



**UPSC
Mentorship**
A Unit of Mentorship India

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

02 September 2024



SOURCES



Table of Contents

1.All textbooks glorifying Akbar will be burnt: Minister.....	2
2.Poba Reserve Forest to join wildlife sanctuary list in Assam.....	3
3.EAC defers proposal for grant of EC to Stage-II of Uri-I Hydroelectric Project.....	4
4.Government Measures for LGBTQIA+ Community: A Comprehensive Overview.....	4
5.Reforming the process of judicial appointments.....	6
6. India trade ministry proposes anti-dumping duty on Chinese aluminium foil imports.....	8
7. Centre to establish foot-and-mouth disease-free zones in eight States.....	9
8. India's neighbourhood watch, past and present.....	10
9. A crisis in WANA that no one talks about.....	11
10.India has a special China problem above world's general China problem: External Minister.....	12
11. Delhi gets a new Chief Secretary.....	14
12. 47 rescued from Laos cyber scam centres.....	14
Daily Quiz	16
Solutions	17



GS I

1. All textbooks glorifying Akbar will be burnt: Minister

Source: The Hindu

Context: It was said that all school textbooks praising Mughal emperor Akbar will be burned.

Akbar's Early Life and Regency:

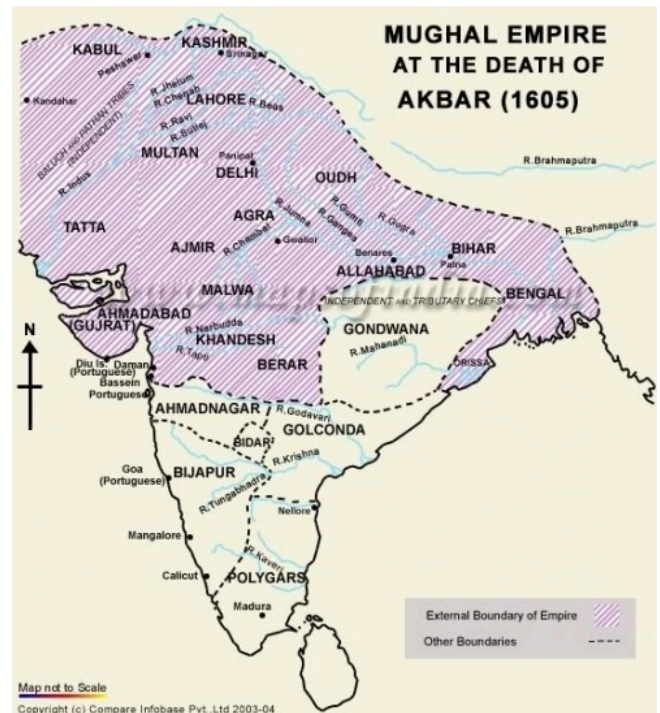
- **Coronation:** Akbar, aged thirteen, was crowned in Kalanaur, Punjab, in 1556 following his father Humayun's death.
- **Regent:** Bairam Khan, Humayun's confidant and Akbar's tutor, served as regent from 1556 to 1560.

Military Conquests:

- **North India Expansion:** Under Bairam Khan, Akbar's empire expanded from Kabul to Jaunpur, including Gwalior and Ajmer.
- **Second Battle of Panipat (1556):** Major victory against Hemu and Afghan forces, securing Mughal dominance.
- **Malwa (1562):** Conquered from Baz Bahadur, who was later appointed as a mansabdar in Akbar's court.
- **Gondwana (1564):** Annexed after defeating Rani Durgavati and her son Vir Narayan.
- **Gujarat (1573):** Conquered from Muzaffar Shah; Akbar established the new capital, Fatehpur Sikri, in commemoration of this victory.
- **Battle of Haldighati (1576):** Mughal army led by Man Singh defeated Rana Pratap Singh; most Rajput rulers then accepted Akbar's suzerainty.
- **Bihar and Bengal (1576):** Defeated Daud Khan, the Afghan ruler, annexing both provinces.
- **Khandesh (1591):** Occupied by Akbar's forces.
- **Ahmednagar:** Chand Bibi defended the city against Mughal forces.

Religious Policy of Akbar:

- **Abolition of Taxes:**
 - Abolished the pilgrim tax.
 - Discontinued the jizya tax.
- **Ibadat Khana (1575):**
 - Ordered the construction of the Ibadat Khana (House of Worship) at Fatehpur Sikri.
 - Invited scholars from various religions, including Hinduism, Jainism, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism.
- **Din-i Ilahi (1582):**
 - Introduced a new religion called Din-i Ilahi or Divine Faith, emphasising the belief in one God and incorporating positive elements from multiple religions.



- **Philosophy of Sulh-i-Kul:**
 - Promoted the principle of Sulh-i-Kul (peace to all), advocating for tolerance and harmony among different faiths.
- **Discontinuation of Debates (1582):**
 - Ended religious debates in the Ibadat Khana to prevent inter-religious conflicts.
- **Criticism and Influence:**
 - Badauni, a contemporary writer, criticised Akbar's religious experiments.
 - Sheikh Mubarak was Akbar's religious guru.
 - Akbar's religious policies were primarily drafted by Abul Faizi.

2. Poba Reserve Forest to join wildlife sanctuary list in Assam

Source: The Telegraph Online

Context: The Poba Reserve Forest in Assam's Dhemaji district will soon be notified as a wildlife sanctuary.

Poba Reserve Forest:

- **Location:** Northeastern Assam, India.
- **Established:** Reserved Forest (RF) created in 1924.
- **Boundaries:**
 - **North:** Foothills of the Himalayan range in Arunachal Pradesh.
 - **East and South:** Confluence of Siang, Dibang, and Lohit Rivers into the Brahmaputra, and Dibru-Saikhowa National Park.
 - **West:** Revenue villages of Jonai Sub-division, Dhemaji district, Assam.
- **Inhabiting Ethnic Groups:** Mising, Bodo, Sonowal Kachari, Hajong (Rabha).

Flora and Fauna:

- Rich in biodiversity; one of North-East India's richest rainforests.
- Arboreal species include slow loris and capped langurs.
- **Common mammal:** Wild boar.
- Hosts about 45 species of birds and reptiles.
- Confluence of **Siang and Lohit rivers** supports diverse fish species.
- Renowned for its variety of orchids.

Ecological Significance:

- Important migratory route for animals, particularly elephants.
- Connects D' Ering Memorial Wildlife Sanctuary (Arunachal Pradesh), Kabu Chapri Proposed Reserve Forest, and Dibru-Saikhowa National Park (Assam).
- Second significant elephant migration route across the Brahmaputra River, after the Panpur-Kaziranga route.



3.EAC defers proposal for grant of EC to Stage-II of Uri-I Hydroelectric Project

Source: Daily Excelsior

Context: The Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) has postponed the Environmental Clearance (EC) decision for Stage-II of the Uri-I Hydroelectric Project.

Uri-I Hydroelectric Project:

- **Location:** Uri town, Baramulla district, Jammu & Kashmir, near the Line of Control (LOC).
- **Commissioned:** 1997.
- **Installed Capacity:** 480 MW, comprising four units of 120 MW each.
- **River:** Jhelum

Jhelum River:

- **Flow:** India and Pakistan.
- **Tributary:** Indus River.
- **Main Waterway:** Kashmir Valley.
- **Region:** Largest and most western of the five Punjab rivers, flows through Jhelum District, Pakistan.
- **Course:**
 - **Origin:** Verinag Spring, Anantnag, Kashmir Valley.
 - **Path:** Flows through Srinagar, Wular Lake, then into Pakistan.
 - **Confluence:** Joins Chenab River near Trimmu, Pakistan.
- **Major Tributaries:**
 - Kishanganga (Neelum) River: Joins near Muzaffarabad.
 - Kunhar River: Connects PoK and Pakistan at Kohala Bridge.
 - Other Tributaries: Sandran, Bringi, Arapath, Watlara, Lidder, and Veshaw Rivers.

GS II

4. Government Measures for LGBTQIA+ Community: A Comprehensive Overview

Source: The Hindu

Context: The Union government has announced that LGBTQIA+ couples will be treated as a single household for ration card purposes.

Rainbow of Hope: LGBTQIA+ Rights and Recognition

Many countries, including India, have legally recognized LGBTQIA+ individuals as equal citizens after extensive advocacy and activism.



- **Constitutional Mandate:** The Preamble of the Indian Constitution emphasises justice—social, economic, and political—for all citizens.

Understanding LGBTQIA+

- Lesbian
- Gay
- Bisexual
- Transgender
- Queer
- Intersex
- Asexual
- + (Other orientation and identities)

Historical Milestones in India:

- **1861:** Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code criminalised homosexual activities as “against the order of nature.”
- **1977:** Shakuntala Devi published “The World of Homosexuals,” the first study on homosexuality in India.
- **1994:** Legal recognition granted for voting rights as a third sex.
- **2014:** Supreme Court recognized transgender people as a third gender.
- **2017:** Freedom to express sexual orientation safely granted to the LGBTQIA+ community.
- **6 September 2018:** Supreme Court decriminalised consensual homosexual activities by striking down part of Section 377.
- **2019:** Parliament enacted the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act to safeguard the rights of transgender individuals.

Key Legal Cases:

- **Navtej Singh Johar Vs. Union of India:** Affirmed that Article 14 of the Constitution guarantees equality before the law, decriminalising homosexuality.
- **Shafin Jahan Vs. Asokan K.M. (2018):** Established the right to choose a same-sex partner as a fundamental right.
- **National Legal Services Authority Vs. Union of India (2014):** Recognized the status of transgenders as a third gender, framing it as a human rights issue.

Challenges Faced by LGBTQIA+ Communities:

- **Marginalisation:** Racism, sexism, and poverty alongside homophobia and transphobia.
- **Impact of Family Reactions:** Rejection by families can adversely affect mental and physical health.
- **Rural Disadvantage:** Often lack access to support networks and are less visible.

The Fight for Rights: A Timeline

In a landmark judgment, a **Delhi High Court Bench** decides to **strike down Section 377**, saying it violates the **fundamental rights to life, liberty, and equality** as enshrined in the Indian constitution.

July
2009



Navtej Singh Johar, an award-winning Bharatanatyam dancer, **files a writ petition** in Supreme Court **challenging Section 377**.

Dec
2013

Supreme Court overturns Delhi High Court's judgment, saying Section 377 “does not suffer from the vice of unconstitutionality and the declaration made by the division bench of the high court is legally unsustainable”.

June
2016



A **Supreme Court bench** hearing petitions against **Aadhaar** **unanimously rules** that **privacy is a fundamental right**. The court also says, “**Discrimination** against an individual on the basis of **sexual orientation** is **deeply offensive** to the dignity and self-worth of the individual.”



Aug
2017



- **Homelessness:** Family rejection or abuse, leading to education gaps and risky behaviours.
- **Employment Barriers:** Challenges in obtaining gender identity documents hinder employment opportunities.
- **Social Recognition Issues:** Gendered systems and infrastructure create difficulties for LGBTQIA+ individuals in public and private spaces.

Path Forward

- **Changing Social Attitudes:**
 - Utilise media to redefine family roles and societal attitudes.
 - Films like "Badhaai Do," "Shubh Mangal Zyada Saavdhan," and "Aligarh" can promote positive representation and understanding.
- **From Special Treatment to Equal Treatment**
 - Advocate for equality rather than special treatment, emphasising that LGBTQIA+ individuals are not inherently different but deserve equal rights and recognition.
- **Improving Parenting Approaches**
 - Encourage acceptance of LGBTQIA+ children to foster a more inclusive society.
- **Empowering LGBTQIA+ Youth**
 - Provide open forums and supportive platforms like **Gaysi** and **Gaylaxy** to ensure LGBTQIA+ youth feel recognized and supported.

Conclusion

- **Ongoing Efforts:** Continued efforts to address discrimination and promote inclusion are essential for advancing LGBTQIA+ rights and ensuring equality in Indian society.

5. Reforming the process of judicial appointments

Source: The Hindu

Context: In April, while 60 lakh cases remained pending at various High Courts, 30% of the seats remained vacant, according to a report published by the Department of Justice.

Judicial Appointments and Challenges in India: Key Points:

- **Current Situation:**
 - **Case Backlog:** As of April, 6 million cases are pending in High Courts.
 - **Vacancies:** 30% of judicial seats remain unfilled.
- **Collegium System vs. NJAC:**
 - **Collegium System:**
 - **Current Status:** Supreme Court struck down the National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) Act, maintaining the collegium system.
 - **Criticisms:** Lack of transparency, accountability, and potential nepotism.
 - **National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC):**
 - **Proposal:** Aimed to replace the collegium system with a body including the Chief Justice of India, Law Minister, two eminent persons, and two senior judges.
 - **Controversy:** Supreme Court ruled NJAC unconstitutional, citing concerns over judicial independence and potential government control.
- **Global Perspectives on Judicial Appointments:**
 - **United Kingdom:**
 - **System:** Constitutional Reform Act, 2005, established a Judicial Appointments Commission.
 - **Composition:** 15 members including judicial, professional, and lay members.



- **South Africa:**
 - **System:** Judicial Service Commission advises the President on appointments.
 - **Composition:** Includes Chief Justice, Judge President, Minister of Justice, and various other members from the legal and academic fields.
- **France:**
 - **System:** Judges are selected by the High Council of the Judiciary or, for lower courts, by the Minister of Justice with advisory input.
- **Reworking NJAC:**
 - **Potential Benefits:**
 - **Faster Appointments:** A more democratic and efficient system.
 - **Transparency:** Could address the lack of clarity in the collegium system.
 - **Challenges:**
 - **Balancing Interests:** Need to reconcile judicial independence with accountability.
 - **Stakeholder Engagement:** Reworking NJAC should involve the judiciary, executive, and civil society to address all concerns.

Way Forward:

- **Need for Reform:** To reduce delays in justice and improve the appointment process.
- **Strategic Approach:** Develop a balanced system that maintains judicial integrity while enhancing efficiency.

Conclusion:

- **Importance:** Addressing judicial appointment issues is crucial for improving justice delivery and maintaining public confidence in the judiciary.



GS III

6. India trade ministry proposes anti-dumping duty on Chinese aluminium foil imports

Source: Economic Times

Context: The Ministry of Commerce and Industry recently recommended imposing an anti-dumping duty on aluminium foil imported from China.

Anti-Dumping Duty:

- **Definition:**
 - A tariff imposed by a domestic government on foreign imports priced below fair market value.
 - Aimed at addressing dumping, where a product is sold at a lower price abroad than in its domestic market.
- **Purpose:**
 - Protects local businesses from unfair competition by foreign imports.
 - Rectifies trade distortions caused by dumping to restore fair trade conditions.
- **Calculation:**
 - Set at a level equal to the difference between the normal domestic price and the foreign market price.
- **WTO Regulations:**
 - Permitted under WTO rules if evidence shows dumping and genuine injury to domestic industries.
 - Affected countries must demonstrate dumping, extent of dumping, and resulting injury or threat to their market.
- **Impact:**
 - Aims to protect domestic markets but may lead to higher prices for consumers.
- **Authority:**
 - In India, the Ministry of Finance is responsible for the final decision on imposing anti-dumping duties.

Countervailing Duty (CVD):

- **Definition:**
 - An import tax imposed to counteract the impact of foreign subsidies that lower the price of imported goods.
- **Purpose:**
 - Protects domestic producers from the adverse effects of foreign subsidies that artificially lower product prices.
 - Prevents market flooding with subsidised foreign goods.
- **WTO Regulations:**
 - Permitted by WTO if subsidies are confirmed and they harm the domestic industry.

Comparison: Anti-Dumping Duty vs. Countervailing Duty:

- **Anti-Dumping Duty:**
 - Targets goods sold below normal value.



- Duty amount is based on the margin of dumping.
- **Countervailing Duty:**
 - Targets goods benefiting from foreign government subsidies.
 - Duty amount is based on the subsidy value received by the foreign producers.

7. Centre to establish foot-and-mouth disease-free zones in eight States

Source: The Hindu

Context: The Union government will set up foot-and-mouth disease-free zones in eight states: Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra, and Gujarat.

Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD):

- **Definition:** Severe, highly contagious viral disease affecting livestock, with significant economic impact.
- **Affected Animals:** Cattle, swine, sheep, goats, and other cloven-hoofed ruminants. Not affecting horses, dogs, or cats.
- **Susceptibility:** Intensively reared animals are more prone than traditional breeds.
- **Impact:** Disrupts livestock production and international trade. No threat to human health or food safety.
- **Virus:** Caused by an aphthovirus of the Picornaviridae family. Seven strains (A, O, C, SAT1, SAT2, SAT3, Asia1) are endemic in various countries.
- **Immunity:** Immunity to one strain does not protect against others.
- **Transmission:** Spreads through excretions and secretions, including aerosolized virus. Transmitted via respiratory or oral routes.
- **Symptoms:**
 - Fever and blister-like sores on the tongue, lips, mouth, teats, and hooves.
 - Ruptured blisters cause lameness and reluctance to move or eat.
 - Other symptoms include depression, hypersalivation, loss of appetite, weight loss, growth retardation, and reduced milk production.
 - Disease causes severe production losses; affected animals often remain weakened even after recovery.
- **History:** First disease officially recognized by the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH).
- **Vaccines:** Available but must match the specific virus type and subtype causing the outbreak.



Editorial, Ideas and Opinions

8. India's neighbourhood watch, past and present

Source: The Hindu

Context: India sometimes overestimates its influence in its neighbourhood and engages in undue self-criticism when events go awry.

India's Neighborhood Dynamics: A Historical and Contemporary Overview:

- **Early 2000s Developments:**
 - **Bangladesh (2008-2009):**
 - Transition from military rule to democratic governance.
 - India played a key role in facilitating free elections and fostering a beneficial partnership.
 - **Sri Lanka (2009):**
 - End of a 33-year conflict with the defeat of a major insurgent group.
 - India's engagement was instrumental in this victory and the subsequent strengthening of relations.
 - **Maldives (2008):**
 - Shift from 30 years of autocratic rule to multi-party democracy.
 - India supported the stabilisation of the new democratic government.
 - **Myanmar (2010):**
 - End of 20 years of military rule with elections leading to a civilian government.
 - Transition paved the way for significant democratic milestones.
 - **Pakistan (2008):**
 - Transition to a civilian government, ending military rule.
- **Recent Changes and Challenges (2024):**
 - **Bangladesh (2024):**
 - Government collapse due to economic issues and student protests.
 - Challenges for India in managing influence without appearing to interfere.
 - **Sri Lanka (2022):**
 - President fled amid mass protests.
 - India's timely financial aid of \$4 billion was crucial; ongoing positive relations with various political factions.
 - **Maldives (2024):**
 - Unexpected political shift with a new leadership.
 - India is working to engage with the new administration and address previous oversight.
 - **Myanmar (Post-2021):**
 - Military coup reversed democratic progress.
 - India faces a complex situation balancing relations with the military and supporting democratic forces.
 - **Afghanistan (2021):**
 - Return of Taliban control following international withdrawal.
 - India is adapting its strategy to protect interests and manage the resulting fallout.



- **Pakistan (2022):**
 - Civilian government removed, suspected to be influenced by military interests.
- **India's Response and Strategy:**
 - **Financial and Diplomatic Support:**
 - Provided financial aid and support to stabilise neighbouring countries.
 - Extended diplomatic efforts to engage with new and unstable governments.
 - **Future Approach:**
 - Maintain robust developmental support and diplomatic engagement.
 - Address challenges in key countries by aligning with democratic forces and managing regional complexities.
- **Conclusion:**
 - India's consistent developmental aid has been a cornerstone of regional relationships.
 - Ongoing engagement and strategic adjustments are essential as the neighbourhood experiences significant changes.

9. A crisis in WANA that no one talks about

Source: The Hindu

Context: The conflict between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Force (RSF) has devastated Sudan.

Sudan Conflict and Humanitarian Crisis: Key Points:

- **Current Crisis:**
 - **Location:** Sudan, not Gaza, emerged as the site of the world's worst humanitarian crisis in 2023.
 - **Conflict:** Ongoing battle between the **Sudan Armed Forces (SAF)** and the **Rapid Support Force (RSF)**.
 - **Casualties and Displacement:** Estimated 150,000 deaths, nearly 10 million displaced (2.5 million abroad).
 - **Economic Impact:** Sudan faces imminent famine and epidemics, despite being an agrarian economy.
- **Historical Context:**
 - **Previous Strife:** Sudan has experienced 15 military coups, two civil wars, and long-standing conflict in Darfur.
 - **Autocratic Rule:** 30-year dictatorship of Omar Hassan al-Bashir, overthrown in 2019.
 - **Recent Developments:** Military coup in 2021 led to current conflict.
- **Conflict Origins:**
 - **Trigger:** April 2023 conflict between SAF (300,000 troops) and RSF (100,000 fighters) exacerbated by failed power-sharing frameworks and RSF's rejection of integration proposals.
 - **Current Situation:** Ongoing civil war with SAF relocating to Port Sudan; RSF gaining ground in some regions.
- **Foreign Involvement:**



- **Support for SAF:** Backed by Egypt and Iran.
- **Support for RSF:** Backed by Russia (Wagner Group), UAE, and various mercenaries.
- **Geopolitical Interests:** Sudan's natural resources and strategic location attract diverse foreign interests.
- **International Response:**
 - **Ceasefire Efforts:** Multiple attempts by Saudi Arabia, the U.S., IGAD, and the African Union have failed.
 - **UN Actions:** The Security Council's resolution was more aspirational; limited initial steps by the ICC.
 - **Recent Talks:** U.S.-sponsored Geneva talks in August 2024 failed to secure a ceasefire but opened humanitarian corridors.
- **India's Stakes:**
 - **Trade and Investment:** India's trade with Sudan reached \$2,034 million; major investments worth \$2.3 billion in Sudan's upstream sector.
 - **Humanitarian Aid:** India evacuated its nationals early in the conflict.
 - **Potential Risks:** Protracted conflict may revive Islamic militancy, potentially impacting Indian interests.

10. India has a special China problem above world's general China problem: External Minister

Source: The Hindu

Context: At a recent forum, it was highlighted that India faces a unique challenge with China, distinct from broader global issues. In this context, it was emphasised that investments from China should be carefully scrutinised due to the current state of border tensions and bilateral relations.

India-China Border Dispute:

- **Western Sector:**
 - Includes **Aksai Chin**, claimed by China as **part of Xinjiang** but originally part of Jammu and Kashmir.
 - Administered by China since the 1962 war; it covers over 38,000 sq km, mostly uninhabited.
 - **India claims Aksai Chin and Shaksgam Valley** (ceded to China by Pakistan).
 - China disputes Indian control over Daulat Beg Oldi, known for its high-altitude airstrip.
- **Central Sector:** The 625 km boundary is least controversial with no major disputes between India and China.
- **Eastern Sector: McMahon Line:**
 - Dispute centres on the McMahon Line, drawn in 1913-14 to demarcate the boundary between British India and Tibet.
 - **China did not recognize the McMahon Line**, claiming Arunachal Pradesh as part of Southern Tibet.
 - The **largest disputed area** was briefly occupied by China during the 1962 war but later withdrawn.

Border Roads Organisation (BRO) Infrastructure Projects:

- **Road Infrastructure Completion:**



- Key projects include the **Nimu-Padam-Darcha road** and the **Shinku La tunnel**, the world's highest tunnel at 15,800 feet.
- New routes to Leh are being developed, including a reduced distance via Shinku La.
- **Ladakh Connectivity:** Focus on roads parallel to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, including Leh-Demchok and Durbuk-Nyoma routes.
- **ICBR Programme:** Aims to complete 73 strategic roads in Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh under the first two phases.
- **Arunachal Pradesh Frontier Highway:** Construction of a nearly 1,800 km highway connecting key locations near the Myanmar border.
- **Other Key Projects:** Includes the **Sungal tunnel on the Akhnoor-Poonch National Highway** and the **Lipulekh Pass Road**.
- **Increased Focus Since 2020:** Accelerated development in Ladakh and Northeast with increased budget allocations for national security.

Key Highlights of Recent Address:

- **“Special China Problem”:** India faces unique challenges with China beyond the global issues other countries face.
- **Scrutiny of Chinese Investments:** Emphasis on scrutinising Chinese investments due to strained border relations and security concerns.
- **Border Situation and Diplomacy:** Recent diplomatic talks show progress in addressing the border standoff that began in May 2020.
- **Trade Deficit and China’s Unique Position:** Discussion on trade deficits attributed to China’s production advantages and unique political and economic systems.
- **Intersection of Economics and Security:** National security concerns extend to areas like telecommunications, where reliance on Chinese technology poses risks.
- **Ongoing Border Standoff:** Persistent standoff with significant troop deployments along the LAC, with unresolved issues in areas like Depsang Plains and Demchok.



In Brief

11. Delhi gets a new Chief Secretary

Source: The Hindu

Context: The Ministry of Home Affairs has appointed a senior IAS officer as the new Chief Secretary of Delhi.

Chief Secretary:

- **Role and Position:**
 - The Chief Secretary is the **highest-ranking executive official and principal civil servant within a state government.**
 - Serves as the **ex-officio head of the state Civil Services Board, the State Secretariat, and all civil services** under the state's rules of business.
 - Acts as the **chief advisor to the Chief Minister** on matters related to state administration.
 - Holds a **position within the Indian Administrative Service (IAS).**
- **Rank and Equivalence:**
 - The Chief Secretary is the **most senior post in state administration**, holding the 23rd position in the Indian order of precedence.
 - The role is **equivalent to that of Vice Chief of the Army Staff or full Generals in the Indian Armed Forces** and is listed similarly in the Order of Precedence.
- **Cabinet Role:**
 - Functions as the **ex-officio Secretary to the state cabinet**, often referred to as the **“Secretary to the Cabinet.”**
 - This position is on par with that of a Secretary to the Government of India.
- **Appointment:**
 - The Chief Secretary is **selected by the Chief Minister.**
 - Although the appointment is an executive action by the Chief Minister, it is **formalised in the name of the Governor of the State.**
- **Tenure:**
 - The office of Chief Secretary is **not governed by a fixed tenure.**
 - The role is **not subject to a set term**, allowing for flexibility in the duration of service.

12. 47 rescued from Laos cyber scam centres

Source: The Hindu

Context: At least 47 Indians who were trapped in ‘cyber scam centres’, have been rescued from Bokeo province in Laos recently.

Laos: Key Facts

- **Location:**
 - Situated in the Indochinese Peninsula, Southeast Asia.
 - Only landlocked country in Southeast Asia.
- **Official Name:**



- Lao People's Democratic Republic.
- **History:**
 - Colonised by the French from the late 19th to mid-20th century.
 - Influenced by European culture, particularly during World War II and the Indochina Wars.
 - Became a Marxist-Leninist communist state in 1975 after a period of civil conflict.
- **Borders:**
 - **North:** China
 - **Northeast and East:** Vietnam
 - **South:** Cambodia
 - **West:** Thailand
 - **Northwest:** Myanmar (Burma)
- **Drainage:**
 - Major rivers are tributaries of the **Mekong River (Tha, Beng, Ou, Ngum, Kading, Bangfai, Banghiang, and Kong)**.
 - The Mekong River flows southeast and south, forming boundaries with Myanmar and Thailand.
- **Climate:** Tropical monsoon (wet-dry) climate.
- **Major Mountain Ranges:**
 - Annamite Range
 - Luang Prabang Range
- **Capital:** Vientiane
- **Religion:** Predominantly Theravada Buddhism.
- **Government:**
 - One of the few openly communist states.
 - One-party state with the general secretary of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party holding ultimate power and authority.



Daily Quiz

Q1. Consider the following statements regarding the Uri-I Hydroelectric Project and the Jhelum River:

1. The Uri-I Hydroelectric Project is located in Jammu & Kashmir near the Line of Control (LOC) and was commissioned in 1997.
2. The Jhelum River is a tributary of the Ganges River and flows entirely within Pakistan.
3. The Jhelum River originates from the Verinag Spring in Kashmir Valley and joins the Chenab River in Pakistan.
4. The Kishenganga (Neelum) River is a major tributary of the Jhelum River.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A. 1 and 3 only
- B. 2 and 4 only
- C. 1, 3, and 4 only
- D. 1, 2, 3, and 4

Q2. Consider the following statements regarding the Chief Secretary of a state in India:

1. The Chief Secretary is the highest-ranking executive official within state government and acts as the chief advisor to the Chief Minister on state administration matters.
2. The Chief Secretary is equivalent in rank to the Chief of the Army Staff and is listed similarly in the Indian Order of Precedence.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q3. Consider the following countries that share a border with Sudan:

1. Egypt
2. Libya
3. Chad
4. South Sudan

Which of the countries listed above are neighbours of Sudan?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 1, 2, and 3 only
- C. 1, 3, and 4 only
- D. 1, 2, 3, and 4

Q4. Consider the following statements regarding Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD):

1. FMD affects only cattle and swine, but not sheep or goats.
2. The disease is caused by an aphthovirus of the Picornaviridae family and has seven known strains.
3. FMD can be transmitted through excretions and secretions, including aerosolized virus, and affects human health and food safety.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A. 1 and 2 only
- B. 2 only
- C. 2 and 3 only
- D. 1, 2, and 3



Q5. Consider the following statements regarding Anti-Dumping Duty and Countervailing Duty:

1. Anti-Dumping Duty is imposed on goods sold below their normal value and is based on the margin of dumping.
2. Countervailing Duty targets goods benefiting from foreign government subsidies and is calculated based on the margin of dumping.
3. Anti-Dumping Duty aims to rectify trade distortions caused by foreign subsidies, while Countervailing Duty addresses unfair pricing practices.

Which of the statements given above is incorrect?

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

Q6. Consider the following statements regarding Akbar's early life, military conquests, and religious policies:

1. Akbar was crowned at the age of thirteen in Kalanaur, Punjab, and was initially guided by his regent Bairam Khan until 1560.
2. The Ibadat Khana, constructed in 1575, was a centre for inter-religious dialogue and debates which continued until 1582 when Akbar discontinued them.
3. Akbar's military conquests included the annexation of Gujarat, Malwa, and Khandesh, and he also faced significant resistance in Ahmednagar from Chand Bibi.

Which of the statements given above is incorrect?

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

Q7. Consider the following statements regarding the Supreme Court (SC) and High Courts (HC) of India:

1. The Supreme Court of India is the highest judicial forum and final court of appeal, whereas High Courts serve as the highest courts within their respective states or union territories.
2. The Supreme Court has jurisdiction over both original and appellate cases, while High Courts have only appellate jurisdiction.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Q8. The National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) was introduced through which of the following Constitutional Amendment Acts in India?

- A. 99th Amendment Act
- B. 100th Amendment Act
- C. 101st Amendment Act
- D. 102nd Amendment Act

Q9. Which of the following countries does NOT share a border with Laos?

- A. China
- B. Vietnam



- C. Myanmar
- D. Cambodia

10. The Uri-I Hydroelectric Project is located on which river?

- A. Chenab River
- B. Jhelum River
- C. Indus River
- D. Ravi River



Solutions

1. Correct Answer is A

Explanation:

- **Statement 1: The Uri-I Hydroelectric Project is located in Jammu & Kashmir near the Line of Control (LOC) and was commissioned in 1997.**
 - **Correct.** The Uri-I Hydroelectric Project is indeed located in Jammu & Kashmir and was commissioned in 1997.
- **Statement 2: The Jhelum River is a tributary of the Ganges River and flows entirely within Pakistan.**
 - **Incorrect.** The Jhelum River is a tributary of the Indus River, not the Ganges. It flows through both India and Pakistan.
- **Statement 3: The Jhelum River originates from the Verinag Spring in Kashmir Valley and joins the Chenab River in Pakistan.**
 - **Correct.** The Jhelum River originates from the Verinag Spring in the Kashmir Valley and joins the Chenab River in Pakistan.
- **Statement 4: The Kishenganga (Neelum) River is a major tributary of the Jhelum River.**
 - **Incorrect.** The Kishenganga (Neelum) River is a major tributary of the Jhelum River, so this statement is actually correct. However, the presence of an incorrect statement elsewhere in the options makes the best choice A) 1 and 3 only as it contains only the completely accurate statements.

2. Correct Answer is A

Explanation:

- **Statement 1: The Chief Secretary is the highest-ranking executive official within a state government and acts as the chief advisor to the Chief Minister on state administration matters.**
 - **Correct.** The Chief Secretary is indeed the highest-ranking civil servant in a state government and serves as the chief advisor to the Chief Minister on administrative matters.
- **Statement 2: The Chief Secretary is equivalent in rank to the Chief of the Army Staff and is listed similarly in the Indian Order of Precedence.**
 - **Incorrect.** The Chief Secretary holds a position equivalent to the Vice Chief of the Army Staff or full Generals in the Indian Armed Forces, not the Chief of the Army Staff.

3. Correct Answer is C

Explanation:

- **Egypt (1):** Shares a border with Sudan to the north.
- **Libya (2):** Does not share a border with Sudan; it is located to the northwest of Sudan.
- **Chad (3):** Shares a border with Sudan to the west.
- **South Sudan (4):** Shares a border with Sudan to the south.

Therefore, the correct options are Egypt, Chad, and South Sudan.

4. Correct Answer is B

Explanation:

- **Statement 1: Incorrect.** FMD affects cattle, swine, sheep, goats, and other cloven-hoofed ruminants, not just cattle and swine.
- **Statement 2: Correct.** FMD is caused by an aphthovirus of the Picornaviridae family, and there are seven known strains (A, O, C, SAT1, SAT2, SAT3, Asia1).
- **Statement 3: Incorrect.** FMD does not affect human health or food safety; it only impacts livestock.



5. Correct Answer is B

Explanation:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** Anti-Dumping Duty targets goods sold below their normal value, and the duty amount is based on the margin of dumping.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** Countervailing Duty targets goods benefiting from foreign government subsidies, not based on the margin of dumping but on the subsidy value received by the foreign producers.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** Anti-Dumping Duty addresses unfair pricing practices (dumping), while Countervailing Duty addresses the impact of foreign subsidies.

6. Correct Answer is A

Explanation:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** Akbar was crowned in 1556 and was guided by his regent Bairam Khan until 1560.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** While Akbar did construct the Ibadat Khana in 1575 and initially promoted inter-religious dialogue, he discontinued the debates in 1582 to avoid conflicts, which aligns with the statement's chronological accuracy.
- **Statement 3: Correct.** Akbar's military conquests included Gujarat, Malwa, and Khandesh, and he faced resistance in Ahmednagar from Chand Bibi.

7. Correct Answer is A

Explanation:

- **Statement 1: Correct.** The Supreme Court is the highest judicial body in India and serves as the final court of appeal. High Courts are the highest judicial authorities within their respective states or union territories.
- **Statement 2: Incorrect.** The Supreme Court has both original and appellate jurisdiction, while High Courts have original jurisdiction in certain matters, as well as appellate jurisdiction.

8. Correct Answer is A

Explanation:

- The National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) was introduced by the 99th Constitutional Amendment Act of 2014. The NJAC aimed to reform the process of appointing judges to the Supreme Court and High Courts, replacing the earlier Collegium system.

9. Correct Answer is C

Explanation:

- Laos shares its borders with China to the north, Vietnam to the east, Cambodia to the southeast, Thailand to the west, and Myanmar to the northwest.
- Myanmar does not share a direct border with Laos.

10. Correct Answer is B

Explanation:

The Uri-I Hydroelectric Project is situated on the Jhelum River in Uri town, Baramulla district, Jammu & Kashmir.





**UPSC
Mentorship**

A Unit of Mentorship India



कौशल भारत - कुशल भारत



Power To Empower



75
Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav



एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

GET IN TOUCH

+919999057869

www.upsmentorship.com

@mentorship.india

C - 103, Second Floor, Sector-2
Noida - 201301

contact@mentorshipindia.com