKRAYAAN MISSION**

- The orbiter may carry a science payload of up to 100 kg and 500 W of electricity, depending on the final configuration.
- 500 km at periapsis and 60,000 km at apoapsis are predicted for the original elliptical orbit of Venus.
- The GSLV Mk II rocket is intended to carry the satellite into orbit.
- With a scientific instrument to examine the planet, Sweden is joining India’s Venus orbiter mission, “Shukrayaan.”
- Venusian Neutrals Analyzer (VNA), a satellite instrument from the Institute of Space Physics (IRF), will examine the interactions between the planet’s atmosphere and exosphere and charged particles from the Sun.

## **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SHUKRAYAAN MISSION**

- For the Investigation of shallow subsurface stratigraphy and surface processes.

- No previous observations of Venus's subsurface have been made before.
- In the field of geology known as stratigraphy, rock layers and layering are investigated.
- To study the atmosphere's behavior, chemistry, and structure.
- Examining the effects of the solar wind on the ionosphere of Venus.

## SIGNIFICANCE

- Learning about the evolution of Earth-like planets and the conditions on Earth-sized exoplanets will be useful (Planets that orbit a star other than our sun).
- It will aid in Earth's climate modeling and serves as a sobering reminder of just how drastically a planet's climate can alter.
- A device to study Venus' atmosphere in the infrared, ultraviolet, and sub-millimeter range will also be carried by the expedition.
- It will shed light on the atmospheric conditions and the evolution of Earth-like planets.
- A futuristic illustration of how climate change may significantly affect a planet will also be a goal of this project.

## Challenges:

- Given its dense atmosphere and surface activities, which make it a complicated planet, Venus presents various difficulties compared to Mars.
- The equipment must penetrate the atmosphere deeply in order to gain deeper knowledge.
- The space agency intends to utilize a high-resolution **Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR)** on the spacecraft as one of its instruments to analyze Venus' surface despite the planet's surrounding clouds.
- In order to see through the clouds and darkness of the Venusian atmosphere, high-resolution sensors are required.

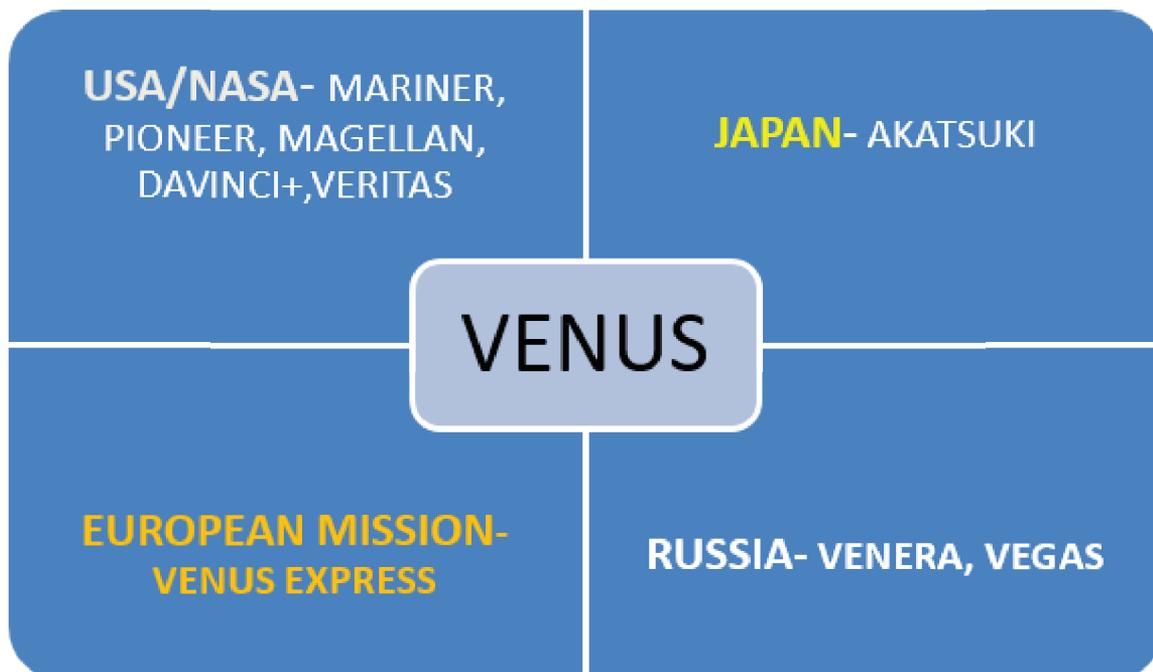
## ABOUT THE VENUS



## Venus

- It is the second-brightest natural object in the night sky after the Moon, which is presumably why it was the first planet whose motions were mapped across the sky in the second millennium BC.
- Venus and Uranus rotate on their axes in the opposite direction from the other planets in our solar system.
- Due to the extreme greenhouse effect caused by the high concentration of carbon dioxide, it is the warmest planet in the solar system.
- Venus has days that are longer than a year. Venus takes longer to complete one rotation on its axis than it does to complete one orbit around the Sun.
- The longest rotation of any planet in the Solar System is 243 Earth days. The shortest orbital period of the Sun takes only 224.7 Earth days.
- Because of their comparable relative positions in the solar system and their similar masses, sizes, and densities, Venus has been referred to as Earth's twin.
- No planet comes closer to Earth than Venus, which at its closest point is the only other big body that is closer than the Moon.
- The pressure of Venus' atmosphere is 90 times that of Earth.

## OTHER MISSIONS TO VENUS



# DOPPLER WEATHER RADAR NETWORK BY IMD

*This article covers "Daily current events" and the topic is "The Doppler weather radar network" which is in news, it covers "Science and Technology" In GS-3, the following content has relevance for UPSC.*

**For Prelims:** Facts about the Doppler effect

**For Mains:** GS-3, Significance of Doppler weather radar

## Why in news:

- The Ministry of Earth Science has officially opened the Doppler Weather Radar (DWR) Systems in **Jammu & Kashmir, Uttarakhand, and Himachal Pradesh** on the occasion of the 148th anniversary of the establishment of the India Meteorological Department (IMD).
- The Doppler weather radar network will be spread across the entire nation by **2025**, according to plans made by the Ministry of Earth Science, allowing for more precise forecasts of extreme weather events.

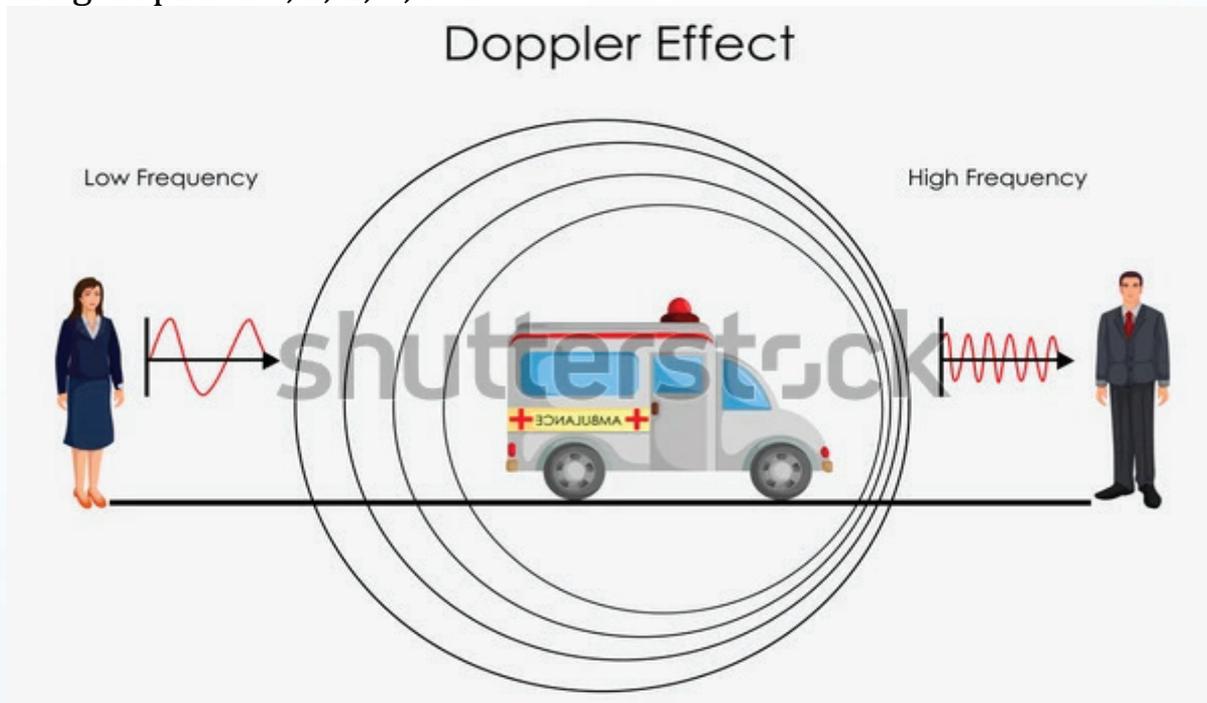
## How It works:

- A parabolic dish antenna and a foam sandwich spherical radome are used in the radar, which is based on the Doppler principle, to increase precision in long-range weather forecasting and surveillance.
- DWR is equipped to find a storm center, as well as the path of a tornado or gust front, as well as to measure the intensity and velocity of wind shear and rainfall.

## ABOUT DOPPLER RADAR EFFECT

- It is a customized radar that generates velocity information about distant objects by using the Doppler effect.
- It utilizes a parabolic dish antenna with a foam sandwich spherical radome to increase precision in long-range weather forecasting and surveillance.
- It has the tools necessary to pinpoint the center of a storm, the path of a tornado or gust front, and the intensity and velocity of the wind.
- In the case of a natural disaster brought on by severe weather, it gives advanced information, boosting the lead time that is so crucial for saving lives and protecting property.
- Doppler radars are classified according to their uses as follows: Doppler ra-

dar can be categorized into several different groups based on wavelength, and these groups are L, S, C, X, and K.

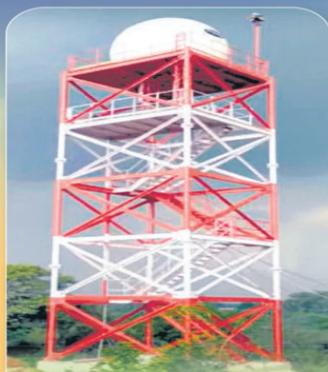


## Doppler Radar effect Radio detection and ranging (radar)

It is a device that employs electromagnetic radiation in the microwave spectrum to identify the range and direction, altitude, intensity, and motion of moving and stationary objects.

## Ayanagar station gets an upgrade

Two such radars are already functioning at Palam (2010) and Lodhi Road (2012). Ayanagar DWR has a smaller influence area but it is the most precise

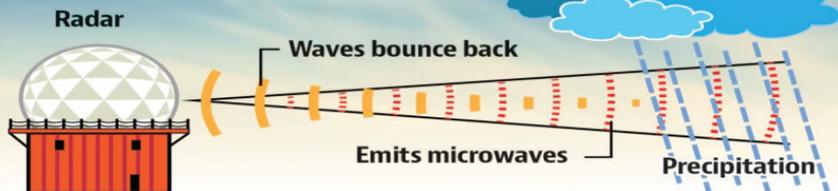


Delhi installed its third doppler weather radar (DWR) system this week — an X-band radar at Ayanagar station. It has an influence area of 100km.

The X-band radar operate on frequencies in the X-range, that fall in the microwave region of the electromagnetic spectrum

DWRs were installed at Palam and Lodhi Road observatories in 2010 and 2012 respectively.

### How it works



### How a DWR works

Basically, it works on the principle of the Doppler effect that describes the change in frequency of a wave in relation to an observer who is moving relative to the wave source

The radar emits micro or radio waves from its antenna, which hits clouds and other objects in the atmosphere and return to the radar, allowing it to gauge how far rain clouds or rainfall activity actually is from the city. Based on the distance and trajectory of the clouds, the IMD can accurately forecast when rainfall will hit a particular point in the city, along with its expected intensity.

### Tech at other stations

- **Palam** (Delhi airport) – It has an S band DWR in place with an effective range of 400km and can detect thunderstorm and gusty winds 200-300km away. It is mainly use to detect severe weather and forecast aviation weather hazards such as wind shear, thunderstorm and dust storm activity.
- **Lodhi Road** – It has a C-band doppler radar and is used to detect thunderstorms and heavy rainfall over Delhi-NCR with a 250km radius. It was currently being used to detect and forecast rain activity in the region that is set to occur within the next few hours. In comparison, the new X-band radar at Ayanagar will only influence a 100km radius, but will be more precise in rainfall forecasting.
- **Safdarjung** – Delhi's base observatory has been in place before the Independence and still uses manual instruments which need to be calibrated regularly. Readings are also collected physically. Like Safdarjung, the Ridge station is also a manual station.
- **Automatic weather stations** – Delhi began installing automatic weather stations from 2009 onwards, before the 2010 Commonwealth Games in order to provide venue-specific weather forecasts. Unlike manual instruments and stations, AWS provide readings directly to a computer system every day. There are AWS currently installed in Narela, Mayur Vihar, Najafgarh, Jafarpur, Pitampura and the Sports Complex in east Delhi.

## How a DWR Works

### THE DOPPLER RADAR

- It is a customized radar that produces velocity data about distant objects by utilizing the Doppler effect.
- The Doppler effect The frequency that is being observed by the observer changes as the source and the signal is moving relative to one another. The frequency rises as they go closer, and the opposite is also true.
- This is achieved by sending a microwave signal toward a target and measuring how the frequency of the returned signal has changed due to the motion of the target.
- This variation allows for direct and extremely accurate measurements of a target's radial component of velocity concerning the radar.

### TYPES

- **L Band Radars:** Work at a frequency of 1-2 GHz and a wavelength of 15–30 cm. mostly employed for research of clean air turbulence.
- **S-band radars:** They function between 2-4 GHz and have a wavelength of 8 to 15 cm. The wavelength and frequency of S-band radars make them difficult to attenuate. They can thus be used for both local and global weather observation. This band of radar has the disadvantage that it needs a big antenna dish and a big motor to power it.
- **C band radars:** They function between 4 and 8 cm in wavelength and 4 and 8 GHz in frequency. The size of the dish does not need to be extremely great because of the wavelength and frequency.

As a result, TV stations can afford C-band radars. This kind of radar works best for close-range weather observation since the signal is more easily muted.

- **X-band radars:** They function at a frequency of 8–12 GHz and a wavelength of 2.5–4 cm. The X-band radar has a shorter wavelength, which makes it more sensitive and capable of detecting tiny particles. Lightning and thunderstorm detection are done using it.
- **K band radars:** They function at frequencies of 27–40 GHz and 12–18 GHz, respectively, with wavelengths of .75–1.2 cm or 1.7–2.5 cm. A strong water vapor absorption line causes this band to be split in half. It's only that this band is more sensitive. It's comparable to the X band.

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DOPPLER RADAR

- The accuracy of weather forecasts has improved by 20–40% for various severe weather events.

- Farmers and fishers benefit from the warning and advising services as their economies grow.
- For instance, a rupee invested in the monsoon mission program returned 50 rupees for every rupee invested.
- Agromet Advisories at District and Block Levels are used efficiently by millions of farmers at all stages of farming, and the service is expanding. This has been especially beneficial for farmers living below the poverty line.
- It aids the general public, disaster management, and stakeholders in launching prompt reaction actions to further mitigate calamities.
- The ability to predict the monsoons, which is essential for maintaining our food security, has improved the economy and decreased the number of fatalities brought on by monsoonal floods and droughts in south Asia.
- With their accurate forecasts and prompt warnings, these advancements have helped in recent years to reduce the death toll from a variety of extreme phenomena like cyclones, heavy rain, thunderstorms, heat waves, and cold waves.

### **Way Ahead**

- To supply climate goods and information for sectoral applications, a national framework should be established as soon as possible.
- It is imperative that the disaster managers, general public, and stakeholders adhere strictly to the National Disaster Management Plans, rules, and SOPs put in place by the current administration.

# EPIGRAPHY

*Here, The topic "Epigraphy" reflects Indian History and Culture. The article also talks about the reconstruction of ancient Indian History.*

**Relevance for Prelims:** Asokan Era

**Relevance for Mains:** Relevance and significance of Epigraphy

**Epigraphy is the study of inscriptions** that are engraved on stone tablets, metal plates, pillars, walls of caves, etc. It serves as primary documentary evidence to establish legal, socio-cultural, literary, religious, archaeological, and historical antiquity based on engravings. On the other hand, Numismatics refers to the study or collection of coins, paper money, and related objects. It gives information about the economic situation, administrative structure, chronological issues, the extent of influence of a particular kingdom, and its relations with distant areas. Epigraphy helped in the Reconstruction of Ancient Indian History

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## **SOME EXAMPLES OF HOW EPIGRAPHY HAS HELPED IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY ARE**

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- The edicts of Asoka, the pillars of Samudragupta and Rudradaman-I are
- Religious and administrative inscriptions that throw light on the cultural mission
- And the administrative maneuverin of the period.
- Inscriptions also throw light on the existing social customs. For example, the
- Brahmadeyam inscription refers to the sati committed by the queen of Rajendra Chola I.
- The Mandatory copper plates, the Sohgaura plate from Gorakhpur district, the
- Aihole inscription of Mahendra-Varman and the Uttiramerur inscriptions of Cholas cast light on trade, taxes, and currency
- Inscription from Jogimara cave depicts the prevalence of the tradition of dance and music.

Epigraphy throws light on the boundaries of kingdoms and empires, the life lived in the past, the nature of society and economy, and the general state of life.

## **NUMISMATICS HELPED IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF ANCIENT INDIAN HISTORY NUMISMATICS HAS ALSO HELPED IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF HISTORY IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS**

Roman coins discovered in India give us an idea about the existence of contacts with the Roman Empire. Portraits and figures, Hellenistic art, and dates on the coins of the western satraps of Saurashtra are remarkable sources for reconstructing this period. The Puranic accounts of the Satavahanas are ascertained from the Jogalthambi hoard of coins. Administration under the Sakas and the Pallavas has been reconstructed largely on the basis of coins.

**Kharoshti and Brahmi** scripts were deciphered with the help of coinage of the Kushan Era.

The purity of gold and silver coins imparts an idea of the economic condition during the rule of the Guptas. The entire argument for instance on the urban decay rests on the paucity of currency and lesser content of precious metals in coins in that period.

### **CONCLUSION**

Thus, epigraphic and numismatic evidence is one of the most reliable sources for reconstructing ancient history.



# DEMAND FOR THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN “REAL MONEY GAMES” AND “VIDEO GAMES”

*This article covers “Daily current events “and the topic is the Demand for the distinction between “real money games” and “video games” in Online Gaming Industry, which is in news, it covers “IT and computers” In GS-3, and “Government policies and interventions” In GS-2, the following content has relevance for UPSC.*

**For Prelims:** IT and computer

**For Mains:** GS-2, GS-3, Factors involves in online gaming

## Why in news:

- In light of the upcoming changes to the IT (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021, over 40 Indian video game and e-sports companies have written a letter to the Ministry of Electronics, Information, and Technology (MeITy) requesting a regulatory distinction between them and “real money games.”
- The Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021 were amended by the MeitY, who also earlier published the Draft Rules for Online Gaming.
- The letter urges MeitY, which it refers to as “the nodal agency for “online gaming,” to understand the distinction between the two markets.

## ABOUT

- Real Money Gaming is any game played through an online medium in which real money is staked on the outcome, including casino, bingo, poker, sports or sporting events, skill games, etc. Real Money Gaming includes all of these activities.
- While A video game is a digital or computerized game that you can play on a computer or television.
- Online games must be played through an online connection. This is a sector of the rising business, and access to various gaming types is becoming more and more popular these days. For instance, poker, rummy, and other augmented reality-based artificial intelligence games.
- The country is the largest fantasy sports market internationally, with more than 13 crore players spread over more than 200 sites. According to the authorities, the number of people playing online rummy has increased. India separates the games mostly into two big categories.

## There are two types of the game:

- The term “**game of chance**” refers to any game that is played at random. These games primarily rely on luck. These games don’t require any prior understanding or knowledge to play. A few examples are playing dice games, selecting a number, etc. These games are regarded as illegal in India.
- A **game of skill** is any of the several video games that are played based on the player’s prior knowledge or level of gaming prowess. A person will require skills including the capacity for making analytical decisions and logical thought. Some games may also require some initial practice to be successful. The majority of Indian states view these games as legal.

## INDIA'S VIDEO GAMES MARKET

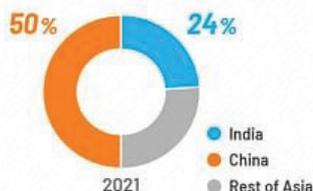
### PC & MOBILE GAME REVENUE (USD)



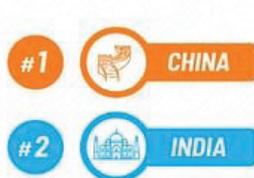
### PC & MOBILE GAMERS



### INDIA VS ASIA BY GAMERS



### INDIA VS WORLD BY GAMERS



### FASTEST GROWING MARKET IN ASIA



## India's Video Games market

### FACTORS INFLUENCING THE ONLINE GAMING INDUSTRY

- The demand for the online gaming industry increased as a result of the Covid 19 restrictions and lockdown, which caused individuals to be out of the office, attend online classes, work from home, etc.
- The gaming industry underwent evolution. Growing tech businesses began showing interest in it because of the profitability involved as a result of the increase in investments made to meet the rising demand for online games.
- Thanks to technology improvements and cloud computing, there are now more gaming possibilities available.
- Another factor for the growing accessibility of these games may be the reasonably priced internet.
- Aside from the various age groups, the population is getting younger, and more people are becoming interested in playing online games, which has

led to an increase in users.

- The newly undertaken Digital India initiatives have a direct impact on the expansion of the gaming industry. Due to digitization, more people have access to the Unified Payment Interface (UPI), hence the industry is growing in terms of both user numbers and monetization.
- According to the World Economic Forum (WEF), mobile devices dominate the Indian gaming industry. Observations show that the growth of the gaming industry is a result of the use of smartphones. Mobile gaming predominates in today's market. availability of smartphones with superior gaming capabilities.

## **ADVANTAGES OF ONLINE GAMING**

- Because they will be occupied, adolescent offenses will decline because they won't engage in risky or damaging social activities. Additionally, it will lead to a decrease in illicit activity. For instance, games like Dream 11 may lead to a decrease in unlawful betting.
- Through the taxes placed on online gaming, the government may see an increase in revenue. And as a result, it will assist the government in cutting the deficit and building out the infrastructure.
- The educational games will keep the kids entertained while assisting them in learning various concepts clearly and straightforwardly.
- For many people with an interest in this field, it will open up career prospects. Animations, for instance, or IT start-ups, etc.
- E-sports may become more widely accepted as a result, and it will give India more opportunities to succeed internationally. For instance, e-sports like pub g will make their debut as medal events at the Asian Games in 2022.
- It will encourage technological advancement and innovation in immersive and interactive media. Take augmented reality, for instance.

## **ISSUES AND CONCERNS**

- There could be psychological and bodily consequences. For instance, aggressive conduct and greater aggression may occur from constantly being in gaming mode. A blue whale challenge can involve a true incident.
- The public has a mediocre understanding of the law. Another issue is that betting and gambling are on state lists, which means that different states will have different rules.
- Obesity, visual disorders, arm injuries, anxiety, stress, disturbed sleep patterns, and irregular eating habits are major health issues that may have long-term effects. Additionally, a gaming addiction may interrupt social interactions and bring about financial losses.

- This may cause the younger generation to become distracted by video games, negatively affecting how well that generation performs academically. And as a result, the youth's moral ideals and social and cultural connections will be lost.
- Due to the potential for increased turmoil and the emergence of unlawful apps, the absence of any national controls and legislation on online gaming would provide additional difficulties for the government and administration to handle.
- As a result of the financial losses, there will be an increase in aggression towards women and children both inside and outside the home because the offender will continue playing games even after the negative effects.
- Damage to the body, society, and emotions will result. There will be poor sleep, professional disruptions, and no social life. Since gaming, financial hardship, and social isolation currently occupy the majority of their time, they will continue to do so.
- Cyber assaults, privacy concerns, data mining, identity theft, money fraud during gaming transactions, and other threats will exist.

## **CONCERNS REGARDING IT RULES 2021 SIMILAR REGULATORY SCOPE**

- A self-regulatory organization that will confirm an Indian online game is approved is proposed as part of the IT Rules, 2021 modifications.
- In the current draught notification, "video games" and "online games played for stakes" are regulated under the same umbrella.
- No nation in the world recognizes or regulates these two types of games similarly.
- However, gaming businesses are concerned about how there isn't a clear line between them and "real money games" (RMG), which are frequently in a grey area because of state gambling laws and regulations.

## **SIMPLY FOR FUN**

- Video game firms claim that "games do not entail staking money and are played solely for fun."
- They note that in other nations, Real Money Games and Fantasy Sports are referred to as the "iGaming Industry" as a whole.

## **THEIR DEMANDS**

- **Formation of a body:** It is essential to establish an appropriate structure that respects the specifics of the business and is in line with international

best practices if India is to produce video games of the highest caliber for a worldwide audience.

This will significantly improve India's ability to attract finance, expand its market reach, collaborate with foreign companies more frequently, cultivate talent pools, and produce world-class athletes.

- **For regulations:** By international standards like PEGI (Pan-European Game Information) in the European Union and ESRB (Entertainment Software Rating Board) in North America, video games are regulated through an age and content rating mechanism specific to India by establishing a video games industry-specific self-regulatory body (SRB).
- **Framework for further issues:** Establish a strong framework to address issues like children's video game addiction, their exposure to in-game purchases, age-inappropriate content, and online harm.

This framework will be regulated by a self-regulatory body specific to the video game industry by international standards like COPPA (Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule) in the USA and GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) in the European Union.

## WAY AHEAD

- Proper gaming regulation for all parties involved is urgently needed, or the center should be given the authority to enact rules and regulations using either the residuary powers under article 248 or the control under article 252.
- To unify regulations and maintain uniformity in the laws across India, there has to be one regulatory agency overseeing the whole online gambling sector.
- In addition, parents need to be accountable for their children's gaming habits and time spent online. They should also be aware of potential negative impacts and work to influence their children to play educational games, among other things.
- There is an urgent need to raise awareness of online gaming, its adverse effects on children's growth and development, its ripple effects on society, and the value of maintaining discipline even when used.
- A license is required for the sector. It is necessary to establish numerous safety checks. It is necessary to involve the sector as a self-regulator rather than having a policy.
- To fully exploit the potential of the online gaming industry, the State and Union Governments should work together to create precise standards in conjunction with industry partners.

# GEOPOLITICS OF EURASIA FOR INDIA

*This article covers “Daily current events “and the topic is” Eurasia and the current geopolitical situation” which is in news, it covers the “International relationship” In GS-2, the following content has relevance for UPSC.*

**For Prelims:** Russia-Ukraine, NATO, QUAD, AUKUS

**For Mains:** GS-2, India, and new Eurasia and geopolitical situations

## Why in news:

As 2023 gets underway, the world is embracing a “new normal” in which ancient and new fault lines in Eurasia and the Indo-Pacific are being rearranged.

## ABOUT EURASIA

- Eurasia as a concept is not new. Many people used it as a descriptor that was both neutral and a large land mass that united Europe and Asia.
- Despite geographical continuity, over the centuries, Europe and Asia developed into distinct political and cultural realms.
- Eurasia is a tectonic plate that geographically underlies much of Europe and Asia. There is no universal agreement on what the territory’s political borders are, though, and this is a problem for the region.



## Colored Eurasia Map with Country Names and Capital Cities

### Approach of Russia

Although it struggled to integrate into either, Russia regarded itself as a force in both Europe and Asia. As new geopolitical conceptions, it created “Eurasia” and “Greater Eurasia.” Putin sees it as his historic mission to bring the “Russkiy Mir,” or the Russian world, back together, which led to the 2014 invasion of Ukraine and the takeover of Crimea. Despite the significant expenditures of the scheme, he was adamant that he would pursue it.

### CHANGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE NEW EURASIA

- **Japan:** The country is adamant about forming reliable military alliances with Europe. The prime minister of Japan made a straightforward statement: “The security of Europe and the Indo-Pacific is indivisible.” Japan will also develop a substantial missile arsenal to intimidate China (and North Korea, whose missile capabilities have grown).
- **US:** The NATO summit in Madrid in June invited important Asian partners to join at the US’s request. Along with the president of South Korea, the summit was attended by the prime ministers of Australia, Japan, and New Zealand. Asian leaders are taking part in NATO discussions for the first time. Eurasian geopolitics will continue to be characterized by new elements, such as NATO’s engagement with Indo-Pacific challenges and East Asia’s engagement with European security. The Biden Administration expressed its intention for its allies and partners in Europe and Asia to cooperate more with one another in its National Security Strategy, which was published in 2022. It is eager to support the advancement of its allies, particularly India, in their efforts to bolster the regional power structures in both Europe and Asia.
- **South Korea** is increasing its visibility in Europe to join the party as well. It sells significant weapon platforms in Poland.
- **Australia:** Equally eager to include Europe in the Indo-Pacific is Australia, which has joined the US and UK in the AUKUS agreement.

**Russia and China’s cooperation:** The geopolitical landscape in Eurasia was changed by China and Russia before Japan and South Korea went to Europe.

Putin traveled to Beijing in February 2022 to sign a document that declared an alliance “without limits” and no “forbidden zones” just days before he gave the order for his army to invade Ukraine.

Together, Putin and Xi revealed a Eurasian alliance in the hopes that it would be the long-awaited final blow to Western hegemony.

### EURASIA’S IMPORTANCE TO INDIA

- **Resources:** The Eurasian region is abundant in natural resources, particularly energy resources, which are distinguished by large production and exports. India’s interests must be protected through economic cooperation with these nations. In

terms of energy (oil, natural gas), and natural resources, the Eurasian states are potential long-term allies (that include uranium and iron ore).

- **Pharmaceutical:** The medical and pharmaceutical industries also present a great deal of room for collaboration. By establishing public hospitals and clinics in Eurasia, India is prepared to increase cooperation. India is planning to create a Central Asian e-network with India as its core to provide connectivity for tele-education and telemedicine, connecting all five Central Asian States.
- **Industry of construction:** Indian firms can demonstrate their skill in the field and develop constructions of the highest caliber at affordable prices. Iron ore, coal, and inexpensive power are all found in almost endless quantities in Central Asian nations, particularly Kazakhstan. India can assist in building a number of medium-sized steel rolling mills that will produce the specialized goods it needs.
- **Economic benefits:** Eurasia's strategic peninsular location connecting several subregions of Asia and West Asia makes it vital for India's goal of becoming an economic hub. Recent programs like Make in India, Skill India, and Digital India may very well help with this. If India integrates economically with other regions of Asia, it may also be used as a tool to take advantage of the demographic dividend in India.
- **Strategic importance:** Strategically, the Eurasian region wants to become less dependent on both Beijing and Moscow. In light of this, they are ready to assist India in its efforts to improve its standing in the area and offer a viable alternative to the established actors Russia, China, the EU, and the US. A qualitative improvement in India's relations with the Eurasian states is made possible by the simultaneous implementation of the Iran nuclear deal and Russia's confrontation with the West.
- **Tourism:** India is a developing tourist destination. Eurasia is crucial for attracting tourists from the continent. To draw more tourists, India should build beaches and luxury accommodations.

## WAY INDIA EXPANDS ITS INFLUENCE

- Provide regular and frequent shipping connections between Chabahar and the Indian ports of Mundra, Kandla, and Mumbai.
- Support the planned joint Afghan-Uzbek project to extend the 700 km long railway line from Mazar-i-Sharif to Herat, which would go through western Afghanistan. All of Central Asia, including Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, would be connected to the Chabahar route via western Afghanistan if this project were to succeed.
- In order to position Chabahar as a crossing point between Eurasia and the Indian Ocean, India has to enlist the aid of one or more Central Asian nations, especially Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan.
- The SCO framework might potentially be used to promote connectivity cooperation with these nations.
- Without necessarily engaging in direct conflict or rivalry with China's BRI, India should forward its own connectivity strategy for Eurasia. India may undoubtedly benefit from assistance in moving toward Eurasian integration with Russia, Iran,

and Central Asian nations.

- In order to link to the Far East and even Japan, India should work to join Russia's "Greater Eurasian" corridor and the Northeast Passage in addition to INSTC and Chabahar Port.

### **Concerns**

- The rise of Eurasia makes it more difficult for India to sail on two boats at once. Up till this point, India could easily run concurrently with the continental coalitions led by Russia and China and hunt with the marine coalition (the QUAD) in the Indo-Pacific.
- As long as the maritime and continental powers did not engage in open hostilities, this was possible.
- But the battle between China and Russia and the US, Europe, and Japan is now severe and doesn't appear to be going away anytime soon.
- The cloud cast over India's continental strategy will therefore get deeper in the days to come due to the growing security threats from China along its Himalayan border and the strengthening of relations between Moscow and Beijing. Positively, there have never been more opportunities to bolster India's strategic capabilities through alliances with the US, Europe, Japan, South Korea, and Australia. Delhi must now seize the opportunities that are opening up.

### **WAY AHEAD**

- India must exert the same effort toward the creation of a "Eurasian" policy that Japan and South Korea do. India's continental strategy needs to be reevaluated in relation to Eurasia, while the Indo-Pacific is about Delhi's new marine geopolitics.
- India has dealt with each of Eurasia's constituent regions separately over the years, but Delhi now needs a coordinated strategy to gain a firm presence in the region.
- India will undoubtedly run into many conflicts along the way with the US, Europe, Russia, China, Iran, and the Arab Gulf, but it shouldn't let these conflicts stop it from progressing.
- Increased strategic action in Eurasia that creates opportunities in all directions is the key for India.

# ANNUAL STATUS OF EDUCATION REPORT (ASER)

*This article covers “Daily current events “and the topic is the ‘Annual Status of Education Report (ASER)’ which is in news, it covers “Education” In GS-2, and the following content has relevance for UPSC.*

**For Prelims: About ASER report findings**

**For Mains: GS-2, Government policies, and interventions, Education**

**Why in news:**

The Pratham Foundation recently published the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), a countrywide assessment that examines the effectiveness of learning in schools.

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## ABOUT ASER

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- The country’s level of fundamental literacy and numeracy is captured by this important annual, citizen-led household countrywide survey.
- It tries to ascertain whether or not students in rural India are enrolled in classes and are gaining knowledge.
- At the national, state, and district levels, the survey provides representative estimates of the enrollment status of children aged 3 to 16 as well as their proficiency in basic reading and math skills.
- The first ASER, which was done in 2005 and repeated annually for ten years, is directed by the Pratham Foundation.
- After a break of 4 years, ASER 2022 will be the nation’s first field-based “basic” ASER. It occurs just as students are returning to class after a protracted period of school closure.

## TOOLS OF TESTING OF ASER

- **Reading Tools** – The ASER reading assessment tool is divided into four levels: letters, words, a brief paragraph (text at the standard level 1), and a lengthier “story” (Std 2 level text). The youngster receives the best grade she can safely complete.
- **Maths Tool** – There are four levels in the ASER Math tool: number recognition (1–9), number recognition (11–99), two-digit subtraction with borrowing, and three-digit by one-digit division. The youngster receives the best grade she can safely complete. A youngster who is unable to complete the first level will be designated at the “Beginner” level.

## KEY FINDINGS OF ASER

### Admission and attendance

- The number of students enrolled generally increased between 2018 and 2022, notwithstanding the pandemic-related closures of some schools.
- Between 2018 and 2022, there was a significant increase in the percentage of kids (aged 6 to 14) enrolling in government schools.
- The percentage of 11–14-year-old girls not enrolled in school in all of India in 2022 is 2%, continuing the downward trend that began in 2006.
- In 2022, there were more 3-year-olds who were enrolled in some kind of early childhood education.
- Additionally, nationwide, from 26.4% in 2018 to 30.5% in 2022, more students in grades I through VIII were enrolled in paid private tuition programs.
- The average teacher attendance rate grew somewhat between 2018 and 2022, but the average student attendance rate has remained stable at roughly 72% for the past few years.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

■ Proportion of children in govt schools up from 65.6% in 2018 to **72.9%** in 2022

■ Children taking private paid tuitions up from 26.4% in 2018 to **30.5%** in 2022

■ Reading levels down to pre-2012 levels – only

### ENROLMENT IN 6-14 AGE GROUP AT A RECORD HIGH:

**98.4%** children now enrolled in school, up from 97.2% in 2018

20.5% children in Class 3 can read a Class 2 textbook, down from 27.3% in 2018

## Annual Status of Education report

### Basic literacy level

- Readability at the Basic Literacy Level significant decline in math and reading skills,
- Children’s fundamental literacy levels have declined significantly, with reading abilities declining much more steeply than numeracy skills and returning to pre-2012 levels despite the excitement parents and students show for schools.
- The proportion of Class 3 students in public or private schools who could read at the level of Class 2 fell from 27.3% in 2018 to 20.5% in 2022.

- States with better reading proficiency in 2018 such as Kerala (from 52.1% in 2018 to 38.7% in 2022), Himachal Pradesh (from 47.7% to 28.4%), and Haryana (from 46.4% to 31%) show declines of more than 10 percentage points from 2018 levels.
- Nationally, the percentage of Class 5 students in public or private schools who can at least read a text at the Class 2 level dropped from 50.5% in 2018 to 42.8% in 2022.
- For kids in Class 8, the declines in basic reading proficiency are less; from 73% in 2018 to 69.6% of students enrolled in public or private schools in 2022 were able to read at least basic text.

### **Mathematical and Calculation Skills**

- From 28.2% in 2018 to 25.9% in 2022, class 3 students who could at least subtract decreased in proficiency.
- Additionally, from 27.9% in 2018 to 25.6% in 2022, the percentage of Indian students in Class 5 who can do division has decreased marginally.
- Students in Class 8 perform fundamental math with a wider range of abilities. From 44.1% in 2018 to 44.7% in 2022, the percentage of kids nationwide who can divide has slightly risen. This rise is the result of better results for girls and students attending public schools, whilst boys and students attending private schools exhibit a fall from 2018 levels.
- Government school students in Class 8 fared much lower in Punjab (from 58.4% to 44.5%) than in Uttar Pradesh (from 32% to 41.8%) and Chhattisgarh (from 28% to 38.6%) in 2022 compared to 2018.

### **Tuition Classes**

- The data also reveals a sharp increase in the number of pupils enrolling in tuition classes. There is a rise in the percentage of kids who attend tuition classes between 2018 and 2022 across all states.
- Families that wanted to save money on tuition fees removed their children from private schools, but they also made investments in private tuition classes, which climbed as the percentage of these pupils increased from 26.4% in 2018 to 30.5% in 2022 in both private and government schools.
- The fact that most students choose to study math and science in their tuition programs, may also explain why reading learning gaps are more pronounced.

### **Impact of the Covid Pandemic on Girls' Education**

- The research also allays concerns that the pandemic would cause families to pull their daughters out of school and drive them into young marriages.
- In the age range of 11 to 14 years, it is discovered that the proportion of

girls who were not enrolled in school decreased from 4.1% to 2%.

- The proportion of older females in the 15–16-year-old age range who are not enrolled in school has decreased even more dramatically, from 13.5% in 2018 to 7.9% in 2022.

### Major Concerns

- **Resources are insufficient:** India’s education spending as a percentage of GDP is 3.1%, falling short of the 6% objective set for NEP 2020.
- **Bias in favor of the English language:** Children in rural areas have had difficulty studying because of the emphasis on the English language.
- **Lack of Practical Experiences:** Prioritizing theoretical knowledge over practical understanding.
- **The teacher counts:** The teacher-to-student ratio is too low.

### MEASURES WERE TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT

Elementary Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan</li> <li>• Mid-Day Meal</li> <li>• Mahila Samakhya</li> </ul>
Secondary Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan</li> <li>• Girls Hostel Scheme</li> <li>• National Scheme of Incentives to Girls for Secondary Education</li> <li>• Inclusive Education for the Disabled at the Secondary Stage</li> <li>• Scheme of Vocational Education</li> <li>• National Merit-cum-Means Scholarship Scheme</li> <li>• Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan</li> </ul>
For Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheme for construction and running of Girls’ Hostel for students of secondary and higher secondary schools</li> </ul>
others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scholarship schemes for Minority students</li> <li>• National Scholarships</li> </ul>