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INDIA -U.K TRADE PACT

India and the United Kingdom have signed a comprehensive trade agreement aimed at enhancing bilateral trade, investment, and strategic cooperation

Key Features:

- **Tariff Reductions:** Lower duties on various goods and services to boost exports and benefit consumers.
- **Investment Facilitation:** Framework to protect and encourage investments in manufacturing, tech, pharma, and finance.
- **Services Liberalization:** Commitments in IT, legal, financial, and business services to expand market access.
- **Ease of Doing Business:** Streamlined customs, regulatory cooperation, and dispute resolution mechanisms.
- **IPR & Innovation:** Strengthened collaboration in intellectual property, R&D, and innovation ecosystems.



INDIA-UK FTA INKED




What is an FTA (Free Trade Agreement)?

A Free Trade Agreement is a deal between countries to make trade easier by:

- ✓ Reducing or removing import and export duties
- ✓ Lowering trade barriers for goods and services
- ✓ Covering areas like investment, intellectual property, and government procurement

Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry

Expanded Cooperation:

- **Climate:** Joint projects on clean energy and climate change mitigation.
- **Education:** Student exchange and higher education partnerships.
- **Security:** Cooperation in defence, cyber security, and counter-terrorism.
- **Healthcare:** Collaboration in pharmaceuticals, clinical trials, and digital health.

Significance:

- Economic Impact: Aims to double trade volumes and create jobs in both nations.
- Strategic Depth: Reinforces India-U.K. ties post-Brexit, aligning economic and geopolitical interests.
- Next Steps: Implementation pending ratification and stakeholder consultations.

Types of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)

FTAs are agreements between countries to reduce or eliminate trade barriers such as tariffs, quotas, and import duties. Based on the level of integration and commitments, FTAs can be classified into the following types:

Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA)

- Scope: Limited; offers preferential access to certain products by reducing tariffs.
- Example: India-MERCOSUR PTA
- Note: Does not cover all trade; only select goods/services get concessions.

Free Trade Agreement (FTA)

- Scope: Elimination of tariffs and quotas on substantially all trade in goods and services between member countries.
- Example: India-ASEAN FTA
- Note: Each member retains its own trade policies with non-members.

Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)

- Scope: Broader than a typical FTA; includes trade in goods, services, investment, and economic cooperation.
- Example: India-Japan CEPA
- Note: Includes non-tariff measures, dispute resolution, and regulatory transparency.

Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA)

- Scope: Similar to CEPA but often at an early stage of cooperation, focused more on promoting investment and capacity-building.
- Example: India-Malaysia CECA

Customs Union

- Scope: Like an FTA, but members also adopt a common external tariff on imports from non-members.
- Example: European Union Customs Union
- Note: Requires deeper economic integration.

Common Market

- Scope: A customs union that also allows free movement of capital and labor.
- Example: European Single Market
- Note: High level of integration; harmonized policies on competition and labor mobility.

Economic Union

- Scope: Deepest form of integration, combining a common market with monetary and fiscal policy harmonization.
- Example: Eurozone (within EU)
- Note: Requires political will and institutional mechanisms.

NATIONAL COOPERATIVE POLICY 2025

Unveiled on **July 24, 2025**, the National Cooperative Policy 2025 replaces the 2002 policy

Vision & Mission

- **Vision:** “Sahkar Se Samriddhi” – Prosperity through Cooperation, aligned with “Viksit Bharat 2047”.
- **Mission:** Build professional, tech-driven, accountable cooperatives with one unit in every village and mass citizen participation.

Key Targets

- Triple cooperative sector’s GDP share by 2034
- Engage 50 crore citizens in cooperatives
- 30% increase in co-op societies (from 8.3 lakh to ~10.8 lakh)
- One cooperative in every village
- Launch 2 lakh new PACS, dairy, fishery cooperatives in 5 years
- Promote digitalization and professional management

Core Features

- Grassroots Focus: Emphasis on rural, tribal, women-led cooperatives.
- Multi-Sectoral Growth: Expansion into non-agricultural sectors (tourism, insurance, taxis, etc.).
- Autonomy with Regulation: More operational freedom, along with transparency and oversight.
- Job Creation: Cooperatives as engines of rural employment
- State Participation: States to frame their own cooperative policies by Jan 31, 2026

Policy Formation

- Drafted by a 40-member expert committee led by Suresh Prabhu
- Based on wide stakeholder consultation, workshops, and feedback from institutions like RBI and NABARD

Major Upgrades Over 2002 Policy

Feature	2002 Policy	2025 Policy
Approach	Autonomy-focused	Action-oriented, tech-driven
Governance	Broad guidelines	Professional and transparent management
Sector Focus	Primarily agriculture	Multi-sector expansion
Ambition	Maintain self-reliance	Mass outreach and economic integration
Institutional Anchor	Ministry of Agriculture	Dedicated Minis

GOLDEN JACKALS

Golden jackals in Kerala have shown remarkable adaptability to human-dominated landscapes, thriving beyond traditional forests in areas like agricultural lands, village edges, and peri-urban zones.

They exploit food sources from human activities, such as waste and livestock carryon, demonstrating a flexible diet and strong scavenging ability. This ecological plasticity allows them to survive habitat fragmentation and loss.



However, their growing presence near human settlements raises concerns about potential conflicts and disease transmission, highlighting the need for effective management of human-wildlife interactions.

Golden Jackal (*Canis aureus*)

IUCN Status:

- Least Concern (LC)

Distribution:

- Native to South Asia, Middle East, North and East Africa, and South-eastern Europe.
- In India, they are found across the subcontinent — from forests and grasslands to rural, agricultural, and urban fringes.

Habitats:

Golden jackals occupy a diverse range of habitats, including:

- Dry deciduous forests
- Scrublands
- Grasslands and savannas
- Mangroves and wetlands
- Agricultural fields
- Peri-urban and rural areas

Key Features:

- Size: Medium-sized canid (8–10 kg on average)
- Color: Golden to reddish-brown fur
- Diet: Omnivorous and opportunistic — includes rodents, birds, fruits, insects, carrion, and human food waste
- Behavior: Can be solitary, in pairs, or small family groups; mostly nocturnal
- Ecological Role: Important scavenger, helps control rodent populations and clean up carrion

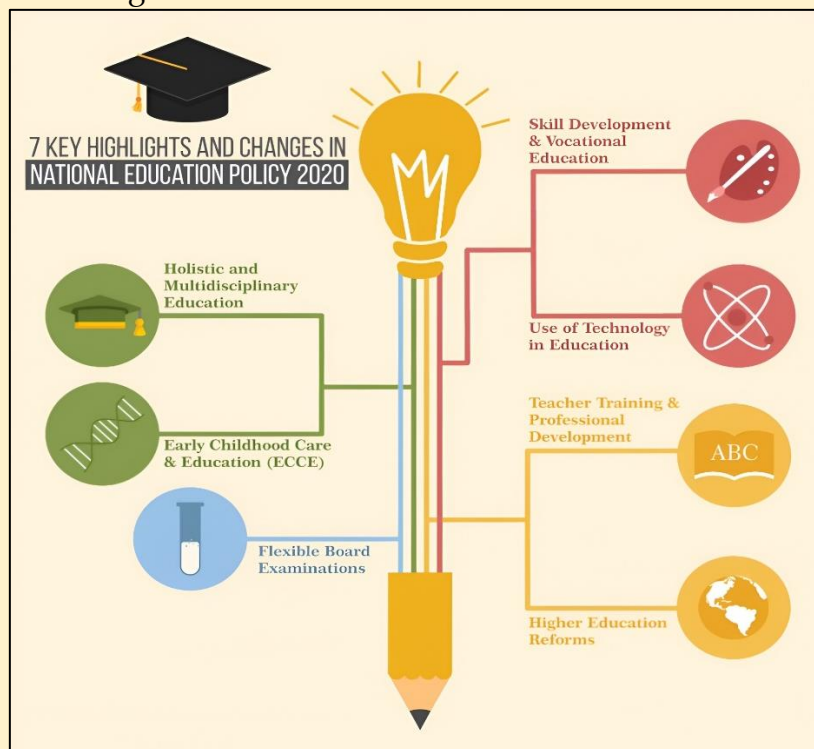
Conservation Concerns:

- Human-wildlife conflict (livestock predation, urban presence)
- Disease transmission (rabies, canine distemper)
- Habitat loss and fragmentation

FIVE YEARS OF NEP

What Has Worked

- **School Curriculum Revamp:** The 10+2 system is being replaced by the 5+3+3+4 structure. NCERT has published new books for classes 1–8, emphasizing experiential learning.
- **Early Childhood Education:** Pre-primary learning is being strengthened with materials like NCERT's *Jaadui Pitara*.
- **Foundational Learning Focus:** National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN Bharat) launched to ensure reading and math skills by class 3.
- **Academic Credit System:** National Credit Framework allows flexible credit transfer and course entry/exit.
- **CUET (Common University Entrance Test):** Implemented in 2022 as a common entrance test for undergraduate admissions.
- **Indian Campuses Abroad:** IITs and IIMs have set up campuses in Africa and the Gulf; foreign universities are coming to India.



What's In Progress

- **Board Exam Changes:** From 2026, CBSE to allow class 10 students to choose subjects and take board exams twice a year.
- **Holistic Report Cards:** PARAKH under NCERT is developing assessments with self-evaluation and skills focus.
- **Four-Year UG Degrees:** Being rolled out slowly due to infrastructure gaps.

What's Stuck and Why

- **Three-Language Formula:** Remains controversial; some states like Tamil Nadu oppose Hindi imposition.
- **Teacher Education Overhaul:** 4-year integrated B.Ed. course announced but not yet implemented.
- **UGC's Replacement Delayed:** The Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) bill is still pending.

- Mother Tongue in Schools: Implementation from pre-primary to class 5 is partial.
- No School Breakfast Yet: Financial Ministry rejected the breakfast proposal for schools.
- Centre-State Divide: States like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal have pushed back against several key reforms.

History of the National Education Policy (NEP) in India

The National Education Policy (NEP) is India's vision document for guiding the development of the education system. Since independence, India has had three major NEPs:

National Education Policy 1968

- First NEP, based on the recommendations of the Kothari Commission (1964–66).
- Emphasized free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of 14.
- Advocated the three-language formula, improvement in the quality of education, and equal educational opportunities.

National Education Policy 1986 (Modified in 1992)

- Introduced by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and later modified under P.V. Narasimha Rao in 1992.
- Focused on removal of disparities, education for women, and improving teacher education.
- Introduced Operation Blackboard, Navodaya Vidyalayas, and the Programme of Action (1992).
- Emphasized vocationalisation, open learning systems, and child-centric education.

CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT

Ceasefire agreement between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Rwanda-backed M23 rebels

A ceasefire agreement in Doha, Qatar, between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Rwanda-backed M23 rebels

Both sides committed to a “permanent ceasefire” and pledged to engage in dialogue, including the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons.

This deal follows years of intense conflict, especially after a renewed M23 offensive seized key cities like Goma and Bukavu in early 2025.

Despite the breakthrough, the ceasefire is considered fragile due to several factors:

- Lack of International Support: Analysts warn that without strong international backing, the peace process could falter, as previous mediation attempts failed until Qatar's surprise intervention.
- Ground Realities: Violence and mistrust persist, with the M23 threatening to resume fighting unless certain conditions are met, and some rebels have stated they will not retreat from their positions.
- Control and Administration: The M23 and its allies control vast territories in North and South Kivu provinces, raising concerns about security and the government's ability to protect civilians.
- Deep-rooted Grievances: The conflict stems from overlapping ethnic, political, and economic issues, with external actors accused of supporting armed groups for their own interests. Key questions on disarmament and reintegration remain unresolved.
- Humanitarian Crisis: The long-running conflict has caused widespread displacement, leaving thousands in dire conditions.

Learning Corner:

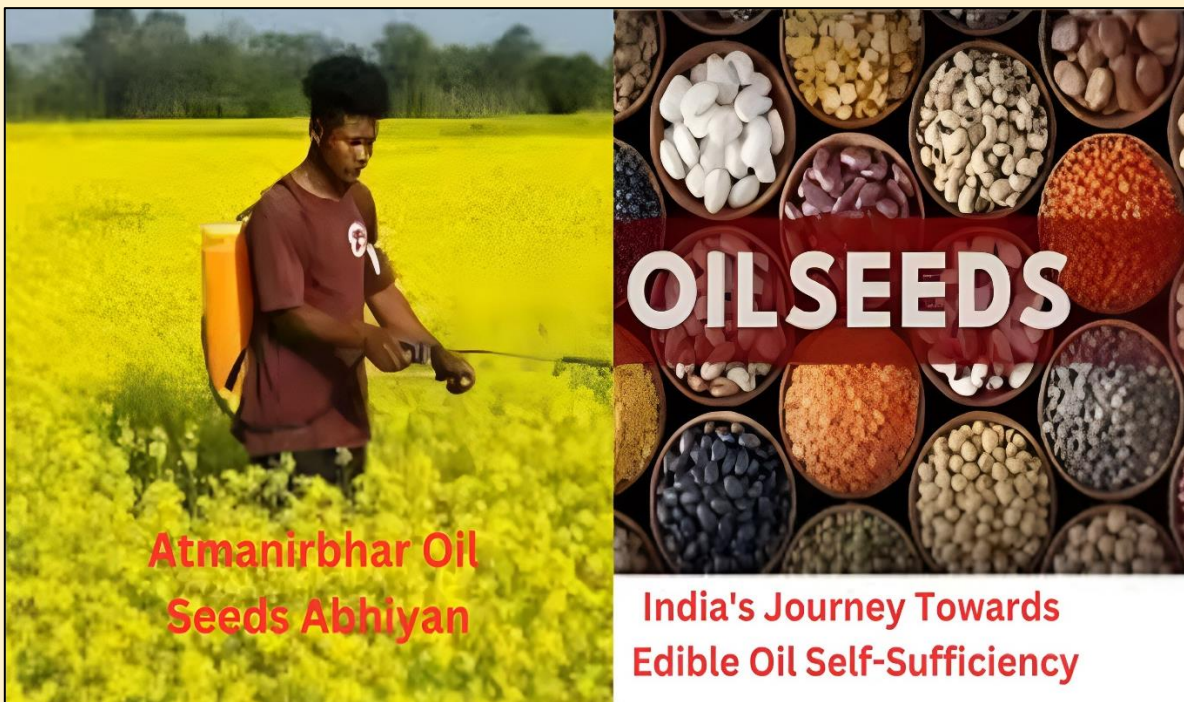
Rebel Group	Country/Region
M23 (March 23 Movement)	Democratic Republic of Congo
TPLF (Tigray People's Liberation Front)	Ethiopia
Taliban	Afghanistan
Houthis (Ansar Allah)	Yemen
PKK/YPG/Kurdish Groups	Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran
FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia)	Colombia
ISIS (Islamic State)	Iraq, Syria, Global

ATMANIRBHAR OIL SEEDS ABHIYAN

Launched in 2024-25, this mission aims to make India self-reliant in oilseed and edible oil production by 2030-31.

Key Objectives:

- Achieve self-sufficiency in key oilseeds like mustard, soybean, groundnut, sunflower, sesame, and others.
- Enhance research in high-yield, climate-resilient varieties.
- Promote modern farming practices and digital technologies.
- Provide financial incentives and input subsidies.
- Strengthen post-harvest management, market linkages, and processing infrastructure.
- Expand crop insurance coverage.
- Boost secondary oil extraction from sources like rice bran, cottonseed, and tree-borne oilseeds.




Implementation & Targets:

- Duration: 2024-25 to 2030-31
- Budget: ₹10,103 crore
- Target: Raise oilseed production from 39 to 69.7 million tonnes
- Goal: Meet 72% of projected domestic edible oil demand

Support Measures:

- Launch of SATHI portal for seed supply coordination.
- Increased MSP and schemes like PM-AASHA to ensure fair pricing.
- Higher import duties to protect domestic producers.
- Emphasis on environmental sustainability and rural employment.



Data Bank

Edible oil sector in India

- **4th** largest player in the global edible vegetable oil sector, behind the USA, China, and Brazil.
- **India accounts for-**
 - 15-20% of global oilseed area
 - 6-7% of vegetable oil production
 - 9-10% of total consumption.
- **Largest importer of vegetable oils globally**, followed by China and the USA.
 - Palm oil account for 59%, followed by soybean (23%) and sunflower (16%)

Oilseeds Production in India:

- India is one of the largest producers of oilseeds globally but remains a net importer of edible oils, meeting over 50% of its domestic demand through imports.
- Major oilseeds grown include:
 - Groundnut, Soybean, Mustard/Rapeseed, Sunflower, Sesame, Linseed, Niger, Safflower, and Castor.
- Cultivated mainly in rain-fed areas; productivity is often lower due to climate variability, low input use, and limited irrigation.

Key Government Schemes:

National Mission on Edible Oils - Oilseeds (NMEO-Oilseeds) (2024-25 to 2030-31)

- Aims to make India self-reliant in edible oils.
- Targets to increase oilseeds production to 69.7 million tonnes by 2030-31.
- Key components:
 - High-yielding seeds, climate-resilient varieties
 - Financial incentives, input subsidies
 - Crop insurance, SATHI portal for seed coordination
 - Post-harvest management and value addition
 - Focus on both primary and secondary sources (e.g., rice bran, cottonseed)

National Food Security Mission (NFSM – Oilseeds & Oil Palm)

- Promotes productivity and area expansion for oilseed crops.
- Provides financial support for inputs, training, and cluster demonstrations.

Price Support Scheme (PSS)

- Under PM-AASHA, ensures Minimum Support Price (MSP) procurement for oilseeds by government agencies.

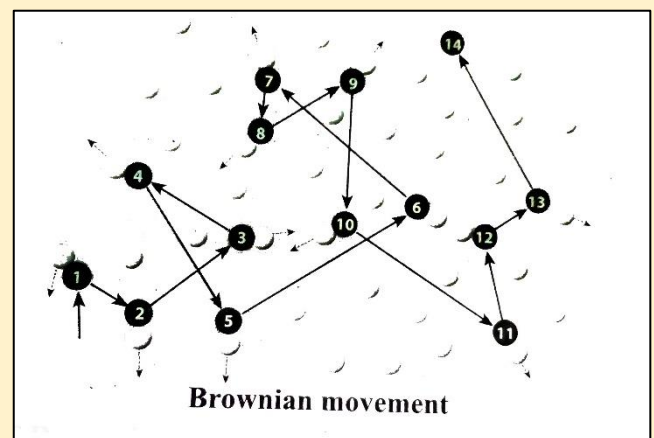
Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY)

- A flexible scheme to fund state-led initiatives, including support for oilseeds based on local needs.

MOLECULAR IMAGING: CALTECH'S ANGSTROM-SCALE MICROSCOPE

Scientists at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) have developed a groundbreaking microscope technique that enables real-time observation of molecular motion down to tens of angstroms.

Instead of imaging individual molecules directly, this new method detects them indirectly by analyzing how they interact with light and leveraging Brownian motion—the random jittering caused by molecular collisions.



Key components of the method include:

- Use of a streak camera to track nanoscale dynamics with picosecond-level speed.
- Observation of an ensemble of molecules (hundreds of billions at once), with enough precision to infer individual molecular motion.
- A non-intrusive, label-free, and fast imaging process, making it suitable for applications in biomedical research, disease diagnostics, and nanomaterial fabrication.

The technique involves directing a laser through a sample, then capturing the scattered light using a system that includes a digital micromirror device (DMD) and the streak camera. The interaction patterns and fluctuations in light provide information about molecular size and movement.

This is now the world's fastest single-molecule imaging technique, offering new possibilities in visualizing molecular behavior at unprecedented speeds and precision, without the need for fluorescent labels or direct visual observation.

Brownian Motion

Brownian motion refers to the random, irregular movement of microscopic particles suspended in a fluid (liquid or gas), resulting from collisions with the fast-moving molecules of the fluid.

Key Features:

- Discovered by: Robert Brown (1827), who observed pollen grains in water moving randomly under a microscope.
- Explained by: Albert Einstein (1905), who mathematically modeled it and linked it to molecular theory.
- Confirmed by: Jean Perrin, whose experimental work validated Einstein's equations and helped establish the existence of atoms.

Scientific Significance:

- Evidence of molecular motion: Brownian motion provided strong proof for the kinetic theory of matter, supporting the atomic nature of substances.
- Statistical mechanics: It is a cornerstone concept in the development of modern statistical and quantum physics.
- Mathematical modeling: Brownian motion forms the basis of stochastic processes, including Wiener processes in probability theory.

Applications:

- Colloidal stability analysis
- Stock market modeling (in financial mathematics)
- Diffusion studies in chemistry and biology

AADI THIRUVATHIRAI FESTIVAL

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during the Aadi Thiruvathirai festival at Gangaikonda Cholapuram, described the Chola dynasty as an “ancient roadmap” for realizing the vision of a developed India (*Viksit Bharat*).



- Military and Naval Strength: Highlighted the Cholas' powerful navy and called for strengthening India's maritime and defense capabilities.
- Cultural Unity: Praised the Cholas for fostering cultural integration, linking it to current initiatives like Kashi-Tamil Sangamam.
- Democratic Traditions: Cited the *kudavolai* system to emphasize India's indigenous democratic roots.
- Water Management: Lauded the Cholas' advanced irrigation systems as models for sustainable environmental practices.

- Art and Architecture: Recognized their enduring legacy in temple architecture, sculpture, and literature.
- Contemporary Actions: Announced statues of Raja Raja Chola and Rajendra Chola I, and highlighted efforts to recover cultural artifacts.

Chola Dynasty

The Chola Dynasty was one of the longest-ruling and most powerful South Indian empires, flourishing primarily between the 9th and 13th centuries CE.

Origin and Early Cholas

- The early Cholas are mentioned in Sangam literature (circa 300 BCE–300 CE), with rulers like Karikala Chola being notable.
- The imperial phase began with Vijayalaya Chola (850 CE), who captured Thanjavur from the Pallavas and laid the foundation of the later Chola Empire.

Important Rulers

1. Rajaraja I (985–1014 CE)

- Expanded the empire across Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and parts of Sri Lanka.
- Built the famous Brihadeeswarar Temple at Thanjavur (UNESCO World Heritage Site).
- Reorganized administration and revenue system.

2. Rajendra I (1014–1044 CE)

- Took the empire to its greatest extent – conquering Sri Lanka, Andaman-Nicobar, Malay Peninsula, and even sending a naval expedition to the Srivijaya Empire (modern Indonesia).
- Built a new capital at Gangaikonda Cholapuram.

Administration & Governance

- Highly centralized administration with efficient revenue collection.
- Use of village assemblies (sabhas) and the famous Kudavolai system for elections.
- Well-documented land grants and temple inscriptions.

Naval Power & Foreign Trade

- The Cholas built one of the strongest navies in ancient India.
- Maintained active trade with Southeast Asia, China, and the Arab world.

Art & Architecture

- Dravidian style temple architecture reached its zenith.
- Grand temples like Brihadeeswarar, Gangaikonda Cholapuram, and Airavatesvara Temple reflect architectural brilliance.
- Patronized Tamil literature and bronze sculpture, especially the Nataraja icon.

Decline

- Began in the late 12th century due to internal strife and rising powers like the Pandyas and Hoysalas.
- The final blow came with Malik Kafur's invasion in the early 14th century.

Legacy

- Played a major role in spreading Tamil culture and Shaivism in Southeast Asia.
- Left behind enduring architectural, artistic, and literary contributions.

E3 COUNTRIES

Iran held nuclear talks in Istanbul with diplomats from Britain, France, and Germany (E3 countries) to resolve the deadlock over its nuclear programme.

The meeting ended with an agreement to continue discussions. The focus was on whether to reimpose UN sanctions on Iran using the “snapback” mechanism, especially if progress isn’t made by August.



The E3 had warned of sanctions if Iran fails to meet its nuclear obligations. While Iran remains skeptical of Western intentions, European leaders are concerned about Iran’s lack of transparency. Both sides agreed to meet again, but tensions remain over trust and commitment.

E3 Group:

The E3 refers to a group of three major European countries: France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. They often coordinate on foreign policy, especially on global security and non-proliferation issues.

- **Origin:** The E3 format emerged during negotiations with Iran over its nuclear program in the early 2000s, even before the broader P5+1 (which includes the US, China, and Russia).
- **Role:** They act together to uphold the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), also known as the Iran nuclear deal.
- **Focus:** Nuclear non-proliferation, diplomacy, sanctions enforcement, and maintaining international agreements.
- **Current Relevance:** The E3 continues to engage Iran diplomatically to prevent nuclear escalation and uphold UN resolutions.

DELIMITATION COMMISSION

The Supreme Court of India has rejected a plea seeking the start of the delimitation process for constituencies in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N.K. Sinha ruled that the delimitation carried out in Jammu & Kashmir under a special provision cannot be used as a precedent for Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, as J&K is a Union Territory governed by a distinct constitutional framework.

The Court emphasized:

- Article 170 (which governs State Assemblies) does not apply to Union Territories like J&K.
- Section 26 of the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 already provides for delimitation, but only after the first census post-2026.
- The existing notifications are not arbitrary and do not violate Article 14 (Right to Equality).

What is delimitation

The process of redrawing boundaries of Lok Sabha and state Assembly seats to represent changes in the population.

The main task of the Delimitation Commission is redrawing the boundaries of the various assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies based on a recent census.



In the process, **the number of seats allocated** to states in Lok Sabha or in the Legislative Assembly may also change

It also **reserves Assembly seats** for Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) in accordance with the Constitution



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Delimitation in India

Delimitation refers to the act of redrawing the boundaries of electoral constituencies to ensure fair representation based on population changes.

Constitutional Basis:

1. Article 82: Empowers the Parliament to enact a Delimitation Act after every census.
2. Article 170: Deals with the composition of State Legislative Assemblies and requires delimitation of constituencies based on population.
3. Delimitation Commission Act: Based on this Act, the Delimitation Commission is constituted to carry out the delimitation process.
4. Article 329(a): Bars courts from questioning the validity of delimitation once finalized by the Commission.

Key Points:

- The last delimitation was based on the 2001 Census; future delimitation is frozen until after the 2026 Census, to ensure population control is not disincentivized.
- Jammu & Kashmir underwent delimitation under a distinct constitutional framework post its reorganization as a Union Territory in 2019.
- The Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 (Section 26) provides for delimitation only after the first census post-2026.

Purpose:

- Ensure equal representation.
- Maintain the principle of "one person, one vote".
- Adjust constituencies as per population shifts.

Delimitation is thus a constitutional tool to uphold democratic fairness while balancing administrative and political considerations.

EXERCISE TALISMAN SABRE

Air Marshal Ashutosh Dixit, Chief of Integrated Defence Staff (CISC), is visiting Australia from July 26 to 28, 2025, to witness the 11th edition of Exercise Talisman Sabre (TS25). TS25 involves 19 countries and features complex joint training across air, land, sea, space, and cyber domains, including live-fire and amphibious operations.

For the first time, six Indian officers are participating as Staff Planners, marking a shift from previous observer roles in 2021 and 2023. Their involvement includes planning and coordination in joint operations. The visit reflects India's growing role in regional defense cooperation and its commitment to strengthening military interoperability and partnerships in the Indo-Pacific.



Military Exercises by India

India conducts a wide range of bilateral, multilateral, and domestic military exercises aimed at strengthening military preparedness, enhancing interoperability, and fostering diplomatic ties.

Types of Military Exercises:

Bilateral Exercises:

- Garuda – With France (Air Force)
- MALABAR – Initially bilateral (India-US), now quadrilateral with Japan and Australia (Navy)
- Yudh Abhyas – With United States (Army)
- Shakti – With France (Army)
- Varuna – With France (Navy)
- Sampriti – With Bangladesh (Army)
- Hand-in-Hand – With China (Army)

GLACIAL LAKE OUTBURST FLOODS(GLOFs)

The Himalayan region witnessed severe Glacial Lake Outburst Floods(GLOFs) in 2025, causing widespread damage to infrastructure and power supply, especially in Nepal and India. Rising temperatures and melting glaciers have increased the frequency and intensity of GLOFs, posing a grave threat to life, property and ecosystems.


The events show the urgent need for trans-boundary cooperation and advanced early warning systems to mitigate risks.

What are Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs)?

A Glacial Lake Outburst Flood, or GLOF, is **sudden release of water from a lake fed by glacier melt** that has formed at the side, in front, within, beneath, or on the surface of a glacier.

Main Features of GLOFs

- Involve sudden (and sometimes cyclic) releases of water.
- Tend to be rapid events, lasting hours to days.
- Result in large downstream river discharges (which often increase by an order of magnitude).




Recent GLOF Events in Nepal

On 8 July 2025, a major GLOF from a supra-glacial lake in Tibet triggered flash floods along the Lende river, damaging Nepal's Rasuwagadhi inland container port and destroying a China-built friendship bridge.

Four hydro-power plants on the Bhote Koshi river were rendered inoperable, cutting 8% of Nepal's electricity supply. Nepalese scientists confirmed the lake's surface area shrank from 63 to 43 hectares overnight.

Causes of GLOFs:


- Extreme Weather Events
- Upstream Flooding
- Slope Failure
- Lack of Dams or Degraded Dams




Why are GLOFs increasing in the Himalayas?

From Ladakh to Everest, risk of floods from glacial lakes grows. The increases are due to

- Global warming
- Glacial ice melting
- Changes in snowfall patterns.





Later the same day, another GLOF struck Mustang district in Nepal. Earlier in 2025, GLOFs occurred in Humla and Solukhumbu districts, the latter destroying the Everest base camp village of Thame. These successive events tell Nepal's vulnerability and the lack of early warning cooperation with China.

Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) are disaster events caused by the abrupt discharge of water from glacial lakes — large bodies of water that sit in front of, on top of, or beneath a melting glacier. As a glacier withdraws, it leaves behind a depression that gets filled with meltwater, thereby forming a lake.

The more the glacier recedes, the bigger and more dangerous the lake becomes. Such lakes are mostly dammed by unstable ice or sediment composed of loose rock and debris.

Triggering Factors and Impact of GLOFs

GLOFs can be triggered by various reasons, including glacial calving, where sizable ice chunks detach from the glacier into the lake, inducing sudden water displacement.

Incidents such as avalanches or landslides can also impact the stability of the boundary around a glacial lake, leading to its failure, and the rapid discharge of water.

GLOFs can unleash large volumes of water, sediment, and debris downstream with formidable force and velocity.

The floodwaters can submerge valleys, obliterate infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and buildings, and result in significant loss of life and livelihoods.

MITIGATION EFFORTS AND CHALLENGES

India's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has shifted focus from disaster response to risk reduction. It launched a \$20 million programme targeting 195 high-risk glacial lakes. The programme includes hazard assessment, installation of Automated Weather and Water Stations (AWWS), early warning systems downstream, water level management, and community engagement.

Scientific methods like SAR interferometry are being introduced to detect micro-changes in slope stability. Several expeditions have conducted bathymetry, Electrical Resistivity Tomography (ERT), UAV surveys, and established monitoring stations. However, challenges remain in accessibility, community trust, and technology deployment in harsh environments.

Need for Trans-boundary Collaboration

The 2025 Nepal floods exposed gaps in cross-border communication and early warning between China and Nepal. Many glacial lakes lie in trans-boundary watersheds, making joint monitoring and information sharing essential.

Nepalese officials lament the absence of established early warning systems with Chinese authorities despite increasing risks. Effective collaboration could help prevent future catastrophes by ensuring timely alerts and coordinated responses.

RAMSAR CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (COP15)

The 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP15) took place from 23 to 31 July 2025 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. Over 3,000 delegates from 172 countries gathered to address the accelerating loss of wetlands worldwide.

This summit brought into light urgent actions to protect these vital ecosystems, which have declined by 35 per cent since 1970, posing severe ecological and economic risks.



Significance of Wetlands and Current Challenges

Wetlands are crucial for maintaining planetary health. They filter pollutants, regulate water cycles, store carbon and support biodiversity.

Despite covering only 6 per cent of the Earth's surface, wetlands contribute ecosystem services valued at over 7.5 per cent of global GDP. However, they face threats from urbanisation, agriculture, climate change and infrastructure development.

The Global Wetland Outlook 2025 report warns that 20 per cent of wetlands could vanish by 2050, potentially causing losses worth \$39 trillion in ecosystem services.

Key Outcomes of COP15

COP15 centred on the adoption of the Victoria Falls Declaration. This framework commits nations to enhanced wetland restoration and integration of wetlands into climate and development policies.

Delegates discussed establishing a Global Wetland Restoration Fund to finance conservation efforts. The conference also emphasised technological innovation and multi-stakeholder collaboration to reverse wetland degradation.

Zimbabwe's Role and Leadership

Zimbabwe assumed the Ramsar Convention presidency for three years, succeeding China. As host nation, Zimbabwe showcased its commitment through its seven Ramsar Sites, including Victoria Falls, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The country aims to lead global efforts by promoting wetland restoration as a key climate mitigation strategy. Zimbabwe's leadership is expected to drive global momentum for sustainable wetland management.

Strategic Plans and Regional Cooperation

The meeting included preparatory sessions by regional groups from Africa, Europe, Oceania, Asia, the Americas and the Caribbean. These sessions aligned priorities and shaped draft resolutions.

The Strategic Plan 2025-2034 was a major agenda item, outlining long-term goals for wetland conservation. Regional cooperation remains vital for addressing transboundary water issues and sharing best practices.

Wetlands and Sustainable Development Goals

Wetlands contribute directly to several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including clean water, climate action, biodiversity, and poverty alleviation. COP15 reinforced the need to integrate wetland conservation into national policies to achieve these goals.

Healthy wetlands support agriculture, fisheries, tourism and disaster risk reduction, making their protection essential for sustainable development.

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KERALA STATE CIVIL SERVICE ACADEMY

Established under Centre for Continuing Education Kerala (CCEK)

NURTURING YOUNG MINDS TOWARDS TOMORROW'S CIVIL SERVICE

COURSES

➤ Prelims Cum Mains Regular Batch

Course Fee: ₹ 49,200 (₹ 40,000 + 18% GST ₹ 7,200 + Caution Deposit ₹ 2,000)

➤ Prelims Cum Mains Weekend Batch

For the Working Professionals & students who are doing their UG/PG

◆ Course Fee: Ongoing Degree/PG students: ₹ 41,300 (₹ 35,000 + 18% GST ₹ 6,300)

◆ Course Fee: Working Professionals : ₹ 49,200 (₹ 40,000 + 18% GST ₹ 7,200 + Caution Deposit ₹ 2,000)

➤ Civil Service Foundation Course

For Higher Secondary School Students

Course Fee: ₹ 5,900 (₹ 5,000 + GST ₹ 900)

➤ Talent Development Course

For High School Students

Course Fee: ₹ 4720 (₹ 4,000 + 18% GST ₹ 720)

➤ REHEARSE- Prelims Test Series

38 Test papers including 3 exclusive current affairs tests and 5 CSAT papers

➤ RESILIENCE- Mains Test Series

17 Tests including compulsory papers

➤ REKINDLE- PCM REPEATERS BATCH

Mentorship, Weekly Current Affairs classes, Bi Weekly CSAT classes, Prelims Test Series, Revision classes, Extensive Answer Writing class / Practices

➤ REPHRASE- Mains Answer Writing Programme

This answer writing exercise will cover Essay, General Studies - I, General Studies - II, General Studies -III & General Studies -IV papers

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EPHRASE

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- Prelims & Mains test series with All Kerala rank list.
- Expert faculties.
- Library facility across the centres.
- Instalment facility for fee payment available to BPL category students.

Optional Subjects

**Geography, History, Malayalam, Political Science & International Relations,
Public Administration and Sociology**

Course Fees : Rs. 11,800/- (Fees Rs 10,000/- + GST Rs.1,800/-).

KERALA STATE CIVIL SERVICE ACADEMY

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LOG ON



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