



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

21st October 2026



Inaugural SCO Civilisation Dialogue Forum



CONTEXT: SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting is taking place at Dushanbe, Tajikistan where India has proposed to strengthen the ancient cultural ties with the members

Chapter 1: Decoding the news : SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting :

Context of News :

- ❑ SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting is taking place at **Dushanbe, Tajikistan**
- ❑ Union Defence Minister : India will host **FIRST** Civilisational Dialogue Forum by the end of this year
- ❑ **Council of Heads of State Meeting in Tianjin, 2025** : PM Proposed to create a Civilisational Dialogue Forum to strengthen people to people ties

"Eurasian
Political,
Economic &
International
Security
Organisation"

Established in **2001** &
India joined in **2017**

Importance : **24% area, 42% population & 23% GDP**

Official languages :
Russian & Chinese

Chief Executive Body :
Heads of State Council

Iran joined in **2023**
& Belarus joined in **2024**

Chapter 2: The "Strategic Importance" of SCO?

Strategic access to **Central Asia** :
Lack of direct land access via Pakistan

Henry Kissinger
"The SCO reflects the emerging balance where regional powers seek order beyond Western frameworks"

Pipelines, trade corridors & connectivity : **INSTC**

Brings **India, China & Pakistan** on same platform : Engage counter - narratives diplomatically

SCO's **RATS Framework** :
Neutralising Terror networks

Strengthen India's role in
Non - Western Groupings

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)



Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is an international political, security, and economic organization that was established in Shanghai on June 15, 2001. It consists of nine member states (Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Russia, China, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, India, and Iran), three 'observer states' that desire full membership, and six 'dialogue partners.' The organization prioritized economic integration, issues, combating regional terrorism, ethnic separatism, and religious extremism.



مرکز البیدر للدراسات والتخطيط
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Inaugural SCO Civilisation Dialogue Forum



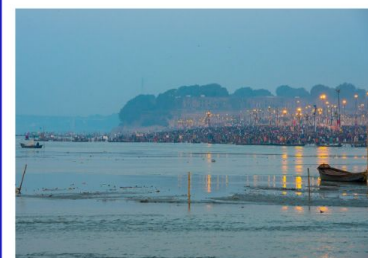
CONTEXT: SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting is taking place at Dushanbe, Tajikistan where India has proposed to strengthen the ancient cultural ties with the members

Chapter 3: The richness of "Ancient" People to People ties :

Iran	China	Russia
❑ "Diffusion Theory" by Mortimer Wheeler ❑ Invasions by Darius & Xerxes in 6th century BCE ❑ System of Governance : Satrapi system ❑ Influence of Achaemenid Art & Architecture ❑ Mir Sayyid Ali & Abdus Samad under Humayun	❑ Kushans : Uttarapatha connected to "Silk Route" ❑ Dream of Ming of Han (57-75 CE) ❑ White Horse Temple at Luoyang in 68 CE ❑ Borderland Complex : Faxian (399-412 CE) & Xuanzang (629-643 CE) ❑ Marco Polo's "Journey to West" : Buddhist cultural sphere	❑ Demand of Silk & Cotton at Astrakhan ❑ Buddhist Monasteries in Buryatia, Kalmykia & Tuva ❑ "Journey beyond 3 Seas" by Nikitin ❑ Panchtantra by Ivan Minaev ❑ Gerasim Lebedev studied Sanskrit & opened theatre in Calcutta in 1795



Xuanzang describes colossal Buddhas carved into the rocks of Bamiyan region (above: 19th-century sketch, destroyed by the Taliban in 2001).



Xuanzang describes Prayaga as a great city where Ganges and Yamuna meet, one where people ritually fast, bathe and give away alms.

Issue 1: Trade Deficit :

- ❑ India - China Trade : \$144 Billion (2025)
- ❑ Heavily lopsided trade relationship : Import rise up by 23% (\$125 Billion)
- ❑ Trade Deficit : \$105 Billion
- ❑ 70% Import : Intermediate Goods & 22% : Capital Goods

Issue 2: Creation of "Critical dependence" :

- ❑ Antibiotics = 97% supply of Erythromycin
- ❑ Electronics = 86% of flat panel displays & 80% of Laptops
- ❑ Renewable Energy = 82% of solar cells & 75% of Lithium ion batteries

Chapter 4: "Points of Conflict" For India at SCO?

GTRI: "Overwhelming dominance gives Beijing potential leverage against India turning supply chains into a tool of pressure in times of political tension"

India's trade deficit with China crosses \$100 billion in 2026

Two-way trade between January and September was up 25.4% to \$144.45 billion, while India's imports from China continued to rise, up 23.3% to \$125.19 billion

China to curb exports of technologies such as AI, photovoltaics

CONTEXT: SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting is taking place at Dushanbe, Tajikistan where India has proposed to strengthen the ancient cultural ties with the members

Chapter 4 : ***"Points of Conflict"*** For India at SCO?

India's exports to China has remained broadly stagnant between 2021-2025, while imports rose sharply from US\$87.5 billion to US\$149.5 billion in the same period, resulting in the widening trade deficit



A new **roadblock**

The draft plan proposes export bans on 14 technologies and restrictions on 26 others



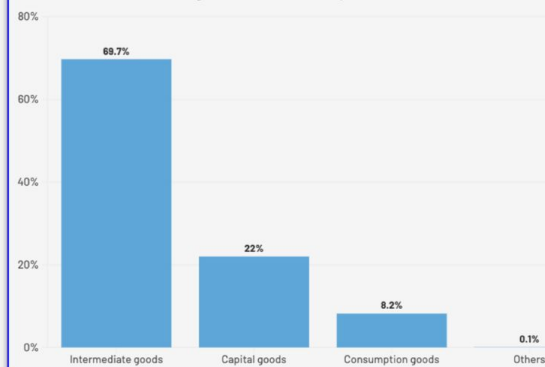
Solar: Perovskite and tandem-cell manufacturing know-how among the proposed bans; polysilicon production faces restrictions

AI, biotech: Select AI systems and cell- and gene-therapy platforms also targeted

■ India might face potential delays in solar investments, licensing and domestic manufacturing



Share of different categories of India's imports from China (2025)



Impact of Rising Trade Deficit :

China Targets India's Manufacturing Sector, Delays Machinery Delivery, Pulls iPhone Engineers

Costlier imports hurts **local manufacturers**

Pressure on **foreign exchange reserves**

Currency depreciation pushes cost of imported goods

Reduce Incentive to **build domestic capacity** in key sectors

India imposes anti-dumping duty on six Chinese products

What has been **India's Response**?

Role of DGTR :
Imposition of Anti - Dumping Duty & Trade subsidies

PLI Scheme for 14 sectors

Focusing upon **"China + 1"** Strategy

Stricter Quality Standards

Inaugural SCO Civilisation Dialogue Forum



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Chapter 4 : "Points of Conflict" For India at SCO?

Presence of "Iran" :

- ❑ Labelling as "Anti - West" Bloc
- ❑ India's Trade manoeuvres with USA
- ❑ Bishkek Declaration : Condemnation of US - Israel unilateral actions against Iran

Iran's Response

- ❑ Pressure tool of Trade : Blockade of Strait of Hormuz
- ❑ 40% crude imports & 54% LNG Imports
- ❑ Issue of "Imported Inflation" & "Generalisation" of Inflation
- ❑ CPI - C (September) : 5.54%

Pakistan as Chairman

- ❑ PM at Kyrgyzstan : Dismantling the ecosystem of "terrorist financing, recruitment, radicalisation, and safe havens"

India - Russia issues :

- ❑ Diversion from Russia's Oil : 37% import of oil from Russia
- ❑ Failure of "De - Dollarisation" Initiative
- ❑ Defence Sector : Russia's share dropped from 60% (2020) to 40% (2025)
- ❑ Growing China - Russia nexus

CRUDE OIL PRICE RISK

■ Strait of Hormuz port closure could lead crude oil prices to surge to over \$120/ bbl, which may negatively impact the Indian economy

Chapter 5: The "Madhyama Marga" taken by India :

Prevailing Concerns :

Strained ties with Pakistan & China

Failure to curb Cross - Border Terrorism

Painting of "Anti - West" Grouping

Recent sanctions by USA & Russia - China Nexus

Share in India's total trade = Less than 10%

Connect "Central Asia" Policy

National Currency Payments for Mutual trade

Revival of TAPI Gas Pipeline

Strengthening RATS

Opportunity For India

SECURE by India



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CONTEXT: SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting is taking place at Dushanbe, Tajikistan where India has proposed to strengthen the ancient cultural ties with the members

Mains Practise Question

Question : *“India can not afford to Ignore China’s Challenge”. In light of this statement, analyse the prevailing challenges in India- China relations and the opportunity which is offered by the regional groupings such as SCO to strengthen the relations.*
(10 Marks, 150 words)



Retrofitment & next mobility revolution



CONTEXT: The article charts path for strengthening India's EV supply chains by focusing on reducing vulnerabilities due to "external shocks"

Mains Heading 1: Decoding the News : **Vehicle retrofitment** as Opportunity for global south?

Context of News :

- ❑ **India's Growth story is FALSE** : "Borrow tech developed elsewhere, re-engineer it for cost & scale it for masses"
- ❑ Time to move from "Optimisation" to "Creation" : **Vehicle Retrofitment**

Case study : Mobile Industry

India is **2nd largest** mobile manufacturer :
Imported parts risen from 3.3% of import basket from China in 2022 to **10% in 2025**

Vehicle retrofitment : Converts existing petrol or diesel vehicle into electric one

Can be useful for **legacy vehicles**,
Battery & power electric systems

Requires a "**Skilled workforce**"
& creation of Employment

India has deep automotive supply chain & engineering talent

Model of **UPI & PM - SGMBY**

Mains Heading 2: The **need** of Electric Vehicles?

"Unlocking a **200 Billion Dollar Opportunity** : EV in India" by NITI Aayog

Vehicular Emission : Major source of **Pollution & Carbon Emission** in country

To achieve **Panchamrit Target** :
Net Zero Emission country by 2070

Reduce Import Dependence : Transport sector accounts for **18%** of total energy consumption

PIB (2025) : **\$646 million** for purchase of Oil For Strategic Petroleum Reserves

Employment Opportunities :
EV Industry to create **5 crore jobs by 2030**

Imperative for **Energy Security**?

Reduce import dependency on Crude Oil

Diversification of Energy Basket

Enhance BOP & FOREX Reserves

Security cover from **Geo - Political Disturbances** in West

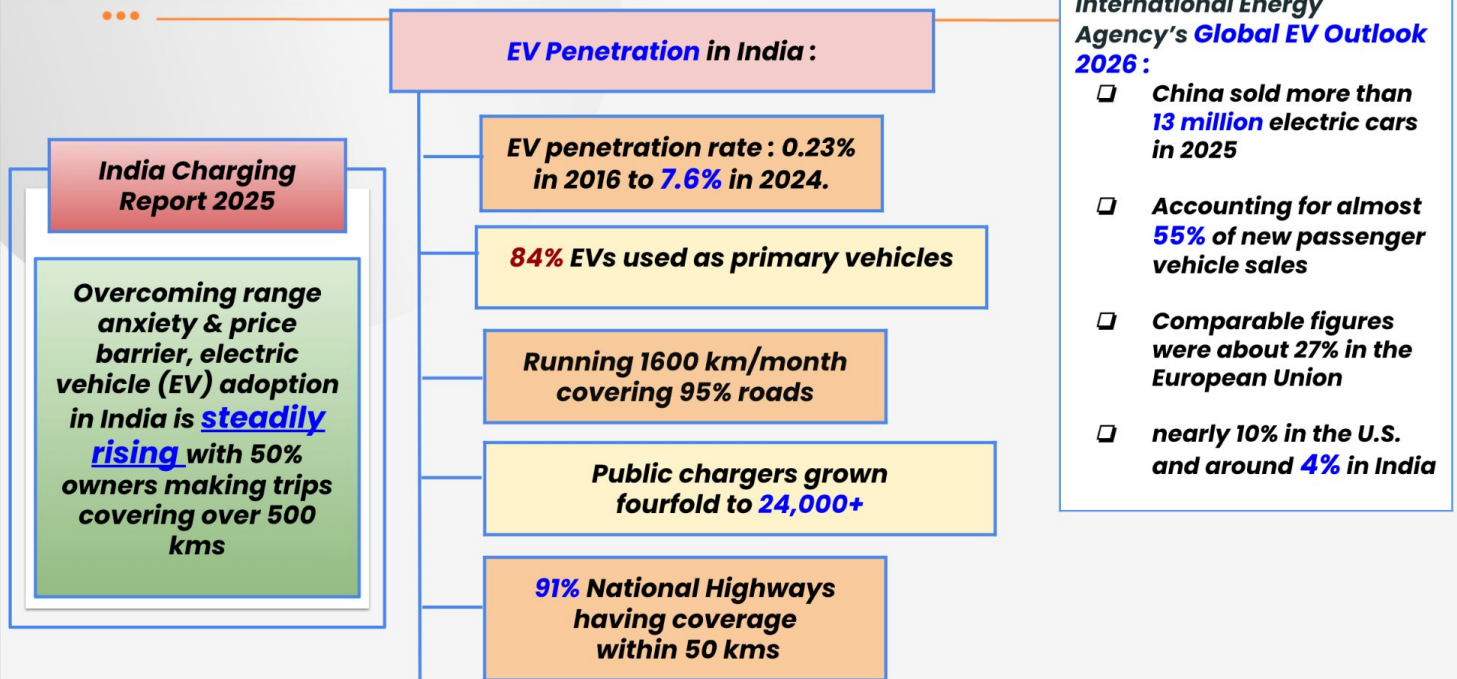
Save from Imported Inflation & Reduce Logistic Cost

Retrofitment & next mobility revolution

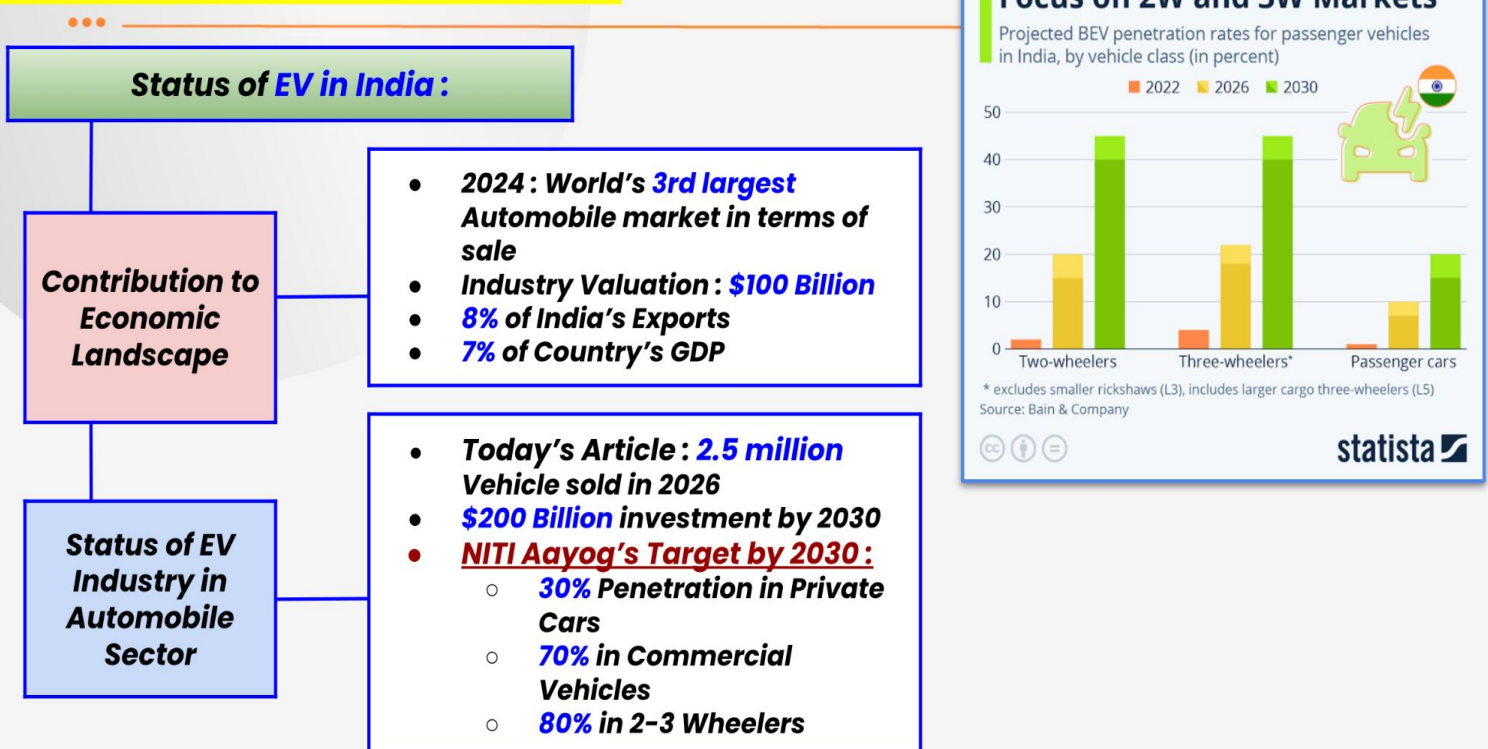


CONTEXT: The article charts path for strengthening India's EV supply chains by focusing on reducing vulnerabilities due to "external shocks"

Mains Heading 3: How much **Successful** EVs has been in India?



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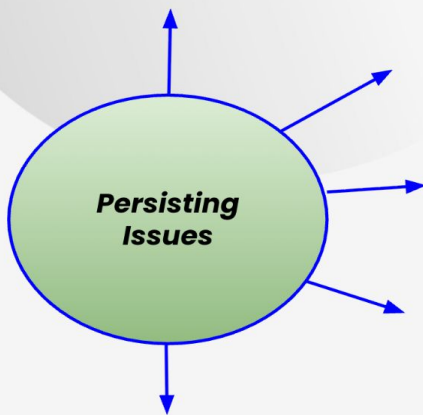


Retrofitment & next mobility revolution

CONTEXT: The article charts path for strengthening India's EV supply chains by focusing on reducing vulnerabilities due to "external shocks"

No fresh subsidy required for India's EV ecosystem, says Piyush Goyal

"Price sensitive market of India" : High Upfront cost & customer safety



Range Anxiety
Tata Nexon EV : 300-400 kms

Poor State of Charging Infrastructure

Import Dependency for Critical Minerals

Policy Paralysis : Reduction in Subsidy

Tata Nexon vs Tata Nexon EV comparison



Tata Nexon



Tata Nexon EV

Fearless Plus PS Da

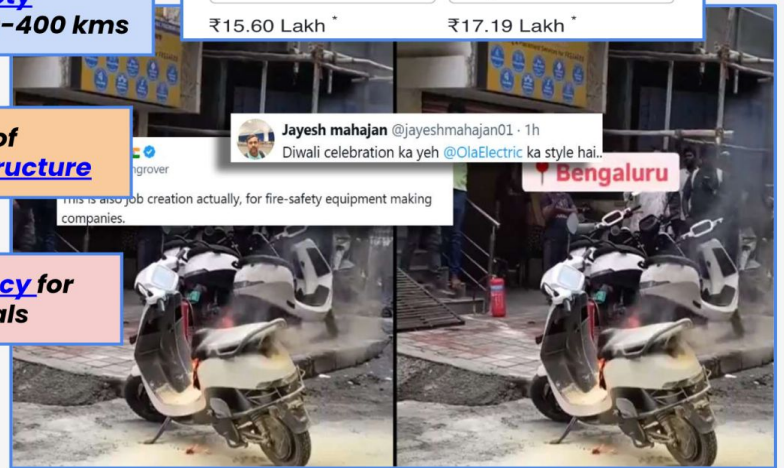
Empowered Plus 45

₹15.60 Lakh

₹17.19 Lakh

Jayesh mahajan @jayeshmahajan01 · 1h
Diwali celebration ka yeh @OlaElectric ka style hai.

Bengaluru



Mains Heading 5 : **Pragmatic Steps Taken by GOI?**

Steps Taken :

National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMMP)

PLI Scheme for Advanced Chemistry Cell Batteries

Create Dense & Accessible Charging Infrastructure like China Model

PM E-Bus Sewa Payment Security Mechanism Scheme 2024

State EV Policies: Exemptions from road tax + lower toll fee + Zero parking fee

UK Model : Ban on Sales of New Petrol or Diesel Vehicle by 2035

Big Boost to Electric Cars

Scheme for FAME India Phase II Approved



Encourage Faster adoption of Electric and hybrid vehicle by offering upfront **Incentive on purchase of Electric vehicles**



To support **10 Lakhs e2-Wheelers, 5 Lakhs e3-Wheelers, 55000 4-Wheelers s and 7000 Buses**



About **2700 charging stations** will be established in a grid of 3 km x 3 km



Outlay of **Rs. 10,000 crores** over three years



Retrofitment & next mobility revolution



CONTEXT: The article charts path for strengthening India's EV supply chains by focusing on reducing vulnerabilities due to "external shocks"

Mains Practise Question

Question : "Electric Vehicle (EV) adoption is crucial for India's transition towards sustainable mobility, yet its penetration remains uneven". Critically Analyse.
(150 words, 10 marks)



Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number : 06

Moves by the North of England to unlock India trade

Context of News :

"The India United Kingdom Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) has opened the door to a new phase in the relationship between the two countries"

Bilateral trade between India & U.K. rose to £47.4 billion in 2025 (11% increase)

Presence of Indian Diaspora : 5,40,000 people of Indian origin living across the region

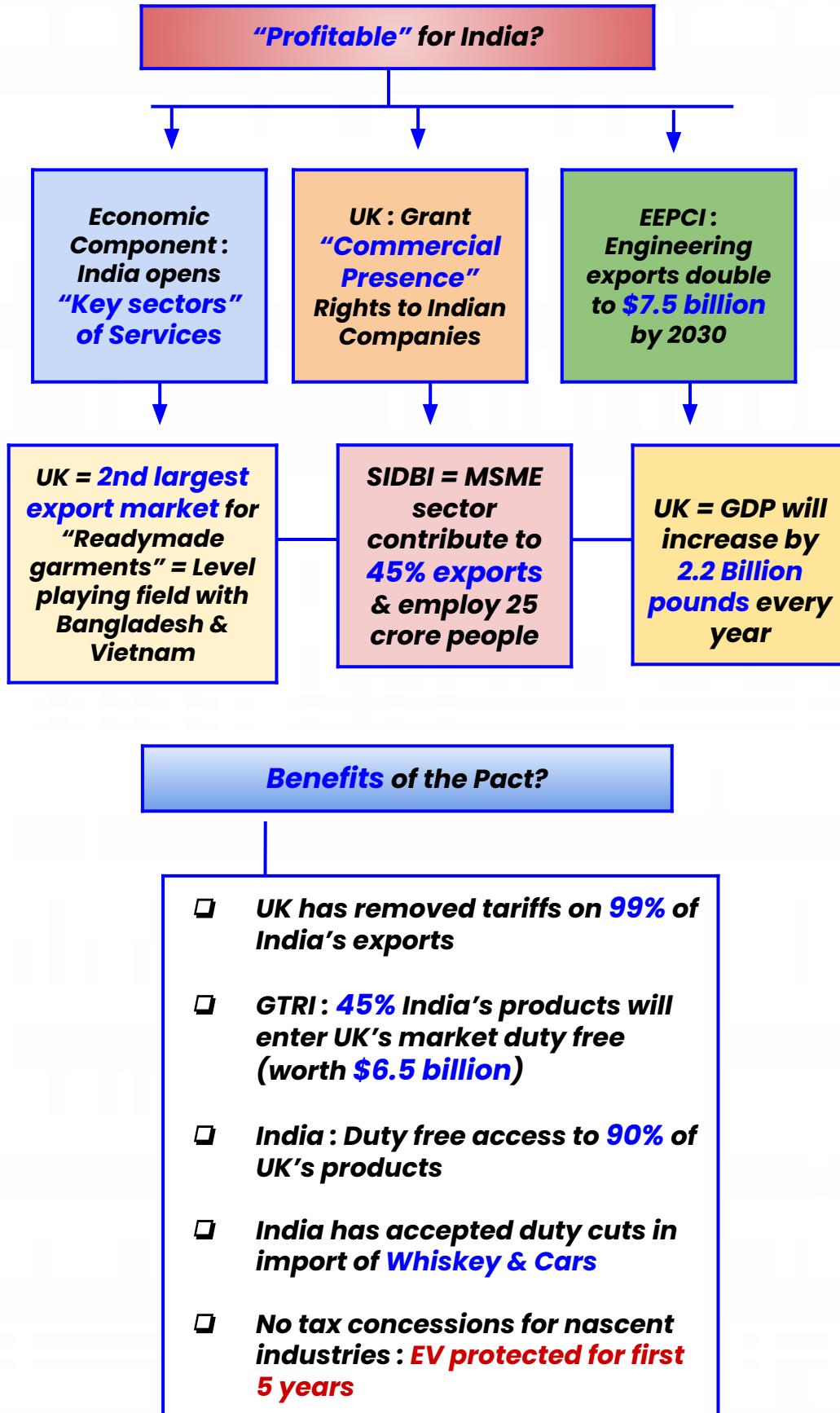
CII Report : Indian companies have invested over £1bn generating more than 6,700 jobs

Ambitious India - UK Roadmap 2030 aims to steer cooperation between two nations"

Indian owned companies rising nearly 60% from the previous year & combined revenues surpassing £105 billion



Newspaper: The Hindu Page Number : 06



Harvesting the sun, powering the farm

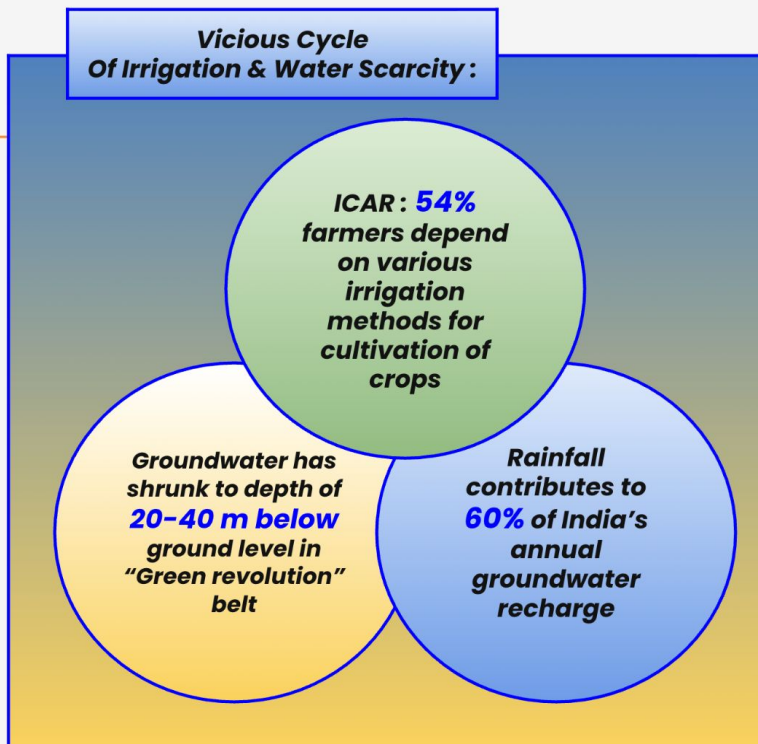
SYLLABUS : Prelims: Government policies & interventions
Newspaper: The Indian Express **Page Number :** 09

Harvesting the sun, powering the farm

Context of News :

- ❑ **Minister of Agriculture :** Govt is working towards transitioning "Annadata" to "Urjadatas"
- ❑ **Solarisation of Irrigation through : PM - KUSUM**
- ❑ **October 21-23 :** India will host the **7th Agri - Voltaics World Conference** in New Delhi
- ❑ **Agri - Voltaics :** Use same piece of land for agriculture & electricity generation

Vicious Cycle Of Irrigation & Water Scarcity :



Harvesting the sun, powering the farm

"Help farmers access reliable daytime solar power for irrigation, reduce power subsidies & decarbonise agriculture"

Component A

- ❑ **10,000 MW** decentralised, grid connected solar/renewable power plants
- ❑ **Farmer, FPOs or Panchayats = Establish 500 KW - 2 MW Energy plants**
- ❑ **Sell surplus to DISCOMS**

Component C

- ❑ **Solarisation of 35 lakh grid-connected agricultural pumps**
- ❑ **Combined target was about 34,800 MW** of solar capacity by March 2026

Component B

- ❑ **Installation of 20 Lakh Standalone Solar powered Agriculture pumps**
- ❑ **Areas without Grid supplied Electricity**
- ❑ **Substitute Diesel based irrigation**

Subsidy Model

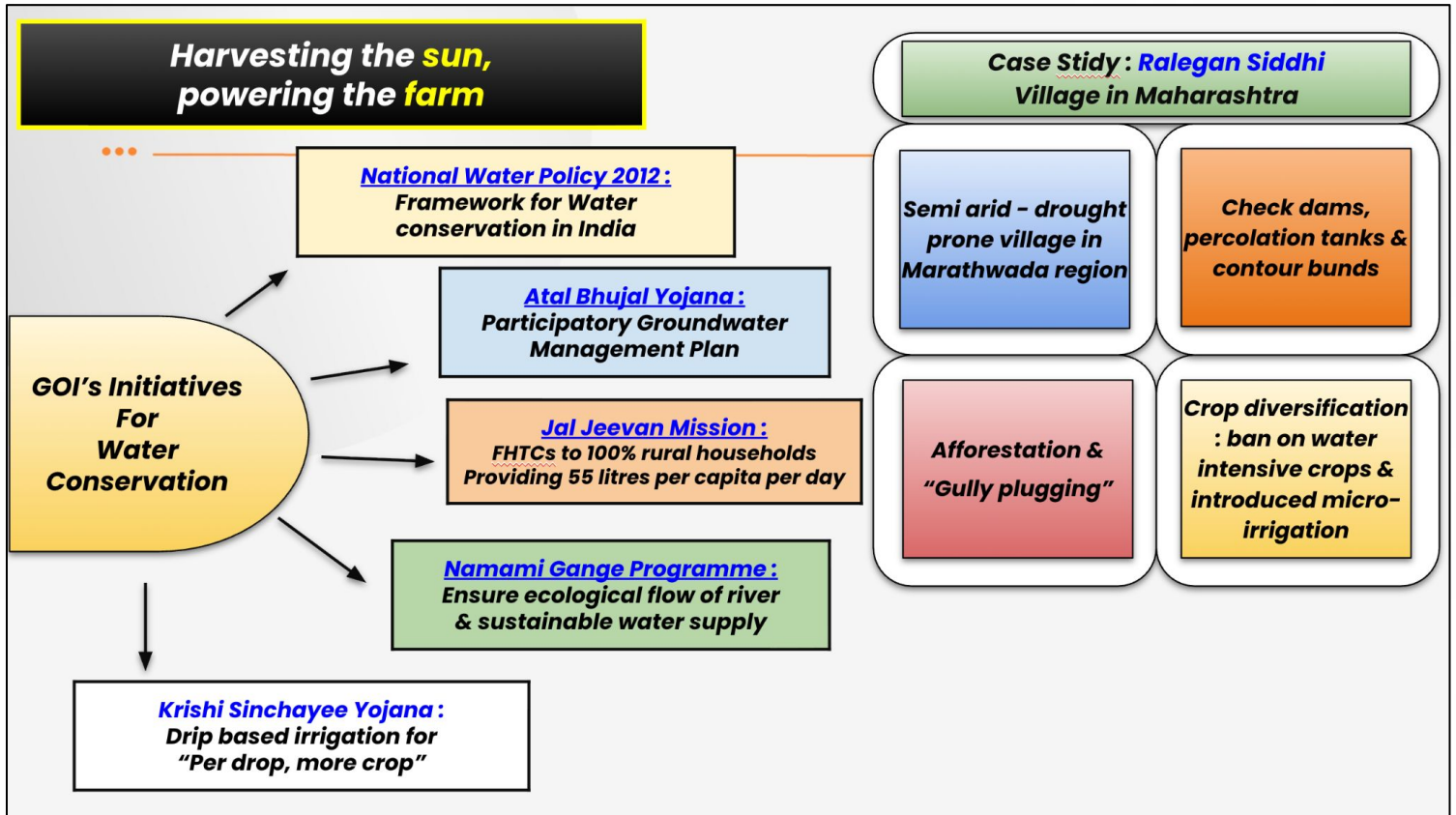
- ❑ **Central Financial Assistance (CFA): 30%**
- ❑ **State Government subsidy: at least 30%**
- ❑ **Farmer contribution: up to 40%**



Harvesting the sun, powering the farm



SYLLABUS : Prelims: Government policies & interventions
Newspaper: The Indian Express **Page Number :** 09



SYLLABUS : Prelims: Important International Organisations in News
Newspaper: The Hindu **Page Number :** 01

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

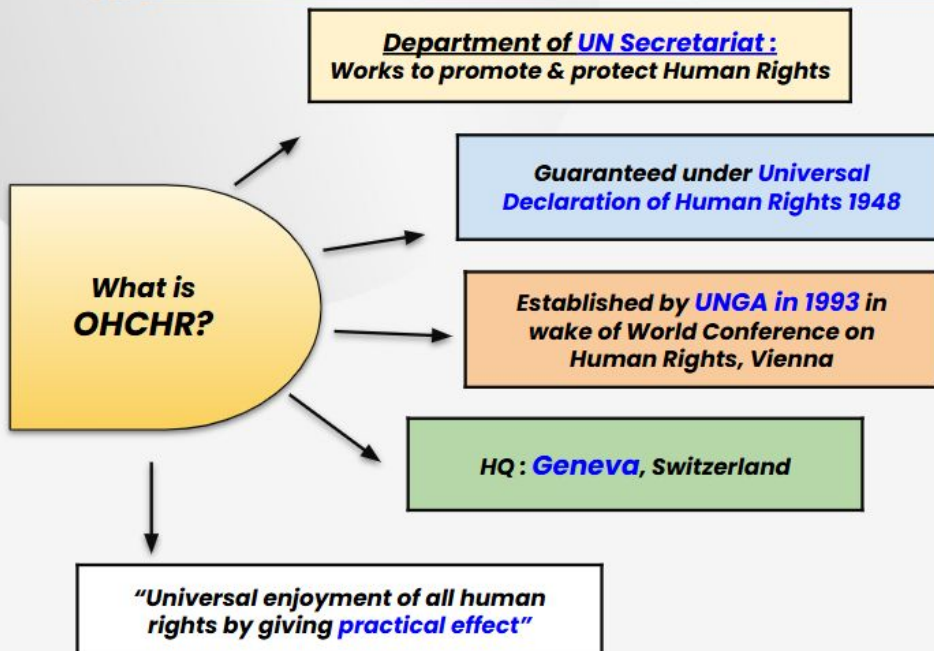
Context of News :

- ❑ **(OHCHR)** : "Over 7,000 youths, journalists, human rights defenders" were detained in New Delhi arbitrarily during the protests & expressed concern over reports of sexual violence
- ❑ Actions violate India's core international legal obligations, including "rights to freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of expression, liberty, security of the person & the **right to defend human rights**"

United Nations : 24th Oct, 1945

<u>General Assembly:</u> Main policy making & representative body with 193 members	<u>Security Council:</u> Maintenance of International peace & security with 15 members	<u>Economic & Social Council:</u> Coordination & Policy review on Economic & Environment issues
<u>Trusteeship Council:</u> Provide International supervision for "11 Trust territories" under 7 states	<u>International Court of Justice</u> : To resolve disputes among the member states	<u>Secretariat :</u> Secretary - General & staff members who carry out day - day work as mandated by UNGA

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)



SYLLABUS : Prelims: Important International Organisations in News
Newspaper: The Hindu **Page Number :** 01

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

1 Equality

Everyone is born free and equal in dignity and with rights.



2 Freedom from Discrimination

You should never be discriminated against for any reason.



3 Life, Liberty and Security

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and personal security.



4 Freedom from Slavery

No-one shall be held in slavery or servitude.



5 Freedom from Torture

No-one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel or degrading treatment.



6 Recognition as Person Before Law

You have the right to be treated as a person in the eyes of the law.



7 Equality Before the Law

You have the right to be treated by the law in the same way as everyone else.



8 Remedy by Tribunal

You have the right to remedy by competent tribunal.



9 Freedom from arbitrary arrest

No-one shall be subject to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.



10 Fair Public Hearing

You have the right to a fair public hearing.



11 Innocent until Proven Guilty

You have the right to be considered innocent until proven guilty.



12 Privacy

No-one has the right to interfere with your privacy, family, or home.



13 Freedom of Movement

You have the right to freedom of movement in and out of the country.



14 Asylum

You have the right to seek asylum in other countries from persecution.



15 Nationality

You have the right to a nationality.



16 Marriage and Family

You have the right to marriage and to raise a family.



17 Property

You have the right to own property.



18 Freedom of Belief

You have the right to freedom of belief and religion.



19 Freedom of Opinion

You have the right to freedom of opinion and expression.



20 Freedom of Assembly

You have the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.



21 Take Part in Government

You have the right to take part in the government of your country.



22 Social Security

You have the right to social security.



23 Work

You have the right to desirable work and to join trade unions.



24 Rest and Leisure

You have the right to rest and leisure.



25 Adequate Living Standard

You have the right to a decent life, including food, clothing, housing, and medical care.



26 Education

You have the right to education.



27 Participate in Cultural Life

You have the right to Participate in the Cultural Life of Community.



28 Social Order

You have the Right to a Social Order that Articulates this Document.



29 Mutual Responsibility

We all have a responsibility to the people around us and should protect their rights and freedoms.



30 Freedom from State or Personal Interference

There is nothing in this declaration that justifies any person or country taking away the rights to which we are all entitled.

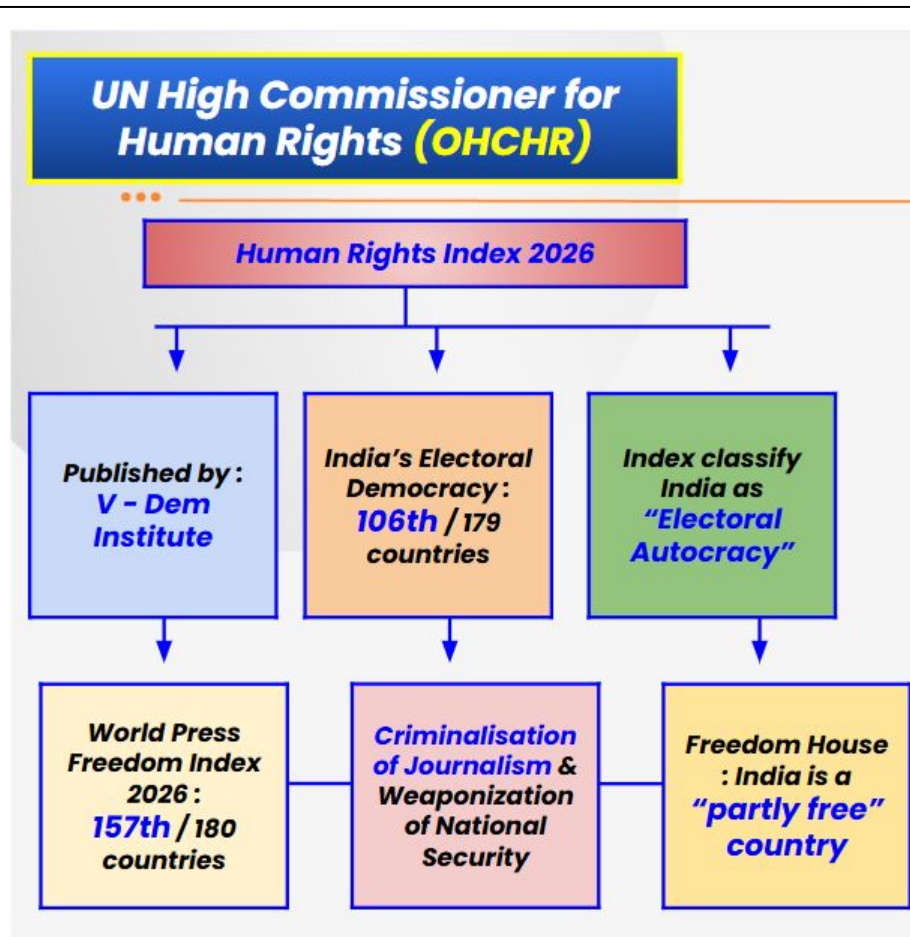


HRE USA
Human Rights Educators USA
A national network dedicated to building a culture of human rights.
hreusa.org

HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION is a lifelong process of teaching and learning that helps individuals develop the knowledge, skills, and values to fully exercise and protect the human rights of themselves and others; to fulfill their responsibilities in the context of internationally agreed upon human rights principles; and to achieve justice and peace in the world. HRE USA strives to promote human dignity, justice, and peace by cultivating an expansive, vibrant base of support for Human Rights Education (HRE) in the United States.



SYLLABUS : Prelims: Important International Organisations in News
Newspaper: The Hindu **Page Number :** 01



8. Other than the Fundamental Rights, which of the following parts of the Constitution of India reflect/reflects the principles and provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) ?

1. Preamble
2. Directive Principles of State Policy
3. Fundamental Duties

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3



SYLLABUS : Prelims: Important Organisations in News
Newspaper: The Indian Express **Page Number :** 01

RSS @ 101

Context of News :

- ❑ Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) concluded its **centenary celebrations** on Vijayadashami (October 20) 2026
- ❑ It runs **88,949** daily shakhas at 55,683 locations, while one of the **32 organisations** it has inspired, the Bharatiya Janata Party, governs India

Backdrop?

Simla Deputation & Formation of **Muslim League** in 1906

Formation of **Hindu Mahasabha** By MM Malviya in 1915

Lucknow Pact 1916 : Acceptance of Separate Electorate by INC

Treaty of Versailles 1919 & Treaty of Sevres 1920

Khilafat, Non - Cooperation & **Gandhi's failed strategies**

KB Hedgewar : Faction of **BG Tilak** & member of **Anushilan Samiti**

"British rule was possible due to **disunity among Hindus & servitude**"

"Even if British leave India, unless Hindus are organised, where is guarantee that we will be able to **protect our freedom?**"

GS Kharpade : "How you will bring freedom By not paying taxes?"

Shakha : Physical & Ideological training

01

27th Sept, 1925 :
Rashtriya
Swayamsevak
Sangh

02

Jaripatka
Mandal & Bharat
Uddharak
Mandal

Anatomy
Of RSS

03

VD Savarkar's
"Essentials of
Hindutva"

04

Did NOT
participated in
CDM & QIM

Piece of Mars's Moon

SYLLABUS : Prelims: Important Space Missions

Newspaper: The Indian Express **Page Number :** Explained

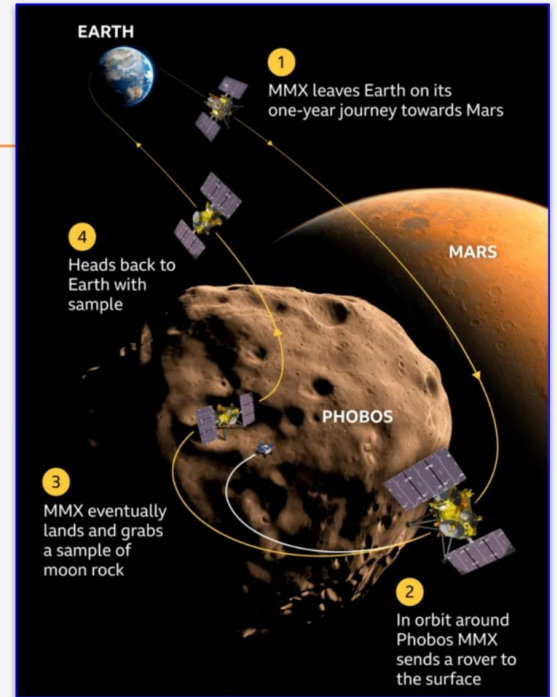
Piece of Mars's Moon

Context of News :

- ❑ **Martian Moons Exploration (MMX) Mission by Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)**
- ❑ **Study: Phobos & Deimos (Moons of Mars)**
- ❑ **Reach Mars by 2027 & Return by 2031**
- ❑ **If successful, FIRST country to return samples from Moon of Mars**

Mission specs

- The MMX mission is carrying 13 scientific instruments, including cameras, spectrometers and devices to measure the surface and composition of the Martian moon Phobos.
- One of its key components is the IDEFIX rover, developed jointly by CNES (France) and the DLR (Germany). The main craft will deploy the rover on Phobos before it lands.



Piece of Mars's Moon

Mars Mission	Country	One salient finding / achievement
Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan)	India	Detected and studied methane and other atmospheric features; demonstrated India's capability to reach Mars orbit on its first attempt.
Perseverance Rover	United States	Collected and cached rock samples in Jezero Crater to investigate ancient habitability and preserve material for possible future return to Earth.
Tianwen-1	China	Successfully achieved Mars orbit, landing and rover operations; the Zhurong rover explored the Martian surface in 2021.
Hope Probe (Emirates Mars Mission)	United Arab Emirates	Revealed previously unobserved types of Martian auroras and helped build a global picture of the planet's atmosphere.
Mars Express	European Space Agency (ESA)	Mapped atmospheric composition and traced evidence of Mars' watery past, including environments that may once have been habitable.

Q1. With reference to the PM-KUSUM Scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It aims to promote solar energy in agriculture while enabling farmers to earn additional income from electricity generation.
2. It provides financial assistance exclusively for solar pumps in areas without grid connectivity.
3. It allows farmers to install solar power plants on barren or fallow land and sell electricity to DISCOMs.

How many of the statements given above are Not correct?

- a) Only one
- b) Only two
- c) All three
- d) None

Answer: a

Q2. With reference to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), consider the following statements:

1. It was established by the UN General Assembly following the 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights.
2. It is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is a legally binding treaty for all UN member states.

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

Answer: a

Q3. With reference to personalities associated with the Indian nationalist movement, consider the following statements:

1. K.B. Hedgewar was associated with the Anushilan Samiti before establishing the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.
2. V.D. Savarkar founded the Hindu Mahasabha after resigning from the Indian National Congress.
3. Madan Mohan Malaviya was associated with both the Indian National Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: c

Q4. With reference to missions exploring Mars and its moons, consider the following statements:

1. Japan's Martian Moons Exploration (MMX) mission aims to collect samples from Phobos and return them to Earth.
2. NASA's Perseverance rover is investigating ancient habitability on Mars and collecting rock samples for possible future return.
3. China's Tianwen-1 mission successfully demonstrated orbital, landing and rover operations on Mars.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: d

Q5. Which one of the following institutions publishes the 'Human Rights Index'?

- a) Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- b) Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Institute
- c) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- d) Freedom House

Answer: b





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