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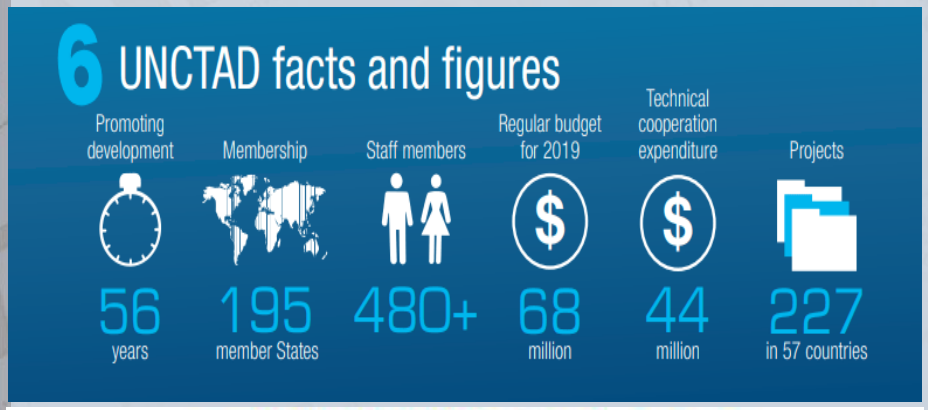
Sept 23

UNCTAD AND SDGs

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Economy)

SDG Summit 2023: World needs investment of over $6 trillion to transform food systems, end hunger by 2030



Context: A recently released analysis by the **UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)** estimates that the cost of **Sustainable Development Goals** indicators linked to the shift towards sustainable food systems will be approximately $6.1 trillion annually until 2030.

SDGs Goal

- **About**: It is the universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.
- **Adopted by**: United Nations in 2015
- **Vision**: To achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.
- The **17 SDGs came into force** with effect from **1st January 2016** as a part of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
    - **India is one of the signatory countries** that has committed to achieving these goals by 2030.

UNCTAD

- **Establishment:** In 1964
- **Aim**: To promote trade, investment, and development in developing countries.
- **Permanent Organ**: United Nations (UN) General Assembly.
- **Headquarters**: Geneva, Switzerland.
- **It organizes**: World Investment Forum
- **Member Countries**: 195 members.
- **Conference Meeting**: Every four years to set policy guidelines and to formulate a program of work.
- **Publishes Reports**: Trade and Development Report, World Investment Report, The Least Developed Countries Report, Information and Economy Report, Technology and Innovation Report & Commodities and Development Report

UN Climate Ambition Summit 2023: Who's leading the charge?

Context: The United Nations Climate Ambition Summit (CAS), hosted by Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, took place recently **in New York**. China, the U.S., and India were absent at the U.N.'s Climate Ambition Summit.

Climate Ambition Summit

- **About**: The summit took place to display leaders who are movers and doers and have credible actions, policies, and plans to keep the 1.5°C degree goal of the Paris Agreement alive.
- **Headquarters**: New York
- **Venue**: UN Headquarters, New York.
- **3 tracks**: Ambition, Credibility and Implementation.
- **Credibility**: Leaders of businesses, cities, regions, and financial institutions are expected to present transition plans aligned with the UN-backed Integrity Matters report.
- **Implementation**: All entities come together by addressing challenges and opportunities related to accelerating the decarburization of high-emitting sectors or delivering climate justice.

Key Points

- **Brazil will now need to propose** more ambitious measures to curb its emissions and look towards a just transition away from fossil fuels.
- **Nepal announced** a revised target of achieving Net Zero emissions by 2045 instead of 2050.
- **Thailand expressed** its determination to be Net Zero by 2050 and Portugal announced a goal to be carbon neutral by 2045, instead of 2050.
- **Canada**, which was one of the largest expanders of fossil fuels last year, announced the development of an emissions cap framework for the oil and gas sector.
- **At COP27, India's suggestion** to call for the phasedown of "all fossil fuels" and not just coal was omitted in the final document.

TRIBUNE

Sept 23

ASIAN GAMES

[Syllabus: Miscellaneous (Sports)]

Anurag Thakur cancels Asian Games visit after China denies entry to sportspersons from Arunachal Pradesh

Context: Recently, in response to Indian sportspersons from Arunachal Pradesh being denied entry into the **19th Asian Games in China**, the Minister of Information and Broadcasting and Sports canceled his planned visit to China for the Games.

Asian Games

- **About**: These are called the Asiad and are a continental multi-sport event held every four years among athletes from all over Asia.
- **Regulated by**: Asian Games Federation (AGF) from
- **First Games were held**: In New Delhi, India, until the 1978 Games. Asiad is the second largest sports gathering after the Olympics.
- **Organized by**: Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), Since 1982.
- **Host nations**: Nine nations have hosted the Asian Games.
- **Participated**: 46 nations have participated in the Games, including Israel, which was excluded from the Games after its last participation in 1974.
- **Symbol**: The Asian Games Movement uses symbols to represent the ideals embodied in the Asian Games charter. The Asian Games flag has four editions.
- **Participation in all games**: Only 7 countries, namely India, Indonesia, Japan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Singapore and Thailand.
- **18th Asian Games hosted**: Indonesia.
- **19th Asian Games host**: China.
- **20th Asian Games will be hosted by:** Japan.

WFME AND NMC
(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Education)

Indian medical graduates can now practice in US, Canada & Australia

Context: The **National Medical Commission (NMC)** of India has been recently awarded **World Federation for Medical Education (WFME)** Recognition status for a tenure of 10 Years.

World Federation for Medical Education (WFME)

- **About:** It is a global organization concerned with the education and training of medical doctors.
- **Establishment**: 1972.
- **Headquarters**: Ferney-Voltaire, France.
- **Objective**: To enhance the quality of medical education worldwide, with the promotion of the highest scientific and ethical standards in medical education.
- **Role**: Ensuring that medical institutes meet and uphold the highest international standards of education and training.

National Medical Commission (NMC)

- **About:** The NMC **replaced the erstwhile Medical Council of India (MCI),** which was established in 1934.
- **Establishment**: National Medical Commission Act, 2019 which came into force in 2020.
- **Headquarters**: New Delhi
- **Organisational structure**: 33 members, including Chairman (medical professionals only), 10 ex-officio members and 22 part-time members.
- **Functions:** NMC regulates medical education and medical professionals.
    - The Commission grants recognition of medical qualifications, gives accreditation to medical schools, grants registration to medical practitioners, monitors medical practice and assesses the medical infrastructure in India.

THE HINDU

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QUAD

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2– IR)

Quad Ministers hold talks on rules-based order, UN reform

They discuss helping countries respond to terror attacks; the joint readout reaffirms commitment to a 'free and open' Indo-Pacific, where disputes are settled in accordance with international law

Sriram Lakshman
NEW YORK

Meeting early on Friday morning along the fringes of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), Foreign Ministers of the Quad (India, Australia, Japan and the U.S.) reaffirmed the group's commitment to a "free and open" Indo-Pacific region, where disputes are settled in accordance with international law. The Quad also committed itself to the principles of the UN charter and reform of the institution. A new initiative to help countries respond to terror attacks was also discussed on Friday, as per a joint readout of the meeting.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and his counterparts discussed the outcome of the Quad Counter-terrorism Working Group's Consequence Management Exercise, which studied how the Quad could help regional countries that had experienced terror attacks. The

Securing the deal: The Quad backed the UN's efforts to restart the Black Sea Grain Initiative. PTI

waii in December, where it will conduct a 'tabletop' exercise. The Ministers stressed their commitment to countering terrorism, including terror financing and cross-border movement of terrorists and curbing the use of emerging technologies for terror purposes. On Ukraine, the Quad readout struck a similar note to the recent G-20 joint statement from New Delhi. It expressed "deep concern", calling for a "just" and "lasting" peace in Ukraine, without naming Russia as the aggressor.

"We express our deep its terrible and tragic humanitarian consequences," the statement said, adding, "We underscore the need for a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in Ukraine in accordance with international law, consistent with the principles of the UN Charter."

The Quad also backed the UN's efforts to restart the Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI), a deal that secures the export of grain from Ukraine and Russia. The agreement had expired in July with countries calling for its resumption, including at the G-20 in New Delhi. The joint statecluding expanding permanent and non-permanent representation on the UN Security Council.

"We underscore the need to address attempts to subvert the international system, including in the UN, and promote accountability," the statement said, presumably referring to Russia's use of the veto on the Security Council in actions related to the conflict in Ukraine.

On North Korea, the statement condemned Pyongyang's "destabilising" missile launches and pursuit of nuclear weapons. On Myanmar, the Quad supported a transition to an "inclusive federal democracy" and the ASEAN Five-Point Consensus (an April 2021 agreement between the Myanmar junta and the ASEAN group of countries). The group reiterated its commitment to practical initiatives in the Indo-Pacific region, including the Quad Infrastructure Fellowship Programme, a pandemic preparedness exercise, and the development of a

Context: Recently, on the sidelines of the 78th session of the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)**, the Foreign Ministers of the **Quad reiterated their commitment to a "free and open"** Indo-Pacific region, emphasizing the resolution of disputes in accordance with international law.

QUAD

- **About**: It also known as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or simply the Quad, is a strategic forum.
- **Countries**: United States, Japan, India, and Australia.
- **Aim**: To promote regional security and economic cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Origin of QUAD Concept:** It was initially **proposed by Japanese Prime Minister** Shinzo Abe in 2007.
- **First Summit:** March 2021.

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

- **Establishment:** In 1945 under the United Nations (UN) Charter
  - The UNGA is the only UN organ wherein all member states have equal representation.
- **Aim**: To create an organization that would facilitate international cooperation and prevent the occurrence of another devastating global conflict.
- **First Session**: October 24, 1945 (United Nations Day)
- **Member States**: 193 member states

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GCES PORTAL

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Agriculture)

Shri Manoj Ahuja launches Innovative Mobile Application and Web Portal for General Crop Estimation Survey (GCES) to Revolutionize Farming Practices

Context: Recently, the secretary of the Department of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) launched the **mobile application and the web portal for GCES** (General Crop Estimation Survey).

General Crop Estimation Survey Portal

- **Launched**: September, 2023
- **Developed by:** Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.
- **Aim**: To enhance the reach, scope, and outcome of government actions in the course of development.
  - The automation of the GCES process will ensure on-time reporting of crop statistics and the accuracy of the data.
- **Features:** Both the portal and the app offer an extensive database of **yield estimations**.
  - The mobile application boasts a crucial feature known as **geo-referencing.**
  - The mobile application enables users to upload images of both experimental plots and the crops under observation.

General Crop Estimation Survey (GCES)

- **Conducted by**: ICAR-Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI).
- **Ministry**: Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare.
- The **estimates of crop production** are obtained by multiplying the area under the crop and the yield rate.
- The yield rate estimates are **based on scientifically designed crop-cutting** experiments conducted under the General Crop Estimation Survey (GCES).
- **Crops Covered**: Around 68 crops (52 food and 16 non-food) in 22 States and 4 Union Territories.

BUSINESS STANDARD

Page 1

DEBT INSTRUMENTS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – ECONOMY)

India to enter JP Morgan EM index; set for $20 bn inflow

TO HAVE 10% WEIGHT, LIKE CHINA | NO TAX BENEFITS FOR BOND INVESTORS

MANOJIT SAHA & ANJALI KUMARI
Mumbai, 22 September

The bond market is set to become more attractive for foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) after JP Morgan decided to include government papers issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) under the fully accessible route in its widely tracked emerging market government bond index (GBI-EM). The process will start in June next year.

"India will be included in the GBI-EM Global index suite and all relevant derivative benchmarks (including custom indices), starting June 28, 2024," JP Morgan said following a 2023 index governance review.

While there was a demand for tax exemption, the government has not offered incentives to foreign investors for the index inclusion.

The inclusion will be phased over 10 months, with 1 per cent weighting included in each month, till March 31, 2025.

Indian bonds, like the Chinese, will have 10 per cent weighting.

With assets under management of $236 billion tracking the index, inflows of $23.6 billion are estimated during this period. A Nomura note said Thailand could bear the brunt of the relocation of resources to India with outflows amounting to $3.6 billion.

"We estimate that India's inclusion could prompt passive inflows of around $30 billion (comprising EM local dedicated funds, as well as blended funds) over the scale-in period as a one-off stock adjustment. However, given India's attractiveness from a yield and (low) vol perspective, we think it could attract at least another $10 billion of active flows," a note from Goldman Sachs said.

The inclusion in the global bond index can lead to lower borrowing costs for both the government and private-sector borrowers. The process of foreign investors converting their currencies into rupees further boosts the demand for the Indian currency, helping stabilise its value.

JP Morgan said India had been on Index Watch Positive since 2021 for inclusion in the GBI-EM, following the government's introduction of the fully accessible route (FAR) programme in 2020 and substantive market reforms for aiding foreign portfolio investment.

According to the index inclusion criteria, eligible securities are required to have a notional outstanding of above $1 billion and at least 2.5 years' remaining maturity.

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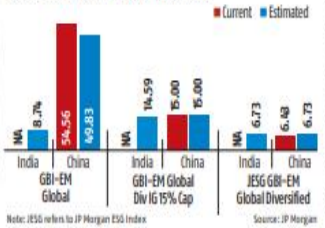
GROWING APPEAL

Country weight projections for other GBI-EM series after India's inclusion (%)



Country weight projections for GBI-EM Global Diversified after India's inclusion (%)

Country	Current	Estimated
India	-	10
China	10	10
Indonesia	10	10
Mexico	10	9.99
Malaysia	10	9.49
Brazil	10	9
Thailand	9.79	8.14
South Africa	8.11	6.75
Poland	7.57	6.29
Czech Republic	6.18	5.14
Others*	18.35	15.2

Note: GBI-EM refers to Global Bond Index - Emerging Markets; *includes Colombia, Romania, Hungary, Peru, Chile, Egypt, Türkiye, Serbia, Uruguay, Dominican Republic, Philippines
Source: JP Morgan

"INDIA'S ENTRY INTO GLOBAL BOND INDEX IS A REFLECTION OF THE RECORD OF (THE GOVT'S) FISCAL PRUDENCE"
TV SOMANATHAN
Finance Secretary

"THE INDIAN BOND MKT IS ALREADY ROBUST, AND THE COST OF CAPITAL IS QUITE REASONABLE. THE COSTS MIGHT EVEN COME DOWN SOMEWHAT FURTHER"
V ANANTHA NAGESWARAN
Chief Economic Advisor

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BONDS SETTLE LOWER AFTER INITIAL EUPHORIA ON INDEX INCLUSION
MORE REPORTS P4 P10

Context: JP Morgan announced that **India will be incorporated into the GBI-EM Global index** suite and all relevant derivative benchmarks, including custom indices.

Emerging Markets Bond Index (EMBI)

- **About:** EMBI tracks the performance of emerging market bonds.
- **Published by**: Investment bank JP Morgan.
- **Emerging Market Bonds**: This is **debt instruments** issued by developing countries, offering higher yields compared to government or corporate bonds from developed nations.
- **EMB Indexes**: Serve as benchmarks for evaluating bond performance within emerging markets.

Debt Instruments

- **About:** A debt instrument is any financial tool used to raise capital. It is a documented, binding obligation between two parties in which one party lends funds to another, with the repayment method specified in a contract.
- **Types/examples:** Bond, certificate of deposits (CoD), Commercial Papers.

Bonds

- **About:** Bonds are income instruments issued by governments and corporations when they want to raise money.
- **Examples:** Corporate Bonds, Municipal Bonds, Government Bonds and Agency Bonds.

TIMES OF INDIA Sept 23

INDIAN SKIMMER

(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 – Env & Eco)

Context: The endangered **Indian Skimmer** was recently spotted along the **Ghaghra River** at Dudhwa Tiger Reserve.

Indian Skimmer

- **About:** It is an odd bird which belongs to the family of skimmers, Rynchopidae.
- **Scientific Name**: Rynchops albicollis
- **Other names**: Indian scissors-bill
- **Habitat:** It occurs primarily on larger, sandy, lowland rivers, around lakes and adjacent marshes, and, in the non-breeding season, in estuaries and coasts.
- **Distribution**: North Indian rivers, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, China, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam.
  - Now, much of the population is confined to north Indian River systems and Pakistan.
- **IUCN Red List**: Endangered
- **Features**: It measures 40 to 43 cm in length and has a wingspan of 110 cm.
  - The forehead and the collar are white, and the crown is black.

Dudhwa Tiger Reserve

- **Location**: Lakhimpur-Kheri in Uttar Pradesh.
- **Rivers:** The Sharda River, Geruwa River, Suheli, and Mohana, all of which are tributaries of the mighty Ghagra River.
- **Vegetation**: North Indian Moist Deciduous type, containing some of the finest examples of Sal forests (Shorea robusta) in India.
- **Flora**: Sal forest, Terminalia alata (Asna), Lagerstroemia parviflora (Asidha), etc.
- **Fauna:** Tiger, Fishing cat, Monkey, Mongoose, small Indian civet, Jackal, Dabchick, spot-billed pelican, Little cormorant, Grey Heron, White stork, Black storck, White Ibis, Python, Sandboa, Russel's viper, Rat snake etc.

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ASIA PACIFIC FORUM

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – IR)

PRESIDENT OF INDIA INAUGURATES ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND BIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF THE ASIA PACIFIC FORUM ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Context: Recently, the **President of India** inaugurated the Annual General Meeting and Biennial Conference of the **Asia Pacific Forum on Human Rights** in New Delhi.

Asia Pacific Forum

- **About:** It has created a strong and united platform that brings together National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) from all corners of the Asia Pacific.
- **Founded:** In 1996
- **Members:** 17 full members, and 8 associate members
  - India has been a full-time member since 1996.
- **National Human Rights Institutions** that partially comply with the **Paris Principles** are granted associate membership.
- Decisions about **the admission of new members** to the APF are made by the Forum Council.
- **Objective**: To promote the establishment of independent NHRIs in the Asia Pacific region and to support our members to do their work as effectively as possible.

Paris Principles of Human Rights

- **About**: It was defined at the first International Workshop on National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights held in **Paris in 1991**.
- **Adopted by:** By the United Nations Human Rights Commission by Resolution 1992/54 of 1992, and by the UN General Assembly.
- **Aim**: To regulate to the status and functioning of national institutions for the protection and promotion of human rights known as National Human Rights Institutions.

HINDUSTAN TIMES Page 16

HATE SPEECH

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 – Polity)

ESTABLISHED IN 1924

{ OUR TAKE }

No place for hate speech

Islamophobic comments lower the dignity of Parliament and point to a larger malaise

The five-day special session of Parliament in the new premises was historic for passing the Women's Reservation Bill. Over two days, members across the party spectrum debated the Bill intensely, and in the end, a near-consensus emerged in its favour. Parties agreed to disagree over the demand for a sub-quota for other backward classes (OBCs) but refused to let their differences in opinion spoil the positive atmosphere that prevailed in the House. It was a fine demonstration of all that is good and great about India's democratic system.

But the same historic session was spoiled by Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) two-time MP from South Delhi, Ramesh Bidhuri, with an appalling verbal assault on Danish Ali, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) MP from Amroha, Uttar Pradesh. When interrupted while addressing Parliament during a discussion on Chandrayaan-3, Bidhuri threatened and hurled communally charged slurs at Ali. Forget Parliament, the kind of words uttered have no place in civilised society.

On Friday, the Speaker warned Bidhuri of action if he repeated the offence even as Ali wrote to the presiding officer asking that the matter be referred to the privileges committee. A warning is too light a punishment for comments that reek of Islamophobia and qualify as hate speech. The worrying aspect is that the lawmaker's comments echo a disturbing but growing trend that has roiled the country in recent times, poisoning minds and polarising society, sometimes culminating in violent flashpoints. Allowing the lawmaker

WHAT THE LAW SAYS

- Hate speech pertains to 'promotion of enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, birth place, residence, language, and acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony'
- It falls under IPC sections 153A, 153B, 295A, 298A and 505(1) and (2)
- Hate speech poses complex challenges to freedom of speech and expression. New provisions in IPC must be incorporated

Context: The five-day **special session of Parliament** was historical, however, at the same time, one of the MPs was criticised for blasphemy and hate speech towards another MP.

Hate Speech

- **About**: Hate speech means talking, acting, writing, or showing things that could make people hurt each other or treat some groups badly.
- **According to the Law Commission of India:** It is usually when someone tries to make others hate a group of people based on things like their race, culture, gender, or religion.
- **As recommended by the Law Commission of India and TK Vishwanath Committee:** There is a need for the insertion of a new Section in IPC in the form of Section 153C to effectively deal with hate speech.
- **According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB):** In 2014, there were only 323 cases, but by 2020, it went up a lot to 1,804 cases.

Blasphemy

- It's like being **really mean and disrespectful about a god**, something special, or something that should be treated with care.
- In a society where people are free and can vote, discussions and disagreements shouldn't be restricted.
- To balance **between protecting beliefs and stopping** hurtful speech, the best option is to have rules about blasphemy but not make it a crime.

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