

FEBRUARY

5

CRUX 10

10 News. 10 Sources. One Place



 **The Indian EXPRESS** live **mint** **पॉइंट**

DownToEarth
FORTNIGHTLY ON POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT,
ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

**Science
Reporter**



MK Yadav Sir

Table of Contents

- 1 Gaganyaan Mission
- 2 Central Bureau of Investigation
- 3 Aroma Mission
- 4 Atmospheric Rivers
- 5 INS Sandhayak
- 6 Personally Identifiable Information
- 7 Uniform Civil Code
- 8 Motion of Thanks
- 9 Northern Ireland
- 10 e-NAM Platform

Woman Robot Astronaut "Vyommित्रा" to fly into Space ahead of ISRO's "Gaganyaan" mission: Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh

Context: Woman Robot Astronaut "Vyommित्रा" will fly into Space ahead of ISRO's ambitious "Gaganyaan" mission, which will be India's first human manned Space Flight carrying Indian Astronauts into Space.

Gaganyaan Mission

- **About:** Gaganyaan project envisages demonstration of human spaceflight capability by launching a crew of 3 members to an orbit of 400 km for a 3 days mission and bring them back safely to earth.
- **Expected Launch:** In 2025)
- It is part of the Indian Human Spaceflight Programme (IHSP), which was initiated (2007) by the ISRO to develop the technology needed to launch crewed orbital spacecraft into low earth orbit (LEO).
- **Launch Vehicle:** GSLV Mk-III (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle) the three-stage heavy-lift launch vehicle will be used for carrying the orbital module.
 - **India's heaviest rocket** consists of solid stage, liquid stage and cryogenic stage.
- **Objective:** To demonstrate the capability to send humans to low earth orbit on board an Indian launch vehicle and bring them back to earth safely.

VyomMित्रा:

- **About:** It is a spacefaring humanoid, is currently under development by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for deployment on the Gaganyaan spacecraft.
- **Humanoid Essentials:** A humanoid, by definition, is a robot designed to resemble a human being in appearance.
- **Half-Humanoid Design:** Vyommित्रा, named after combining "vyoma" (space) and "mitra" (friend), is often referred to as a half-humanoid due to its structure, featuring a head, two hands, and a torso, but lacking lower limbs.
- **Functional Anatomy:** Like all robots, the capabilities of a humanoid are determined by the computer systems to which it is connected, shaping its overall functionality.



Govt: 23% manpower shortage in CBI, over 1,000 cases pending

MAHENDER SINGH
MANRAL
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

THE CBI is facing a shortage of 23% manpower, including in the posts of Special Director, Joint Directors and DIGs, said the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) in their 2022-23 annual report as 1,025 cases – 943 registered cases and 82 preliminary enquiries – were pending.

"Till December 31, 2022, the total sanctioned strength of CBI was 7,295 against which 5,600 officers were in position and 1,695 posts were vacant," the report said.

Till December 31, 2020, CBI's total sanctioned strength was 7,273 and of them, 1,374 posts were vacant, the report said, adding that in 2021, 1,533 posts were vacant.

As per the report, the vacancies are in the rank of one Special/Additional Director, two Joint Directors, 11 DIGs, 9 SSPs, one Additional SP, 65 Deputy SPs, 360 inspectors, 204 sub-inspectors, 51 assistant sub-inspectors, 123 head constables, 281 constables, and 367 technical officers.

CBI strength is made up of directly recruited personnel and state police personnel on deputation while all higher posts are occupied entirely by officers on deputation. "In 2022, a total of

308 officers were inducted on deputation in CBI in different ranks... Also, the deputation tenure of 133 officials was extended in the different ranks from Joint Director to constable," the report said.

The report also said, "Out of 943 registered cases, 447 were pending under investigation for over a year. Similarly, of the 82 pending enquiries, 60 were pending enquiries for over three months. Also, 23 Lokpal references were also pending."

"In 2022, the courts delivered judgments in 557 court cases of CBI. Of these, 364 cases resulted in conviction, 111 in acquittal, 13 in discharge and 69 cases were disposed of for other reasons. The conviction rate was 74.59%. Around 10,732 court cases were pending under trial in various courts," the report said.

The CBI has made several plans for their personnel. "To provide better office-cum-residential environment, various projects relating to construction of office/residential buildings/quarters in various CBI branches are underway as part of the scheme 'Comprehensive Modernisation and purchase of land and construction of office/residence buildings for CBI' under which funds of Rs 39.06 crore were allocated in the revised estimates for 2022-23," the report said.

Context: The CBI is facing a shortage of 23% manpower, including in the posts of Special Director, Joint Directors and DIGs, said the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).

Central Bureau of Investigation

- **Origin:** The CBI was established as the Special Police Establishment in 1941, to investigate cases of corruption in the procurement during the Second World War.
- **Formalised agency:** to investigate allegations of corruption in various wings of the Government of India by enacting the Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946.
- The CBI is not a statutory body but derives its power to investigate from the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946.
- **Establishment of the CBI:** In 1963, the CBI was established by the Government of India with a view to investigate serious crimes and maintain integrity in administration.
- The establishment of the CBI was recommended by the Santhanam Committee on Prevention of Corruption (1962–1964).
- **Composition:** There shall be a director of CBI who **heads the department**.
- **Nodal Ministry:** under the superintendence of the Department of Personnel, Ministry of Personnel, Pension & Public Grievances which falls under the prime minister's office.
- **Functions**
 - Its primary objective **involves conducting investigations into violent crimes** using a robust system and advanced technology.
 - Its role extends to **addressing and countering cybercrimes and crimes** related to social platforms.
 - Its presence serves **to assist, oversee, and provide backing to law enforcement agencies** when handling complex and high-profile cases.
 - The agency is **responsible for probing cases involving corruption, bribery, misconduct, and misbehavior** among federal government employees.
 - It operates under the **supervision of the Central Vigilance Commission**.

"Jammu and Kashmir born "Aroma Mission" will be among the torchbearers of "Viksit Bharat", said Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh in Jammu today

Context: Recently, the Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology highlighted J&K's role model status for India, citing the depiction of lavender farms of Bhaderwah town in a tableau on Kartavya Path during the Republic Day celebrations in the national capital.

Aroma Mission

- **Launch:** Introduced in 2016.
- **Developed by:** Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR).
- **Aim:** To enhance the cultivation of aromatic medicinal plants, such as lavender, Aloe Vera, Mehndi, Menthol, and Mint, through innovative technology.
- **Technical and Infrastructure Support:** Seeks to offer technical and infrastructure assistance for distillation and value addition to farmers nationwide, while also establishing effective buy-back mechanisms to ensure fair prices for farmers.
- **Targets:** The cultivation of an additional 30,000 hectares of aromatic crops with CSIR interventions, catalyzing the overall cultivation to about 60,000 hectares.
 - This initiative aims to produce an extra 700 tonnes of essential oil for industries.
- **Economic Impact:** The cultivation expansion is expected to generate a business worth at least 200 crores, utilizing the essential oils for perfumery, cosmetics, and pharmaceutical industries.
- **Focuses:** On developing superior varieties and agro-technologies for specific agro-climatic regions, promoting value addition of aromatic crops, conducting skill development activities, managing intellectual property, fostering entrepreneurship, and facilitating business development.

Purple Revolution

- **About:** The Union Ministry of Science & Technology launched the Purple Revolution in 2016 through CSIR's Aroma Mission.
- **Free Lavender Saplings for New Farmers:** First-time farmers received free lavender saplings under the mission, while experienced growers were charged Rs. 5-6 per sapling.
- **Economic Shift to Aroma Crops:** High monetary returns prompted farmers in Jammu and Kashmir's hilly areas to transition from traditional farming to aroma crops like lavender.

Another 'atmospheric river' storm to hit California with potentially deadly floods

Context: A second, more powerful atmospheric river storm was headed for Southern California recently, threatening to unleash life-threatening floods and landslides.

Atmospheric Rivers

- **About**: Atmospheric rivers are extended bands in the atmosphere that efficiently transport moist air from the tropics to higher latitudes.
- **Moisture Movement**: Responsible for 90% of the tropical-to-polar moisture transport, atmospheric rivers stand as Earth's largest freshwater conveyors.
- **Formation**: These dynamic channels emerge when large-scale weather patterns align, creating concentrated filaments of intense moisture transport.
- **Global Occurrence**: Simultaneously, ten or more atmospheric rivers can occur across the globe, contributing to diverse weather patterns.
- **Pineapple Express**: It is, a prominent atmospheric river, channels moisture from the tropical Pacific to the US and Canadian West Coasts.
- **Geographical Dimensions**: Typically 250 to 375 miles wide and stretching over a thousand miles long, atmospheric rivers display considerable dimensions.
- **Seasonal Prevalence**: These phenomena are predominantly observed during the winter hemisphere when extratropical cyclones are at their peak.
- **Water Vapor Equivalent**: On average, an atmospheric river carries water vapor comparable to the flow at the mouth of the Mississippi River, North America's second-longest river.
- **Landfall Effects**: Passing over land, atmospheric rivers can induce hurricane-like conditions, including rapid rainfall, cyclone-force winds, and heightened wave activity.

INS Sandhayak, first Survey Vessel Large ship, commissioned into Indian Navy in the presence of Raksha Mantri in Visakhapatnam

Context: The Indian Navy commissioned its latest survey vessel, Sandhayak, at Naval Dockyard in Vizag in the presence of defence minister.

INS Sandhayak

- **About:** The ship is the inaugural unit among four Survey Vessel (Large) constructions at Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) in Kolkata.
- **Primary Mission:** Designed primarily for extensive coastal and deep-water hydrographic surveys, the ship facilitates mapping of Port and Harbour approaches, as well as determining navigational channels and routes.
- **Operational Range:** The vessel's operational capabilities extend up to maritime limits, covering the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the extended continental shelf.
 - Versatile Data Collection: Apart from hydrographic surveys, the vessel is equipped to collect oceanographic and geophysical data, catering to both defense and civil applications.
- **Secondary Role:** The ship offers limited defense capabilities and can function as a hospital ship during wartime or emergencies.
- **Cutting-Edge Hydrographic Tools:** The vessel is equipped with state-of-the-art hydrographic tools, including a Data Acquisition and Processing System, Autonomous Underwater Vehicle, Remotely Operated Vehicle, DGPS Long-range positioning systems, and Digital side-scan sonar.
- **Propulsion and Speed:** Powered by two diesel engines, the vessel can achieve speeds exceeding 18 knots, ensuring efficient performance during operations.
- Dimensions and Indigenous Content: Impressive Specifications:
- **Indigenous Features:** Measuring 110 meters in length and displacing 3400 tons, INS Sandhayak showcases an indigenous content of over 80 percent by cost.

The importance of keeping personally identifiable information safe

PII is any data or information maintained by an organisation or agency that can potentially be used to identify a specific individual. Threat actors can gain access to exposed PII and misuse it to launch targeted attacks on individuals

Nabeel Ahmed

Recently, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs fixed a critical vulnerability in its online portal months after a cybersecurity researcher reported it to the Computer Emergency Response Team of India (CERT-In). The vulnerability reportedly exposed personal details – like Aadhaar, PAN, voter identity, passport, date of birth, contact number and address – of more than 98 lakh directors of Indian companies. The vulnerability also exposed the personal data of top industrialists, celebrities, and sports personalities in the country.

What is Personally Identifiable Information?

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is any data or information maintained by an organisation or agency that can potentially be used to identify a specific individual. This could include information such as Aadhaar, PAN, voter identity, passport, date of birth, contact number, communication address, and biometric information. The constituents of PII vary depending on an individual's home country. However, non-PII in tandem with additional information can be used to identify an individual. Non-PII information includes photographic images (especially of the face or other identifying characteristics), place of birth, religion, geographic indicators, employment information, educational qualifications, and medical records.

All this information can be used to identify individuals accurately. And while access to one set of PII may be enough to compromise online security, access to multiple databases can be used to identify and target individuals.

What is the difference between sensitive and non-sensitive PII?

Non-sensitive PII is publicly available information and can be stored and transmitted unencrypted. This includes information such as zip code, race, gender, and religion. They cannot be used to accurately identify an individual.

Sensitive PII, when exposed, can be used to identify individuals and potentially cause harm. Some of the most important components that constitute sensitive PII are stored by employers, government organisations, banks, and other digital accounts used by individuals.

What are the risks of PII exposure?

Cyberattacks and weaknesses in digital infrastructure can lead to the exposure of citizens' PII. Threat actors can gain access to exposed PII and misuse it to launch targeted attacks on individuals. These attacks could range from phishing attacks with messages curated with PII information, to fraudulently opening bank accounts, and siphoning funds from accounts allotted to beneficiaries of government welfare programmes. Threat actors may also use such information to obtain cellular connections, credit cards, and compromise the security of an

individual's digital accounts. Threat actors are also known to sell exposed PII information on the dark web.

What are the recent events where PII was compromised?

In 2023, reports emerged that a bot on Telegram was returning the personal data of Indian citizens who registered with the COVID-19 vaccine intelligence network (CoWIN) portal for vaccination purposes. A similar data breach was reported when an American cybersecurity company said that the PII of 815 million Indian citizens, including Aadhaar numbers and passport details, were being sold on the dark web.

At the time, a cybersecurity company, Resecurity, said it contacted multiple victims who verified the validity of their data. The government of India denied allegations of a biometric data leak, as well as a breach in the CoWIN portal. It did, however, launch an investigation into the allegations that led to the arrest of a man in Bihar, along with a juvenile in June 2023. A data breach was also reported in the RailYatri platform in January 2023.

Additionally, 67% of Indian government and essential services organisations experienced over a 50% increase in disruptive cyberattacks, a report from Resecurity said. Furthermore, a survey of 200 IT decision-makers noted that 45% of Indian businesses experienced more than a 50% increase in cyberattacks.

How can one protect PII?

Individuals may not be able to prevent

leaks in databases of government organisations or service providers. However, they can take steps to ensure that their PII is not readily available to threat actors.

Look for HTTPS in URLs when visiting unknown websites. The "S" stands for secure and is used by legitimate websites to secure collected information from unsecured connections. Some browsers may also use a lock symbol in the URL bar to signify that a website is secure.

Use a VPN when accessing sensitive information using public networks. A VPN helps protect PII and other vital data by securing your online connection from prying eyes on public networks.

Keep a tab on your PII like Aadhaar, passport, PAN, Voter ID, and other important proofs of identity. Avoid sharing or accessing images or details of identity documents through unknown devices.

In case you do access them at a photocopy shop or devices owned by others, make sure to delete the documents even from recycle bins to ensure they are not misused.

Avoid sharing personal information on social media platforms.

In case your PII is leaked, be on the lookout for phishing attacks, that may use leaked information to convince you they are legitimate.

Keep a tab on your bank account transactions, credit cards, and credit score; a hit in the score could mean your PII has been misused to procure credit cards in your name.

Context: Recently, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs fixed a critical vulnerability in its online portal months after a cybersecurity researcher reported it to the Computer Emergency Response Team of India (CERT-In).

Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

- **About:** PII is any data or information maintained by an organisation or agency that can potentially be used to identify a specific individual.
- **Include information:** Aadhaar, PAN, voter identity, passport, date of birth, contact number, communication address, and biometric information.
- **Non-PII information includes:** Photographic images (especially of the face or other identifying characteristics), place of birth, religion, geographic indicators, employment information, educational qualifications, and medical records.
- **Sensitive PII:** When exposed, can be used to identify individuals and potentially cause harm. Some of the most important components that constitute sensitive PII are stored by employers, government organisations, banks, and other digital accounts used by individuals.
- **Nonsensitive PII:** It is publicly available information and can be stored and transmitted unencrypted. This includes information such as zip code, race, gender, and religion. They cannot be used to accurately identify an individual.
- **Risks of PII exposure:** Cyberattacks and weaknesses in digital infrastructure can lead to the exposure of citizens' PII.

Has your PII been compromised?

- **Telegram Bot Data Leak:** In 2023, a Telegram bot exposed personal data of Indians registered on the CoWIN portal for COVID-19 vaccination, raising concerns.
- **Dark Web Sale of Indian Citizen Data:** An American cybersecurity firm revealed that personal information of 815 million Indians, including Aadhaar and passport details, was for sale on the dark web, sparking a major data breach incident.
- **Government Denies Data Leak:** Despite allegations, the Indian government refuted claims of a biometric data leak and CoWIN portal breach. An investigation led to the arrest of a man and a juvenile in Bihar.
- **RailYatri Platform Data Breach:** January 2023 witnessed a data breach in the RailYatri platform, contributing to the growing concerns about the security of personal information.

On Uttarakhand's uniform civil code

What was the debate surrounding the UCC in the Constituent Assembly? Can a State government implement a State-wide UCC? Why has the Supreme Court not given a definite order regarding the implementation of a UCC?

LETTER A SPEET
Arunika Bhattacharya

The story so far:

The Uttarakhand Assembly is likely to pass the State's Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill during its four-day long session this week. A State-appointed panel constituted to draft the UCC submitted its report to Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on February 2. The report has also been passed by the State Cabinet. The introduction of a UCC was a key poll promise of the BJP in the run-up to the 2022 elections in Uttarakhand.

What does a UCC aim to do?
A UCC seeks to replace a collection of laws to replace the distinct personal laws of every religion pertaining to subjects such as marriage, divorce, inheritance and adoption. This comes from Article 44 of the Constitution which mandates that the state "shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India." The provision is a part of the Directive Principles of State Policy, which although not enforceable, play a pivotal role in governance.

Whether the provision should be included as a fundamental right or a directive principle was the subject of intense debate in India's Constituent Assembly. Opponents feared that would



Protesters at the Constituent Assembly. Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai was one of the UCC report in the Constituent Assembly on February 2, 2016.

keep the pre-dominant to protect women in Hindu law. In contrast, Justice Singh, one of the two scheduled to the UCC, said that the UCC would come in the way of Article 44 of the draft Constitution from which 20 which guarantees the fundamental right to freedom of religion subject to reasonable restrictions such as public order, morality, and health. He also emphasized that such a uniform set of laws could not be implemented without securing the consent of the concerned communities. On the other hand,

member K.M. Munshi contended that a UCC would not dilute the principle of freedom of religion since the state is empowered to make laws related to religious practices if they were needed for social reform. He highlighted various benefits such as promoting equality for women, since personal laws often prevent the elimination of discriminatory practices against women.

Taking a more moderate stance, the B.K. Chaudhary said that although a UCC was desirable, it should remain "gradually voluntary" during the initial stages. He stated that since the provision was merely recommendatory, it should not be imposed upon all citizens. The matter was ultimately left to the people, with the state's commitment on fundamental rights headed by Justice Subodh Chandra Pandey, who stated that a UCC should not fall within fundamental rights.

What about the Uttarakhand UCC?
In June 2022, the Uttarakhand government constituted an expert committee headed by former Supreme Court judge Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai to examine ways for the implementation of a UCC. The same followed the Chief Minister's promise that he would implement a UCC in the State if re-elected. The committee was expected to submit its report to the government by November 2022. The deadline was extended multiple times despite the Chief Minister announcing in June last year that a draft UCC was ready.

Right from the start, the proposal has been met with opposition from both political parties. Congress representatives from the State have alleged that the move is BJP's poll ploy and that it wants to

keep the pre-dominant to protect women in Hindu law. In contrast, Justice Singh, one of the two scheduled to the UCC, said that the UCC would come in the way of Article 44 of the draft Constitution from which 20 which guarantees the fundamental right to freedom of religion subject to reasonable restrictions such as public order, morality, and health. He also emphasized that such a uniform set of laws could not be implemented without securing the consent of the concerned communities. On the other hand,

member K.M. Munshi contended that a UCC would not dilute the principle of freedom of religion since the state is empowered to make laws related to religious practices if they were needed for social reform. He highlighted various benefits such as promoting equality for women, since personal laws often prevent the elimination of discriminatory practices against women.

Taking a more moderate stance, the B.K. Chaudhary said that although a UCC was desirable, it should remain "gradually voluntary" during the initial stages. He stated that since the provision was merely recommendatory, it should not be imposed upon all citizens. The matter was ultimately left to the people, with the state's commitment on fundamental rights headed by Justice Subodh Chandra Pandey, who stated that a UCC should not fall within fundamental rights.

What about the Uttarakhand UCC?
In June 2022, the Uttarakhand government constituted an expert committee headed by former Supreme Court judge Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai to examine ways for the implementation of a UCC. The same followed the Chief Minister's promise that he would implement a UCC in the State if re-elected. The committee was expected to submit its report to the government by November 2022. The deadline was extended multiple times despite the Chief Minister announcing in June last year that a draft UCC was ready.

Right from the start, the proposal has been met with opposition from both political parties. Congress representatives from the State have alleged that the move is BJP's poll ploy and that it wants to

THE GIST

The Uttarakhand Assembly is likely to pass the State's Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill during its four-day long session this week.

The draft UCC is set to focus on gender equality by introducing provisions that treat men and women equally, especially in matters pertaining to inheritance. It will also revoke practices governing marriage and divorce such as polygamy, after a mandatory period of waiting to be observed by women following the dissolution of a Hindu marriage and triple talaq. The Code is also likely to extend an equal property share to Hindu women against the existing 25% share accorded under Hindu personal law.

Following inter-religious dialogues, the draft UCC will include – "Hindu, Muslim and Christian" – have appointed committees to advise the formulation of a UCC.

UNIFORM CIVIL CODE (Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

Context: The Uttarakhand Assembly is likely to pass the State's Uniform Civil Code (UCC) Bill during its fourdaylong session this week.

Uniform Civil Code (UCC)

- **Meaning:** The Uniform Civil Code (UCC) calls for the formulation of **one law for India**, which would be **applicable to all religious communities** in matters such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption.
- **Article 44:** Of the Constitution, under **Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSP)**, lays down that the state shall endeavour to **secure a Uniform Civil Code** for the citizens throughout the territory of India.
- **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.
- **History of Uniform Civil Code**
 - During their rule in Goa and Daman & Diu, the **Portuguese separately codified the local customs** of each of these territories.
 - After liberating the territories in 1961 and integrating them into a Union Territory, the **Indian government declared that the Portuguese laws**, including the Portuguese Civil Code of 1867, would continue until amended or repealed by a competent authority.
- **Demand of having a UCC in recent times:** The demand for a UCC in recent times came to the fore in the judgment pronounced in the **Shah Bano Case in 1985**, more than three decades after the Constitution was drafted.

- **Formation of Expert Committee:** In June 2022, the Uttarakhand government established an expert committee led by former Supreme Court judge Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai to explore avenues for the implementation of a Uniform Civil Code (UCC).
- **Committee's Mandate and Delay:** Despite setting a deadline for the committee to submit its findings by November 2022, extensions were granted repeatedly. This was despite the Chief Minister's announcement in June the previous year about the readiness of a draft UCC.

Initiation of Uttarakhand UCC

- **Formation of Expert Committee:** In June 2022, the Uttarakhand government established an expert committee led by former Supreme Court judge Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai to explore avenues for the implementation of a Uniform Civil Code (UCC).
- **Committee's Mandate and Delay:** Despite setting a deadline for the committee to submit its findings by November 2022, extensions were granted repeatedly. This was despite the Chief Minister's announcement in June the previous year about the readiness of a draft UCC.

Both Houses of Parliament to resume discussion on Motion of Thanks

Context: Both Houses of Parliament will resume discussion on Motion of Thanks on President's address to the joint sitting of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha.

Motion of Thanks

- **History:** This corresponds to the 'Speech from the Throne in Britain'.
- **Article 87:** It outlines provisions for a special address by the President.
- **Presidential Address:** The President addresses the first session post-general elections and the inaugural session of each fiscal year. The President's Address is the government's statement of policy. So, the government drafts it and is responsible for its contents.
- **Government Policy:** During this address, the President elucidates the government's policies and programs from the past year and forthcoming year.
- **Parliamentary Discussion:** Both Houses of Parliament deliberate on this presidential address through a motion known as the 'Motion of Thanks.'
- **Voting on the Motion:** After the discussion, the motion undergoes a voting process, and it must be approved by the House.
- **Significance of Approval:** Failure to pass this motion signifies the government's defeat and poses a critical juncture in parliamentary proceedings.

Other Motions

- **Privilege Motion:** Any member from either house (Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha) can move a notice in the form of a motion against the member who he/she thinks is guilty of the breach of privilege.
- **Censure motion:** A censure literally means expression of strong disapproval or harsh criticism.
- **No-confidence motion:** As per Rule 198 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Lok Sabha, any member of the house can move a no-confidence motion.
- **Adjournment Motion:** It is the procedure for adjournment of the business of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, which can be moved with the consent of the Speaker.
- **No-Day-Yet-Named Motion:** If the Speaker admits notice of a motion and no date is fixed for its discussion, it is called a 'No-Day-yet-Named Motion'.
- **Dilatory Motion:** A motion for the adjournment of the debate or a motion to retard or delay the progress of the business under consideration of the House.

NORTHERN IRELAND GETS NEW GOVT: THE DEADLOCK, AND THE RESOLUTION

YASHEE

NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 4

NORTHERN IRELAND finally got a functional government on Saturday, two years after its Parliament was paralysed over new trade rules between the European Union and the United Kingdom, necessitated by Brexit.

New first minister Michelle O'Neill creates history, as she belongs to Sinn Féin, a political party linked to the paramilitary group Irish Republican Army, which has a long history of fighting the British.

The prolonged deadlock in governance had affected public services, while public sector employees had been protesting delayed salary hikes.

Unique position

Northern Ireland was created in May 1921 by partitioning Ireland. In 1922, the rest of Ireland gained independence from the British, becoming today's Republic of Ireland, with its capital in Dublin.

From the 1960s, Northern Ireland saw a bloody conflict between those who wanted to remain with the United Kingdom and those who wanted a free and united Ireland. Finally, on April 10, 1998, the Good Friday Agreement was signed to end the bloodshed, and gave Northern Ireland a unique system of governance.

Thus, unionists (the side loyal to the British Union) and nationalists share power in Stormont, the Parliament buildings in Belfast. Both sides have to cooperate for the government to work.

Collapse of 2022

After the UK (England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland) left the EU, Northern Ireland now shared a land border with an EU member, the Republic of Ireland. Since the EU and the UK have different product standards, border checks were necessary before goods could move from Northern Ireland to Ireland.



New First Minister Michelle O'Neill and Deputy First Minister Emma Little-Pengelly at Stormont in Belfast on February 3. Reuters

However, given the history of violence here, it was decided to leave this border alone, and checks were introduced between Great Britain (England, Scotland, and Wales) and Northern Ireland instead.

This system angered the unionists, who believed it undermined Northern Ireland's position with the UK. Thus, Sir Jeffrey Donaldson, leader of Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), refused to allow Stormont to function from May 2022.

The new deal

Various efforts were made to resolve the problem, including the Windsor Framework of February 2023, which introduced a system of green lanes for goods that would stay in Northern Ireland and red lanes (with more checks) for those that would go to the EU. However, for the DUP, these measures were far too little.

Now, a new deal has been reached. Its three main points, as stated on the UK's Institute for Government, include: The green lane is now the UK Internal Market channel, on which checks and customs paperwork have been reduced further; there's an "Internal Market Guarantee" which says that at least 80% of Great Britain to Northern Ireland goods will pass through this channel; and the UK government is extending a £3.3 billion package to help Northern Ireland's finances.

Context: Northern Ireland recently achieved the establishment of a functional government, marking a significant milestone after two years of parliamentary paralysis sparked by new trade rules between the European Union and the United Kingdom due to Brexit.

Northern Ireland's Unique Position

- **About:** It (part of the UK) shared a land border with the Republic of Ireland (an EU member).
- **Creation and Division:** Northern Ireland emerged in May 1921 through the partitioning of Ireland, encompassing the six northeastern counties. Meanwhile, the remaining part of Ireland gained independence in 1922, forming the Republic of Ireland with Dublin as its capital.
- **Political Divide and Tensions:** Post-independence, Northern Ireland stayed within the United Kingdom, leading to tensions between the predominantly Protestant unionists loyal to the Crown and the mainly Catholic faction aspiring to join the Republic. Presently, unionists support British Union, while nationalists advocate for a united and free Ireland.
- **Escalation and Conflict (1960s-1998):** The late 1960s witnessed a violent conflict in Northern Ireland, fueled by opposing desires to remain part of the UK or join Ireland. The British Army and police, accused of excesses, exacerbated the situation.
 - This turbulent period persisted until April 10, 1998, when the Good Friday Agreement was signed, marking the end of the bloodshed and introducing a unique governance system for Northern Ireland.
- **Collapse of Parliament in 2022**
 - **Brexit Impact:** Following the UK's departure from the EU, Northern Ireland finds itself sharing a land border with the EU member, the Republic of Ireland.
 - **Product Standards Divergence:** Due to differing product standards between the EU and the UK, mandatory border checks are now required for goods traveling from Northern Ireland to Ireland.

Farm-gate, inter-mandi sales on eNAM platform surge this fiscal

SANDIP DAS
New Delhi, February 4

WITH MORE STATES opening up or facilitating trade of agricultural commodities on the electronic National Agriculture Market (eNAM), there has been a spurt in trading among various markets within the state as well as at the inter-state level.

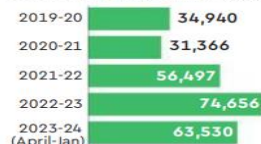
An agriculture ministry official said that farmers in several states — Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir — have sold commodities such as

paddy, maize, cotton, cauliflower, onion and tomato without physically transporting commodities to mandis using the farm-gate purchase model through eNAM.

The volume of farm-gate, inter-state and inter-mandi trade is still a small portion of eNAM's total turnover of ₹63,530 crore in the April-January period of FY24, up 4% on year. However, it indicates a gradual shift to the digital platform, being used for better price discovery by the farmers.

The total traded value of commodities on the digital platform using the farm-gate model during April-January has been ₹79 crore compared to a very small

e-NAM: TURNOVER (₹ cr)



Source: Agriculture ministry



amount traded last fiscal.

Officials have urged other states to follow the farm-gate purchase model so that farmers could sell

their commodities at appropriate time and save costs

In the April-January period of the current fiscal, there has been a

151% spike in inter-mandi trade on e-NAM to ₹1,299 crore. In terms of inter-state trade, which was not happening a year ago, there has been an increase since the beginning of the year.

The ministry has urged states to relax norms, including allowing traders from outside to buy and sell commodities without bank guarantee, provisioning of unified licence for seamless statewide trade access and procurement from farm gate.

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her interim Budget speech last week, had said that the eNAM platform has integrated 1,361 mandis, and is providing ser-

vices to 18 million farmers with a trading volume of ₹ 3 trillion.

Mandis integrated into eNAM platform since its launch in April 2016, are in 27 states and Union Territories, including Tamil Nadu (157 mandis), Rajasthan (145), Gujarat (144), Maharashtra (133), Uttar Pradesh (125) and Haryana (108).

In addition, 3,405 FPOs, 0.25 million traders and around 0.11 million commission agents are registered with eNAM.

The platform currently allows online trading in 209 agricultural, horticultural and other commodities notified by respective state governments.

Sources said there are estimated to be around 7,000 mandis in the country and after the recommendation from mandi boards of the respective states, the marketplace for agricultural produce comes on board eNAM.

While stating that eNAM is the only digital platform where no user charges are being levied on the transaction, the agriculture ministry has urged all central agencies such as Food Corporation of India, farmers' cooperative Nafed and others engaged in procurement and selling of grain, pulses and other agricultural produce to use the platform for better price discovery.

Context: With more states opening up or facilitating trade of agricultural commodities on the electronic National Agriculture Market (eNAM), there has been a spurt in trading among various markets within the state as well as at the inter-state level.

- The platform currently allows online trading in 209 agricultural, horticultural and other commodities notified by respective state governments.

Electronic National Agriculture Market (e-NAM)

- **About:** It is a pan-India electronic trading portal which networks the existing APMC mandis to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities.
- **Implementing Agency:** Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC).
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.
- **Vision:** To promote uniformity in agriculture marketing by streamlining of procedures across the integrated markets.
- **Mission:** The recent integration of APMCs nationwide via a unified online market platform enables pan-India agricultural trade, enhancing price discovery through transparent auctions based on produce quality, coupled with prompt online payments.
- **Features**
 - **Farmers' Product Showcase:** The eNAM portal empowers farmers to exhibit their products in nearby markets, enabling traders from any location to provide price quotations.
 - **APMC Services:** e-NAM offers a unified platform for all Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) services, encompassing commodity arrivals, quality and prices, buy and sell offers, and direct e-payment settlements into farmers' accounts.
 - **Streamlined Licensing Process:** Utilizing eNAM services, traders, buyers, and commission agents can acquire licenses from state-level authorities without any prerequisites of physical presence or ownership of a shop or premises in the market yard.

FREE



Download PDF



Login to theiashub.com



**Aaj Ka
Quality Enrichment**
(Toppers' Favourite PDF)



News-CRUX-10
(10 News. 10 Sources. One Place)



Monthly Editorials
(The Hindu & Indian Express)



Daily Quiz (Prelims)



**Government Schemes &
Ministry Wise Year End
Review**



Free Enrichment PDFs
(Tailor Made Crisp Study Material)

FREE

**India's Best Answer Writing Sessions
with**



Ritika Jindal



Simi Karan



Gaurav Budania



Mridul Shivhare

IAS OFFICERS

Log On To Our Unique
Free Answer Writing Sessions with Toppers (FAST) Portal
& Start Practicing!



**SCAN
HERE**



9560082909



t.me/theiashub



www.theiashub.com



/mkyadav



www.theiashub.com