

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

By



SOURCES



**Date: 18 Oct. 2023**

## **Important News Articles**

1. India, Europe & Middle East economic corridor will create jobs: Modi - Indian Express
2. Lok Sabha Speaker refers 'cash-for-query' complaint against Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra to ethics panel - The Hindu
3. SC gives Narwekar last chance to set timeline for anti-defection proceedings - The Hindu
4. Shri Nitin Gadkari approves 7 bridge projects worth Rs 118.50 Crore in Arunachal Pradesh under the Setu Bandhan Scheme - PIB
5. PM Modi spells out ISRO goals: Space station by 2035, Indian on Moon by 2040 - Indian Express
6. Plea seeks stay on Jewar Airport until wetland protected, UP govt to inform about status in 4 weeks - Indian Express
7. Amazon River falls to lowest in over a century amid Brazil drought - The Print
8. Rare bird from arctic tundra brings cheer to top birders - The Hindu

## **Editorials, Gists and Explainers**

1. A case for marriage equality: the legal arguments for same-sex marriage / Cannot legalise same-sex marriage, says SC Bench - The Hindu
2. A ferry from Tamil Nadu to Jaffna, once again - Indian Express

## **Quick Look**

1. Mt. Vesuvius
2. Bright Transient Survey Bot
3. Chakmas
4. Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002
5. Saptakoshi High Dam

## Important News Articles

### GS II

## 1. India, Europe & Middle East economic corridor will create jobs: Modi - Indian Express

**Relevance:** Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

**News:**

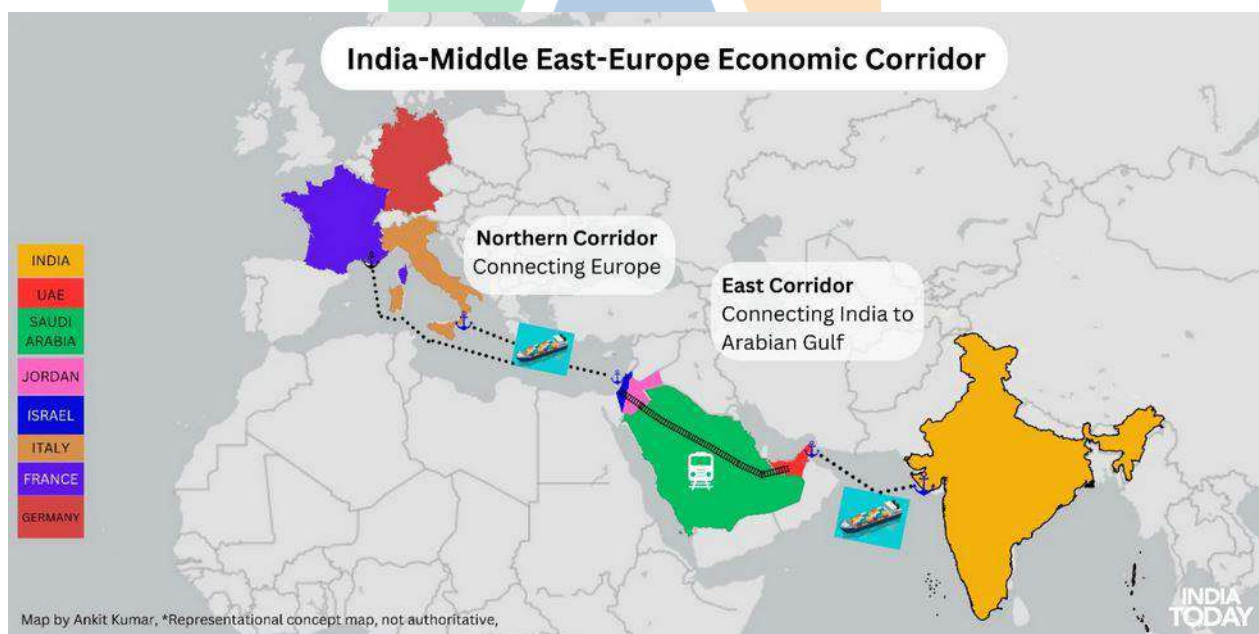
- Recently, the Prime Minister said that the **India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor** will **reduce business costs, increase logistical efficiency** and **create a large number of jobs**.

**India Middle East Europe Corridor**

- It is a network of **transport corridors comprising railway lines and sea lanes**.
- Objective:** To promote **economic integration** between Asia, the Arabian Gulf, and Europe.
- The proposed corridor will comprise **two separate corridors** namely
  - The Eastern Corridor:** It will connect India to the Arabian Gulf
  - The Northern Corridor:** It will connect the Arabian Gulf to Europe.
- The project involves
  - Transit by ship between India and Saudi Arabia
  - A rail link to the UAE and likely to Jordan
  - Then, the shipment will move by sea to Turkey and further by rail
- Cables for energy and digital connectivity as well as a pipeline** for clean hydrogen export will also be laid.
- Members:** India, US, UAE, Saudi Arabia, European Union (EU), Italy, France and Germany.

**Prelims Takeaway**

- India Middle East Europe Corridor
- Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment
- Belt and Road Initiative
- G7



**Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment (PGII)**

- The India Middle East Europe Corridor is **part of the Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment (PGII)**
- PGII is a collaborative effort by G7 nations to **fund infrastructure projects in developing nations**.

- It is the **G7 bloc's** counter to **China's Belt and Road Initiative**.
- It is part of **G7's** vision of the **Build-Back-Better** framework.

## 2. Lok Sabha Speaker refers 'cash-for-query' complaint against Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra to ethics panel - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Parliament and State legislatures—structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these.

**News:**

- Recently, the **Lok Sabha Speaker** referred a **BJP MP's** "bribe-for-query" complaint to the **Ethics Committee of the Lower House**.

**Ethics Committee of the Parliament**

- Constituted in **Rajya Sabha in 1997** and in **Lok Sabha in 2000**.
- It enforces the **code of conduct** of members of Parliament.
- It **examines the cases of misconduct** and **recommends appropriate action**.
  - The House **may or may not agree with the recommendations**.
- Thus, it is engaged in **maintaining discipline and decorum in Parliament**.

**Ethics Committee Lok Sabha**

- Should not contain **more than 15 members**.
- Members are **nominated by the Speaker** and **hold office for a term not exceeding one year**.
- It can **examine every complaint relating to unethical conduct** of a member of Lok Sabha referred to it by the Speaker.
- It can **formulate a Code of Conduct for members** and **suggest amendments or additions to the Code of Conduct** from time to time.

**Ethics Committee vs Privileges Committee**

- The work of the Ethics Committee and the Privileges Committee **often overlap**.
- A **corruption allegation** against an MP **can be sent to either body**.
  - Since, it involves an **accusation of serious breach of privilege and contempt of the House**.
- In the case of the Ethics Committee, **only an MP can be examined for misconduct**.
  - The mandate of the Committee of Privileges is to **safeguard the freedom, authority and dignity of Parliament**.
  - Thus, **a person who is not an MP can also be accused of breach of privilege** for actions that attack the authority and dignity of the House.

**Prelims Takeaway**

- Ethics Committee
- Privileges Committee
- Speaker of Lok Sabha

## 3. SC gives Narwekar last chance to set timeline for anti-defection proceedings - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Constitution of India —historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure.

**News:**

- Recently, **Maharashtra Assembly Speaker** was given a **final opportunity by the Supreme Court** to frame a realistic time schedule to **hear and decide the anti-defection proceedings** against Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and other MLAs.

**The Anti-Defection Law**

- The **Anti-Defection Law** passed in **1985** through the **52nd amendment** to the Constitution added the **Tenth Schedule** to the Indian Constitution.
- It aimed to combat **"the evil of political defections"**.
- According to it, a **member of a House** belonging to any political party becomes **disqualified**, if
  - he **voluntarily** gives up his **membership** of such political party
  - he **votes or abstains from voting** in such House **contrary to directions** issued by his political party and such act has not been **condoned** by the party
  - If any **independently** elected member **joins any political party**.
  - If any **nominated member** joins any political party after the **expiry of six months**.

**Exceptions**

**Prelims Takeaway**

- The Anti-Defection Law
- Supreme Court of India
- The Speaker

- If a member goes out of his party as a result of a **merger of the party** with another party.
  - A merger takes place when two-thirds of the members of the party have agreed to such merger.
- If a member, after being elected as the **presiding officer** of the House, **voluntarily gives up the membership** of his party or **rejoins it** after he ceases to hold that office.

#### **Powers of Speaker with regard to Anti-Defection Law**

- **Any question** regarding disqualification arising out of defection is to be decided by the **presiding officer** of the House.
- After the **Kihoto Hollohan case**, the Supreme Court declared that the **decision** of the **presiding officer is not final**
- It is **subject to judicial review** on the grounds of **malafide, perversity, etc.**

### GS III

#### 4. Shri Nitin Gadkari approves 7 bridge projects worth Rs 118.50 Crore in Arunachal Pradesh under the Setu Bandhan Scheme - PIB

**Relevance:** Infrastructure: Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc.

#### **News:**

- Recently, **Setu Bandhan Scheme** approval was granted for **seven bridge projects in Arunachal Pradesh** under the **Central Road and Infrastructure Fund (CRIF)**.

#### **Prelims Takeaway**

- Central Road and Infrastructure Fund
- Setu Bandhan Scheme

#### **Setu Bandhan Scheme**

- **It is an initiative of the** Ministry for Road Transport and Highways.
- **Objective:** To improve inter-state connectivity, especially in rural areas at the borders where state roads do not get the required attention.
- It is aimed at replacing railway line Level Crossings (LCs) with **Road Over Bridges (ROBs)/Rail Under Bridges (RUBs)** in states.

#### **Central Road and Infrastructure Fund**

- **Established in 2000** under the **Central Road Fund Act, 2000**.
- It was previously known as **the Central Road Fund**.
- It falls under the jurisdiction of the **Ministry of Finance**.
- The fund is financed through **a cess levied along with excise duty on petrol and diesel**.
- The Central Road Fund Act, 2000, was **amended in 2018** and its objectives are as follows
  - To use proceeds of the road cess under CRIF to finance other infrastructure projects.
    - Like waterways, some portion of the railway infrastructure, and even social infrastructure, including education institutions and medical colleges.

#### 5. PM Modi spells out ISRO goals: Space station by 2035, Indian on Moon by 2040 - Indian Express

**Relevance:** Achievements of Indians in science & technology; indigenization of technology and developing new technology.

#### **News:**

- The Prime Minister recently announced **two new targets for ISRO** building on the success of the recent **Chandrayaan-3 and Aditya L1 Missions**.
- These targets include setting up an **Indian space station by 2035** and taking the **first Indian to the Moon by 2040**.
- He also called on the scientists to work towards a **Venus Orbiter Mission and a Mars Lander Mission**.

#### **Prelims Takeaway**

- Gaganyaan Mission
- Chandrayaan Mission
- Bharatiya Antariksha Station

#### **The Future Targets**

### 1. Gaganyaan Mission

- A **high-level meeting** was chaired by the Indian PM to assess the progress of Gaganyaan Mission.
- The mission envisages undertaking the **demonstration of human spaceflight to Low Earth Orbit (LEO)** in the short term.
- It will lay the **foundation for a sustained Indian human space exploration program** in the long run.

### 2. Bharatiya Antariksha Station (Indian Space Station)

- The PM directed that India should now aim for new and ambitious goals, including **setting up the Indian Space Station by 2035**.
- The Indian space station is **likely to be much smaller**, built by combining a couple of modules similar to the **current crew module**, weighing only 20 tonnes

### 3. Sending first Indian to the Moon by 2040

- The Department of Space has been tasked with **developing a roadmap for Moon exploration**, including a **series of Chandrayaan missions**.
- The next Chandrayaan mission is likely a **sample return mission**.

### 4. Preparations for a Venus mission

- The current ISRO chief recently stated that it has already been configured.
- Probably, there would be **12 payloads**, including a **thermal camera, mass spectrometer and a cloud-monitoring camera**.

### 5. Other targets

- ISRO will also work on a **next generation launch vehicle, a new launch pad and human-centric laboratories and technologies**.

## 6. Plea seeks stay on Jewar Airport until wetland protected, UP govt to inform about status in 4 weeks - Indian Express

**Relevance:** Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation  
**News:**

- The **National Green Tribunal** recently gave the UP government four weeks to inform it about the status of the **Ramsar tag for Dhanauri wetlands**.
- This came following a petition seeking a stay on the **construction of Jewar Airport until Dhanauri Wetland is granted protection**.

#### Dhanauri Wetland

- It is a **bird-watching area** located in **Dhanauri village in Uttar Pradesh**.
- It is a **natural wetland** that hosts more than 217 bird species, including over **150 Sarus cranes**, and serves as a **vital birding and nesting site**.
- It has **received recognition as an Important Bird Area** by Bird Life International and has been documented by the **Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)**.
- During **peak migratory seasons** (November to March), the **wetland hosts over 50,000 waterfowls**.

#### Significance

- Dhanauri plays a crucial role in supporting the **vulnerable Sarus crane population** (State Bird of UP).
- The wetland **fulfills two key Ramsar site criterias** out of nine
  - It hosts over 1% of the biogeographic Sarus crane population.
  - The area serves as a congregation site for 20,000+ waterfowls and various other species.

#### Ramsar Convention

- Also known as the '**Convention on Wetlands**', it is an **intergovernmental environmental treaty** established by **UNESCO in 1971**.
- It is **named after the city of Ramsar in Iran**, where the convention was signed that year.
- Ramsar sites are **wetlands of global significance** recognized under this treaty, especially if they **provide habitat to waterfowl (about 180 species of birds)**.

#### Prelims Takeaway

- Dhanauri Wetland
- Ramsar Convention
- National Green Tribunal

## 7. Amazon River falls to lowest in over a century amid Brazil drought - The Print

**Relevance:** Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation

**News:**

- Recently, the **Amazon River fell to its lowest level** in over a century.

**Amazon River**

- It is the **world's largest river by water volume and width**.
- It is the **second-longest river in the world** after the Nile.
- It accounts for **one-fifth of the total volume of freshwater** entering the oceans globally.
- It represents about **half of the Earth's remaining rainforest**, and also constitutes its **single largest reserve of biological resources**.
- It is sometimes referred to as the "**lungs of the Earth**" due to its role in **regulating the planet's oxygen and carbon cycles**.
- Course:**
  - Its journey begins high in the **Andes Mountains**.
  - Then **makes its way east** through thousands of miles of rainforests and lowlands.
  - It empties into the **Atlantic Ocean on the northeastern coast of Brazil**.
- Drainage:**
  - It has the **largest drainage area of any river system**.
  - Its watershed spans the countries of **Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela and Bolivia**.
- Tributaries:** The Rio Negro, the Madeira River, the Xingu River etc.

### Prelims Takeaway

- Amazon River
- Droughts

## 8. Rare bird from arctic tundra brings cheer to top birders - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation

**News:**

- Recently, a **rare bird from the arctic tundra, Buff-breasted sandpiper**, was sighted in Kannur, Kerala.

**Buff-breasted Sandpiper**

- It is one of the **most delicately beautiful of the shorebirds**.
- Unlike most shorebirds, **they forage in dry, grassy habitats, not wetlands**.
- It breeds in the **open arctic tundra of North America**
- It is a **very long-distance migrant**, spending the **non-breeding season mainly in South America**, especially Argentina.
- It **migrates mainly through central North America** and is uncommon on the coasts.
- The male Buff-breasted Sandpipers **gather in groups on display territories called "leks"**.
  - There, they flash their eye-catching underwings to compete for females' attention.
- IUCN Status:** Near Threatened

**Arctic Tundra**

- It is the **northernmost biome**, which is a **vast, dry, rocky place with few trees**.
- It **covers the land north of the Arctic Circle** up to the polar ice cap.
- It **reaches as far south as the Hudson Bay area of Canada** and the **northern part of Iceland**.
- One **important characteristic** of the tundra is **the permafrost**.
  - The word "permafrost" is short-form for the word "permanently frozen".
- The ground in the arctic tundra **tends to be rocky** and the **soil has few nutrients**.
  - This is because the organic matter there breaks down very slowly.
- Despite the lack of trees, this biome is still **considered a major carbon sink**.
  - This is due to the large amounts of organic matter found in deposits of peat and humus.

### Prelims Takeaway

- Buff-breasted Sandpiper
- Arctic Tundra

## Editorials, Gists and Explainers

## 1. A case for marriage equality: the legal arguments for same-sex marriage / Cannot legalise same-sex marriage, says SC Bench - The Hindu

**Relevance:** Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States and the performance of these schemes; mechanisms, laws, institutions and Bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections.

**Context:**

- A **Constitution Bench** of the Supreme Court recently held that **only the legislature can recognise or regulate same-sex marriage** due to lack of fundamental or unqualified right to marry.
- The Bench could **not reach a consensus on providing** even long-abiding **relationships between same-sex couples the status of a legally recognised “civil union”**.
- The Bench unanimously accepted the **need to end discrimination against same-sex couples**.

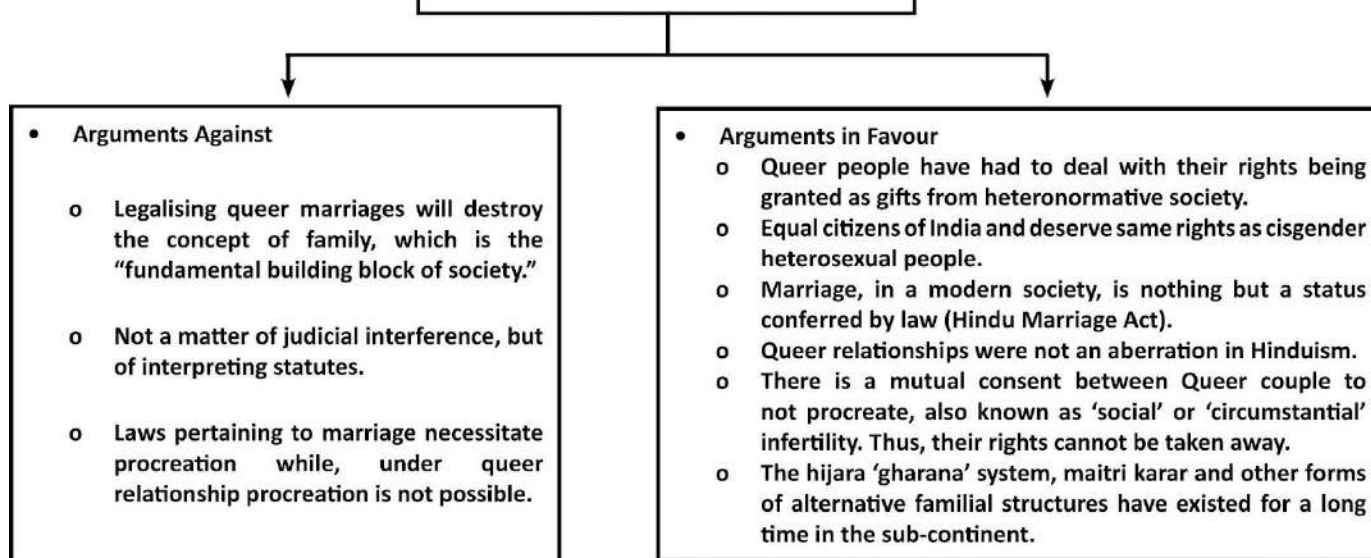
**Government’s Stand on the Plea**

- The Centre **filed an affidavit** in the Supreme Court **frowning upon same-sex marriage**.
- It invoked the **“accepted view”** that marriage between a **biological man and woman** is a **“holy union, a sacrament and sanskar (culture)”** in India.

**Demand for Debate in Parliament on the Issue**

- More than 20 retired judges **emphasised on the need to debate the issue in Parliament** as the legalisation of **same-sex marriage will “strike at the very root of the family system”**.

### Queer and their Rights



## 2. A ferry from Tamil Nadu to Jaffna, once again - Indian Express

**Relevance:** India and its neighbourhood- relations.

**Context:**

- Recently, a **ferry service was started between India and Sri Lanka**, from **Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu** to cross the Palk Strait and travel to **Kankesanthurai in Jaffna, Sri Lanka**.



### India-Sri Lanka Maritime Connectivity

- The maritime service, begun in the early 1900s, was discontinued in the 1980s in the wake of ethnic strife in Sri Lanka.
- Reactivating the sea route had been on the agenda of governments of both countries for more than 12 years.
- India and Sri Lanka signed an MoU for sea connectivity in 2011 and a ferry service between Tuticorin and Colombo began that year.
- It was discontinued in less than six months, because of logistical reasons.

### Strengthens India's Neighbourhood First policy

- The Indian government has located India-Sri Lanka ties within its Neighbourhood First policy.
- In July, during the Sri Lankan President's visit to India, the two governments came out with a vision document.
- This document emphasised maritime connectivity, including the development of ports at Colombo, Kankesanthurai and Trincomalee and the revival of sea routes.
- Besides improving business ties between the Indian Ocean neighbours, it is likely to bring pilgrims to religious centres in southern Sri Lanka and temple towns in south India.

### Countering China's influence

- In recent decades, Beijing has loomed large over India-Sri Lanka ties.
- China is Sri Lanka's biggest bilateral creditor and has roped it in its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).
- Besides a \$4-billion aid package, India has sought to counter Beijing's influence by underlining the civilisational aspects of its ties with Sri Lanka, that involved the movement of people and ideas over centuries.
- It is significant, therefore, that the ferry service was launched a day before the Sri Lankan President left for China for a BRI meeting.

### Conclusion

- The recent ferry service is going to **enhance commerce between India and Sri Lanka** and **encourage people-to-people contacts**.
- With this, there is a need to expedite resumption of other projects like the Rameshwaram-Talaimannar ferry service for further improving the relation between both the nations.



**Mentorship**  
India

## Quick Look

### 1. Mt. Vesuvius

- It is an active volcano that rises above the Bay of Naples on the plain of Campania in southern Italy.
- It is the only active volcano in mainland Europe.
- The volcano is classified as a complex stratovolcano because its eruptions typically involve explosive eruptions as well as pyroclastic flows.
- It is most famous for the 79 AD eruption that destroyed the Roman cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum.
- It is part of the Campanian volcanic arc, a line of volcanoes that formed over a subduction zone created by the convergence of the African and Eurasian plates.
- Under Vesuvius, the lower part of the subducting slab has torn and detached from the upper part to form what is called a "slab window."
- This makes Vesuvius' rocks slightly different chemically from the rocks that erupted from the other Campanian volcanoes.

### 2. Bright Transient Survey Bot

- It is a machine-learning algorithm which has been trained by using over 1.4 million images from nearly 16,000 sources.
- It detected the newly discovered supernova named SN2023tyk in data from the Zwicky Transient Facility (ZTF)
- This new system not only allows automation of the entire search for new supernovae across the night sky but also eliminates human error and dramatically increases speed.
- It searched, detected, confirmed, classified, and announced the findings without any human intervention.

### 3. Chakmas

- Chakmas are one of the largest ethnic groups native to the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) region of southeastern Bangladesh.
- They have their own age-old culture, language, and scripts.
- They primarily live in the Chittagong Hills Tracts of Bangladesh, the Chin and Arakan provinces of Myanmar, in the northeastern Indian states of Mizoram, Tripura, and Arunachal Pradesh, and a few families in West Bengal.
- The majority of Chakmas practise Theravada Buddhism, tinged with aspects of animism and Hinduism.
- The Chakmas worship Hindu deities like Lakshmi, who is worshipped as the Goddess of the Harvest.
- Chakmas are divided into clans (gojas), which are further subdivided into subclans (guttis).
- Members of the same subclan are forbidden to marry each other.
- The Chakmas speak a dialect of Bengali (Bangla) and use the standard Bengali alphabet.
- They practice shifting cultivation called JUM.
- They grow paddy, maize, cotton, sesame, etc. in their JUM, along with vegetables and spices.

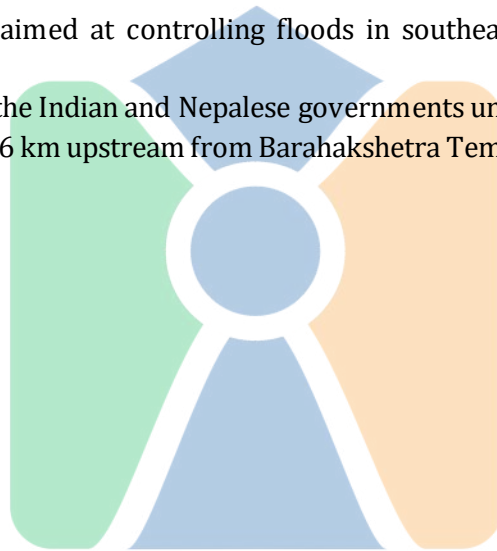
### 4. Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002

- The PMLA was enacted in response to India's global commitment (Vienna Convention) to combat the menace of money laundering.
- These include

- United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances 1988
- Basle Statement of Principles, 1989
- Forty Recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering, 1990
- Political Declaration and Global Program of Action adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1990.
- It is a criminal law enacted to prevent money laundering and to provide for confiscation of property derived from, or involved in, money-laundering and related matters.
- The provisions of this act are applicable to all financial institutions, banks (Including RBI), mutual funds, insurance companies, and their financial intermediaries.

## 5. Saptakoshi High Dam

- It is a multipurpose project proposed to be constructed on the Saptakoshi River of Nepal (known as Koshi River in India).
- The project is primarily aimed at controlling floods in southeast Nepal and northern Bihar and generating hydropower.
- It is a bilateral project of the Indian and Nepalese governments under the Koshi agreement.
- The proposed place lies 1.6 km upstream from Barahakshetra Temple in the Sunsari district of Nepal.



**Mentorship**  
India

## Prelims Track Question

**Q1. Consider the following countries**

1. Saudi Arabia
2. USA
3. Egypt
4. Italy

**How many of the countries mentioned above is/are a part of India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. Only three
- D. All four

**Q2. Consider the following statements**

1. A corruption allegation against an MP can be sent to the Ethics Committee only.
2. In the case of the Privileges Committee, only an MP can be examined for misconduct.

**Which of the statements given above is/are not correct?**

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

**Q3. Consider the following statements regarding the Anti-Defection Law in India**

1. If any independently elected member joins any political party, he will not be disqualified from his position.
2. It is applicable only to members of the Lok Sabha and does not apply to members of the Rajya Sabha or state legislative assemblies.
3. Any question regarding disqualification arising out of defection is to be decided by the President Of India.

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q4. Consider the following statements regarding the Central Road and Infrastructure Fund**

1. It is used for the railway infrastructure as well as social infrastructure works.
2. It is managed by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways.
3. It is financed through a cess levied along with excise duty on petrol and diesel.

**How many of the statements given above is/are correct ?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three
- D. None

**Q5. With reference to International Space Station (ISS), consider the following statements**

1. The ISS was taken into space piece-by-piece and gradually built-in orbit.
2. NASA has announced plans to retire and decommission the International Space Station (ISS) by 2031.

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

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

**Q6. The "Dhanauri Wetland" seen in the news recently is located in which of the following states?**

- A. West Bengal
- B. Assam
- C. Himachal Pradesh
- D. Uttar Pradesh

**Q7. Consider the following statements with reference to the Amazon River**

1. It is the world's largest river by water volume and width.
2. It empties into the Pacific Ocean off the coast of Peru.
3. It accounts for one-fifth of the total volume of freshwater entering the oceans globally.

**How many of the statements given above is/are not correct?**

- A. Only one
- B. Only two
- C. All three

D. None

**Q8. Consider the following statements regarding the Buff-breasted Sandpiper**

1. Similar to most shorebirds, they too forage in wetlands.
2. The male Buff-breasted Sandpipers gather in groups on display territories called leks.

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

- A. Only 1
- B. Only 2
- C. Both 1 and 2
- D. Neither 1 nor 2

- A. Declaration of freedom of trade and commerce through the medium of the internet as a fundamental right.
- B. Allowing women entry in Sabarimala temple
- C. Concept of 'ex post facto' Environmental Clearance (EC)
- D. Decriminalisation of homosexuality

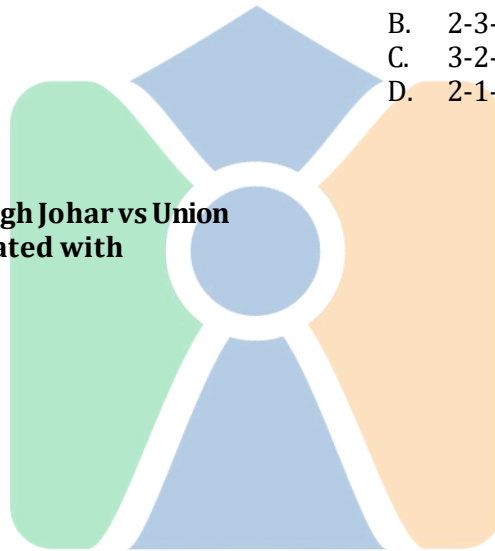
**Q10. Arrange the following water bodies from North to South**

1. Gulf of Mannar
2. Palk Bay
3. Palk Strait

**Select the correct code**

- A. 1-2-3
- B. 2-3-1
- C. 3-2-1
- D. 2-1-3

**Q9. The famous 'Navtej Singh Johar vs Union of India' case is associated with**



**Mentorship**  
India

## Prelims Track Answer

### Ans. 1 Option C is correct

#### Explanation

- India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor project includes India, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, the European Union, France, Italy, Germany and the US. **Hence, Option C is correct.**
- The project will aim to enable greater trade among the involved countries, including energy products.
- It will include a railway and ship-rail transit network and road transport routes.
- The corridor will include a rail link as well as an electricity cable, a hydrogen pipeline and a high-speed data cable.
- In the coming times, it will be a major medium of economic integration between India, West Asia and Europe.

### Ans. 2 Option C is correct

#### Explanation

- The work of the Ethics Committee and the Privileges Committee often overlap.
- A corruption allegation against an MP can be sent to either body, since it involves an accusation of serious breach of privilege and contempt of the House. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- In the case of the Ethics Committee, only an MP can be examined for misconduct. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**
- The mandate of the Committee of Privileges is to safeguard the freedom, authority and dignity of Parliament.
- Thus, a person who is not an MP can also be accused of breach of privilege for actions that attack the authority and dignity of the House.

### Ans.3 Option D is correct

#### Explanation

- The Anti-Defection Law was passed in 1985 through the 52nd amendment to the Constitution to combat “the evil of political defections”.
- Any question regarding disqualification arising out of defection is to be decided by the presiding officer of the House. **Hence, statement 3 is incorrect.**
- According to it, a member of a House belonging to any political party becomes disqualified, if
  - he voluntarily gives up his membership of such political party

- he votes or abstains from voting in such House contrary to directions issued by his political party and such act has not been condoned by the party
- If any independently elected member joins any political party. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- If any nominated member joins any political party after the expiry of six months.
- The Anti-Defection Law is applicable to both members of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, as well as state legislative assemblies. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**

### Ans. 4 Option B is correct

#### Explanation

- The Central Road and Infrastructure Fund was established in 2000 under the Central Road Fund Act, 2000.
- It falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Finance. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**
- The fund is financed through a cess levied along with excise duty on petrol and diesel. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- 2018 Amendment: To use proceeds of the road cess under CRIF to finance other infrastructure projects like waterways, some portion of the railway infrastructure, and even social infrastructure. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**

### Ans. 5 Option C is correct

#### Explanation

- The International Space Station (ISS) is the largest artificial object in space and the largest satellite in low Earth orbit.
- This high-flying satellite is a laboratory for new technologies and an observation platform for astronomical, environmental and geological research.
- Five different space agencies representing 15 countries built the USD 100-billion International Space Station and continue to operate it today.
- The International Space Station was taken into space piece-by-piece and gradually built in orbit. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- It consists of modules and connecting nodes that contain living quarters and laboratories, as well as exterior trusses that provide structural support, and solar panels that provide power.

- The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has announced plans to retire and decommission the International Space Station (ISS) by 2031. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**

**Ans. 6 Option D is correct**

**Explanation**

- Dhanauri Wetland is a bird-watching area located in Dhanauri village in Uttar Pradesh. **Hence, option D is correct.**
- It is a natural wetland that hosts more than 217 bird species, including over 150 Sarus cranes, and serves as a vital birding and nesting site.
- It has received recognition as an Important Bird Area by Bird Life International and has been documented by the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS).
- It plays a crucial role in supporting the vulnerable Sarus crane population (State Bird of UP).

**Ans. 7 Option A is correct**

**Explanation**

- The Amazon river is the world's largest river by water volume and width. **Hence, statement 1 is correct.**
- It is the second-longest river in the world after the Nile.
- It accounts for one-fifth of the total volume of freshwater entering the oceans globally. **Hence, statement 3 is correct.**
- It is sometimes referred to as the "lungs of the Earth" due to its role in regulating the planet's oxygen and carbon cycles.
- Its journey begins high in the Andes Mountains and it empties into the Atlantic Ocean on the northeastern coast of Brazil.
- It has the largest drainage area of any river system.
- Its watershed spans the countries of Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela and Bolivia. **Hence, statement 2 is incorrect.**
- Tributaries: The Rio Negro, the Madeira River, the Xingu River etc.

**Ans. 8 Option B is correct**

**Explanation**

- Buff-breasted Sandpiper is one of the most delicately beautiful of the shorebirds.
- Unlike most shorebirds, they forage in dry, grassy habitats, not wetlands. **Hence, statement 1 is incorrect.**
- It breeds in the open arctic tundra of North America

- It is a very long-distance migrant, spending the non-breeding season mainly in South America, especially Argentina.
- It migrates mainly through central North America and is uncommon on the coasts.
- The male Buff-breasted Sandpipers gather in groups on display territories called "leks" where they flash their eye-catching underwings to compete for females' attention. **Hence, statement 2 is correct.**
- IUCN Status: Near Threatened

**Ans. 9 Option D is correct**

**Explanation**

- Navtej Singh Johar vs. Union Of India (2018) case decriminalised homosexuality. **Hence, option D is correct.**
- It dismissed the position taken by SC in Suresh Kumar Koushal case (2013) that the LGBTQ community constitute a minuscule minority and so there was no need to decriminalise homosexual sex.

**Ans. 10 Option C is correct**

**Explanation**

- Palk Strait is a narrow stretch of water that separates the Indian state of Tamil Nadu from the northern part of Sri Lanka.
- Palk Bay, located to the south of Palk Strait, is a shallow bay that lies between the southeastern coast of India (Tamil Nadu) and the northern coast of Sri Lanka.
- It is larger and extends further south than the Palk Strait.
- The Gulf of Mannar is situated to the south of both Palk Strait and Palk Bay.
- It is a large bay in the Indian Ocean that lies between the southeastern tip of India (Tamil Nadu) and the western coast of Sri Lanka. **Hence, option C is correct.**

# Mentorship India

Our mission is crystal clear – to provide the finest UPSC mentorship and guidance available in India. We recognize that the path to success in the UPSC examination is both demanding and multifaceted. This is precisely why we have developed a comprehensive approach that goes beyond conventional coaching. Our commitment lies in fostering excellence by equipping aspirants with the necessary tools, knowledge, and unwavering support to not only excel in the examination but also in life itself.

Mentorship India represents more than just an organization; it is a community of ambitious individuals bound together by the shared objective of conquering the UPSC examination. We warmly invite you to embark on this transformative journey alongside us. Whether you are a novice taking your initial steps or a seasoned aspirant aiming for the pinnacle, Mentorship India is your dependable companion in the relentless pursuit of excellence.

+91 9999 057869  
www.mentorshipindia.com

A-92, Third Floor, Hari Nagar  
Delhi - 110064

 @mentorship.india