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INDIAN EXPRESS

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ELECTORAL BOND SCHEME

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

Electoral bond scheme transparent: Govt to SC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 14

THE CENTRE on Friday told the Supreme Court that the procedure for funding political parties under the Electoral Bond Scheme-2018 is "absolutely transparent" and that it is now "impossible to get any money in black or any unaccounted form".

"The methodology of receiving the money has been so transparent. We will take the court through it step by step. Now it's impossible to get any money in black or any unaccounted form...It is the most transparent system," Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told a bench of Justices B R Gavai and B V Nagarathna.

Mehta said this as Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal contended that free-and-fair elections was a basic feature of the Constitution but under the scheme, it is not known who is funding parties and that "this is destructive of free-and-fair elections".

Mehta added: "So to say, it affects democracy, etc. does not hold water".

Advocate Prashant Bhushan said petitions touch three important interconnected issues which go to the very root of democracy — the question of electoral bonds; whether political parties come under the RTI; and about retrospective amendments to Foreign Contribution Regulation Act which says that subsidiaries of foreign companies will not be treated as foreign source thereby allowing donations to political parties, public servants, etc. "And the question in all these cases is whether amendments can be made through a money Bill which don't even go to the Rajya Sabha for approval," he pointed out.

Justice Gavai said the matter would need a detailed hearing.

Sibal said the matter involves questions that would require interpretation of the Constitution and hence it may have to be referred to a larger bench.

Attorney General R Venkataramani and the SG said the court should first look into the matter and only then take a call on whether it should be referred [to larger Bench] or not. With both sides agreeing, the court fixed the hearing on December 6.

The matter last came up in the court on March 26, 2021, when a bench headed by the then Chief Justice of India S A Bobde dismissed an application filed by the petitioners seeking stay on any fresh sale of electoral bonds ahead of the Assembly elections that were due at the time.

The top court had questioned claims regarding "complete anonymity" of the purchasers of the bonds and said "it is not as though the operations under the scheme are behind iron curtains incapable of being pierced".

Dismissing the prayer not to allow any new window for their sale till its main petition challenging the scheme is decided, the court pointed out that the bonds had already been issued in the past without any impediment and that it had ordered "certain safeguards".

"Therefore, in the light of the fact that the scheme was introduced on 2.1.2018; that the bonds are released at periodical intervals in January, April, July and October every year; that they had been so released in the years 2018, 2019 and 2020 without any impediment; and that certain safeguards have already been provided by this Court in its interim order dated 12.4.2019, we do not see any justification for the grant of stay at this stage. Hence, both the applications for stay are dismissed," the SC had said.

The court's reference was to its April 12, 2019, interim order by which it directed political parties to "forthwith" submit details of donations received through electoral bonds to the EC.

Context: The Centre told the Supreme Court that the procedure for funding political parties under the Electoral Bond Scheme is absolutely transparent.

Electoral Bond Scheme

- **Origin**: The scheme was first announced in the 2017 budget session and was **notified in January 2018.**
  - **Electoral bonds:** They are **money instruments like promissory notes** that can be bought by companies and individuals in India **from the State Bank of India (SBI) and donated to a political party**, which can then encash these bonds.
- **Objectives**: to "cleanse the system of political funding in the country" by eradicating the "menace of unaccounted money coming into the country's economy through political funding".
- **Key features of the scheme**:
  - **Authorised Bank**: Bonds are available for purchase at **any SBI branch in multiples of ₹1,000, ₹10,000, ₹1 lakh, ₹10 lakh and ₹1 crore** and can be bought through a KYC-compliant account.
  - **No Limit**: There is **no limit on the number of electoral bonds** that a person or company can purchase.
  - **Registered political party: Every party registered under section 29A of the Representation of the Peoples Act, 1951 and having secured at least one per cent of the votes** polled in the most recent Lok Sabha or State election has been allotted a verified account by the Election Commission of India.
  - **10-days windows: The bonds go for sale in 10-day windows in the beginning of every quarter**, i.e. in **January, April, July and October,** besides an additional 30-day period specified by the Central Government during Lok Sabha election years.
  - **Anonymous**: The **donor's name is not mentioned on the bond.**
    - Donors **who contribute less than Rs. 20,000 to political parties through purchase of electoral bonds need not provide their identity details** such as PAN, etc.
    - The **donor can donate the bond to a party of their choice**, which can cash it within 15 days, only through the allotted account.
    - A **person being an individual can buy bonds, either singly or jointly** with other individuals.
  - **Other ways of donation: Electoral bonds are not the only way in which parties now receive donations.**
    - They can also receive cash donations of less than ₹2,000 from anonymous sources through cheque or by digital mode, in addition to electoral bonds.

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WPI AND CPI
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy)

Wholesale inflation eases to 10.7% in September

Dilasha Seth
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NEW DELHI

India's wholesale inflation eased to an 18-month low in September, as the prices of food and manufactured goods fell, official data showed. Overall wholesale inflation cooled for the fourth straight month in September, which may reflect retail inflation with a lag.

With international prices of commodities and fuel beginning to ease, economists expect domestic prices to cool further. However, the easing of inflation could also be attributed to last year's high base.

Wholesale Price Index-based inflation eased sharply to 10.7% in September compared with 12.41% in the previous month, data released by the ministry of commerce and industry showed on Friday. It was the 18th straight month of double-digit WPI inflation.

Wholesale inflation is at odds with the trend in retail inflation, which rose to a five-month high of 7.41% in September.

"The moderation in inflation numbers has been led by easing commodity prices of basic metals, chemical products, textiles and manufactured food products. We expect WPI inflation to ease to a single-digit from

Context: India's wholesale inflation eased to an 18-month low in September, as the prices of food and manufactured goods fell, official data showed.

Wholesale Price Index

- **Index Measurement**: It measures the **changes in the prices of only goods** sold and traded in bulk by wholesale businesses to other businesses.
  - It is the most **widely used inflation indicator** in India.
- **Published by**: the Office of Economic Adviser, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- **Base year of All-India WPI**: revised from 2004-05 to 2011-12 in 2017.

Consumer Price Index

- **Index Measurement**: It measures price changes from the perspective of a retail buyer.
  - The CPI **calculates the difference in the price of goods and services** such as food, medical care, education, electronics etc, which Indian consumers buy for use.
- **Released by:** the National Statistical Office (NSO) in the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.
- **Four types of CPI are as follows:**
  - **CPI for Industrial Workers (IW)**: compiled by the Labour Bureau in the Ministry of Labour and Employment.
    - Recently, the Ministry of Labour and Employment released the new series of Consumer Price Index for Industrial Worker (CPI-IW) with base year 2016.
  - **CPI for Agricultural Labourer (AL):** compiled by the Labour Bureau in the Ministry of Labour and Employment.
  - **CPI for Rural Labourer (RL):** compiled by the Labour Bureau in the Ministry of Labour and Employment.
  - **CPI (Rural/Urban/Combined)**: compiled by the NSO.
- **Base Year:** 2012.
- **Significance**: The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) uses CPI data to control inflation.
  - In April 2014, the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had adopted the CPI as its key measure of inflation.**

THE HINDU Page 6

ECO-SENSITIVE ZONES
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Env & Eco)

Eco-sensitive zone: top court may take up Kerala's review

Supreme Court may also consider Centre's plea seeking clarification on court's judgment to have a one-km eco-sensitive zone ringing protected forests, national parks and wildlife sanctuaries

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday indicated it may consider taking up Kerala's review of the Supreme Court's judgment to have a one-km eco-sensitive zone ringing protected forests, national parks and wildlife sanctuaries across the country along with a plea for clarification sought by the Centre.

A Bench led by Justice B.R. Gavai said the court would wait for the Centre's application to come up for hearing. It was responding to an oral mentioning made by advocate Nishe Rajen Shonker, for Kerala, about the State's review petition.

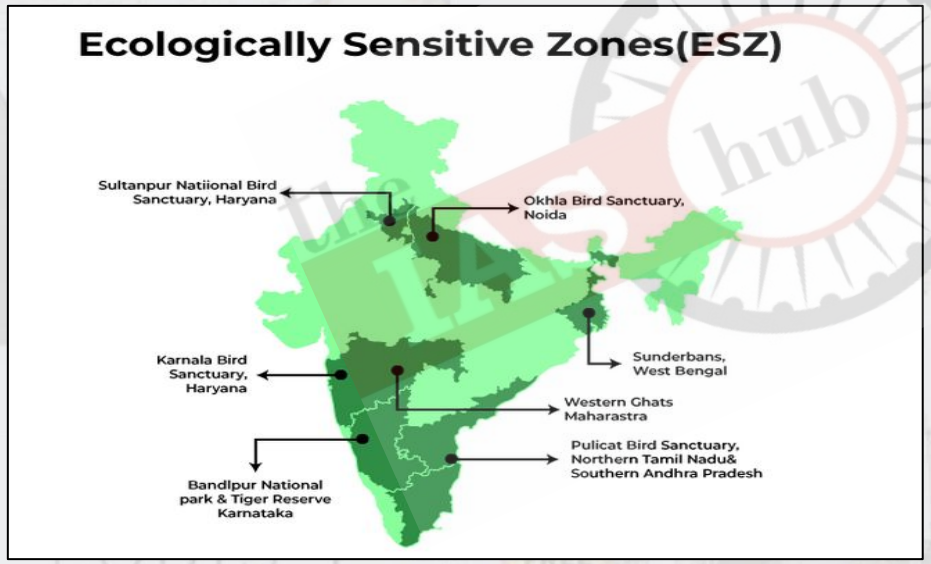


Green concerns: A glimpse of the eco-sensitive zone of the Parambikulam Tiger Reserve. FILE PHOTO

The Centre has sought a clarification on certain paragraphs in the court's verdict, including the fate of building activities pre-dating the judgment.

The review by Kerala has argued that the judgment would lead to massive displacement of people living in the vicinity of forest areas. Even worse, the judgment would strip thousands of Scheduled Tribe families and forest dwellers of their vested rights under the law. "Human habitations are there within one km of the protected areas," the review petition said.

In June, the Supreme Court, in its judgment, referred to Environment Ministry guidelines highlighting that ESZs around national parks, forests and sanctuaries would function as a "shock absorber" for the protected areas. These zones would act as a transition zone from areas of high protection to those involving lesser protection. The court had noted how the national resources were ravaged by mining and other activities.



Context: The Supreme Court may consider taking up Kerala's review of the Supreme Court's judgment to have a one-km eco-sensitive zone ringing protected forests, national parks and wildlife sanctuaries across the country along with a plea for clarification sought by the Centre.

Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) or Ecologically Fragile Areas (EFAs)

- **Notified by the Union government**: They are areas notified by the MoEFCC around Protected Areas, National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries.
- **National Wildlife Action Plan (2002-2016) of the MoEFCC:** It stipulated that state governments should declare land falling within 10 km of the boundaries of national parks and wildlife sanctuaries as eco fragile zones or Eco Sensitive Zones (ESZs) **under the Environmental (Protection) Act, 1986.**
  - The **Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 does not mention the word "Eco-Sensitive Zones".**
- **10-km rule**: While the 10-km rule is implemented as a general principle, the extent of its application can vary.
  - An **ESZ could go up to 10 kilometres around a protected area** as **provided in the Wildlife Conservation Strategy, 2002.**
  - Areas **beyond 10-km can also be notified by the Union government as ESZs**, if they hold larger ecologically important "sensitive corridors."
- **Activities Permitted under ESZs:** Ongoing agricultural or horticultural practices, rainwater harvesting, organic farming, use of renewable energy sources, adoption of green technology for all activities.
- **Activities prohibited under ESZs:** commercial mining, saw mills, industries causing pollution (air, water, soil, noise etc), the establishment of major hydroelectric projects (HEP), commercial use of wood, Tourism activities like hot-air balloons over the National Park, discharge of effluents or any solid waste or production of hazardous substances.
- **Activities regulated under ESZs:** Felling of trees, the establishment of hotels and resorts, commercial use of natural water, erection of electrical cables, drastic change of agriculture system, e.g. adoption of heavy technology, pesticides etc, widening of roads.

TIMES OF INDIA

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SUBMARINE LAUNCHED BALLISTIC MISSILE (SLBM)

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Sci & Tech)

N-missile tested from sub, nuke triad's weakest leg gets teeth

N-Deterrence In Line With 'No First Use' Policy

Rajat.Pandit@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: India on Friday successfully tested a nuclear-capable ballistic missile from its solitary nuclear-powered submarine INS Arihant, and promptly declared that having an 'assured retaliatory capability' was in tune with the country's 'credible minimum deterrence' against the first-use of nuclear weapons by an adversary.

A brief statement by the defence ministry did not identify the submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) tested from the 6,000-tonne INS Arihant, which became fully operational in 2018, in the Bay of Bengal on Friday afternoon. Sources, however, told **TOI** that the SLBM tested was the B-05 or K-15 missile with a strike range of 750-km. "INS Arihant is armed with the short-range K-15 missiles. Developmental trials of the K-4 SLBM (with a 3,500-km range) have been completed but it is yet to be fully inducted," a source said.

This is the first time the launch of an SLBM from INS Arihant has been announced by the government. It comes at a time when India and China continue to have over 50,000 soldiers each, backed by heavy-duty weapon systems, ranged against each other along the frontier in eastern Ladakh, with the military confrontation there now into its 30th month.

The world is also currently watching with bated breath the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, where the threat of use of nuclear weapons is being considered the most serious since the Cuban missile crisis of 1962.

The MoD, on its part, said, "The SLBM was tested to a predetermined range and impacted the target area in the Bay of Bengal with very high accuracy. All operational and technological parameters of the weapon system have been validated."

"The successful user training launch of the SLBM by INS Arihant is significant to prove crew competency and validate the SSBN (naval parlance for nuclear-propelled submarines armed with nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles) programme, a key element of India's nuclear deterrence capability. A robust, survivable and assured retaliatory capability is in keeping with India's policy to have 'credible minimum deterrence' that underpins its 'no-first use' commitment," it added.

INS Arihant does give some teeth to the weakest leg of India's existing nuclear triad — the capability to fire nukes from land, air and sea — but much larger SSBNs that can carry longer range missiles are required to make it more credible.

The other two legs of the triad are, of course, much more robust with the induction of the land-based Agni series of ballistic missiles as well as fighters like Sukhoi-30MKIs, Mirage-2000s and Rafales that are capable of dropping nuclear gravity bombs.

Under the Rs 90,000 crore top-secret advanced technology vessel (ATV) project, India is currently building three more SSBNs to follow INS Arihant, which is propelled by an 83 MW pressurised light-water reactor at its core. The second such submarine, INS Arighat, is slated to become fully operational next year after some delay. The vessel will be followed by two 7,000-tonne SSBNs under the ATV project. There is also plan to build 13,500-tonne SSBNs with more powerful 190MW reactors.

INDIA'S N-TRIAD

Nuclear Command Authority set up in 2003. Its Political Council, chaired by PM, is the sole body that can authorise use of nuclear weapons

Strategic Forces Command (SFC) to handle nuclear arsenal set up in 2003

LAND VECTOR

Prithvi-II (350km), Agni-I (700km), Agni-II (2,000km) & Agni-III (3,000km) missiles inducted

Agni-V (over 5,000km) in process of induction

AIR VECTOR

Sukhoi-30MKI, Mirage-2000, Jaguar fighters & Rafales can deliver nuclear gravity bombs

SEA VECTOR

- Only 1 nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN), the 6,000-tonne INS Arihant. Became fully operational in Nov 2018. Armed with 750-km range K-15 nuclear missiles



6,000-TONNE INS Arighat to be commissioned soon. Will be followed by two 7,000-tonne SSBNs (called S-4 & S-4*) being built at Vizag. Over 13,000-tonne S-5 class SSBNs to be built later

- Induction of K-4 SLBMs (3,500km range) underway after completion of developmental trials
- Development of K-5 (5,000km) and K-6 (6,000km) SLBMs in progress

'Gogra disengagement reflects Jaishankar-Wang understanding'

With disengagement yet to be fully completed in eastern Ladakh, India and China held another round of diplomatic talks to resolve the military stand-off that started in May 2020.

To achieve the objective of resolution of remaining issues along the LAC in the Western Sector "in accordance with existing bilateral agreements and protocols", they also agreed to hold the next (17th) round of the senior commanders' meeting at an early date. The two sides reviewed the situation along the LAC in the western sector of India-China border areas. "Recalling the developments since the last meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation & Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC) in May 2022, they welcomed the disengagement in the area of Gogra-Hot Springs (PP-15), that was carried out in a phased, coordinated and verified manner between 8-12 September 2022," said the government, while noting that these steps reflected the understandings between external affairs minister S Jaishankar and his counterpart Wang Yi, including at their recent meeting in Bali in July this year. TNN

Context: India successfully tested a nuclear-capable ballistic missile from its solitary nuclear-powered submarine INS Arihant.

Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile (SLBM)

- **About**: It is a ballistic missile capable of being launched from submarines.
  - A **ballistic missile follows a ballistic trajectory to deliver one or more warheads** on a predetermined target.
  - A **ballistic trajectory is the path of an object that is launched but has no active propulsion** during its actual flight (these weapons are guided only during relatively brief periods of flight).
- **Launching system**: Modern variants usually deliver multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs), each of which carries a nuclear warhead and allows a single launched missile to strike several targets.
  - It **operate in a different way from submarine-launched cruise missiles.**
- **Related to ICBMs**: Modern submarine-launched ballistic missiles are closely related to intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), with ranges of over 5,500 kilometres (3,000 nautical mile (symbol M, NM or nmi)), and in many cases SLBMs and ICBMs may be part of the same family of weapons.
  - **ICBM is a ballistic missile** with a range greater than 5,500 kilometres (3,400 mi), primarily designed for nuclear weapons delivery (delivering one or more thermonuclear warheads).

Submarines in India

- India has **16 conventional diesel-electric submarines**, which are classified as SSK (hull classification symbol) excluding the INS Vagir and INS Vagsheer.
  - **4 Shishumar Class**: Bought and then built in India in collaboration with the Germans in 1980s
  - **8 Kilo Class or Sindhughosh Class**: Bought from Russia (including erstwhile USSR) between 1984 and 2000
  - **4 Kalvari Class Scorpene submarines**: Built at India's Mazagon Dock in partnership with France's Naval Group
- India also has **two nuclear ballistic submarines, classified Ballistic Missile Submarines (SSBNs).**
  - **INS Arihant**: Indigenously-built nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine
  - **INS Arighat:** An upgraded version of Arihant.

ECONOMIC TIMES

Page 3

REGIONAL ANTI-TERRORIST STRUCTURE-SCO

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - International Organisations)

SCO-RATS to Counter Terror Groups Operating from Afghanistan

Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury & Rahul Tripathi

New Delhi: The Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation in its key meeting held here on Friday decided on joint measures by member countries to counter threats posed by international terrorist groups operating from Afghanistan.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the council of RATS hosted by India. Sources said joint measures by SCO RATS, including Pakistan, to counter terror groups in Afghanistan is significant given fact that the Pakistan Army has been abetting and aiding terror groups there. The meeting was attended by senior officials of all the member nations including China and Pakistan. This is one of the rare occasions that a Chinese delegation was physically present at a meeting since the Covid-19 outbreak.



Deputy National Security Advisor Dattatray Padsalgikar

India hosted the meeting in its capacity as the chair of SCO-RATS. Deputy national security advisor Dattatray Padsalgikar said the meeting also decided to organise a military exercise called 'Solidarity-2023'.

It is learnt that the exercise will take place in China. "Joint measures of the competent authorities of the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation to counter the challenges and threats posed by international terrorist organisations from the territory of Afghanistan were approved," Padsalgikar said at a media briefing.

Context: The **Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation** in its key meeting decided on joint measures by member countries to counter threats posed by international terrorist groups operating from Afghanistan.

Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure-SCO

- **About**: SCO-RATS is a permanent body of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).
- **Objective**: It is promoting coordination and interaction between the SCO member states as per as fight against terrorism, extremism and separatism are concern.
  - The **main functions of SCO-RATS are information sharing.**
- **India's role**: As a member of SCO, India has actively participated in the activities of SCO-RATS.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)

- **Created in 2001**: The SCO Charter was signed in 2002, and entered into force in 2003.
- **Permanent intergovernmental international organization**: It's a Eurasian political, economic and military organization aiming to maintain peace, security and stability in the region.
- **Objective**: It envisages joining forces to counteract emerging challenges and threats, and enhance trade, as well as cultural and humanitarian cooperation.
- **Member Nations**: Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India, Pakistan.
  - India and Pakistan became members in 2017.
- **Two Permanent Bodies:**
  - SCO Secretariat in Beijing,
  - Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent

BUSINESS STANDARD

Page 4

MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy)

MPC members differed on future interest rate hikes

MANOJIT SAHA
Mumbai, 14 October

Sharp differences in opinion were observed among the members of Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) monetary policy committee (MPC) as some asked for restraint on future increases in interest rates while others still believe in continuing with aggressive hikes.

The MPC hiked the policy repo rate by 50 basis points (bps) to 5.9 per cent in the last policy review, announced on September 30. Since May, repo rate has been hiked by 190 bps even as inflation stayed stubbornly higher, over 6 per cent — the upper tolerance limit of RBI. (100 bps = 1 percentage points)

External member Jayanth Varma who supported the 50-bps rate hike said it was time to pause as monetary policy actions acted with a lag.

"A pause is needed after this hike because monetary policy acts with lags," Varma said, as the minutes showed which was released on Friday.

"It may take 3-4 quarters for the policy rate to be transmitted to the real economy, and the peak effect may take as long as 5-6 quarters," he said, adding that much of the rate hike impact is yet to be transmitted to the real economy. "...less than a third of the increase in the repo rate during April-August has been transmitted to retail bank deposit rates."

Another external member of MPC Ashima Goyal said the rate cycle was not over but a gradual approach is required.

"...if lagged effects of monetary policy are large, as in India, overreaction can be very costly. Harmful effects become clear too late and are difficult to reverse. Gradual data-based action reduces the probability of over-reaction," she said. Goyal voted for a 35-bp rate hike during the last policy review meeting.

"It is necessary to go very carefully now that forward-looking real interest rates are positive," Goyal said.

Michael Patra, deputy governor of RBI, who is an internal member perhaps was the most hawkish in the group.

"...currently available projections of inflation suggest that the real policy rates will remain negative up to close of 2022. Hence, more forceful tightening of monetary policy in 2023 may be required if terminal rates have to be achieved," Patra said.

He said the RBI's forward-looking surveys suggest that selling prices in manufacturing and services may rise further as pass-through from input cost pressures remains incomplete. He said exchange rate volatility is amplifying these core price pressures, especially in view of key import prices being invoiced in the US dollar.

"Inflation expectations are rising, with signs that they are becoming unanchored over a one year ahead horizon. Taken together with a closing output gap, rising capacity utilisation in manufacturing, surging demand for services and the pick-up in spending as the festival season nears, monetary policy must move to red alert," he said.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said the world was in the eye of the new storm from aggressive policy tightening from central banks of advanced economies and their even more aggressive forward guidance.

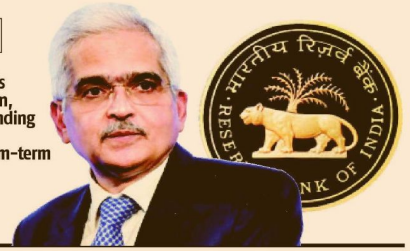
"The future trajectory remains clouded with uncertainties arising from continuing geopolitical conflicts, possibility of further supply disruptions, volatile financial market conditions and domestic weather related factors," Das said, adding that he remained optimistic about the future prospects of the Indian economy.

"The need of the hour is calibrated monetary policy action, with a clear understanding that it is required for sustaining our medium-term growth prospects," Das said.

The next review of the monetary policy committee is scheduled on December 5-7.

"The minutes paint a clear divergence among MPC members on the future rate trajectory, with financial stability increasingly in focus. In the near term, given limited comfort on price trends, we see a case for further rate tightening, but possibly by less than the latest 50bp hike," said Rahul Bajoria, MD and head of E-M Asia (ex-China) Economics, Barclays.

MPC MINUTES



The need of the hour is calibrated policy action, with a clear understanding that it is required for sustaining our medium-term growth prospects
SHAKTIKANTA DAS,
RBI governor



More forceful tightening of monetary policy in 2023 may be required if terminal rates have to be achieved
MICHAEL PATRA,
Deputy governor of RBI



A pause (in repo rate hike) is needed after this increase because monetary policy acts with lags
JAYANTH VARMA,
External member



It is necessary to go very carefully now that forward-looking real interest rates are positive
ASHIMA GOYAL,
External member

Context: Sharp differences in opinion were observed among the members of Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) monetary policy committee (MPC) as some asked for restraint on future increases in interest rates while others still believe in continuing with aggressive hikes.

Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)

- **Origin**: The **Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934** was amended by **Finance Act (India), 2016 to constitute MPC**.
  - It has been **instituted by the Central Government of India** under Section 45ZB of the RBI Act that was amended in 1934.
- **Function**: entrusted with the responsibility of deciding the different policy rates including MSF, Repo Rate, Reverse Repo Rate, and Liquidity Adjustment Facility.
- **Composition of MPC:** Total 6 members.
  - Of the six members, **the government will nominate three.**
    - **No government official will be nominated** to the MPC.
  - The **other three members would be from the RBI** with the governor being the ex-officio chairperson.
    - **Deputy governor of RBI in charge of the monetary policy will be a member**, as also an executive director of the central bank.
- **Selection of members:** The government nominees to the MPC will be **selected by a Search-cum-Selection Committee under Cabinet Secretary** with RBI Governor and Economic Affairs Secretary and three experts in the field of economics or banking or finance or monetary policy as its members.
- **Term of members**: appointed for a **period of four years** and shall **not be eligible for reappointment.**
- **Decision making**: Decisions will be taken **by majority vote** with each member having a vote.
- **RBI governor's role**: The RBI Governor will **chair the committee.**
  - The **governor will not enjoy a veto power** to overrule the other panel members, but will have a casting vote in case of a tie.

RBI Monetary Policy

- The **Reserve Bank of India Act 1934 empowers the RBI** to make the monetary policy.
- The **term 'Monetary Policy' is the Reserve Bank of India's policy** pertaining to the **deployment of monetary resources** under its control for the purpose of achieving GDP growth and lowering the inflation rate.

PIB

Oct 15

IBSAMAR EXERCISE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Internal Security)

INS TARKASH PARTICIPATES IN IBSAMAR VII

Context: The **7th edition of IBSAMAR exercise** was held at **Port Gqeberha** (also known as Port Elizabeth), South Africa.

Key points

- **Represented by INS Tarkash**: The Indian Navy was represented in it by the guided missile frigate, INS Tarkash, a Chetak helicopter and MARCOS special forces.
- **Objectives of the exercise**: strengthening maritime relations, promoting joint operational military training, combating maritime crimes, securing Sea Lines of Communication and enhancing interoperability to pursue common evolutions at sea.
- **Previous edition of IBSAMAR (IBSAMAR VI):** conducted in Simons Town, South Africa in 2018.

IBSAMAR exercise

- **Navy exercise**: It is a **joint Multinational Maritime Exercise.**
- **Participating countries:** India, Brazil and South Africa.

IBSA

- **South-South cooperation**: A trilateral, developmental initiative between India, Brazil and South Africa to promote South-South cooperation and exchange.
- **Brasilia Declaration:** formalized and named the IBSA Dialogue Forum when the Foreign Ministers of the three countries met in Brasilia (Brazil) on 6th June 2003 and issued the Brasilia Declaration.
- **Headquarters:** IBSA **does not have a headquarters** or a permanent executive secretariat.
- **IBSA Fund**: Established in 2004, a **unique Fund through which development projects are executed** with IBSA funding in fellow developing countries.
    - **Management of Fund**: managed by the United Nations (UN) Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC).
    - **Contribution**: Each IBSA member country is required to contribute $1 million per annum to the fund.

INS Tarkash

- INS Tarkash is **a Talwar class (improved versions of the Krivak III-class (Project 1135) frigates used by the Russian Coast Guard) guided missile frigate**.
- **Built by**: Yantar Shipyard at Kaliningrad, Russia.
- It is a **modified version of Krivak III-class frigates.**
- **Commissioned**: The naval vessel was commissioned into the Western Naval Command on December 27, 2012.
- **Features**: It is equipped with a versatile range of weapons and sensors capable of addressing threats in all three dimensions.

India's Other Maritime Exercises

- **Thailand**: India-Thailand Coordinated Patrol (Indo-Thai CORPAT)
- **United Kingdom**: Konkan - Shakti
- **Indonesia**: Samudra Shakti
- **Singapore**: Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX)
- **Qatar**: Zair-Al-Bahr
- **Japan**: Maritime Partnership Exercise (MPX)

PIB

Oct 15

MATADATA JUNCTION

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

Second Episode of Voter Awareness Program, "Matadata Junction" to be broadcast on Friday, October 14 by All India Radio during 7.25-7.40pm on 100.1 FM Gold Channel

Context: All India Radio in collaboration with the Election Commission of India has started a new weekly program 'Matadata Junction' on Voter Awareness.

About Matdata Junction

- **Launched by**: It is a **52 episode radio series** produced by the Election Commission of India, in collaboration with All India Radio.
  - The 1**5 minutes program will be broadcast every Friday on All India Radio network in 23 languages.**
- **Theme**: 'Matdata Junction: Har voter ka apna station'.
  - It will cover various aspects of election and related processes from voters' perspective.
- **Genre of info-tainment program**: The series will be in the **genre of infotainment (Information and entertainment) program produced by the SVEEP** (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation) division of the Election Commission of India.
- **Query for citizens**: The program includes a Citizen's Corner where any citizen can ask a query or also provide suggestions for making elections inclusive and participative.
- **National Icon for ECI:** CEC announced **Pankaj Tripathi (a film actor)** would be the National Icon for Election Commission of India.

SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation)

- Started in 2009, as the **flagship program of the ECI for voter education.**
- **Primary goal is to build an inclusive & participative democracy by encouraging all eligible citizens** to vote and make an informed decision & ethical choice.

DOWN TO EARTH

Oct 15

INTERNATIONAL E-WASTE DAY

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Env & Eco)

WASTE

International E-Waste Day: Over 5 billion phones will become waste this year

One of six e-products in average european household is being hoarded, finds non-profit survey

By DTE Staff
Published: Friday 14 October 2022



Context: Hoarding of small, unused, dead or broken plug-in and battery-operated products is the focus of this year's 5th annual International E-Waste Day.

Key points

- **International E-Waste Day is held on October 14 every year** as an opportunity to reflect on the impacts of e-waste.
  - **This year's slogan** is 'Recycle it all, no matter how small!'.
- **Roughly 5.3 billion mobile/smartphones will drop out of use this year**, according to non-profit Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Forum.
  - **WEEE Forum is an international association** of 46 e-waste producer responsibility organisations.
- **Top five hoarded small electronic products were (in order)**: small electronics and accessories (eg, headphones, remotes), small equipment (eg, clocks, irons), small IT equipment (eg, hard drives, routers, keyboards, mice), mobile and smartphones, small food preparation appliances (eg, toasters, grills).
  - **LED lamps ranked the top of the list of products most likely to be trashed.**
- **Small EEE items** such as cell phones, electric toothbrushes, toasters and cameras produced worldwide will weigh an **estimated total of 24.5 million tonnes — four times the weight of the Great Pyramid of Giza.**

E-Waste

- **E-Waste is short for Electronic-Waste** and the term is used to describe old, end-of-life or discarded electronic appliances.
  - It includes their components, consumables, parts and spares.
- **E-waste can be categorized as hazardous or non-hazardous waste under the Basel Convention.**
  - Originally, the **Basel Convention (1992)** did not mention e-waste but later it addressed the issues of e-waste in 2006 (COP8).
  - The **Nairobi Declaration was adopted at COP9 of the Basel Convention** on the Control of the Trans-boundary Movement of Hazardous Waste. It aimed at creating innovative solutions for the environmentally sound management of electronic wastes.

Initiatives Taken by India

- **Laws to manage e-waste have been in place in India since 2011**, mandating that only authorised dismantlers and recyclers collect e-waste.
- The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change **notified the E-Waste Management Rules, 2016** in supersession of the E-waste (Management & Handling) Rules, 2011.
- **Over 21 products (Schedule-I) were included** under the purview of the rule. It is **categorised under two broad categories:**
  - Information technology and communication equipment.
  - Consumer electrical and electronics.
- **India's first e-waste clinic** for segregating, processing and disposal of waste from household and commercial units **has been set-up in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.**

DOWN TO EARTH

Oct 15

EXOPLANETS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Sci & Tech)

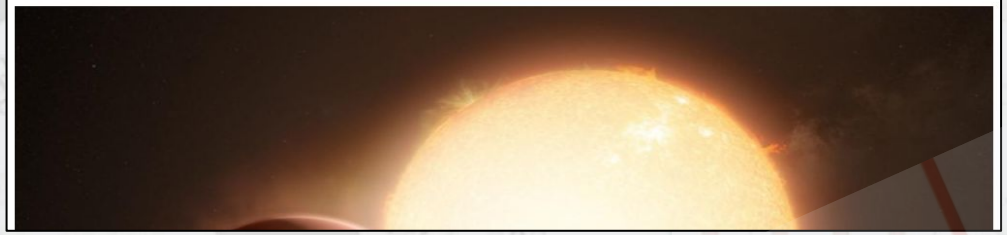
SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

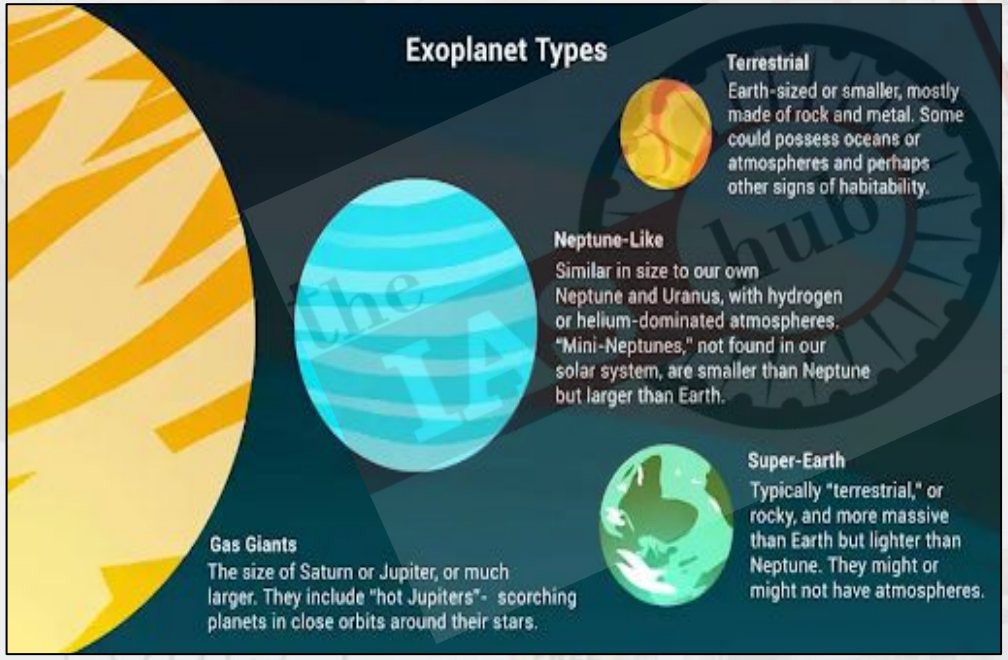
Heavy metal out there: Researchers detect barium in atmospheres of 2 exoplanets

Discovery of barium is surprising because heavy elements like barium are expected to quickly fall into the lower layers of the atmosphere

NEXT NEWS >

By Rohini Krishnamurthy
Published: Friday 14 October 2022





Context: Scientists have detected barium in the upper atmosphere of two giant exoplanets for the first time.

Key points

- **Barium**, two and half times heavier than iron, is the **heaviest-ever detected element.**
  - Barium salts are used in fireworks to generate green lights.
- **These exoplanets are two ultra-hot Jupiters - WASP-76b and WASP-121b** - which orbit their host stars WASP 76 and WASP 121.
  - **Ultra-hot Jupiters are a class of hot gaseous planets** that matches the size of Jupiter. But they have short orbital periods, unlike Jupiter.
  - Both WASP-76b and WASP-121b **complete one orbit in two days.**
  - **Surface temperatures** in these bodies reach as **high as 1,000 degrees Celsius**.
  - These bodies have **unique features owing to their high temperatures**. For instance, WASP-76b experiences iron rain.

Exoplanet

- An exoplanet or extrasolar planet is a **planet outside the Solar System**.
- The **first confirmation of detection of exoplanets occurred in 1992**.
  - More than 4,400 exoplanets have been discovered till now.
- Exoplanets are **very hard to see directly with telescopes.**
- They are **hidden by the bright glare of the stars they orbit**.
  - Astronomers use other ways to detect and study exoplanets such as looking at the effects these planets have on the stars they orbit.

Composition of atmosphere

- The atmosphere is **a layer of gas or layers of gases** that envelope a planet and is held in place by the gravity of the planetary body.
- **The atmosphere is divided into five different layers depending upon the temperature conditions** – troposphere, stratosphere, mesosphere, thermosphere and exosphere.
- A **planet retains an atmosphere when the gravity is great** and the temperature of the atmosphere is low.

THANK YOU!

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