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ANALYSIS

Topics (10) + 2 PIB}

Detailed Analysis for Prelims & Mains:

1. The ordinance question before the Supreme Court - Pg 10
2. From borderland to India's strategic frontier - Pg 8
3. High-Level Committee on Demographic Change - Pg 8
4. Neutralise armed miscreants in Manipur: CRPF chief - Pg 1
5. India, Indonesia review bilateral ties - Pg 12

Prelims:

1. Major Abhilasha Barak conferred UN Military Gender Advocate - Pg 14
2. Mark-0 demonstration reactor of US - Pg 16
3. Denisovan genome - Pg II
4. The Wilderness Project - Pg II
5. Pyroprocessing - Pg II

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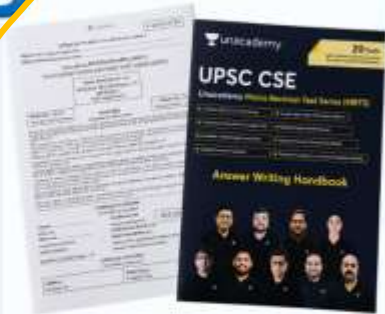
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START FROM
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President

→ Ordinance

→ Judges

→ SC

The Ordinance question before the SC

The Collegium's acceptance of an Ordinance that creates four additional judges' posts raises questions about judicial independence, security of tenure and the appearance of detachment from the executive; court has taken a calculated risk by staking its independence on the goodwill of the government and Parliament

LETTER & SPIRIT

V. Venkatesan

In February 1937, the President of the United States of America, Franklin D. Roosevelt, asked Congress to enlarge the nine-judge Supreme Court. He sought a new justice for each one past 70 who refused to retire, up to 15 in all. The Senate Judiciary Committee saw through it. It preferred "an independent Court, a fearless Court," to one that bent "out of fear or sense of obligation to the appointing power." The Senate refused, with 70 members voting against and 20 in favour, and the plan was dead.

In Delhi last week, five judges took the oath; three occupy chairs, that no statute has created. They sit because the President, by Ordinance, lifted the sanctioned strength from 34 to 38.

Ordinance-made seats

The five are fit for office: four sat as Chief Justices of High Courts, the fifth came from the bar. Their elevation is not the grievance; the manner of it is. The Ordinance was promulgated on May 16, when the Court sat at 32 against a sanctioned 34. Two lawful vacancies existed; two of Tuesday's appointments filled them. The other three rest on the Ordinance alone.

Article 124(D) leaves the number of judges to what Parliament may prescribe. An Article 123 Ordinance carries, for its life, the force of an Act. Independence of



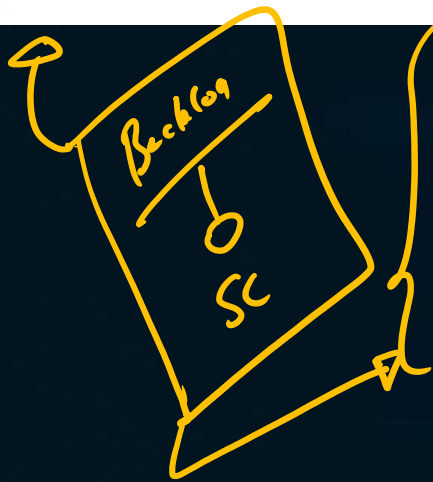
THE GIST

Five judges were sworn in to the Supreme Court after the sanctioned strength was raised from 34 to 38 through a Presidential Ordinance; while two appointments filled existing vacancies, three were made to newly created posts.

The Supreme Court has previously held in cases such as *D.C. Wadhwa vs State of Bihar* and *Krishna Kumar Singh vs State of Bihar* that ordinance-making power cannot become a parallel source of legislation and that repeated promulgation of ordinances is unconstitutional.

If Parliament does not replace the Ordinance with a law, the court's sanctioned strength would revert to 34, raising unresolved questions about the status of judges appointed to Ordinance-created posts and the legal implications of such appointments.

In Delhi last week, **five judges took the oath**; three occupy chairs, that no statute has created. They sit because the **President, by Ordinance**, lifted the **sanctioned strength from 34 to 38**.



President → Art 123 → Ordinance



SC → Strength → **34** → **38**

33 + CJI

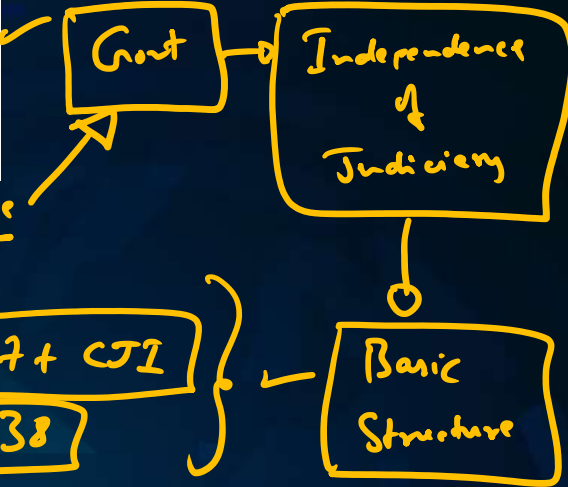
37 + CJI



Grant

Independence of Judiciary

Basic Structure



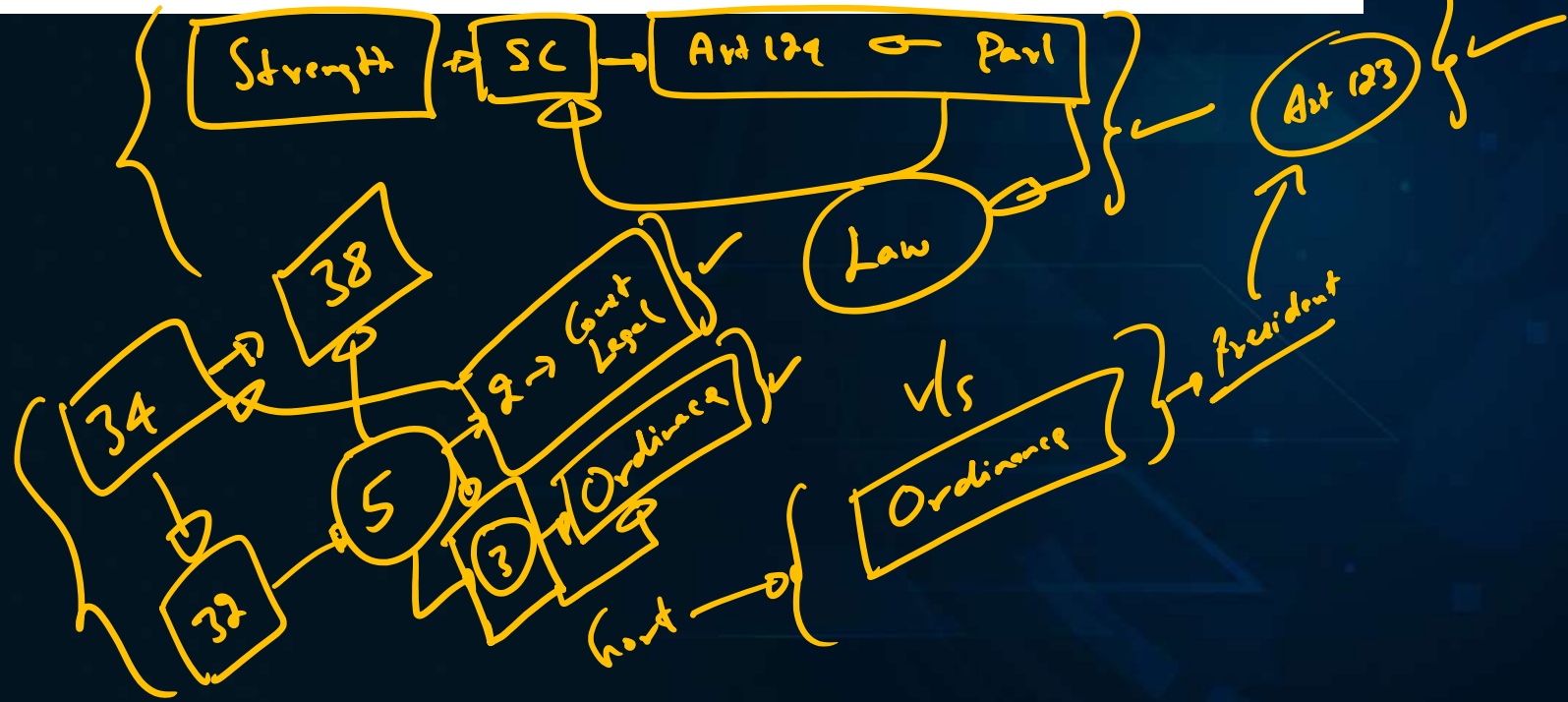
In February 1937, the President of the United States of America, Franklin D. Roosevelt, asked Congress to enlarge the nine-judge Supreme Court. He sought a new justice for each one past 70 who refused to retire, up to 15 in all. The Senate Judiciary Committee saw through it. It preferred "an independent Court, a fearless Court," to one that bent "out of fear or sense of obligation to the appointing power." The Senate refused, with 70 members voting against and 20 in favour, and the plan was dead.



Congress

Govt → Judges

Article 124(1) leaves the number of judges to what Parliament may prescribe. An Article 123 Ordinance carries, for its life, the force of an Act. Independence of the judiciary is a basic feature of the Constitution. It is also about whether the court holds its seats free of obligation to the political branch. A court that owes three chairs to a six-week renewable Ordinance holds them at the executive's sufferance.



A test of principle ✓

In 2015, a Constitution Bench decided *Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association vs Union of India*. It struck down the 99th Amendment and the National Judicial Appointments Commission. Parliament had passed it 367 to nil in the Lok Sabha, with the States ratifying. The commission was to have six members: the Chief Justice, the two senior-most judges after him, the Union Law Minister, and two eminent persons. The eminent persons were to be chosen by a panel of the Prime Minister, the Chief Justice, and the Leader of the Opposition. The composition was meant to keep the choice neutral. Yet the Act provided that any two members could veto a name. The court feared that the Law Minister and even one eminent person could thus block a candidate the judges favoured. It held that this destroyed the judiciary's primacy in its own appointments. PX

99th CAA → NJAC

2015

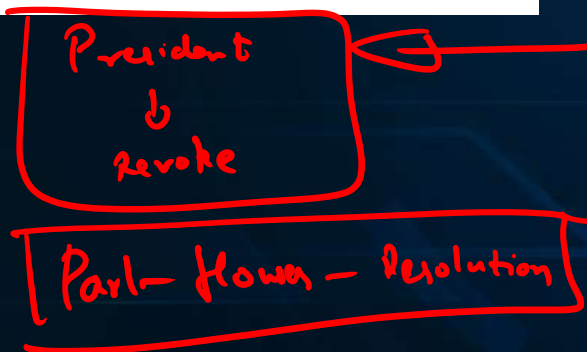
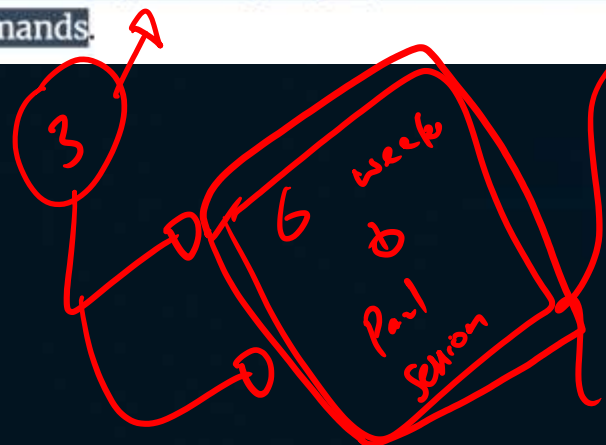
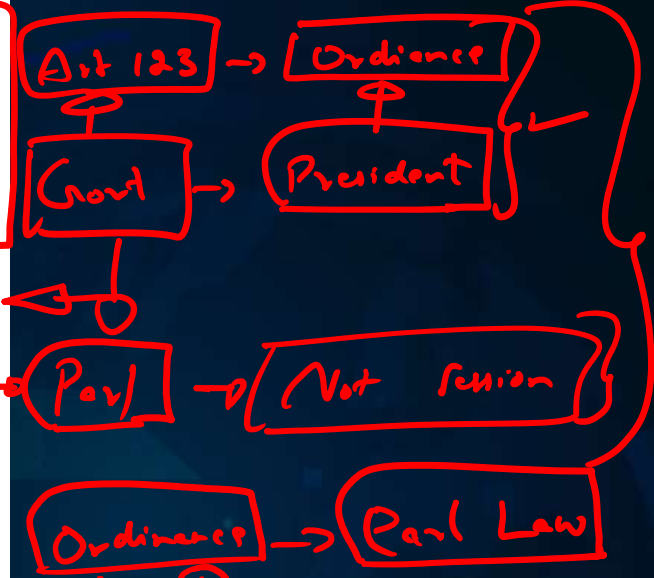
Collegium

Yet the Supreme Court Collegium has accepted an Ordinance that seats three of its own, despite the uncertainty over its fate. Under Article 123, the President may withdraw an Ordinance at any time. Both Houses may disapprove it by resolution. Otherwise, it ceases to operate six weeks after Parliament reassembles.

The court itself taught the country to distrust the Ordinance. In *D.C. Wadhwa vs State of Bihar* (1986), it called governance by repromulgated ordinance a fraud on the Constitution. In *Krishna Kumar Singh vs State of Bihar* (2017), a seven-judge Bench ruled against using ordinance-making power as a parallel source of legislation.

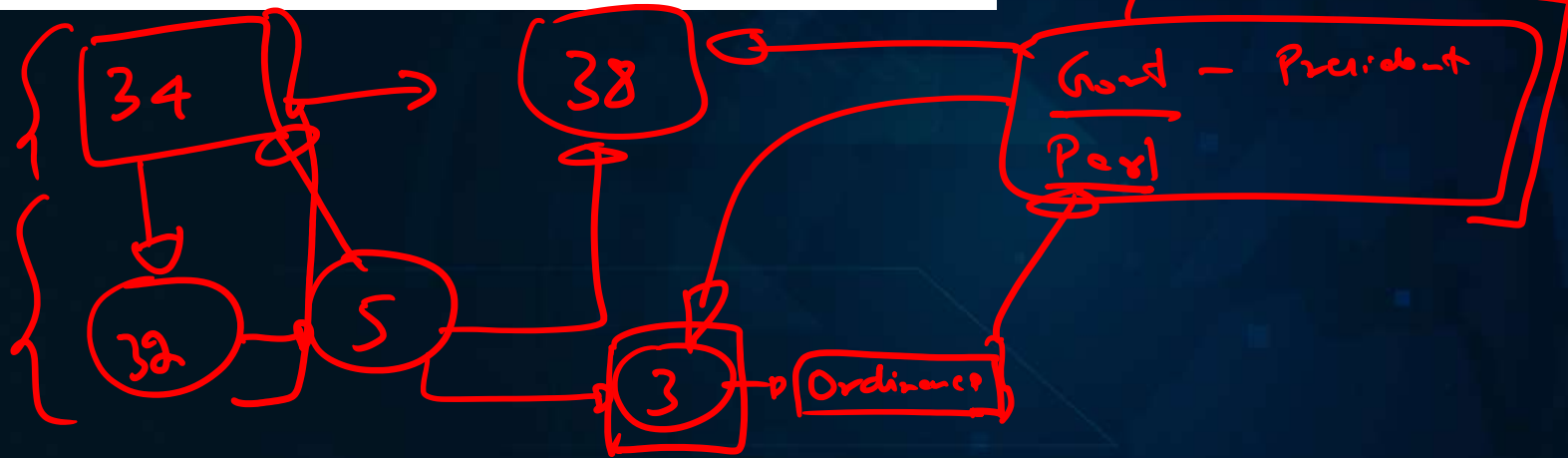


If the Bill replaces the Ordinance, the anomaly closes. If not, the apex court's strength reverts to 34, and the executive cannot bridge the gap by repromulgation, the fraud Wadhwa condemned. Whether a judge appointed to an Ordinance-created post can be removed once that post lapses is untested. Their judgments hold under the de facto doctrine, affirmed in *Gokaraju Rangaraju vs State of Andhra Pradesh* (1981). The subtler harm is to appearance: in any matter touching the Union, the government whose majority must regularise their seats may appear before them. A judge whose tenure lies, even loosely, in one party's gift cannot wear the detachment the office demands.



Ordinance-made seats

The five are fit for office: four sat as Chief Justices of High Courts, the fifth came from the bar. Their elevation is not the grievance; the manner of it is. The Ordinance was promulgated on May 16, when the Court sat at 32 against a sanctioned 34. **Two lawful vacancies existed**; two of Tuesday's appointments filled them. The **other three rest on the Ordinance alone.**



Mains Practice Question

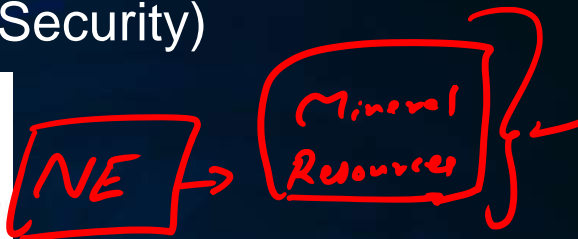


Q. The Supreme Court Collegium's acceptance of an Ordinance that creates four additional judges' posts raises questions about judicial independence, security of tenure and the appearance of detachment from the executive. Critically examine.

(250 words; 15 marks)

2. Pg 8 – GS II (Social Justice) & GS III (Economy & Security)

From borderland to India's strategic resource frontier



Within days of one another, official platforms of the Ministry of Mines cast several northeastern States in a similar frame – as repositories of strategic minerals and untapped potential. Manipur was described as a “quiet mineral frontier”, Arunachal Pradesh as a “resource-rich frontier”, while Meghalaya and Mizoram were portrayed through comparable narratives that emphasised the hidden wealth beneath their hills. Governments routinely publicise natural resources and development opportunities, and such descriptions would ordinarily attract little attention.

Taken together, however, they point to a broader shift in the language through which the northeast is increasingly being framed in the national conversation and strategic picture.

The critical mineral push

The timing is significant because critical minerals have moved from geological discussions into strategic ones. Lithium, cobalt, graphite, nickel and rare earth elements increasingly shape industrial competition, technological manufacturing and energy transitions. Batteries, semiconductors, renewable technologies and defence systems depend upon them, and countries have begun repositioning themselves around access to these resources. India itself continues to depend on imports for several critical minerals and has consequently expanded exploration efforts. According to a Ministry of Mines reply in Parliament, the Geological Survey of India undertook 43 critical mineral exploration projects across northeastern States during the 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25 field seasons, covering minerals such as graphite, vanadium, lithium, rare earth elements, nickel and cobalt. Exploration activity has expanded across Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Assam, Nagaland and Manipur. In Manipur, projects involving nickel, cobalt and chromium exploration have recently been initiated.

Geological surveys have pointed toward mineral potential across the region for years.



Sangman Hangsing

Researcher and
alumnus of the
Kautilya School
of Public Policy

Critical mineral
ambitions must
account for the
people, land and
history of
northeast India

What appears to be changing is the language through which that significance is increasingly being understood. The northeast has long held strategic significance that extends beyond geology, but the framework through which that significance is understood now appears to be widening.

Shift in language

For decades, the northeast has figured in national strategy largely through the language of borders and security. Discussions have centred on insurgencies, territorial management, connectivity initiatives and geopolitics considerations involving neighbouring countries, while infrastructure and development were often justified as instruments of strategic access and territorial security.

The language of resources is increasingly entering a strategic space once dominated by concerns over borders and security. Critical minerals are now discussed alongside trade corridors and geopolitical access, with territorial and resource security converging. Places once viewed mainly as sensitive border regions are increasingly seen as strategic assets.

The repeated use of the word frontier is revealing, because frontiers rarely function as neutral descriptions. They do not merely describe geography; they often reflect how States imagine it. Historically, frontiers have been viewed as spaces awaiting integration, development or extraction because they appear as landscapes of future possibility.

The difficulty is that frontiers are rarely empty spaces waiting to be discovered. The hills and valleys of the northeast already contain dense social and political worlds structured around customary land systems, local institutions and long-standing relationships with territory. Questions of land often extend beyond economics, as they are also tied to authority, identity and memory. Resource extraction thus enters landscapes that already possess institutions and histories of their own.

These questions become particularly significant in regions where political uncertainties continue to shape everyday life. In Manipur, years of violence and displacement have intensified debates over land and territorial arrangements. Similar concerns about ownership, ecological vulnerability and local participation have surfaced across the northeast at different times. Projects involving land often acquire meanings that extend beyond development, as communities interpret them through the lens of trust, representation and political inclusion.

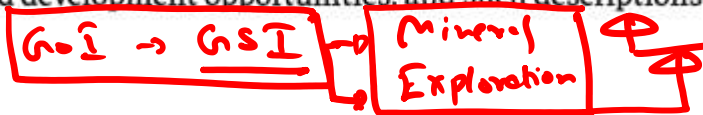
Resources and inclusion

India's search for critical resources is understandable within a global environment increasingly shaped by supply-chain uncertainty and strategic competition. The northeast itself also requires infrastructure, employment and economic opportunities that have remained uneven for decades. Questions surrounding resource development rarely fit neatly into positions of support or opposition.

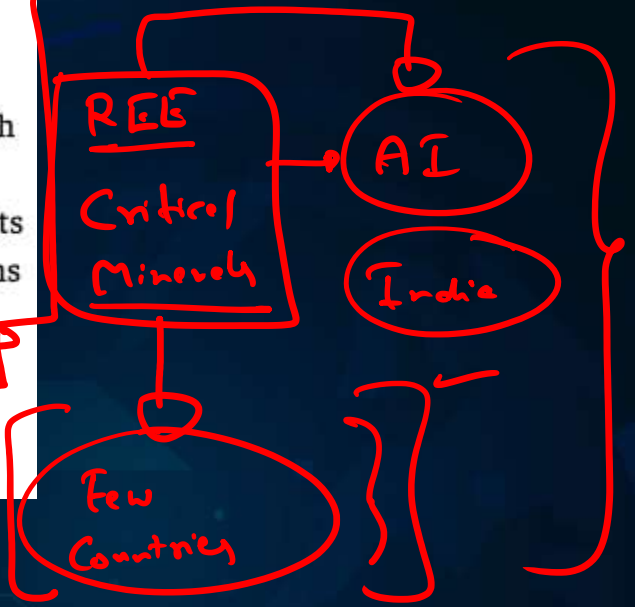
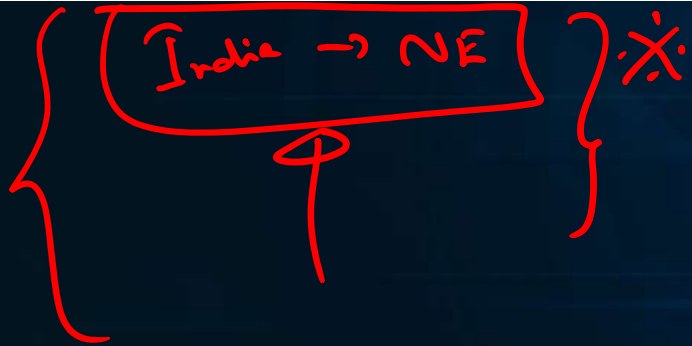
How quickly these transitions unfold and who shapes them may matter as much as the resources themselves. For a very long time, national priorities and local realities in the northeast often moved at different speeds. Connectivity projects sometimes arrived without corresponding economic ecosystems, while strategic considerations frequently overshadowed questions surrounding participation and representation. Resource development risks reproducing similar tensions if extraction begins moving faster than institutions capable of managing its social consequences.

What is being debated extends beyond the minerals beneath the hills. The northeast has spent years being viewed first as a border to be secured and then as a corridor to be connected. If it now begins entering national imagination as a landscape of strategic resources, the question is whether this new frontier will finally include the people who already inhabit it, or merely assign another purpose to the land beneath their feet.

Within days of one another, official platforms of the **Ministry of Mines** cast several northeastern States in a similar frame — as **repositories of strategic minerals** and untapped potential. Manipur was described as a “quiet mineral frontier”, Arunachal Pradesh as a “resource-rich frontier”, while Meghalaya and Mizoram were portrayed through comparable narratives that emphasised the hidden wealth beneath their hills. Governments routinely publicise natural resources and development opportunities, and such descriptions would ordinarily attract little attention.

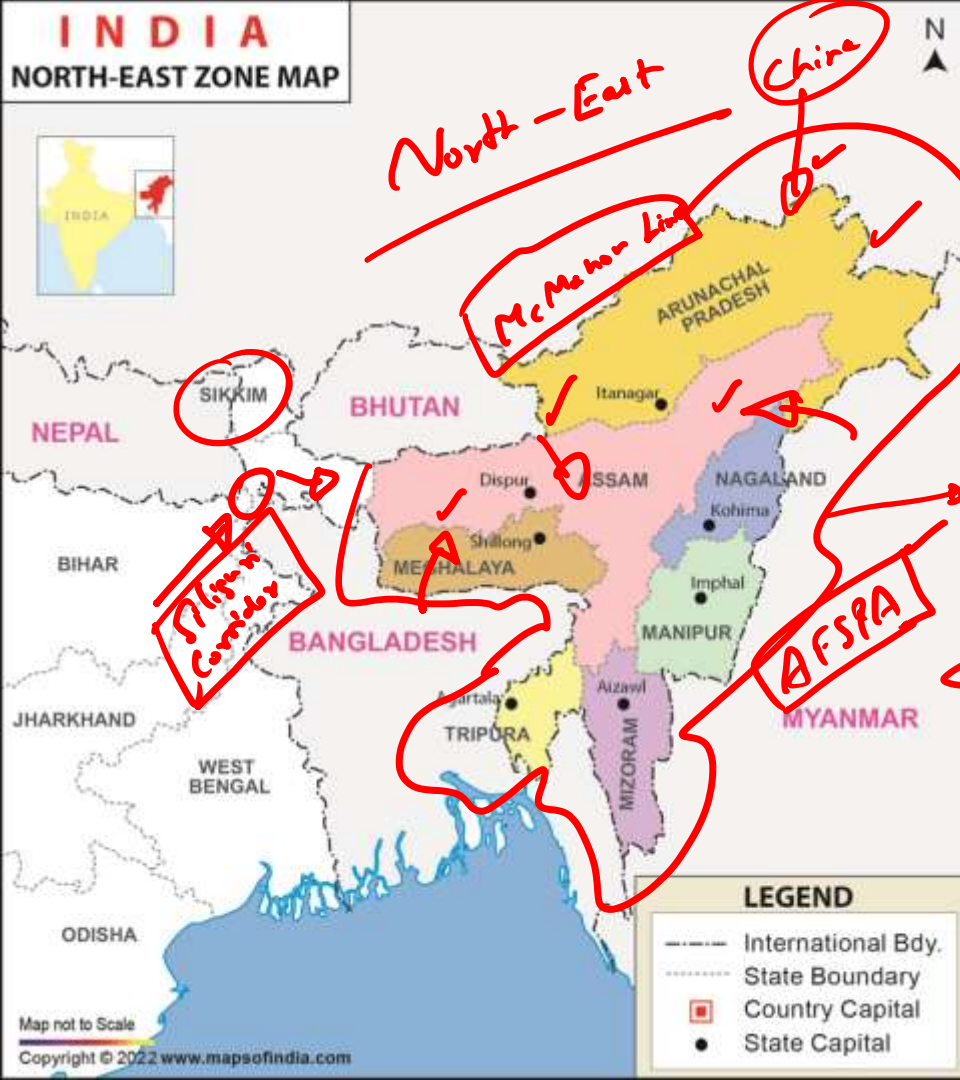


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INDIA

NORTH-EAST ZONE MAP

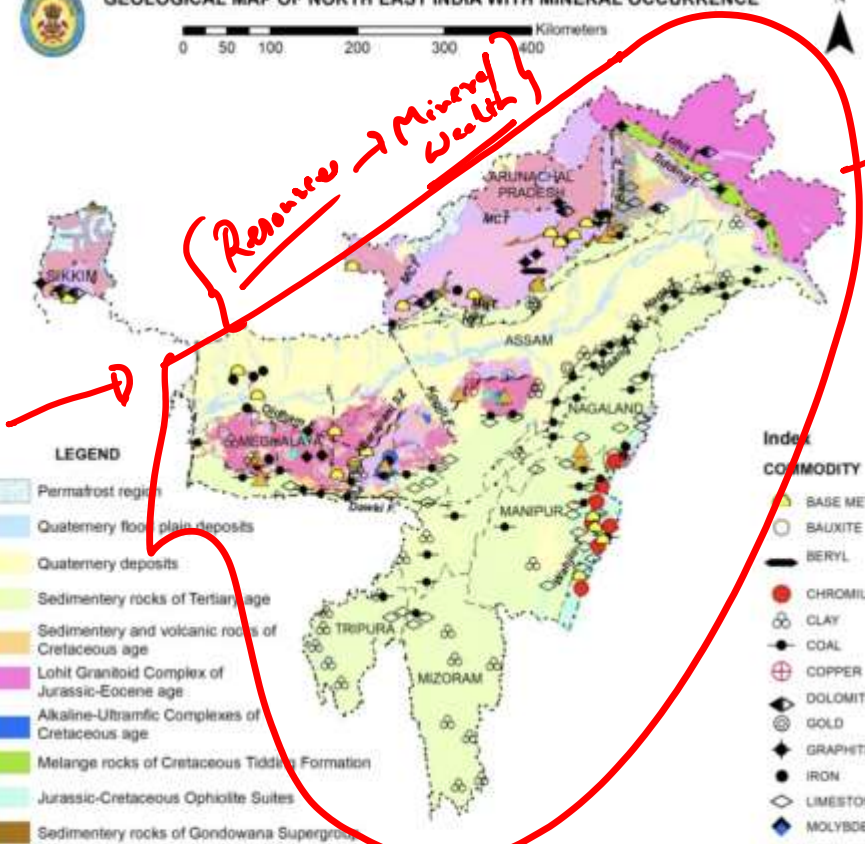


LEGEND

- International Bdy.
- State Boundary
- Country Capital
- State Capital



GEOLOGICAL MAP OF NORTH EAST INDIA WITH MINERAL OCCURRENCE



LEGEND

- Permafrost region
- Quaternary flood plain deposits
- Quaternary deposits
- Sedimentary rocks of Tertiary age
- Sedimentary and volcanic rocks of Cretaceous age
- Lohit Granitoid Complex of Jurassic-Eocene age
- Alkaline-Ultramfic Complexes of Cretaceous age
- Melange rocks of Cretaceous Tidding Formation
- Jurassic-Cretaceous Ophiolite Suites
- Sedimentary rocks of Gondwana Supergroup
- Palaeozoic Meta-sedimentary rocks
- Granite of Pan-African Orogeny
- Meta-sedimentary rocks of Proterozoic age
- Proterozoic gneissic complexes of Arunachal Pradesh
- Proterozoic Assam Meghalaya Gneissic Complex
- Central Crystalline Complex

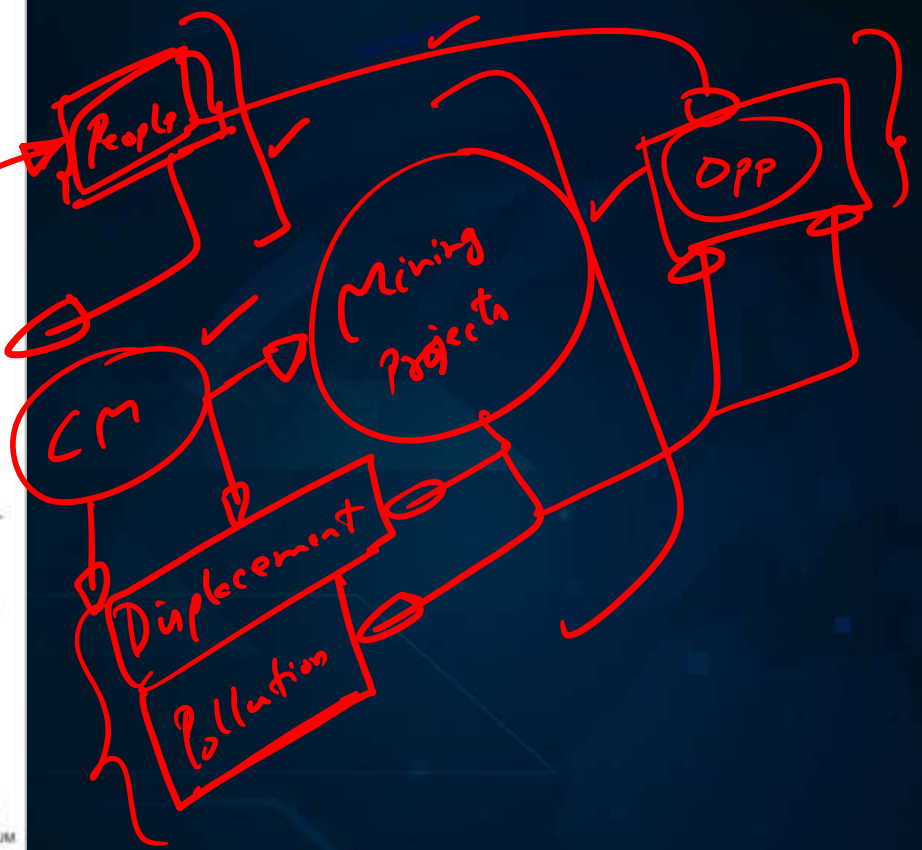
INDEX

- Major Fault
- Major Shearzone
- Major Thrust

Index

COMMODITY

- BASE METAL
- BAUXITE
- BERYL
- CHROMIUM
- CLAY
- COAL
- COPPER
- DOLOMITE
- GOLD
- GRAPHITE
- IRON
- LIMESTONE
- MOLYBDENUM
- NICKEL-COBALT
- PHOSPHATE
- SILLIMANITE
- TVM



Vanadium In Arunachal, REE In Assam And Meghalaya

Another major find in Arunachal Pradesh is vanadium, an important metal used in steel alloys and other industrial applications. The GSI's exploration found vanadium totalling 13.79 million tonnes, marking India's first major resource of this critical alloying element.

The area around **Lodoso village in Arunachal Pradesh's Papum Pare district** has yielded a delineated resource of 2.15 million tonnes of REE-bearing ferruginous phyllite [a type of metamorphic rock], the GSI said.

Assam and Meghalaya are the two other states where the GSI's investigations found REE potential.

In Assam, the GSI found encouraging results of REE concentrations ranging from 1,000 to 5,000 parts per million.

Parts per million (ppm) means one part of a substance for every one million parts of the total mixture.

In Meghalaya, GSI tests showed REE values ranging between 3,646 and 5,100 ppm.

GSI

State	Commodity	Exploration Stage	Resource (MT)
Arunachal Pradesh	Graphite	G3	24.81
Arunachal Pradesh	Vanadium	G3	17.17
Arunachal Pradesh	Copper	G3	0.116
Arunachal Pradesh	REE	G3	2.15
Assam	Limestone	G3	1494.30
Assam	REE	G3	28.64
Assam	Iron Ore	G3	18.29
Assam	Glass Sand	G3	4.13
Meghalaya	Limestone	G2	1964.905
Meghalaya	Limestone	G3	4661.786

There are indications of lithium deposits in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Assam, the GSI report said, adding while they are still in early stages of investigation, these occurrences merit further exploration, given India's dependency on lithium imports.

}
*
GSI

"Nickel and cobalt, associated with ophiolite complexes in Nagaland and Manipur, are being targeted through detailed geochemical surveys and petrographic studies," the GSI said.

↑
*

To formalise and accelerate the search for critical minerals in the NER, the GSI launched the Critical Mineral Assessment Programme (CMAP) in 2024-25. The programme focuses on assessing the potential of laterite/lateritic soils, carbonaceous rocks and alkaline complexes across Manipur-Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Arunachal Pradesh, the GSI said in its report.

]

Sl	Commodity	Target Areas	State
1	Rare earth elements (REE) & RM	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Samchampi, Barpung Alkaline pluton 2. Sung Alkaline Complex 3. Assam Meghalaya Gneissic complex 4. Pan African granite plutons 5. Younger granites of Himalayas 6. Clay horizon of Tertiary sed. seq. 7. Tertiary coal-shale sequence 	Assam Meghalaya Assam-Meghalaya Assam-Meghalaya Arunachal Pradesh Tripura - Mizoram Meghalaya, Assam, Nagaland, Manipur
2	Graphite & Vanadium	Bomdila graphite vanadium belt of Khetabari Fm	Arunachal Pradesh
3	Limestone	Tertiary limestone sequence. Proterozoic meta-sedimentary sequence	Assam- Meghalaya- Arunachal Pradesh
	Nickel , Chromite	Ophiolite Belt.	Manipur Nagaland
5	Gold	Placer gold in reworked Siwalik sediments. Precambrian gneisses	Assam, Arunachal Pradesh Sikkim, Meghalaya, Assam, A.P.
6	Critical & Strategic mineral	Laterite/ Lateritic soil cover	Manipur, Nagaland, Meghalaya, AP, Assam
7	Coal	Tertiary sedimentary sequence	Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur

Target areas for future mineral exploration in northeast region (NER)

Prelims →

State	Project Title	Stage	Minerals	Agency	Cost (₹ Cr)	Status
Assam	<u>Preliminary REE Exploration</u>	G3	REE	MECL	8.82	In Progress
Arunachal Pradesh	<u>Graphite & Vanadium Reconnaissance</u>	G4	Graphite, Vanadium	Pvt. Agency	5.63	In Progress
Meghalaya	Ion-Adsorption Clay & REE Exploration	G3	REE	DMR Meghalaya	3.01	In Progress
Manipur	Ni-Co-Cr Exploration	G3	Nickel, Cobalt, Chromium	Pvt. Agency	6.12	In Progress
Nagaland	Limestone Exploration	G3	Limestone	DGM Nagaland	7.66	In Progress
Mizoram	Exploration Equipment Procurement	—	—	DGM Mizoram	1.96	In Progress

(Source: NMET Portal)

Projects in the northeast region funded by the National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET)

Mains Practice Question

Q. North-East India is emerging as a strategic resource frontier. But, critical mineral ambitions must account for the people, land and history of the region. (250 words; 15 marks)

A targeting in the name of demography



C. Ramamohan Reddy

Writer based in Hyderabad

India is on the cusp of a demographic upheaval. Fertility rates across the country have been falling for decades and are now on or below replacement levels. We will soon have to shift from the challenges of finding jobs for the youth bulge to preparing to care for an ageing population.

This is not about undocumented migration For decades there has indeed been cross-border migration between India and Bangladesh across what is an integrated riverine ecology. But given the economic transformation that has taken place in Bangladesh in recent decades, it would be hard to argue for economic distress driving large-scale migration from Bangladesh to India. India's neighbour is its "hosted case" as it was derisively described decades ago.

According to World Bank data, Bangladesh's per capita income (in nominal dollar terms) grew faster than India during 2005-20 (8.4% versus 7.0% compound annual growth rates); it now has roughly the same income as India's. In purchasing power parity terms, India's growth is slightly higher. Both countries presently have roughly the same per capita income however measured, and both now have the same levels of human development, according to the UNDP's Human Development Index. But the change in Bangladesh has been much faster. Why then would there be migration to India of a scale that there should be talk of being swamped? There would certainly remain pockets of distress forcing the poor to consider migrating to India and the more skilled to West Asia. But we cannot find economic evidence to suggest waves of Bangladeshis being pushed by distress to migrate to India, ending up affecting jobs and electoral outcomes here.

Of course, all this is not about undocumented migration. All this is really a code for the place of Muslims in India and an acceleration of the social, economic and political discrimination of this community of Indian citizens that has taken place over the past 12 years. And here the government has given a more dangerous tilt to the committee. It is the code for the place of Muslims in India and an acceleration of the social, economic and political discrimination of this community of Indian citizens that has taken place over the past 12 years. And here the government has given a more dangerous tilt to the committee. It is the code for the place of Muslims in India and an acceleration of the social, economic and political discrimination of this community of Indian citizens that has taken place over the past 12 years. And here the government has given a more dangerous tilt to the committee.

wiped up fears of Muslims overtaking Hindus in population. This is now firmly ingrained in the minds of Hindus of all ages, classes, castes and regions. It is to be found in everyday social conversations, on social media of course, and it is expressed in less than thinly veiled terms during electoral campaigns.

When facts are ignored It is tiresome to repeat the facts, but one has to, even when confronted by a wall of disinformation and prejudice. Yes, the share of Muslims in India's population has risen from 10% in 1951 to 14% in 2011, at the time of the last Census. Yes, in the past, the Muslim community on a whole has shown a higher fertility than the Hindus and other religious demarcations. This has been on account of its poorer economic status, lower education of women and perhaps even religious beliefs. However, fertility among Muslim women has been falling rapidly, with the result that the gap between Muslims and Hindus has narrowed and will soon disappear. On the desired number of children that women want to have, there is now almost no difference between Hindus and Muslims. So much for Muslims now having more children than Hindus. And to repeat what is well known, the best example of why religion is not the determinant of fertility behaviour: Muslim women in Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Jammu and Kashmir exhibit lower fertility than the Hindu women of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Poverty and education matter more. This is the deviation that needs to be addressed, not fertility behaviour according to religion.

To speak then about Muslim fertility "deviating from broad trends", as one of the ToRs of the committee indicates, is to ignore the facts on the ground and fall back on familiar tropes about the behaviour of this minority, giving official validation of age-old misinformation.

We cannot escape from the realisation that this committee is being asked to recommend steps to target minorities under the cover of checking undocumented migration. After all, we have already become an inhuman society where, according to reliable reports, government agencies have flown Rohingya refugees from Delhi to the Andamans and then pushed them into the sea with life jackets. So when the Demographic Change Committee is asked "to recommend a streamlined and permanent operational mechanism for the legal, fair, and time-bound identification, detention, and deportation of illegal immigrants already residing in the country", there is a chilling similarity between the language of this "permanent operational mechanism" and the "Final Solution" practised in 1940s Europe. We should not say we have not been forewarned.

We would not think so looking at the Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the High Level Committee on Demographic Change that the government constituted at the end of May. The ToRs are peppered with the need to address "illegal migration" and border management. Home Minister Amit Shah said on the social media site X while announcing the formation of the committee that "illegal infiltration and other reasons leading to Unnatural Demographic Change is a very big challenge for the present and future of any nation." It is no wonder that the committee does not have a single demographer to guide its work. Its chairperson is a retired Supreme Court of India judge. It has a retired IAS officer and a retired IPS officer, the Census Commissioner and an economist.

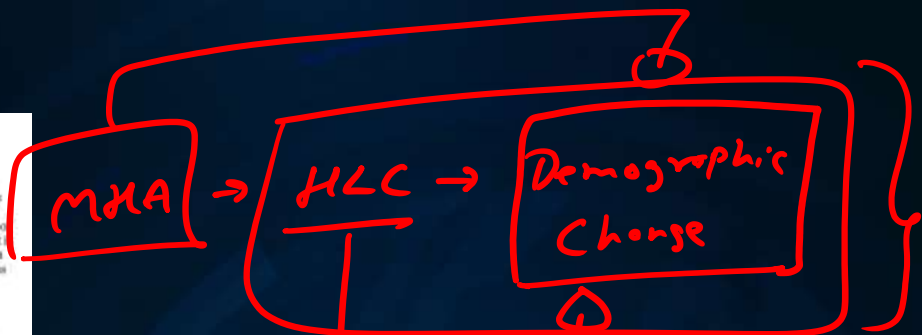
The infiltration narrative expands Using strong words about "infiltrators", the Prime Minister had announced the need for such a committee from the ramparts of Red Fort on August 15, 2025. Indeed, this was the culmination of years of building a mythology that undocumented (Muslim) migrants from Bangladesh are swamping the districts on the border, spreading across the country and influencing electoral outcomes. It was way back in 2008 that Amit Shah, then Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) President, said that Bangladeshis migrants were terrorists. The mythology about borders of immigrants has seeped into the citizen's consciousness and has served well the electoral purposes of the BJP.

It has worked very well in Assam during a couple of election cycles, and it was stunningly effective in West Bengal during the recent elections where the need to deal with "infiltrators" was a central feature of the BJP campaign. It is perhaps time now to make it a nation-wide campaign aided by the recommendations of the Demographic Change Committee.

Given how the issue has been highlighted and framed, we can have a fair idea of what the recommendations of this committee will be. It is still important to understand why this has little to do with demographic challenges and is all about moving to the next stage of the "Othering" of India's minorities, especially Muslims.

To begin with, what is the evidence of large-scale undocumented immigration from Bangladesh? It is revealing that the only kind of official evidence we have so far of "demographic change" (i.e., immigration from Bangladesh

The Demographic Change Committee may become a platform to institutionalise the targeting of minorities



India is on the cusp of a demographic upheaval. Fertility rates across the country have been falling for decades and are now on or below replacement levels. We will soon have to shift from the challenges of finding jobs for the youth bulge to preparing to care for an ageing population.

You would not think so looking at the **Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the High-Level Committee on Demographic Change** that the government constituted at the end of May. The ToRs are peppered with the need to address "illegal immigration" and border management. Home Minister Amit Shah said on the social media site X while announcing the formation of the committee that "Illegal infiltration and other reasons leading to Unnatural Demographic Change is a very big challenge for the present and future of any nation." It is no wonder that the committee does not have a single demographer to guide its work. Its **chairperson is a retired Supreme Court of India judge**, it has a **retired IAS officer and a retired IPS officer, the Census Commissioner and an economist.**

Chairmanship: The panel is headed by **Justice Prakash Prabhakar Navlekar**, a retired Supreme Court Judge and former Lokayukta of Madhya Pradesh, and also comprises the Census Commissioner, among others.

Tenure and Deadlines: The committee has been directed to submit its **final report within one year** (by May 2027), with an available provision for a six-month extension if required.



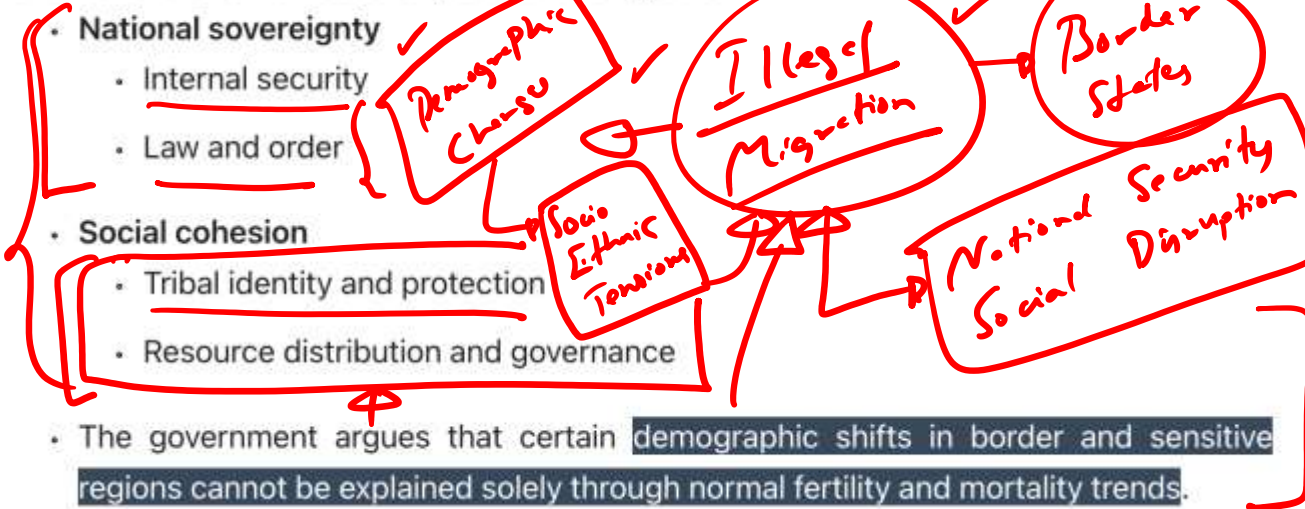
Member Sec

JS

Foreigner Div
MHA

Deadline - 1 yr

According to the Union Home Minister, demographic change caused by illegal infiltration and "other abnormal reasons" poses challenges to:



Scientific study of demographic changes:

- The committee will examine demographic shifts across regions and communities.
- It will analyse causes such as illegal immigration, cross-border movement, fertility variations, economic migration, socio-environmental factors, and administrative failures.

Identification of "abnormal" population trends:

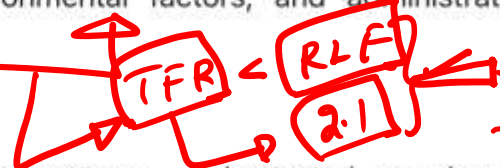
- The panel will study abnormal settlement patterns, orchestrated or planned migration, structural changes in religious and social demographics, and population changes diverging from national trends.
- **Special focus areas** include border districts, tribal regions, urban centres, and industrial corridors.

A major responsibility of the committee is to recommend a permanent and streamlined mechanism for identification, detention, and deportation of illegal immigrants.

The process is expected to be legal, fair, and time-bound, and the committee will also propose measures to strengthen:

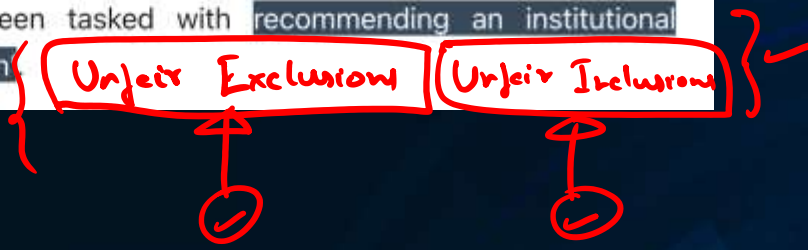
- Border management
- Identification systems
- Monitoring mechanisms
- Centre-State coordination

Push-back ❌



Deportation

The committee has additionally been tasked with recommending an institutional framework for "population stabilisation"



4. Pg 1 – GS III (Security) ✓

Neutralise armed miscreants in Manipur: CRPF chief to personnel

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

G.P. Singh, Director-General, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), has asked personnel deployed in Manipur to “neutralise” miscreants found roaming around in civilian areas with weapons.

Mr. Singh made the remarks during an interaction with CRPF personnel in Manipur on Saturday, according to a 6.05-minute video clip seen by *The Hindu*. He said that discussions were held at the highest levels in the government, and added, “It is expected that there will be a turnaround in the situation in the northeastern State in the next one or one-and-a-half years.”

More than 6,000 police weapons and thousands of rounds of ammunition



Security agencies have flagged the availability of weapons with civilians as a major challenge in the violence-hit State. FILE PHOTO

were looted from armouries after ethnic violence erupted in the State on May 3, 2023.

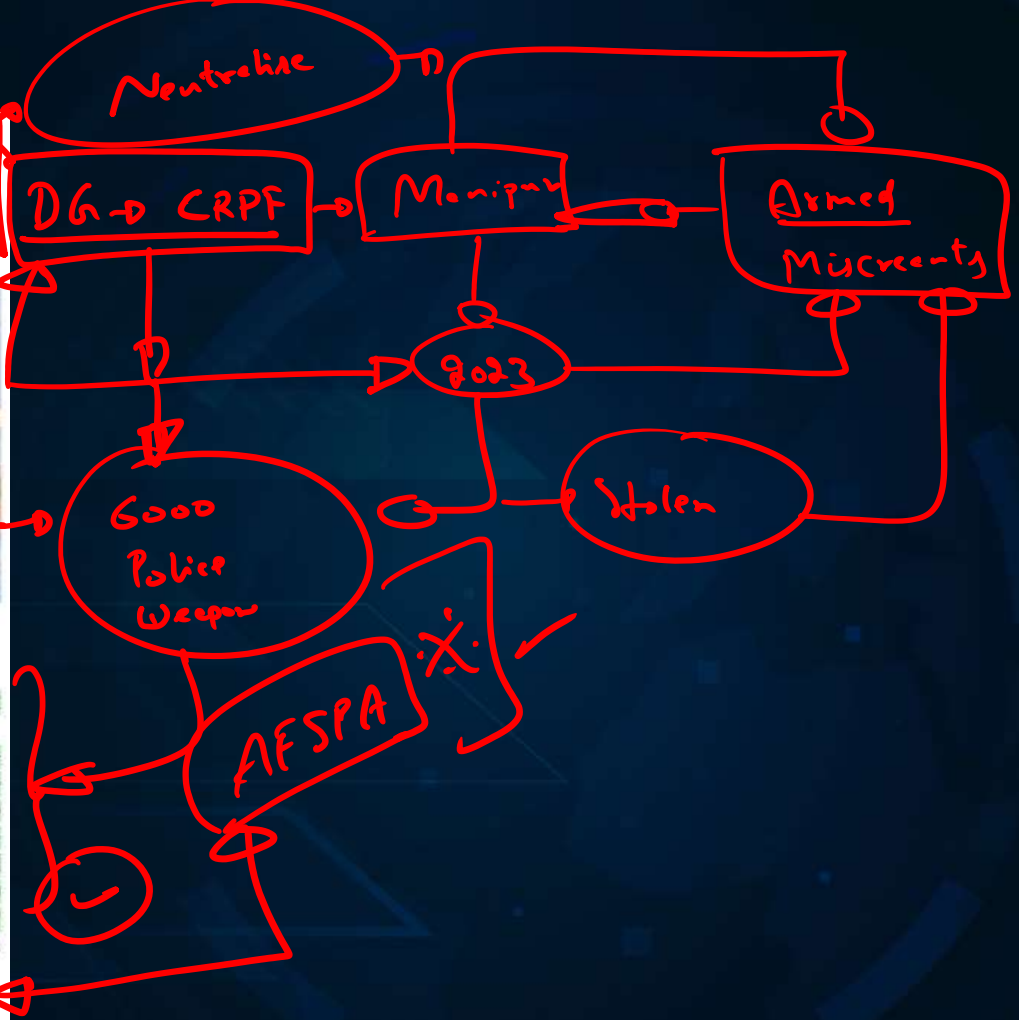
Security agencies have consistently flagged the availability of a large number of weapons with civilians as a major security challenge.

In the video, the CRPF officer said that personnel need not worry about firing at miscreants and he,

as the D-G, would protect any “bona fide” action.”

“If you do not fire at miscreants, why has the government given us so much arms and ammunition. I have your back. Till the time I am here, no need to worry about any (legal) action,” Mr. Singh said.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 12



NAM → Ind Indo

Nature Island → South China Sea

India, Indonesia review bilateral ties as Jaishankar meets his counterpart

Malacca

JORA

R-Day & Chief Guest

Sabang Port

Symbolic message

Priority

MAHA SAGAR

Indo Pacific

Act East Policy

Indonesia & Defence & India

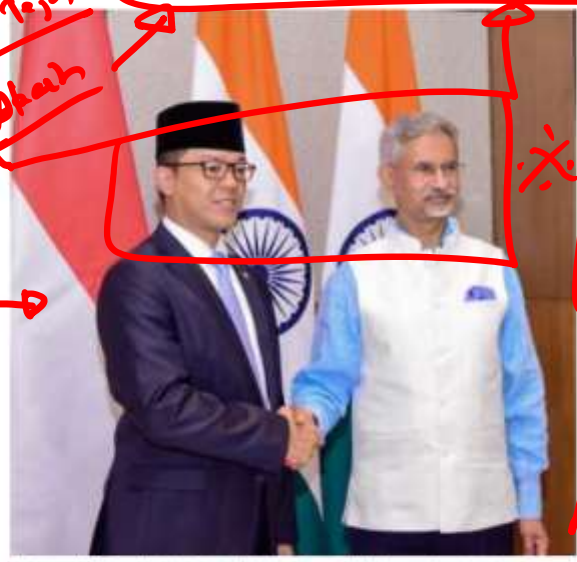
Brokering LCA Tejas Akash

Kallol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

Ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's expected visit to Indonesia, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and his Indonesian counterpart Sugiono held the 8th India-Indonesia Joint Commission meeting here on Sunday.

In a press statement, the External Affairs Ministry said the two Ministers covered the "full spectrum" review of bilateral relations covering cooperation in defence, security, maritime, trade and investment, pharma and healthcare, digital, energy, connectivity, space, education, consular and culture domains, as well as political ties.

"The two sides exchanged views on regional



External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar with Indonesian Foreign Minister Sugiono in New Delhi on Sunday. ANI

and global developments of mutual interest and reaffirmed their commitment to closer cooperation and

coordination in regional and multilateral fora," said the Ministry. Following the meeting, Mr. Jaishankar

said the talks were "substantive".

The Joint Commission meeting was held after a gap of four years, Mr. Jaishankar said in his opening remarks, informing that during the past four years the two sides made "good progress" in bilateral ties.

Mr. Sugiono said Indonesia was looking forward to Mr. Modi's visit that is expected in the coming weeks. He said the visit would provide an "important opportunity to further deepen our cooperation and deliver tangible benefits for our peoples".

The visit will be a reciprocal one by the Indian side as Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto had come to New Delhi in January 2025, when he was the chief guest at the Republic Day celebrations here.

Prelims Bytes



Prime Minister congratulates Major Abhilasha Barak on being conferred the UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award

Posted On: 07 JUN 2026 2:06PM by PIB Delhi

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today congratulated Major Abhilasha Barak on being conferred the UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award. The Prime Minister noted that Major Barak is serving as an Engagement Team Commander and Gender Focal Point within the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

Shri Modi observed that this honour is a recognition of her exemplary service and also of India's longstanding contribution to United Nations peacekeeping efforts.

Modi congratulates Major Abhilasha Barak on UN Award

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday congratulated Major Abhilasha Barak on being conferred the UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award and said the honour is a recognition of her exemplary service and also of India's longstanding contribution to the United Nations peacekeeping efforts. Major Barak, currently serving with the United Nations mission in Lebanon, has been honoured with the award for her outreach efforts with women and girls during her deployment in the West Asian nation. She is also the first woman combat helicopter pilot of the Indian Army. PTI

India

UNPKF

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180 Killed

UNIFIL

UN Blue Line

UNPKF

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The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (Arabic: [قوة الأمم المتحدة المؤقتة في لبنان](#); Hebrew: [כוח האו"ם הזמני בלבנון](#)), or **UNIFIL** (Arabic: [يونيفيل](#); Hebrew: [יוניפי"ל](#)) is a United Nations peacekeeping mission **established on 19 March 1978** by United Nations Security Council Resolutions [425](#) and [426](#), and resolution [1701](#) in 2006 to restore peace and security along the [Israel-Lebanon border](#).^[1]

UNIFIL was established as a result of the [1978 Israeli invasion of Lebanon](#) at a time of [Palestinian insurgency in South Lebanon](#) and the [Lebanese Civil War](#). The UNIFIL mandate had to be adjusted due to the [Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982](#) and after the [Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000](#). Following the [2006 Lebanon War](#), the United Nations Security Council enhanced **UNIFIL** and added additional tasks to the mandate, such as aiding displaced persons.

PLO

UNIFIL → 900 Indian
Soldiers

WASHINGTON

U.S. sees nuclear renaissance with micro-reactor, eyes global markets



AP

A small nuclear reactor, developed by a private U.S. company has achieved first criticality, a stepping stone in the development of small modular reactors which Washington plans to sell to countries including India. The Mark-0 demonstration reactor built by Antares Nuclear achieved first criticality on June 4. PTI

Homo erectus fossil yields secrets long thought to be beyond genetics

That modern humans carry DNA fragments from two other members of the genus *Homo* raised the possibility that they may also harbour genetic material from other extinct human species, but in the 14 years since the Denisovan genome was published, no new genome from any other extinct human relative has been uncovered – until now.

* ↑

↑ *

2010 → Neanderthals

The **Denisovans** or **Denisova hominins** (*deˈnɪsəvə(nz)* / *də-NIS-ə-və(nz)*) are an **extinct** species or subspecies of archaic human that ranged across **Asia** during the Middle to Late Pleistocene, approximately **200,000–32,000 years ago**. Most of what is known about Denisovans comes from **DNA** evidence. While many recent fossils have been found and tentatively identified as Denisovan, the first Denisovans discovered were known from few physical remains. Consequently, no formal species name has been established. However, an analysis of the **mitochondrial DNA** and endogenous proteins from the **Harbin cranium**, which had been given the name ***Homo longi***, showed with great certainty that this skull represents a Denisovan.^{[1][2][3]} In a study published in September 2025, remains from six additional sites in China including the 1 million year old **Yunxian man** were proposed to be related to the ***Homo longi*** lineage with the genetically confirmed Denisovans.^[4] Other authors have included other Denisovan remains, like **Penghu 1** and the **Xiahe mandible**, within the species ***Homo juluensis***.^[5]



The Harbin cranium, the holotype of the species *Homo longi*, a Denisovan cranium

The first identification of a Denisovan individual occurred in 2010, based on mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) extracted from a **juvenile** finger bone excavated from the Siberian **Denisova Cave** in the **Altai Mountains** in 2008.^{[6][7]} **Nuclear DNA** indicates close affinities with **Neanderthals**. The cave was also periodically inhabited by Neanderthals. Additional specimens from Denisova Cave were subsequently identified, as were specimens from the **Baishiya Karst Cave** on the **Tibetan Plateau**, **Tam Ngu Hao 2 Cave** in the **Annamite Mountains** of Laos, the **Penghu channel** between **Taiwan** and the mainland, and **Harbin** in **Manchuria**.

Wilderness
Project



25

As part of the Wilderness Project, wildlife experts who visited Angola's Lisima plateau in February have reported eight new species of dragonfly, three unknown grasshoppers, and some 60 new butterflies and moths in vivid hues. They have also found a spider species that fluoresces under ultraviolet light (shown). It is the

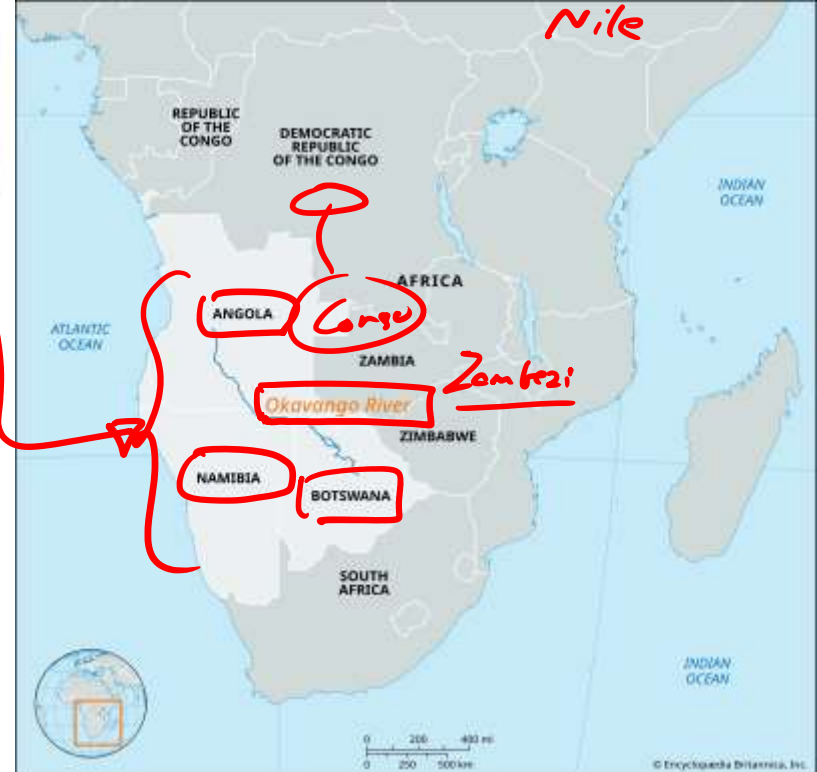
The name "**The Wilderness Project**" usually refers to a specific, pan-African science and research organization spun out of the *National Geographic Okavango Wilderness Project*. It aims to explore, study, and protect 1.2 million square kilometres of sub-Saharan Africa's major river basins (the **Okavango, Zambezi, Congo,** and Nile).



Because "wilderness project" is a broad term, it can refer to a few different prominent initiatives depending on the context:

1. The Wilderness Project (Pan-African Conservation)

- **What it is:** A science, research, and conservation initiative originally started by the team behind the *National Geographic Okavango Wilderness Project*. Its goal is to establish ecological baselines and protect massive water catchment areas across the continent, focusing on "The Great Spine of Africa".
- **Who founded it:** The pan-African team behind the Okavango Wilderness Project, spearheaded by **NatGeo Explorer Steve Boyes**.



Pyroprocessing: heat shows the way

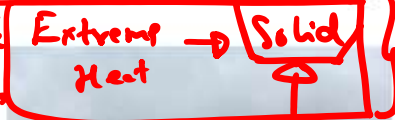
Vasudevan Mukunth

Pyroprocessing is a way to change a solid material physically or chemically using high temperature. It is a dry process and very energy-intensive. The three sectors that use it most are cement-making, metallurgy, and nuclear power.

Of these, cement-making uses pyroprocessing the most. First, finely ground limestone, clay and iron — the raw materials — are fed into a rotary kiln. As the temperature increases to 900° C, the limestone loses its carbon dioxide, and at around 1,450° C, the mix partly melts to form marble-sized nodules called clinker. The clinker is then ground to produce cement.

In metallurgy, pyroprocessing is used to extract metals from their ores in multiple stages. For example, sulphide ores are heated in air — or roasted — to convert them into metal oxides, like zinc sulphide. Smelting melts an ore to separate the metal from waste impurities called slag. Heating limestone to yield lime is likewise called calcining.

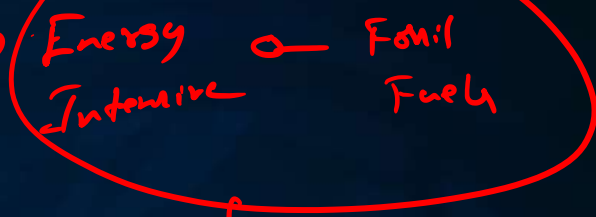
In the nuclear industry, pyroprocessing has a slightly different meaning. It is used to reprocess spent nuclear fuel, in techniques developed in the 1980s and 1990s. First, used nuclear fuel is broken up into pieces and placed in a salt bath — usually a mixture of lithium and potassium chlorides at 500° C or more. Then, an electric current is passed through the salt bath, causing



A rotary kiln is visible as the rust-coloured horizontal tube at the centre in this image of a cement plant in the U.S. GREG GOEBEL (CC BY-SA)

different elements to become separated depending on their electrochemical properties. Operators then recover the elements of interest in separate streams.

This form of pyroprocessing has been the subject of study in Japan, South Korea, and the U.S. and is used as part of programmes involving advanced fast reactors.



For feedback and suggestions
for 'Science', please write to science@thehindu.co.in with the subject 'Daily page'

Security
Economy

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah to launch Land Port Management System (LPMS) on Tuesday, 9th June 2026 in New Delhi

ICP

LPAI

Initiative underscores Modi Government's commitment to smart border management and security in cross-border trade and passenger movement

LPMS is a state-of-the-art digital platform designed to integrate operations across Land Ports into a unified system

Equips land ports with secure, real-time exchange of logistics and regulatory information akin to airports and seaports

End-to-end digital workflows for cargo and passenger processing, including slot booking, payments, tracking, and single-window clearances

LPMS is a state-of-the-art digital platform designed to integrate operations across Land Ports into a unified system. It enables secure, real-time exchange of logistics and regulatory information, bringing land ports at par with digital systems operational at airports and seaports. As a neutral and open platform, LPMS will facilitate seamless coordination among various stakeholders, including government agencies and private operators, thereby reducing delays and enhancing operational efficiency.

The system introduces end-to-end digital workflows for cargo and passenger processing including slot booking, payments, tracking, and single-window clearances. Fully integrated with key national platforms such as ICEGATE, ULIP, and the motor vehicle ecosystem, LPMS will enable interoperable, efficient, and transparent border management.

The Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI) a statutory body under the Department of Border Management, Ministry of Home Affairs, is responsible for developing and managing land ports to facilitate trade, connectivity, and regional cooperation. Currently, LPAI operates 15 land ports across India's international borders: Attari (Punjab) and Dera Baba Nanak (Punjab) along the India-Pakistan border; Runaidiha (Uttar Pradesh), Raxaul (Bihar) and Jogbani (Bihar) along the India-Nepal border; Darranga (Assam) along the India-Bhutan border; Petrapole (West Bengal), Dawki (Meghalaya), Sutarkandi, Golakganj and Mankachar (Assam), Agartala, Srimantapur and Sabroom (Tripura) along the India-Bangladesh border; and Moreh (Manipur) along the India-Myanmar border.

(4,096 km)

Ease of Doing Business: Strengthening India's Business Framework

Posted On: 07 JUN 2026 10:47AM by PIB Delhi

Transforming India's Business Environment

India has undertaken sustained reforms over the past years to improve its business regulatory environment. The government's focus has gradually shifted from a compliance-heavy system to a facilitation-driven ecosystem. Reforms have aimed at enhancing speed, transparency, and trust-based governance across processes. Consequently, this has resulted in growing investor confidence in India's business environment and improved Ease of Doing Business (EoDB).

The progress is reflected in global assessments such as the **Doing Business Report 2020 by World Bank**, **India's rank improved from 142 in 2014 to 63 in 2019**, marking an advancement of 79 positions over five years.

Additionally, the **IMD World Competitiveness Ranking 2025** factors in economic performance of the country, **Government and business efficiency and infrastructure development for the businesses**. **India's rank improved from 43 in 2021 to 41 in 2025**. This highlights stronger business environment, improved governance and better digital and regulatory reforms.

The **World Bank's GovTech Maturity Index**, which assesses public sector digital transformation, placed **India in Group A in 2020, 2022 and 2025**. This category represents countries demonstrating advanced and innovative practices across Core Government Systems, Public Service Delivery, Digital Citizen Engagement, and GovTech Enablers.

United Nations also conducts E-Government Survey to assess the digital government landscape across different countries. India has secured overall high score in the survey. Within this, **India has also achieved a very high score in the Online Services Index**. **India has also acquired high scores in Telecommunication Infrastructure and Human Capital indices**. This indicates strong digital public service delivery, expanding digital infrastructure, and improved citizen access to technology-enabled governance services.



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