

### ISRAEL AND LEBANON REACH AN AGREEMENT ON MARITIME BORDER

#### In News:

- Israel has announced a historic deal with Lebanon, aimed at resolving a long-running maritime border dispute over Mediterranean waters.
- Israel and Lebanon do not have official diplomatic relations and the two countries remain technically at war.



- Lebanon and Israel have reached a historic deal, brokered by USA, to end a long-running maritime border dispute in the gas-rich Mediterranean Sea.
- A signing date for the deal has not been set yet.

#### Maritime dispute between Israel and Lebanon

- The two countries declared overlapping boundaries in 2011 in the Mediterranean Sea.
- Since both countries have been technically at war, the United Nations was asked to mediate.
- The issue gained significance after Israel discovered two gas fields off its coast a decade ago, which experts had believed could help turn it into an energy exporter.

#### Key highlights of the agreement

- The draft agreement aims to settle Israel and Lebanon's competing claims over offshore gas fields in the region.
- **Sets maritime boundary**
  - The agreement sets a border between the maritime waters of Lebanon and Israel for the first time.
  - Lebanon recognised Israel's existing control of a 3-mile-wide stretch of water closest to their shared coast.
  - Israel allowed Lebanon the right to drill in a previously contested gas field that stretches between the Israeli and Lebanese economic zones.
- **Division of gas fields**

- A major source of friction was the Karish gas field, which Israel insisted fell entirely within its waters and was not a subject of negotiation.
- The agreement has not been made public but under terms leaked to the press all of the Karish field would fall under Israeli control.
- On the other hand, Lebanon will get its full rights from the Qana field, and Israel might receive share of future revenues.



## Land border dispute not covered under the agreement

- The agreement does not touch on the shared land border between Israel and Lebanon.
- Land border between the two countries is still disputed. However, both countries have committed to a ceasefire.
- This border is also called the Blue Line, a boundary that was drawn up by the UN after Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon in 2000.
- This land border is currently patrolled by the United Nations forces.

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## WHAT ARE THE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST GOOGLE BY THE NBDA?

### In News:

- Recently, the News Broadcasters and Digital Association (NBDA) approached the Competition Commission of India (CCI) against search-engine operator Google.
- NBDA alleged that Google had deprived them of their justifiable revenue acquired from news dissemination on its platforms.

### Competition Commission of India (CCI)

- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) is a statutory body which was established in March 2009 under the Competition Act, 2002.
- The Commission consists of one Chairperson and six members who shall be appointed by the Central Government.

- It is also mandated to undertake competition advocacy, create public awareness and impart training on competition issues.

### **Objectives:**

- Eliminate practices having adverse effect on competition
- Promote and sustain competition
- Protect the interests of consumers
- Ensure freedom of trade in the markets of India

### **Powers:**

- To inquire into a certain agreement as well as the dominant position of enterprises.
- To inquire into any acquisition or combination if it determines that such acquisition or combination may adversely affect competition in the Indian market.
- To regulate its own procedures.
- To impose monetary penalties upon violation of the Competition Act, 2002.
- To pass an interim order for any act where there have been anti-competition agreements or abuse of position by dominant parties which adversely affects the competition in the market.

### **Key allegations labelled against google**

- NBDA alleged that its members are forced to provide their news content to Google in order to prioritise their web links in the Search Engine Result Page (SERP) of Google.
  - Google is dominant in both the markets of relevance to digital publishers — online web search services and digital advertising services.
  - A news website sells advertising spaces on its platform through ad-exchanges.
  - In addition to this, Google also operates a platform that manages a publisher's sale of online ads and tools to purchase display ad space.
  - It has been alleged that owing to the tech-giant's dominance in the space, publishers have been forced to integrate content on their platforms.
- As a result, Google free rides on the content of the members without giving them adequate compensation.

- The NBDA also alleged that the search giant exploits the dependency of the members on Google for referral traffic to build services such as Google News, Google Discover and Google Accelerated Mobile Pages (AMP).

## Why Google is at the centre of this controversy?

- Google's search engine commands a 94% market share in the country.
  - The number becomes all the more crucial for news publishers with the increased transition toward news consumption online.
- The traditional newspaper industry in India has sustained itself on a business model wherein advertising accounts for two-third of its total revenue.
- On similar lines, with online proliferation, there is an increased reliance of news publishers on digital ad revenues.
- More than half of the total traffic on news websites is routed through Google.
  - The search engine, by way of its algorithms and internal quality vetting, determines which news websites would be prioritised in search queries.
- Search engines have become an important determinant in online news consumption and hence Google is at the centre of this controversy.
  - Readers would more often opt for an online web search rather than reaching out to a specific news website by typing its URL in a browser.
  - This has made search-engines the **first port of call** for information online.

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## COLLEGIUM SYSTEM

During Justice Chandrachud's two-year tenure, the collegium he will head will potentially make as many as 18 recommendations for appointment of judges to the Supreme Court. It will be an unusual collegium: instead of five members, it will have six.



### About:

- The collegium system of appointing judges evolved through three significant verdicts of the Supreme Court, known as the First, Second, and Third Judges Cases.

- The Constitution of India does not mention the collegium system; however, these three cases established that the collegium headed by the Chief Justice of India will have primacy in the appointment of judges to the higher judiciary.
- The Supreme Court collegium is headed by the CJI and comprises four other senior-most judges of the court.
- This collegium makes recommendations to the government for appointment of judges to the SC and of Chief Justices of High Courts, and the transfers of HC judges.
- A separate three-member collegium, headed by the CJI and comprising the two senior-most judges of the SC makes recommendations for appointment of judges to HCs.

## What are the Judges Cases?

### First Judges Case (1982)

- SC held that "consultation" of judges does not mean concurrence
- Hence, it gave the primacy in appointment of judges to the Executive.

### Second Judges Case (1993)

- Court reversed its earlier ruling by changing the meaning of "consultation" to concurrence.
- With this, the advice tendered by CJI became binding. However, the CJI would have to take into account the views of two of his senior most colleagues.

### Third Judges Case (1998)

- Court gave primacy to the opinion of CJI in the matter of appointment of Judges.
- However, Chief Justice must consult four seniormost judges of SC.
- Opinion of all members of the collegium should be in writing.
- Even if two judges in the collegium give an adverse opinion of a person for appointment as the SC judge, the CJI should not send the recommendation to the government.

### What is a 5+1 collegium?

- Given the order of seniority, a potential CJI will enter the Chandrachud collegium only in May 2023. However, Justice Khanna will be the sixth member of the collegium from November 9, 2022 itself.

- This happened earlier in 2007 — when then CJI K G Balakrishnan took the top office, the collegium he headed did not have a potential CJI candidate. Justice S H Kapadia, who was next in line to be CJI, was invited to the collegium as the sixth member.
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## JUSTICE D.Y. CHANDRACHUD

**Chief Justice of India UU Lalit recommends Justice D Y Chandrachud as next Chief Justice of India.**



### **About:**

- Chief Justice Lalit's recommendation to the government would start the process for appointment of Justice Chandrachud as the 50th Chief Justice of India.
- If the government approval comes through, Justice Chandrachud would be the first second-generation CJI. His father, Justice Y.V. Chandrachud, was the 16th CJI and one of the longest serving.
- Chief Justice Lalit is scheduled to retire on November 8 at the end of a 74-day tenure as top judge.
- Justice Chandrachud is expected to be sworn in and assume charge as Chief Justice of India from November 9.
- He has a tenure of two years as Chief Justice until his retirement on November 11, 2024.

### **Judicial career**

- Justice Chandrachud was appointed judge of the Supreme Court on May 13, 2016.
  - He was before that the Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court from October 31, 2013.
  - Justice Chandrachud began his career as a judge in the Bombay High Court on March 29, 2000 until his appointment as the Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court.
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## BETI BACHAO BETI PADHAO

**Union Minister Smriti Irani recently released an operations manual of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao.**

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## About:

- The Central government recently announced the inclusion of skilling of girls in non-traditional livelihood (NTL) options in Beti Bachao Beti Padhao programme.
- The scheme will now also focus on increasing the enrolment of girls in secondary education, particularly in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) subjects.
- A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Ministries of Women and Child Development, Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and Minority Affairs.
- It emphasises convergence between Ministries and Departments to ensure adolescents complete their education, build skills, and enter the workforce in a diverse range of professions, including in STEM fields.
- A national committee headed by the Secretary, Ministry of Women and Child Development will be the apex committee to review the implementation of the scheme at regular intervals with State governments and Union Territory administrations.

## RIGHT TO INFORMATION (RTI) ACT

According to a report by Satark Nagrik Sangathan, backlog of RTI appeals or complaints is increasing in commissions every year.



## About:

- Nearly 3.15 lakh complaints and appeals are pending with 26 information commissions across India.
- The number of appeals and complaints pending in 2019, from data obtained from 26 information commissions was 2,18,347.
- In 2020, the number climbed up to 2,33,384 with data obtained from 23 information commissions, in 2021 the number was 2,86,325 with data from 26 commissions and in 2022, it was 3,14,323.

- The highest number of pending cases was in Maharashtra at 99,722, followed by Uttar Pradesh at 44,482, Karnataka at 30,358, the Central Information Commission at 26,724 and Bihar at 21,346.
- The report says two information commissions—Jharkhand and Tripura—out of 29 across the country have been completely defunct for 29 months and 15 months respectively.
- Manipur, Telangana, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh are without chiefs at the moment.
- Only 5% of the all positions in commissions are being occupied by women.
- Also, several information commissions, including the Central Information Commission, are working at reduced capacity with less than the stipulated number of members being in office.
- Under RTI law, information commissions are the final appellate authority and are mandated to safeguard and facilitate people's right to information.

## 2ND UNITED NATIONS WORLD GEOSPATIAL INFORMATION CONGRESS

PM Narendra Modi recently addressed 2nd UN World Geospatial International Congress. It is being held in Hyderabad.



### About:

- The goal of this year's UNWGIC is to promote a broad dialogue on global geospatial information management with all relevant governments, non-governmental organisations, academia, and the private sector.
  - **Theme:** The theme of UNWGIC 2022 is 'Geo-Enabling the Global Village: No one should be left behind'.
  - It was hosted by the ministry of science and technology of the government of India.
- United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress (UNWGIC)**
- The United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) convened the conference on UNWGIC 2022 and was organised by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.



- It is conducted every four years with the objectives of enhancing international collaboration among the Member States and relevant stakeholders in Geospatial information management and capacities.
  - The first UNWGIC was organized by China in October 2018.
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## CYBER-KNIFE

**PM Modi recently lays the foundation stone of various healthcare facilities in Civil Hospital Asarwa, Ahmedabad. The new Civil Hospital Asarwa will be the first government hospital in the country where state-of-the-art technology like Cyber-Knife will be available.**



### **About:**

- The CyberKnife System is a non-invasive treatment for cancerous and non-cancerous tumors and other conditions where radiation therapy is indicated.
  - CyberKnife treatments are typically performed in 1 to 5 sessions.
  - It is used to treat conditions throughout the body, including the prostate, lung, brain, spine, head and neck, liver, pancreas and kidney.
  - It can be an alternative to surgery or for patients who have inoperable or surgically complex tumors.
  - It offers several advantages to patients, including rapid relief from pain and other symptoms.
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