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INDIA MAKES FORMAL BID TO HOST 2036 OLYMPICS

- The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has formally expressed India's interest in hosting the 2036 Olympic and Paralympic Games by submitting a Letter of Intent to the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) Future Host Commission.
 - Los Angeles in the USA will host the 2028 Summer Olympics, and Brisbane, Australia, will host the 2032 Games.
- This move aligns with PM Narendra Modi's vision of bringing Games to India.
- **Ahmedabad as Potential Host City**
 - The 2010 Commonwealth Games in New Delhi was India's last major international multi-sport event.
 - Ahmedabad is currently a leading candidate to host the 2036 Games if India's bid is successful.
 - IOA President PT Usha and other sports officials promoted the bid during the 2024 Paris Olympics.
- **India's Push for Inclusion of Regional Sports**
 - India aims to include yoga, a significant element of its cultural heritage, in the Olympic sports program.
 - The Sports Ministry's Mission Olympics Cell has identified six sports — yoga, Twenty20 cricket, kabaddi, chess, squash, and kho kho — for potential inclusion.
 - Under IOC rules, a host nation can propose sports popular in its region for inclusion in that edition of the Games.

International Olympic Committee (IOC)

- It is the guardian of the Olympic Games and the leader of the Olympic Movement. The vision of the International Olympic Committee is to Build a Better World through Sport.

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- **As an organisation**

- In 1892, Pierre de Coubertin of France declared his intention to spearhead a movement to revive the ancient Greek Olympics. His efforts led to the establishment of IOC in June 1894 as a not-for-profit independent international organisation.
- It is based in Lausanne, Switzerland, the Olympic Capital.

- **Roles & Responsibilities**

- IOC is the authority responsible for organising the modern (Summer, Winter, and Youth) Olympic Games.
- It is the governing body of the National Olympic Committees (NOCs).

Process of selection of host country

- An Olympic host election is the result of a close collaborative partnership between the IOC and the potential host, together with its National Olympic Committee (NOC), to explore every aspect of the proposed Games vision & plan.
- The host election process is overseen by two **Future Host Commissions**, one for Summer, and one for Winter Games.
 - The commission considers factors such as the region's infrastructure, sustainability plans, economic impact, and cultural relevance to ensure each host city aligns with the Olympic Movement's strategic goals.

- **No fixed timeframe**

- There is no fixed timeframe for electing the hosts.

- **What IOC looks at**

- The IOC looks at multiple factors:
 - candidate city's funding strategy, the ability to deliver the Games, transport infrastructure, accommodation capacity,
 - alignment of venues with local development plans, socio-economic and geo-political factors, and public support.
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SC TO DECIDE ON ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY'S MINORITY STATUS

Article 30 of the Indian Constitution:

- It consists of provisions that safeguard various rights of the minority community in the country **keeping in mind the principle of equality as well.**
- **Article 30(1)** says that all minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

Background of the Controversy around AMU's Minority Status:

- **It originated in 1967** when the Supreme Court (SC) ruled on challenges to amendments to the university's founding Act, arguing that they stripped the Muslim community of the right to administer the institution.
 - **In 1951**, non-Muslims were allowed to join the University Court (the supreme governing body at the time), and the Visitor - a role held by the President of India, replaced the university's Lord Rector.
 - **In 1965**, the Executive Council's powers were expanded, diminishing the University Court's authority.
- **The SC concluded** that AMU was not established by the Muslim minority but by an Act of Parliament (Aligarh Muslim University Act, 1920).
- **If the SC declares AMU a minority institution:**
 - AMU would not have to reserve seats for SC/ST/OBC/EWS groups but could **reserve seats for Muslims, potentially up to 50% or more.**
 - **The university's administrative structure would shift** from its current setup, which includes a diverse Executive Council, and it **would have a separate admissions process.**

Arguments from the Centre and AMU:

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- **The St. Stephen's college precedent:** The SC had previously recognised the minority status of Delhi's St. Stephen's College in **1992**, affirming its right to admit Christian students up to 50% and administer itself autonomously.
- **The centre's argument:**
 - **The Centre distinguished St. Stephen's from AMU**, noting that the former was founded privately, while AMU was created by an Act of Parliament and continuously receives government funding.
 - **The Centre argued** that AMU, as a national institution, **should uphold its secular foundations** and not prioritise one community's interests.
- **Counter arguments:**
 - AMU contended that exempting it from certain quotas does not harm public interest, as **Article 30 provides minorities with special rights**.

Conclusion:

- **The SC's upcoming decision will be pivotal for AMU**, determining whether it can claim minority status and retain autonomy over its admissions and governance under Article 30.
 - This verdict will also impact minority educational institutions' rights and their relationship with state policies on social justice and equality.
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WHAT ARE AIRSHIPS?



- Airships are **lighter-than-air, vertical-lift vehicles** that achieve flight by using buoyant gasses that are less dense than surrounding air.
- There are three main types of airships: **non-rigid (or blimps), semi-rigid and rigid**.
- Typically, these bullet-shaped craft are filled with **helium or hydrogen**, and composed of three main parts: a balloon-like hull, a gondola and a propulsion system.

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- Airships were the first aircraft capable of controlled powered flight and were thought to be the future of travel for some years in the early 20th century.

How airships work?

- Airships are **lighter-than-air aircraft** that are lifted by gas with a density lower than atmospheric gases. This principle also operates in helium balloons.
- Early airships used hydrogen as the lifting gas since it was cheap, easy to produce, and the lightest existing gas. But hydrogen was also extremely flammable.
- Most modern **airships use helium**, which is non-combustible.

Uses: They see limited use today as advertising platforms, for aerial observation by scientists and militaries, and in the tourism industry.

Advantages: Airships are significantly **less polluting than aeroplanes** as they do not burn fossil fuels to achieve lift. They can also reach more places than ships or trucks.

AGRIVOLTAIC FARMING



- It is the practice of **growing crops underneath solar panels**.
- The panels are positioned 2-3 metres off the ground and sit at an angle of 30 degrees, providing shade and offering crops protection from the weather.
- This farming primarily focuses on the simultaneous use of land for both agriculture and solar energy generation.
- It's also sometimes referred to as **Agri solar, dual-use solar, or low-impact solar**.
- Solar panels have to sometimes be elevated or suspended to allow plants to grow beneath them.
- Another option is putting them on the roofs of greenhouses. This allows enough light and rainwater to reach the crops, as well as providing access to farm machinery.

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- It uses poles or frames to mount solar panels on the ground, leaving space for crops to grow under or around them. Some solar panels can also rotate or form a canopy to adjust the amount of sunlight and shade on the crops.

Advantages

- This **increases land-use efficiency**, as it lets solar farms and agriculture share ground, rather than making them compete against one another.
- And certain crops appear to thrive when grown in such environments, according to a number of recent studies.
- The shade from the panels protects vegetables from heat stress and water loss.

BRAN



- It is the **edible broken seed coat**, or protective outer layer, of wheat, rye, or other cereal grains, separated from the kernel.
- In flour processing, the coarse chaff, or bran, is removed from the ground kernels by sifting or bolting in a rotating, meshed, cylindrical frame.
- It provides dietary fiber and many different bioactive substances, including phenolic compounds, which can exert a beneficial effect on human health.
- Removing the bran from millets results in **decreasing the protein, dietary fibre, fat, mineral and phytate content** in them while increasing the carbohydrates and amylose content.
- Dehusked millets are nutritious and should be promoted in Indian diets to improve diet quality, debranned millets are nutritionally inferior and can increase the glycemic load of Indian diets.

What are Millets?

- Millets are a highly varied **group of small-seeded grasses**, widely grown around the world as cereal crops or grains for fodder and human food.



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- This crop is favoured due to its **productivity and short growing season** under dry, high-temperature conditions (hardy and drought-resistant crops).
 - Millets are a **powerhouse of nutrients**, which score over rice and wheat in terms of minerals, vitamins, and dietary fibre content, as well as amino acid profile.
 - Though rich in both iron and zinc, wheat's protein content comprises glutens, known to trigger gastrointestinal and autoimmune disorders in many people.
 - Millets are high in minerals such as **calcium, iron, phosphorus, and potassium**, and they are an excellent source of phytochemicals such as phenolic compounds when compared to other major cereals (rice, wheat, maize).
 - Millets provide a range of health benefits such as antiaging, **anticarcinogenic, anti-atherosclerogenic, antibacterial** and antioxidant effects.
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CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR)

The concept of CSR rests on the ideology of businesses giving back to society as they grow and benefit.

Companies take resources in the form of raw materials, human resources etc from the society.

By performing the task of CSR activities, the companies are giving something back to the society.

- Howard Bowen, an American economist, is widely regarded as the father of modern CSR.
- In his book "Social Responsibilities of the Businessman" in 1953, he writes, "CSR refers to the obligations of businessmen to pursue those policies which are desirable in terms of the objectives and values of our society".

CSR in India:

- CSR in India has traditionally been seen as a philanthropic activity.



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- However, with the introduction of **Section 135 in the Companies Act 2013**, India became the first country to have statutorily mandated CSR for specified companies.
- The mandatory CSR provisions were made effective from 1st April, 2014 for companies with a certain profit, turn-over or valuation.
- Concerned Ministry: **Ministry of Commerce and Industry**

Companies Covered under the Act:

- The companies which fall in the ambit of any of the following three criteria are required to spend on CSR.
 - Company with a net worth of Rs. 500 crore or more, or
 - Turnover of Rs. 1,000 crore or more, or
 - Net profit of Rs. 5 crore or more during the immediately preceding financial year.
- Such companies are required to do CSR spend amounting to 2 % of their average annual profit over last three years.
- The Act also enumerates the activities that can be undertaken and the manner in which the companies can undertake CSR projects/programmes.

MILLIMETER WAVE



- It refers to **electromagnetic waves** with frequency **between 30-300 GHz** and wavelength between 10 mm and 1 mm.
- Its frequency spectrum is used for **wireless high-speed communications**. It is also known as the extremely high frequency, or EHF, band by the International Telecommunication Union.

Advantages

- It enables **higher data rates compared** with lower frequencies when used in telecommunications, such as those used for Wi-Fi and current cellular networks.
- The **higher frequency range** has a high tolerance for bandwidth.



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- It offers less latency due to its higher speeds and bandwidth.
- There is less interference, as mm waves don't propagate and interfere with other neighboring cellular systems.

Significance of recent agreement

- It will also encourage small and medium-scale industries to set up their manufacturing units in India which will create job opportunities for our own engineering graduates, due to the use of polymer-based structure in conjunction with metals.
 - This will also reduce our over-dependence on semiconductor fabrication industries. The proposed cost for the development of technology is extremely small as against the opportunities it would create.
 - Additionally, the project also aims to contribute to generating Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) and develop a skilled workforce to support the emerging millimetre wave/Sub-THz technology for 5G/6G.
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