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MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



MK Yadav Sir

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The Hindu

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Frigate Vindhyagiri

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Science and Technology)

President Murmu launches warship *Vindhyagiri*



A view of *Vindhyagiri* during its launch by the Kolkata-based Garden Reach Ship Builders and Engineers Ltd. DEBASISH BHADURI

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday launched *Vindhyagiri*, the last in the series of three Project 17A (Alpha) frigates built by the Indian Navy at the Kolkata-based Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE).

Describing the development as a move forward in enhancing India's maritime capabilities, the President said that the launch was also a step towards achieving the goal of *Atmanirbhar Bharat* through indigenous shipbuilding.

President Murmu said that Project 17A, under which *Vindhyagiri* was developed, reflects the country's commitment to self-reliance and technological advancement.

"The President said that the security in the Indian Ocean Region and the larger Indo-Pacific has many aspects and the Navy has to always remain proactive in tackling security threats," a press statement by the Rashtrapati Bhavan said.

The President Murmu was joined by West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose and Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee at the event.

"Following the launch, *Vindhyagiri* will join its two sister ships at the Outfitting Jetty at GRSE, to progress remaining activities and equipment trials, in the run-up to their delivery and commissioning," said a pres statement by the Indian Navy.

Context: The President of India launched Vindhyagiri, the last in the series of **3 project 17A(Alpha) frigates** built by the Indian Navy at the Kolkata based Garden Reach shipbuilders and Engineers(GRSE).

- The launch was also a step towards achieving the goal of **Atmanirbhar Bharat** through indigenous shipbuilding.
- Following the launch, **Vindhyagiri will join its two sister ships** (INS Himgiri and INS Dunagiri) at the Outfitting Jetty at GRSE, to progress remaining activities and equipment trials.

About Vindhyagiri:

- Named after a mountain range in Karnataka.
- The **sixth ship** among Project 17A frigates.
- These ships come after **Project 17 Class Frigates (Shivalik Class)**, having better stealth, advanced weapons, sensors, and management systems.
- Vindhyagiri, a **highly advanced frigate**, honors its forerunner, the former INS Vindhyagiri.
- The newly named Vindhyagiri represents **India's strong commitment** to embracing its abundant naval history.

About Project 17A:

- The **Indian Navy initiated Project 17** Alpha (P-17A) frigates in 2019 to build advanced stealth guided-missile frigates.
- Currently, two companies, **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders (MDL)** and **Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE**), are building these frigates.
- The ships are also equipped with technology that reduces their infrared signals.
- The **first ship** under this project, named **Nilgiri**, was launched in 2019.
- As part of the P17A initiative, **seven ships are currently being built** – four at MDL and three at GRSE.

Livemint

Page 1

India's Diamond Industry

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Economy)

Russia war fallout may hurt Indian diamond exports

Ram Sahgal
ram.sahgal@livemint.com
MUMBAI

The Indian diamond trade, which produces nine out of 10 of the world's polished diamonds and employs over 4 million, could face collateral damage from the Russian war.

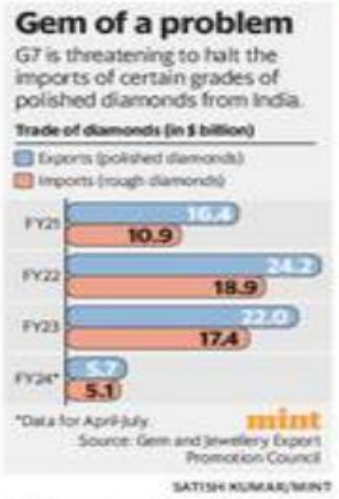
The Group of Seven (G7) nations, an informal bloc of advanced democracies led by the US, is threatening to halt the imports of certain grades of polished diamonds from India that use rough diamonds indirectly sourced from Russia.

Though the G7 hasn't yet sanctioned Russian diamonds cut and polished outside that country, the bloc is working on restricting their use to cut Russian revenues.

The action forms part of the punitive economic sanctions imposed by the bloc against Russia, which invaded Ukraine in February last year.

Representatives from the bloc have been negotiating with officials from apex trade body and commerce ministry sponsored Gem & Jewellery mond Bourse, among others, for the past three months on the issue.

The Indian side is urging the G7 to prevent any such ban, given the deleterious impact it could have on over 4 million people directly employed in India's diamond cutting and polishing trade. However, a top trade source, who has been part of the negotiations, told *Mint* that the G7 could consider a ban on exports of stones of one carat and above, to begin with.



Context: The **Indian diamond trade**, which produces nine out of **10 of the world's polished diamonds** and employs over 4 million, could face collateral damage from the Russian war.

- The **G7 nations,** an informal bloc of advanced democracies led by the US, is threatening to halt the **imports of certain grades of polished diamonds from India** that use rough diamonds indirectly sourced from Russia.
- The **Indian side is urging the G7 to prevent any such ban**, given the deleterious impact it could have on over 4 million people directly employed in India's diamond cutting and polishing trade.

India's Diamond Industry

- India is the **world's largest cutting and polishing center for diamonds. It accounts for** over 90% of polished diamond manufacturing globally.
- India contributes **19% of the total diamond exports** in the world. (2019).
- Over **75%** of the world's polished diamonds, gems, and jewelry are exported by India.
- The industy contributes 5% to India's GDP & provides employment to more than 5 million individuals, and it's expected that this figure will rise to 8.23 million by 2022.
- The govt. has permitted **100% FDI** in the sector under the automatic route.

About Diamonds

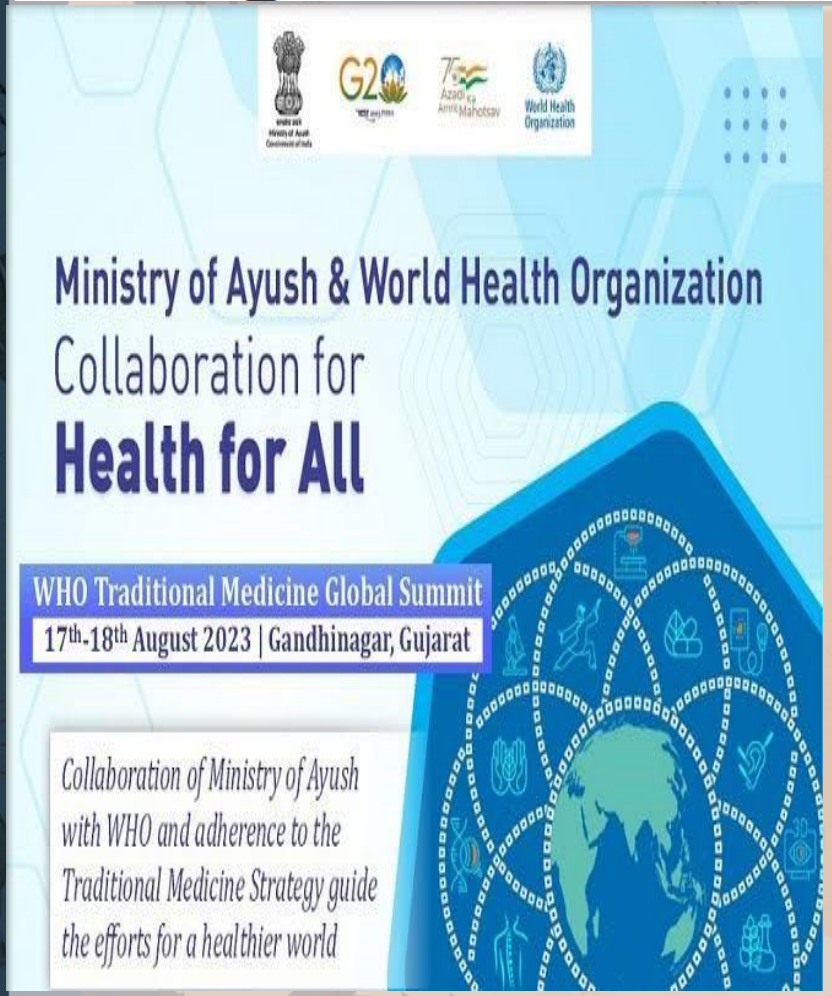
- Diamond is a **rare, naturally occurring mineral** composed entirely of carbon.
- It is the **hardest known natural substance**. It is also chemically resistant and has the **highest thermal conductivity** of any natural material.
- **Top natural diamond producers:** Russia, Botswana, Canada, Australia, South Africa, and Congo (Zaire).
- **Other important producers:** Namibia, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Venezuela, Brazil, and more.
- The **USA** leads in making synthetic industrial diamonds.
- Russia has the **world's biggest and richest** diamond resources.

PIB August 18

WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - International Relations)

More than 75 nations participates in the first-ever global Summit on Traditional Medicine



Context: The **first World Health Organization Global Summit on Traditional Medicine** was inaugurated yesterday at Gandhinagar, Gujarat alongside the **G20 health ministerial meet**.

- The theme of the exhibition was **'Ayush for Planetary Health and Well-being'**

About Global Summit on Traditional Medicine

- **Organised by:** Ministry of Ayush and the World Health Organisation in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- **Health Ministers** of 30 countries participated in the event.
- **Aim:** It will delve into how traditional, complementary, and integrative medicine can contribute to tackling urgent health issues and advancing global health and sustainable development.
- It is expected to be **one of the largest gatherings of its kind,** bringing together participants from over 90 countries, distinguished members of academia, government representatives and significant players from the traditional medicine sector.

About Global Centre for Traditional Medicines

- Established by **WHO in Jamnagar, Gujarat,** it is the first such centre in a developing country.
- Established under Ministry of AYUSH.
- It will **set policies and standards on traditional medicine products** and help countries create a comprehensive, safe, and high-quality health system.
- It will will support efforts to implement the WHO's Traditional Medicine Strategy (2014-23).

TIMES OF INDIA

Page 1

Remission Policy

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity)



Guj & Centre: Bilkis case not rarest of rare; SC: Why selective remission?

Decision Taken On SC Direction Last May: ASG

AmitAnand.Choudhary
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The Centre and the Gujarat government on Thursday justified the decision to allow premature release of 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano case by arguing that they did not commit "rarest of rare crime" and should be given a chance to reform and reintegrate into society. The Supreme Court asked why the remission policy was implemented selectively and why many similarly-placed prisoners continued to languish in jail.

Countering the conten- told a bench of Justices BV Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan that the offence committed by them was not in the rarest of rare category as they were not awarded death sentence and, instead, were given life imprisonment.

Bilkis was 21 years old and five months pregnant when Raju submitted that the crime, though heinous, should not be dangling over the convicts' heads and they should be permitted to reintegrate into society after having spent more than 14 years in jail. "Law does not say that everybody be punished and be hanged but it says that chan- lementation of the remission policy and stressed equal opportunities for reformation.

"Why is the policy of remission being applied selectively? The opportunity to reform and reintegrate should be given to all prisoners but only a few of them are given it. Question is whether the remission policy is being implemented when prisoners are eligible. It should not be en masse, but for those who are eligible for it and for life sentence convicts after 14 years in jail," the bench said.

The ASG said the decision on their release was taken on the direction of the SC, which had in May last year held that it was the Gujarat government, and not the Centre, which had jurisdiction to decide their remission pleas. He said the court's order last ye-

> They have already undergone 14 years in jail. **That suffering is sufficient.** It is not the rarest-of-rare crime as capital punishment was not given. It is a case where a **person should be given a chance to reform...** Their conduct in jail and outside shows that they have realised their mistake
>
> **–SV Raju** | Addl solicitor

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> **–SC bench**

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> **–SC bench**

Context: The Centre and the Gujarat government on Thursday justified the decision to allow premature release of 11 convicts in the **Bilkis Bano case** by arguing that they did not commit **"rarest of rare crime"** and should be given a chance to reform and reintegrate into society.

- The Supreme Court asked why the **remission policy was implemented selectively** and why many similarly-placed prisoners continued to languish in jail.

About Remission Policy

- **Prison Act of 1894** explains that remission is a system where prisoners in jail can earn marks that lead to shorter sentences.
  - The Constitution places prisons in the State List, and State governments handle their management and administration.
- **Article 72:** Gives the President the authority to provide remission, while Article 161 gives the Governor a similar power.
- **Section 432 of the CrPC:** Gives the 'relevant authority' the ability to pause or reduce a prisoner's sentence.
  - Under **Section 433,** any sentence may be commuted to a lesser one by the appropriate government.
- **Ground of Remission:** The Supreme court has stated that states **must not use the authority** of remission **without reason and should follow proper procedures.**
  - States establish a **Sentence Review Board** to utilize the authorities outlined in **Section 432** of the CrPC.

About Remission

- It implies **reducing the period of the sentence** without changing its character. For example, a sentence of rigorous imprisonment for five years may be remitted to rigorous imprisonment for one year.
- It is **different from furlough and parole** as is a reduction in the sentence and not a break from imprisonment.

National Thermal Power Corporation Limited
(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Governance)

Inside NTPC's big green hydrogen bet lies a few first-mover disadvantages it must weigh

Context: India's largest energy company, National Thermal Power Corporation, is taking steps to transition from coal-guzzling power producer to clean & sustainable sources of energy.

About Hydrogen

- Hydrogen is a **colourless, odourless, tasteless, flammable** gaseous substance.
- It is a substitute for conventional fuels due to its **large abundance, high energy density, better combustion characteristics, non-polluting nature,** etc.
- **Types of Hydrogen**
  - Hydrogen produced using renewable energy is referred as **renewable hydrogen/Green hydrogen.**
  - Hydrogen produced from coal is called **brown hydrogen.**
  - Hydrogen produced from natural gas or petroleum is referred to as **grey hydrogen.**
  - Brown or grey hydrogen production combined with carbon capture and storage/sequestration might be referred to as **blue hydrogen.**

About National Thermal Power Corporation Limited

- **Establishment:** 1975. It operates as a central Public Sector Undertaking (PSU)
- **Ministry:** Ministry of Power.
- **Headquartered:** New Delhi.
- It stands as the country's largest energy conglomerate, dedicated to propelling power development.
- **Objective:** To furnish dependable and cost-effective power solutions while prioritizing environmental sustainability, innovation, and efficiency.
- Recognized as a **Maharatna** company in **May 2010.**

BUSINESS LINE August 18

Microplastics
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Env & Eco)

Scientists detect 'microplastics' in human heart for first time: Report

Context: According to the latest study published by the American Chemical Society, team of scientists in China have found **microplastics** in the **human heart for the first time**.

- Plastics have been causing grave problems on planet Earth. Plastic pollution has led to many environment-related issues around us. Studies have shown that microplastics have even made their way into the body of living creatures.
- Notably, microplastics can be lesser than **5 millimeters wide** and can enter the human body through the **mouth, nose** and other cavities in the body.

About Microplastics:

- Microplastics are **minute fragments of diverse plastic materials** present in the surroundings.
- These minute plastic particles pose a threat to marine environments and the creatures that inhabit them.
- **Recent study revealed a groundbreaking discovery:** microplastics, which are minuscule plastic particles, have been identified in human blood for the very first time.
- **Two main categories of Microplastics**
  - **Primary microplastics** are released into the environment from a variety of sources.
  - **Secondary microplastics:** are created when larger plastics break down.
- **Concerns related to microplastics**
  - Microplastics cause d**amage to human cells** in the laboratory.
  - It has the potential to adhere to the outer membranes of red blood cells, possibly **restricting their capacity to carry oxygen**.

Ethanol Blending

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Env & Eco)

Govt eyes ethanol for 5% biodiesel blending target

Oil-marketing companies estimate steady supply of biodiesel far way off

SUBHAYAN CHAKRABORTY
New Delhi, 17 August

The government is banking on ethanol to meet its target of blending 5 per cent biodiesel in diesel sales by 2030, officials said.

Widely used in Europe, biodiesel refers to biodegradable fuel traditionally manufactured from vegetable oils, animal fats, or recycled restaurant grease.

But its adoption on a large-scale across the country hit multiple hurdles due to the limited availability of biodiesel feedstock.

Despite launching an exercise to tune the existing national biodiesel policy with more incentives, no viable solutions were found, officials told *Business Standard*.

As a result, oil-marketing companies (OMCs) were asked to prioritise research on how to commercially blend ethanol in diesel.

The Centre's ethanol blending programme has been a major success for petrol, with E20 petrol (petrol blended with 20 percent ethanol) now selling at more than 1,900 pumps across the country.

"It is only logical that ethanol blended diesel be explored as a viable clean fuel. We are closely watching the development," a petroleum and natural ministry official said.

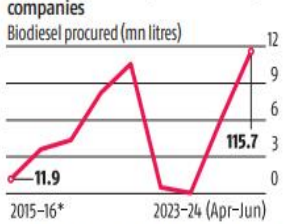
Both BPCL and HPCL are in the process of running vehicles on diesel mixed with ethanol, he added.

After the United States (US) and Brazil, India is the world's third-largest



GOING OIL OUT

Biodiesel procured by oil-marketing companies



*Blended biodiesel sale started by OMCs in Oct, 2015
Source: Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry

This has expanded since but stood at around 0.3-0.5 per cent, two senior officials from multiple OMCs said.

"Now, after a lull of 3 years due to the pandemic, biodiesel purchases by OMCs expressions of interest (EoI) for the supply of biodiesel from UCO at 200 locations.

Studies are ongoing to see whether other compounds can be blended in diesel, including methanol obtained from sustainable biomass, often called bio-methanol and Dimethyl Ether, a synthetically produced gas extensively used as an aerosol propellant.

Lack of supply has been a perennial issue. Policies have been in place to encourage biodiesel production in India since 2005.

The Biodiesel Purchase Policy had listed the standards and prioritised non-edible tree borne oils such as Jatropha curcas and Pongamia pinnata (the Indian Beech tree called *Karanj* in Hindi) as feedstock.

Yet, most of these projects have not

Context: The government is banking on ethanol to meet its target of blending 5 per cent biodiesel in diesel sales by 2030.

- The Centre's ethanol blending programme has been a major success for petrol, with E20 petrol (petrol blended with 20 percent ethanol) now selling at more than 1,900 pumps across the country.

Key Points

- Widely used in Europe, **biodiesel** refers to biodegradable fuel traditionally manufactured from vegetable oils, animal fats, or recycled restaurant grease.
- Ethanol is a type of **biofuel** that can be made by **fermenting sugars using yeast** or by processing ethylene from petroleum.
- In India, the **primary source of ethanol** is sugarcane molasses, obtained through a fermentation process.
- Ethanol has the potential to be **combined with gasoline**, creating various blends with distinct properties.

Ethanol Blending Programme (EBP)

- This program is designed to help India become less reliant on imported crude oil, decrease carbon emissions, and increase earnings for farmers.
- **Objective:** To promote the use of 5 percent ethanol-blended gasoline in 9 states and 4 union territories. Ethanol blending involves a distinct process of pumping and BIO-metering.
- The Indian government has moved up the goal of mixing **20% ethanol** with petrol (known as **E20)** to 2025 instead of waiting until 2030.

DTE August 18

Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Environment)

Mining in Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary, Odisha

The complaint of mining activities taking place in the eco-sensitive zone of Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary, Balasore district, Odisha needs to be considered, said the National Green Tribunal (NGT), August 14, 2023.

Context: The complaint of mining activities taking place in the eco-sensitive zone of Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary, Balasore district, Odisha needs to be considered.

- There are 97 sand mining sources leased out in the vicinity of Similipal-Hadgarh-Kuldiha-Conservation Reserve.
- Therefore, quarrying activities carried out in the eco-sensitive zone of Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary without prior approval of the central government is illegal and in violation of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980

About Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary

- The Kuldiha Wildlife Sanctuary is located in the Balasore district, **Odisha.**
- Covering an area of 272.75 square kilometers, it is **found in the Chota Nagpur Plateau area**.
- It's **connected to Simlipal National Park** by the Sukhupada and Nato hill ranges.
- This sanctuary falls under the category of **Eastern Highlands moist deciduous forests ecoregion.**
- The status of a sanctuary was **granted to Kuldiha on January 4, 1984**.

About National Green Tribunal

- It was established under the **National Green Tribunal Act, 2010.**
- **Composition:** It comprises of Chairperson, the Judicial Members and Expert Members. The shall hold office for term of three years or till the age of65 years, whichever is earlier and are **not eligible for reappointment.**
- Priniple place of sitting is located at **New Delhi**; four other places of sitting are: B**hopal, Pune, Kolkata, and Chennai.**
- It is mandated with the responsibility to resolve applications within 6 months of their submission**.**
- The Tribunal is not bound by the procedure laid down under the **Code of Civil Procedure, 1908**, but shall be guided by **principles of natural justice**.

Chandrayaan 3

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Science & Technology)

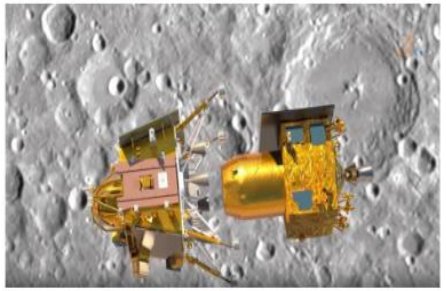
Chandrayaan propulsion, lander modules separate

The lander module is set to descend to a slightly lower orbit upon a deboosting planned for today; payload in propulsion module will continue to be in operation for a period of three to six months

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

After 34 days on board the Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft, the propulsion module and the lander module parted ways on Thursday, and have now embarked on their respective journeys.

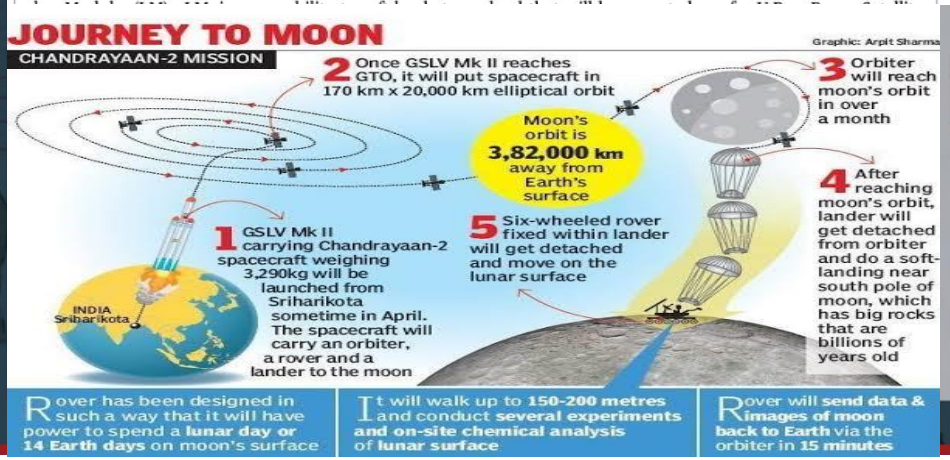
After the separation, ISRO posted on X (formerly Twitter): "Thanks for the ride, mate!' said the Lan-



After the separation of the two modules, a series of complex braking manoeuvres will be executed to facilitate a soft landing. ISRO/X

"The lander will have the also has one scientific payload, and will continue to do so possibly for months or years. The Spectro-polarimetry of Habitable Planet Earth (SHAPE) payload on board the propulsion module would perform spectroscopic study of the Earth's atmosphere and measure the variations in polarisation from the clouds on Earth to accumulate signatures of exoplanets that would qualify for habitability by humans.

This payload is the work



Context: Chandrayaan-3 consists of a l**ander module, a propulsion module and a rover.** The main function of the propulsion module is to carry the lander module from launch vehicle injection till 100-km orbit around the moon

About Chandrayan 3

- It is a **follow-on mission to Chandrayaan-2** to demonstrate end-to-end capability in safe landing and roving on the lunar surface.
- **Objective:**
  - Demonstrate safe and soft landing on the surface of the Moon,
  - Conduct rover operations on the Moon, and
  - Conduct on-site experiments on the Lunar surface.
- **Components: Lander** (powered by 4 throttle-ale engines & equipped with Laser Doppler Velocimeter), **Rover** (no orbiter unlike Chandrayaan 2).
- The **mission has six tools** for studying science and an additional instrument on the propulsion module.
- **Propulsion Module:** It carries the SHAPE experiment, which uses spectro-polarimetry to study Earth's reflected light.
- **Opportunities offered by Chandrayaan-3**
  - **Economic benefits:** Chandrayaan-3 will be India's ticket to the "moon economy", an emerging sector with a potential of billions of dollars.
  - **Accelerate scientific discoveries:** By analyzing the data collected during the mission, scientists can discover about Moon's geology, mineralogy, and environment, which can contribute to our understanding of lunar evolution.
  - **Accelerate private sector participation** & its stature in the global arena facilitating international collaborations in space industry.

Uniform Civil Code

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity)

Goa is the only state with a UCC, left behind by Portuguese: What it looks like

PAGE 1
ANCHOR

APURVA VISHWANATH
PANAJI, AUGUST 17

IT WAS a strange demand. F E Noronha had got a call from the Cabeca de Casal, an administrator appointed to make an inventory of assets for partition in his maternal family, asking for his mother's dowry certificate. Noronha's parents married nearly six decades ago and his mother



When his mother's inheritance share was decided, lawyer F E Noronha had to show her dowry certificate. *Apurva Vishwanath*

about that...When someone dies, they start carefully counting the heirs," Noronha, 70, said.

With the matter of a Uniform Civil Code likely to be kept alive in the run-up to the 2024 elections – even if, as *The Indian Express* earlier reported, the BJP-led government is unlikely to push it through in its current term – the crucial question is what form and shape the proposed law would take.

One model that is held up as an example is the Portuguese Civil Code – a 156-year-old, 647-page code that was enacted in

"The uniform civil code, which we often talk about with reference to Goa, is related to family laws...the part of the Portuguese Civil Code which is in force in the state... In Goa, the laws of marriage, divorce and succession are common to people of all faiths. After the marriage, the spouses are governed by the rule of communion of assets, that is they become half-sharers in all their properties Devidas Pangam | AG



Context: The 156-year-old, 647-page code cuts across religions and has laws that govern everything from gender equality in marriage to personal inheritance. Amid talk of a **UCC** for the country, the Goa code is being touted as a model.

- It was a strange demand. **F E Noronha had got a call from the Cabeca de Casal,** an administrator appointed to make an inventory of assets for partition in his maternal family, asking for his **mother's dowry certificate.**

About Uniform Civil Code

- A Uniform Civil Code (UCC) refers to a a **common set of personal laws** to be followed by the citizens**,** irrespective of religion, in matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption.
- **Origin of UCC:** The UCC's roots trace to colonial India, as the British government's 1835 report highlighted the importance of consistent laws for crimes, evidence, and contracts, excluding the personal laws of Hindus and Muslims.
- **Source: Under Article 44**, the State is bound by a constitutional mandate to endeavour to **universalize and secularize** personal laws, throughout the Indian territory.
- **Objective:** To address the discrimination against vulnerable groups and **replace the system of fragmented personal laws**, that are segregated at present on the basis of religious beliefs like the Hindu code bill, Shariat law, and others, into one Uniform Code.
- Goa is the **only state in India that has a uniform civil code** regardless of religion, gender and caste.
- In **Shah Bano case (1985),** SC emphasised the importance of UCC for having a common basis for jurisdiction.

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