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PIB FEB 28

PM-KISAN SCHEME
(Syllabus: GS Paper 3 - Agriculture)

Prime Minister Shri Modi transfers Rs. 16,800 crore towards PM Kisan Samman Nidhi

Context: Prime Minister transferred the 13th installment of about Rs 16,800 crore under the ambitious **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme** of the Government of India, through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) to the bank accounts of more than 8 crore beneficiary farmers across the country.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi

- **Launched**: on 24th February, 2019 to supplement financial needs of land holding farmers.
- **Benefits**: Financial benefit of Rs **6000/- per year in three equal installments (every 4 month)** is transferred into the bank accounts of farmers' families across the country **through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) mode.**
- **Eligibility**: **all landholding farmers** (subject to the prevalent exclusion criteria).
- **Exclusion Categories:**
  - All **Institutional Landholders**.
  - Farmer families in which one or more of its members belong to the following categories:
    - Former and present holders of **constitutional posts**
    - Former and present **Ministers/ State Ministers and former/present Members of LokSabha/ RajyaSabha/ State Legislative Assemblies/ State Legislative Councils, former and present Mayors of Municipal Corporations, former and present Chairpersons of District Panchayats.**
    - All **serving or retired officers and employees** of Central/ State Government Ministries /Offices/Departments and its field units Central or State PSEs and Attached offices /Autonomous Institutions under Government as well as regular employees of the Local Bodies (Excluding Multi Tasking Staff /Class IV/Group D employees)
    - All **superannuated/retired pensioners** whose monthly pension is Rs.10,000/-or more (Excluding Multi Tasking Staff / Class IV/Group D employees) of above category
    - All Persons who **paid Income Tax in last assessment year**
    - **Professionals** like Doctors, Engineers, Lawyers, Chartered Accountants, and Architects registered with Professional bodies and carrying out profession by undertaking practices.
- **Funding**: It is a Central Sector Scheme with 100% funding from the Government of India.
- **Implementation**: It is being implemented by the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.**
- **Identifications of beneficiaries:** Responsibility of identifying the landholder farmer family eligible for benefit under the scheme **shall be of the State/UT Government.**
- **PM-KISAN Mobile App**: It was **developed and designed by the National Informatics Centre** in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.
- **Physical Verification Module:** A **mandatory physical verification of 5% beneficiary every year** is being done as per the provisions laid down in the scheme.

TIMES OF INDIA

Page 15

RENAMING OF CITIES

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

I'm Christian, but equally fond of Hinduism: SC judge

RENAMING SPREE

Old Name	New Name
Allahabad (UP)	Prayagraj
Faizabad district (UP)	Ayodhya
Mughalsarai (UP)	Deen Dayal Upadhyay Nagar
Osmanabad (Maha)	Dharashiv
Aurangabad (Maha)	Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar
Hoshangabad (MP)	Narmadapuram
Habibganj Rly Stn (MP)	Rani Kamlapati Rly Stn
Khizrabad (Haryana)	Pratap Nagar
Miyan Ka Bada (Rajasthan)	Mahesh Nagar Halt

Times View: The apex court has rightly rejected the PIL. Renaming of cities has reached disturbing proportions. In times when the country is making rapid strides in science and technology, repeated attempts to undo history can only further aggravate social tension rather than calm frayed nerves. History is what happened. We must accept it and move on.

▶ Continued from P 1

Historical aberrations cannot haunt present and future generations of the nation to a point that succeeding generations become prisoners of the past. What is of the greatest importance for the country is the Preamble of the Constitution, which professes secularism and maintenance of harmony and fraternity between different sections. This alone will be true notions of national unity and bind the country together. Do you want to go back to the past, keep the issue alive and keep the country on the boil by pointing to a particular community? You must remember that India is a secular country, and this is a secular forum," the SC bench said.

physics. The height it reached through Vedas, Upanishads and Bhagavad Gita is unequalled. No one could come anywhere near it. Do not belittle it. We must understand our greatness and be magnanimous. The world looked at India in the past and still looks up to it. I am a Christian, but I am equally fond of Hinduism and try to understand its greatness."

When Upadhyay argued that even Shaktipeeths have been desecrated and renamed after barbaric Muslim invaders, the SC said, "That is a fact in India's history. It is no secret that India remained under foreign rule. But what is the point in digging into the past? Do we not have other problems in hand? Can't we move forward and deal with the problems at hand?"

Context: The Supreme Court dismissed a plea seeking the **renaming of cities and historical places** that he claims are named after "invaders."

Procedure to change the name of a city or place in a state

- There is **no constitutional provision** which talks about changing the name of a city or any area in a state.
- The **power to change** the name is given to the **State Legislation**.
- A **resolution is proposed** by any Member of Legislative Assembly as a request to change the name of a particular city or place in the state.
- A **discussion** takes place on the resolution. In the discussion, the **reasons for and possible consequences** of altering the name is discussed.
- **Formal voting** on the enforcement of the resolution.
- For the passing of the resolution, a **simple majority** is required. Once the majority is achieved in the favour, the resolution is considered passed.
- The resolution as a proposal is **submitted to the Ministry of Home Affairs.**
- The Ministry considered the proposal and **consulted with other state agencies.**
- The agencies from whom the approval is required are the **Ministry of Railways, Intelligence Bureau, Department of Posts, Survey of India, and Registrar General of India.**
- A **'No Objection' certificate** is issued by the Ministry if the proposal is approved by the ministry and all the agencies.
- After getting approval from the ministry, the S**tate Government can issue an official notification** in the Gazette.
- The notification **must include the details of the changes made** in the name of the state or city or any other place.

INDIAN EXPRESS

Page 1

DELHI LIQUOR POLICY

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

Excise policy probe: Sisodia sent to CBI custody for 5 days

AAP protests, says Govt diverting attention from Adani issue

ANAND MOHAN J
NEW DELHI, FEBRUARY 27

A DAY after his arrest, Delhi Deputy Chief Minister and senior AAP leader Manish Sisodia was sent to five-day CBI custody by a special court here on Monday. The court said Sisodia had failed to "legitimately explain the incriminating evidence which has allegedly surfaced against him in the investigation".

The CBI is investigating alleged irregularities in the now-scrapped Delhi excise policy.

Sisodia was produced before Special Judge M K Nagpal, who allowed the CBI's plea for his custodial interrogation. The Judge observed that even if Sisodia had joined the investigation on two occasions, he had "failed to provide satisfactory answers to most

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



Sisodia being taken away from the court. *Praveen Khanna*

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNY



MORE REPORTS P6, 15

Context: A local court sent **Delhi's deputy chief minister to five days of CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation) custody** in the Delhi liquor excise policy case.

- According to the CBI, he **provided licenses to private liquor shops** for his own benefit. He then used the money gained from the private liquor companies in the Goa elections and Punjab elections.

Delhi Liquor Policy

- With the Delhi Liquor Policy, the Government **exited from selling liquor.**
- **Only private shops** were allowed to sell liquor.
- It was proposed in 2020. Under the policy, Delhi was **divided into 32 zones.**
- Each zone had **27 liquor vendors.**
- The policy **aimed to increase liquor revenue,** end the black market, and improve the consumer experience.
- The shops were **allowed home deliver liquor till 3 AM.**
- Shops can sell liquor on their **own MRPs**.
- Also, the shops were **allowed to provide discounts.**

THE HINDU Page 15

ONE RANK ONE PENSION SCHEME

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - Polity & Governance)

SC slams Defence Ministry over OROP case

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Defence Ministry came under fire from the Supreme Court on Monday for tweaking a judicial order to pay the entire arrears under the One Rank One Pension (OROP) scheme by March 15.

A three-judge Bench even said it may take the "very serious" step of issuing contempt notice.

Instead of complying with the January 9 order, the Ministry wrote on January 20, saying except for family pensioners and gallantry awardees, others would only get their OROP arrears in four equal half-yearly installments.

Context: The Supreme Court took exception to the decision by the Ministry of Defence in **unilaterally extending the deadline for payment** of arrears to retired armed forces personnel under the **One Rank One Pension Scheme (OROP)** contrary to the top court's order.

- SC ordered the Secretary of Defence Ministry to file a personal affidavit explaining why a unilateral direction was passed by the Ministry when the apex court had directed that the payment should be made by March mid this year.

One Rank One Pension (OROP)

- **About**: OROP implies the payment of the **same pension to armed forces** personnel for the same rank and the same length of service, irrespective of the date of retirement.
- **Background**: Since independence, the model of deciding pensions for the armed forces had been the '**one rank one pension' model for 26 years**.
  - In 1973, the Indira Gandhi-led government **terminated the OROP model.** Also, the Third Pay Commission reduced the pensions of soldiers while increasing the pensions of civilians.
  - In 1986, the **Rajiv Gandhi-led government implemented the Rank Pay Scheme** in the wake of the Fourth Pay Commission.
    - This brought the basic pays of seven officer ranks in the army (and their equivalents in the navy and the air force) down by fixed amounts designated as rank pay.
    - This caused reduced pensions for many personnel of the armed forces in 1986 and later years.
    - Also, this caused an asymmetry in the pay scales of armed forces officers and their equivalent officers in the Indian Police Force (IPS).
- **Koshiyari Committee:** A **10 member all-party parliamentary panel** formed under the chairmanship of Bhagat Singh Koshiyari.
  - The **Committee accepted the veterans' demand of OROP** and stated that equal pension should be paid for an equal length of service of the same rank, irrespective of the retirement date.
  - Also, any future increase in the pension rate should be automatically passed on to the past pensioners.
  - Finally, in 2014, the government passed the **order of implementation of the OROP scheme.**
- **Current Status:** As per the order of the government, the pension of the past pensioners would be **re-fixed on the basis of pension of retirees** of the calendar year 2013 and the benefit will be effective with effect from January 2014.
- **Coverage**: Armed Forces Personnel **who had retired till 30th june 2014** are covered under it.
  - **Uttar Pradesh and Punjab** have the highest number of OROP beneficiaries.

ECONOMIC TIMES
Page 13

YEMEN CRISIS

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - International Relations)

UN Seeks $4.3 Billion to Cover Yemen 2023 Humanitarian Needs

Cairo: The United Nations is seeking $4.3 billion at a pledging conference Monday to alleviate the suffering of millions of people in Yemen, where an eight-year civil war has created one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

More than 21 million people in Yemen, or two-thirds of the country's population, need help and protection, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, or OCHA, which says the humanitarian needs in Yemen are "shocking." Among those in need, more than 17 million are considered particularly vulnerable.

Monday's high-level gathering is co-hosted by Sweden, Switzerland, and the UN in the organisation's Palais des Nations in Geneva. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres will address donors on the dire humanitarian situation in the Arab world's poorest country. In a first announcement Monday, German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock said her country will provide $127 million. **AP**

Context: The United Nations is seeking $4. 3 billion at a pledging conference to alleviate the suffering of millions of people in Yemen, where an eight-year civil war has created one of the world's worst humanitarian crises.

Background

- The **UAE joined the Saudi campaign in 2015** and has been deeply involved in the conflict ever since, despite announcing the formal withdrawal of its forces in 2019 and 2020.
- Saudi Arabia **started a military campaign in March 2015**, hoping for a quick victory against the Houthis. But the Houthis had dug in, refusing to leave despite Saudi Arabia's aerial blitzkrieg.
- Since the Saudi intervention in 2015, at least **10,000 people have been killed in Yemen**, according to the WHO.
- The **widespread damage** caused to infrastructure by the coalition airstrikes and lack of supplies of food and medicines due to the blockade have pushed Yemen into a humanitarian catastrophe.
- About **12 million people are at the risk** of starvation if aid doesn't reach them fast.
- The country has also seen a **massive cholera outbreak.**
- **A child dies every 10 minutes** in Yemen from preventable causes, says UNICEF.

Steps were taken by India

- **Operation Rahat:** It was launched by the Indian Armed Forces to evacuate more than 4,000 Indian citizens and other foreign nationals from Yemen during the 2015 military intervention by Saudi Arabia and its allies. The 11-day evacuation by sea started on April 1, 2015, from Aden port.
- **Food and medical aid:** India has provided food and medical aid to Yemen in the past and thousands of Yemeni nationals have availed of medical treatment in India over the past few years.

BUSINESS STANDARD

Page 4

GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL

(Syllabus: GS Paper 2 - International Relations)

Nov launch missed, India-GCC trade talks may resume in March

SHREYA NANDI

New Delhi, 27 February

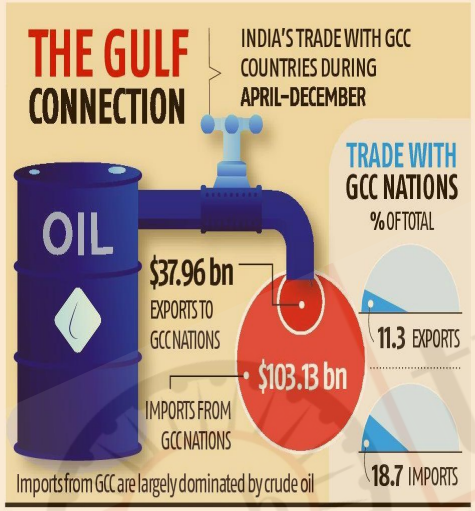
India and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) will engage in discussions to finalise the terms of reference as soon as March before launching negotiations for a trade deal.

Both sides were expected to launch trade negotiations in November last year. However, it got delayed as India and GCC were not able to agree upon the terms of reference, a person aware of the development told *Business Standard*.

"The meeting can happen as early as next month," the official cited above said.

Besides, the term of the GCC's Secretary General — Kuwait's Nayef Al Hajraf — also ended last month and Jassim Al Budaiwi took over from February 1. The new secretary general is also from Kuwait.

This will be the first meeting since Al Budaiwi's taking over as the new secretary general. However, discussions on the terms of reference won't begin from scratch and will focus on reaching a common ground.



GCC is a regional, intergovernmental political economic union comprising six countries–Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Commerce & Industry Minister Piyush Goyal in November last year said the trade deal would be comprehensive, with substantial coverage of goods and services, including technology, food security, climate change, energy security, among others.

India and the GCC had signed a framework agreement on economic cooperation to explore the possibility of a free trade agreement (FTA) more than 17 years ago. Thereafter, two rounds of negotiations took place in 2006 and in 2008. However, the economic union deferred its negotiations with all countries and economic groups.

Separately, India signed a trade deal with the UAE in February last year.

The official said it would take more than a year to complete negotiations with GCC, because it might take time for all members of the group to reach a common ground on all issues.

Business Standard had earlier reported that other member countries of the GCC would also have the option to join the India-UAE trade deal on the same terms and conditions, if the launch of the FTA negotiations between New Delhi and the GCC is further delayed.

In the India-UAE free-trade agreement, the two have kept a clause that if both nations agree, a third country or a group of nations shall have the option to be a party to the trade pact. This means that the country would have to offer India the same concessions that the UAE had offered. The clarity on this front is yet to emerge, another official said.

India's exports with the six-member GCC nations stood at $37.96 billion during April-December, up 21 per cent YoY.

Context: India and the **Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)** will engage in discussions to finalise the terms of reference as soon as March before launching negotiations for a trade deal.

- Both sides were expected to launch trade negotiations in November last year.
- However, it got delayed as India and GCC were not able to agree upon the terms of reference.

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

- **About:** It is an **economic and political union** comprising of all the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf except Iraq.
- **Origin**: It was **formed in 1981 by an agreement** among Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), that was concluded in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
- **Structure of the GCC:** Supreme Council (the highest authority), the Ministerial Council and the Secretariat General.
- **Headquarter**: The **Secretariat is located in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**.
- **Members**: The six members of the GCC are Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, UAE, Bahrain and Kuwait. The members comprise:
  - 2 absolute monarchies (Saudi Arabia, Oman)
  - 3 constitutional monarchies (Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait)
  - 1 federal monarchy (UAE)
- **GCC and India**: Although, **India is not one among six members of GCC**, it has emerged as a major trading partner of India.
  - India and GCC members are members of the FATF.

PIB FEB 28

RASHTRIYA SANSKRITI MAHOTSAV

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 - Art & Culture)

PRESIDENT OF INDIA GRACES THE 14TH RASHTRIYA SANSKRITI MAHOTSAV AT BIKANER

Context: The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu graced and addressed the **14th Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav** at Bikaner, Rajasthan (February 27, 2023).

Rashtriya Sanskriti Mahotsav

- **About**: It is the flagship festival of the **Ministry of Culture.**
  - It is organized **every year** in different states of India to promote National Unity and integrity through cultural exchange.
- **Origin**: It has been organized **since 2015** with the active **participation of Seven Zonal Culture Centres**.
- **Objectives**: It was started with an intention to **exhibit the rich cultural heritage of the country** in all its rich and varied dimensions namely, Handicrafts, Cuisine, Painting, Sculpture and Performing Arts- Folk, Tribal, Classical and Contemporary- all at one place.
- **Participation**: All the seven zonal Cultural Centres and academies under Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India, are participating in this event.
  - Entry to the entire **event is free for all citizens and art lovers.**

DST FEB 28

WESTERLIES
(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 - Geography)

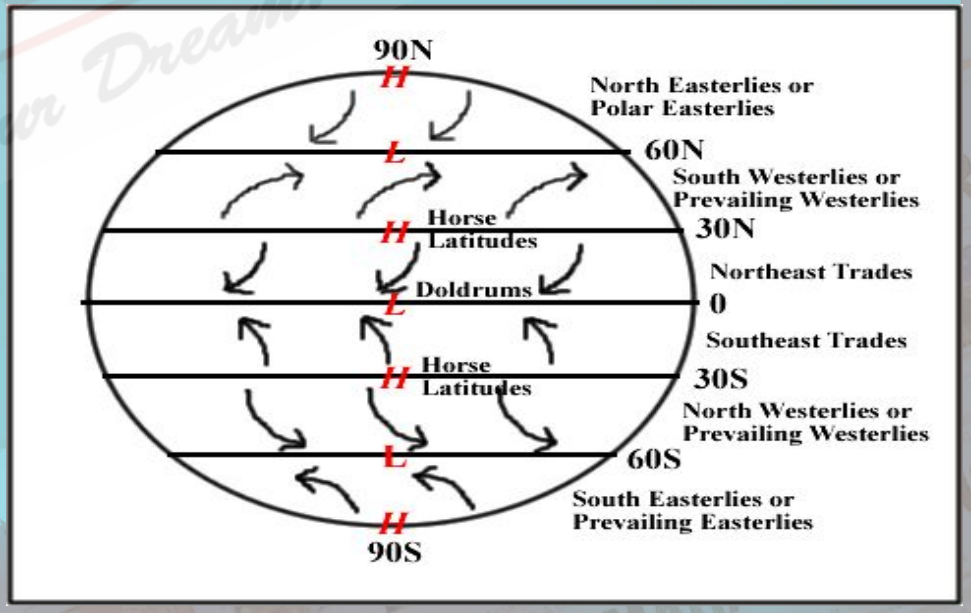
Westerlies governed the climatic variations and landscape of Trans-Himalaya historically: study

Context: It was the **Westerlies and not the Indian Summer Monsoon (ISM)**, that governed the climatic variations and the evolution of its landscape, particularly during the Mid-Holocene Thermal Maxima (between 7075 and 6040 cal yr before present), according to a new study.

- The researchers collected sediments from the lakes and used them as archives to carry out a high-resolution **multi-proxy climatic record from Ladakh**-the cold desert of India lying above the altitudes of 3000m in the Trans-Himalaya.
- The research will **help characterize and assess the past climatic changes** for a better assessment of regional and global forcing factors of future glacier behaviour in the context of global warming, climate variability, and associated societal impacts.

Westerlies

- **About**: Westerlies are the **Permanent winds** that blow in the middle latitudes.
- **Blow**: They blow **from the subtropical high-pressure belts** towards sub-polar low-pressure belts.
- **Variations**: The westerlies of the **Southern hemisphere are more robust and constant** than the westerlies of the Northern hemisphere.



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FEB 28

Fossil Gas Exploitation

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 - Geography)

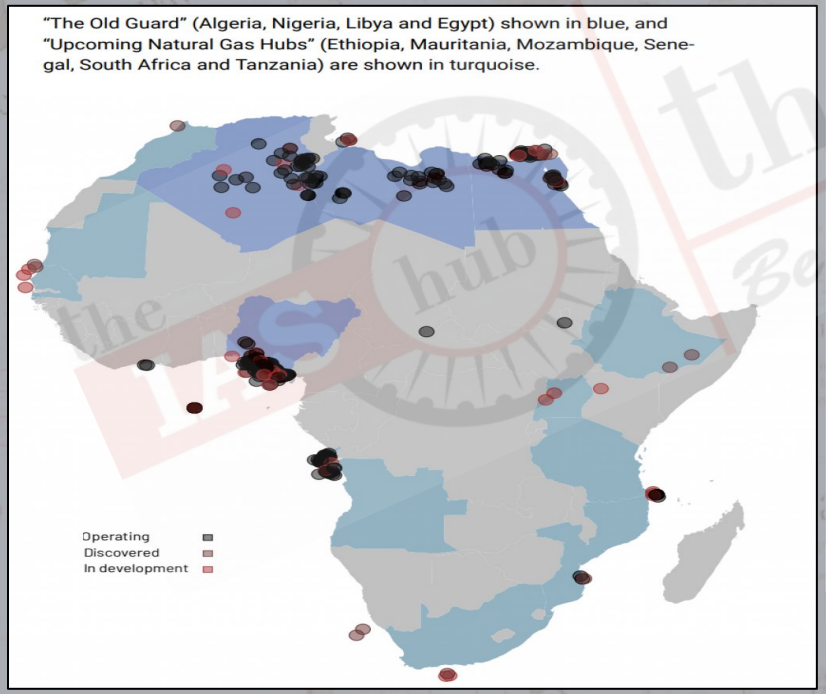


Dash for gas: 7 new countries enter African gas markets

84% new reserves to come up in the 7 countries that have no history of fossil gas exploitation, finds Global Energy Monitor

NEXT NEWS >

By Rohini Krishnamurthy
Published: Monday 27 February 2023



Context: Seven African countries with no history of fossil gas exploitation have now opened their doors to gas projects, a new briefing report showed.

Key Points

- Some 84 per cent of new reserves in the pre-production stage are coming up in **Mozambique, Senegal, Tanzania, Mauritania, South Africa, Ethiopia, and Morocco**, stated the Global Energy Monitor briefing released February 2023.
- This **"dash for gas"** threatens the global scientific consensus to halt constructing new fossil fuel infrastructure.
- Previously, only Algeria, Nigeria, Libya and Egypt were gas reserves and production hubs. These four countries accounted for 78 percent of African gas reserves in 2021.
- Africa is **home to select deposits of oil and natural gas,** which are drilled for energy and fuel.
- Oil exploration has significantly increased on the continent, and many countries are looking to become first-time producers.
- Oil and natural gas production have also been **connected to civil conflict.**
- In Nigeria, guerrilla groups have attacked oil infrastructure and stolen oil from pipelines since the early 1990s.
- These groups, primarily ethnic minorities, say foreign oil companies have exploited their labor while keeping most of the wealth.
- They also charge that out-of-date equipment has severely polluted air, soil, and water resources.
- This **pollution has lead to losses in arable land and fish stocks.** However, the severe actions of these guerrilla groups have also increased pollution as they have damaged equipment.
- The attacks have also **reduced production and local income,** as many companies are forced to shut down.

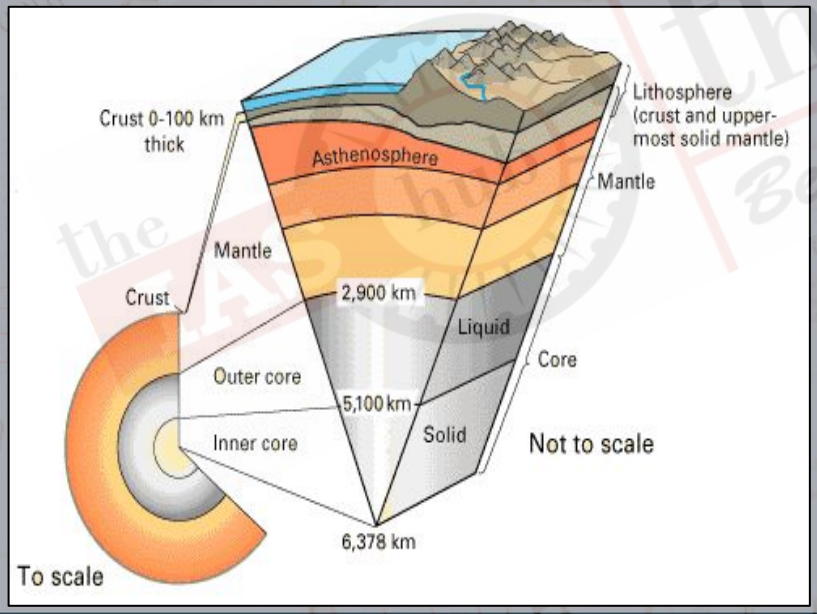
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FEB 28

EARTH'S MANTLE

(Syllabus: GS Paper 1 - Geography)





Context: The mantle - a 2,900 km thick layer of solid rock sandwiched between the **Earth's upper crust and lower core** - has been hiding two layers, two new research papers revealed.

Key Points

- One is the **"low viscosity" zone** in the upper mantle, roughly 100 kilometres in thickness.
- The **upper mantle** extends from 40-410 km depth.
- The **temperature** here ranges from 1,000-3,500 degrees Celsius.
- The other layer is the low-velocity zone, which is also a part of the upper mantle.
- Though this layer is not new, it is a **semi-global feature,** distributed around 44 per cent of the Earth.

Mantle

- The portion of the **interior beyond the crust** is called the mantle.
- It is in a **solid-state.**
- It has a **density higher than the crust portion.**
- The thickness ranges from **10-200 km.**
- The mantle **extends from Moho's discontinuity** to a depth of 2,900 km.
- The **asthenosphere** is the upper portion of Mantle.
- It is the **chief source of magma** that finds its way to the surface during volcanic eruptions.
- The crust and the uppermost part of the mantle are called the **lithosphere**.
- The major constituent elements of the mantle are **Silicon and Magnesium** and hence it is also termed as SIMA.

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