

OPERATION CHAKRA II

India's Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has launched Operation Chakra-II, a crackdown on transnational organised cyber-enabled financial crimes.



About Operation Chakra-II:

- It was launched to fight against transnationally **organised cyber-enabled financial crimes** in India.
- For this, CBI has **partnered with Microsoft and Amazon**, as well as with national and international agencies, to combat and dismantle infrastructure of illegal call centres.
- The CBI is working with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) of the USA, the Cyber Crime Directorate and IFCACC of INTERPOL, the National Crime Agency (NCA) in the UK, Singapore Police Force and BKA of Germany to notify further leads.

Key facts about the CBI

- The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is the **premier investigative agency of India**.
- The agency was established in 1963 by the Indian government as a result of the recommendation of the **Santhanam Committee**.
- CBI is not a statutory body. It derives its power to investigate from the **Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946**.
- **Control**
 - It operates under the jurisdiction of **the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions** (which in turn operated under PMO).
 - However, for investigation of offences under the Prevention of Corruption Act, CBI vests superintendence to the Central Vigilance Commission.
- **Functions**
 - Initially, it was set up to **investigate corruption in government departments** and public sector undertakings.
 - However, over the years, its jurisdiction has expanded to cover a wide range of cases, **including economic offenses, cyber-crimes**, organized crimes, and special crimes.

TRIBAL COOPERATIVE MARKETING DEVELOPMENT FEDERATION (TRIFED)

The Union Tribal Affairs Ministry recently declared “null and void” the suspension of the managing director of TRIFED.



About Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation (TRIFED):

- It is a national-level organisation under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, primarily engaged in the development and marketing of tribal handicrafts and natural products.
- It came into existence in 1987 and got registered under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 1984 (now the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002).
- The main mandate of TRIFED is capability enhancement for Tribals, promotion of tribal products, and creation of marketing opportunities for the Tribals with a view to ensuring remunerative prices for their products and augmenting their income on a sustainable basis.

Objectives:

- To develop the socio-economic welfare of the tribal community.
- To act as a facilitator and service provider for the tribal community to uplift production.
- Provide training to enhance artistic skills with modern technology to meet the requirements of the global market.
- To increase the promotion of tribal art and crafts for a stable livelihood.
- To identify target groups to monitor and evaluate the process and activities and provide input to the Ministry.
- **Retail Marketing:**
 - TRIFED has been doing the retail marketing of tribal products under the brand name “TRIBES INDIA”.
 - TRIFED promotes and creates a sustainable market through retail outlets, exhibitions such as Aadishilp, Aadichitra, and OCTAVE, international fairs, and e-marketing.

- TRIFED has also been entrusted by the Government of India to implement its proposed **Minimum Support Price Scheme for Minor Forest Produce**.
 - **Head Office: New Delhi**
 - It has a network of **pan India Regional Offices** and a **chain of TRIBES INDIA Retail Outlets**.
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NATIONAL COOPERATIVE EXPORTS LIMITED (NCEL)

- **The Ministry of Cooperation**, Government of India, has set up a NCEL under Multi-State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act 2002.
- **It is an umbrella body** for cooperative sector exports and has an authorised share capital of Rs 2,000 crore, with Rs 500 crore as the initial paid-up share capital.
- It (NCEL) covers **agriculture and allied activities as well as handloom and handicraft items** by enrolling a large number of co-operatives under its fold with a target to double its revenue by 2025 from the current Rs 2,160 crore.
- **All cooperative societies** from the level of primary to apex, who are interested in exports are eligible to become its **member**.
 - Its chief promoter is the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation Limited (GCMMF). The other promoters are: IFFCO, KRIBHCO, NAFED, and NCDC.
- **This society will focus on exporting the surpluses** available in the Indian cooperative sector by accessing wider markets beyond the geographical contours of the country.

Significance of the NCEL:

- **It will help in increasing the demand of Indian Cooperative products/services** across the globe and fetch best possible prices for such products/services.
- **It will promote exports** through various activities including -
 - Procurement, storage, processing, marketing, branding, labelling, packaging, certification, R&D, etc., and
 - Trading of all types of goods and services produced by cooperative societies.
- **The society will -**

- **Help in arranging finance**, provide technical guidance,
 - Help in training and capacity building,
 - Develop and maintain market intelligence systems, and
 - Implement related government schemes which will increase exports from the cooperative sector.
 - Promote "Make in India" and led to 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.
 - **Help in achieving the goal of "Sahakar-se-Samridhhi"** through the inclusive growth model of Cooperatives.
 - This society will also help cooperatives in getting **benefits of various export related schemes and policies** in a focussed manner through '**Whole of Government Approach**'.
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COMPETITION COMMISSION OF INDIA

- It is a **statutory body** of the Government of India, was established in March 2009 under **the Competition Act, 2002**.
 - The goal of CCI is to create and sustain fair competition in the economy that will provide a '**level playing field**' to the producers and make the markets work for the welfare of consumers.
 - The priority of the Commission is to eliminate practices having adverse effects on competition, promote and sustain competition, protect the interests of consumers, and ensure freedom of trade in the markets of India.
 - **Mandate:** To implement provisions of The Competition Act, 2002, which–
 - prohibits anti-competitive agreements and abuse of dominant position by enterprises;
 - regulates mergers and acquisitions (M&A), which can have an adverse effect on competition within India. Thus, deals beyond a certain threshold are required to get clearance from CCI.
 - **Composition:**
 - It has the **composition of a quasi-judicial body**, with one chairperson and six additional members.
 - All members of the CCI are **appointed by the Central Government**.
 - **Headquarters:** New Delhi.
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INDIA SENDS MEDICAL SUPPLIES, DISASTER RELIEF AID TO WAR-TORN GAZA

Why in news?

- India sent its first humanitarian aid for the beleaguered residents of Gaza via Egypt.
- This was days after PM Modi spoke to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to convey condolences over the loss of civilian lives at the Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza City.

India – Palestine Relation: Background:

- **Evolution of relationship**
 - India's support for the Palestinian cause is an integral part of the nation's foreign policy.
 - In 1974, India became the **first Non-Arab State** to recognize Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.
 - In 1988, India became one of the first countries to recognize the Palestinian State.
 - In 1996, India opened its Representative Office in Gaza, which was later shifted to Ramallah in 2003.
- **Support at multilateral fora**
 - India has always played a proactive role in garnering support for the Palestinian cause in multilateral fora.
 - India has consistently supported, co-sponsored, and voted in favour of UN General Assembly Resolutions.
 - In 2011, India also voted in favour of Palestine becoming a full member of UNESCO.

Bilateral Trade

- Trade between India and Palestine is conducted through Israel and therefore, comprehensive trade statistics are not available.
- India-Palestine annual bilateral trade volume was USD 67.77 million for the year 2020.
 - Indian exports and imports were USD 67.17 million and USD 0.6 million, respectively.
 - India has a share of 0.06% of Palestine's exports, while India ranks 13th among the importing countries for Palestine with 1.1% share of total Palestine's imports.

Culture Relations

- In 2014, a bust of Mahatma Gandhi was unveiled at the Garden of Nations in Ramallah.
- An Indian Cultural Week was also organized by the Mission, in association with ICCR and Palestinian Ministry of Culture in November 2021.

News Summary: India sends medical supplies, disaster relief aid to war-torn Gaza

- India sent humanitarian aid to the people of Palestine.
- An IAF C-17 flight carrying nearly 6.5 tonnes of medical aid and 32 tonnes of disaster relief material for the people of Palestine departed for El-Arish airport in Egypt.
- The material includes essential life-saving medicines, surgical items, tents, sleeping bags, tarpaulins, sanitary utilities, water purification tablets among other necessary items.

India in a balancing act

- In his first phone conversation with Palestinian President Abbas since the Hamas attack on Israel, PM Modi had reiterated India's long-standing principled position on the Israel-Palestine issue.
 - The phone call to Abbas was perceived as a balancing act.
- Modi's call to Abbas came days after he spoke to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to extend solidarity.
 - Following his conversation with Netanyahu, Modi had posted: "People of India stand in solidarity with Israel in this difficult hour... India strongly and unequivocally condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations".
- Later, Delhi, in its first official statement on the conflict, sought to balance its position.
- For Delhi, the diplomatic challenge was to balance between the many sides in West Asia where India has deep strategic ties with Israel on the one hand, and Saudi, UAE, Qatar, Iran and Egypt – to name a few – on the other hand

LITTLE ICE AGE (LIA)



A recent study showed the signature of moist conditions during the Little Ice Age (LIA) from the Western Ghats, India.

About the Little Ice Age (LIA):

- It was one of the coldest periods of the past 10,000 years, a period of cooling that was particularly pronounced in the North Atlantic region.
- This cold spell, whose precise timeline scholars debate but which seems to have set in around 600 years ago, was responsible for crop failures, famines, and pandemics throughout Europe, resulting in misery and death for millions.
- The Little Ice Age followed the Mediaeval Warming Period (roughly 900–1300 CE) and preceded the present period of warming that began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
- **Impact on climate:**
 - It is best known for its **effects in Europe and the North Atlantic region.**
 - **Alpine glaciers advanced far below** their previous (and present) limits, obliterating farms, churches, and villages in Switzerland, France, and elsewhere.
 - Frequent cold winters and cool, wet summers **led to crop failures and famines** over much of northern and central Europe. In addition, the North Atlantic cod fisheries declined as ocean temperatures fell in the 17th century.

Key findings of the study

- It showed significant **variations in rainfall patterns** during that age, challenging the **conventional notion of a uniformly cold and dry climate** with reduced monsoon rainfall during the LIA.
- It suggested that northward movement of the Inter Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ), positive temperature anomalies, increased sunspot numbers, and high solar activity could be **driving climate change and increased South West Monsoon.**
- They attributed the weakest phase of the Indian Summer Monsoon (ISM) across the Indian subcontinent during the LIA, in general, to the southward shift of the ITCZ, resulting from increased northward energy flux across the equator during a cold northern hemisphere.
- Knowledge and understanding of climate change and Indian Summer Monsoon (ISM) variability during **the Holocene** could be of immense interest to strengthen the understanding of the present ISM-influenced climatic conditions, as well as of possible future climatic trends and projections.

WHAT IS OPTOELECTRONICS?

A new Laboratory of Advance Synthesis and Characterisation (LASC) in Gujarat is developing LASC probe stations for universities in India and abroad for the investigation of opto-electronic properties in a wide range of materials.



About Optoelectronics:

- Optoelectronics is the study and application of light-emitting or light-detecting devices.
- It is widely considered a sub-discipline of photonics. Photonics refers to the study and application of the physical science of light.
- Optoelectronics is a fast-emerging technology field that consists of applying electronic devices to sourcing, detection, and control of light.
- It is largely based on semiconductor materials. These exhibit suitable bandgap energies for absorbing near-infrared and visible light, and their electric conductivity (albeit not perfect) is also essential for such applications.
- Examples of optoelectronic devices consist of:
 - Telecommunication laser
 - Optical fibre
 - Blue laser
 - LED traffic lights
 - Photodiodes
 - Solar cells
- These devices are used in a wide variety of application areas, such as military services, automatic access control systems, telecommunications, medical equipment, and more.
- Optoelectronics should not be confused with electro-optics, as this field is a wider branch of physics that deals with the interaction of electric fields and light, without concern if an electronic device is involved or not.

LEMURU ELEPHANT RESERVE

The Union Coal Ministry has said that Coal India Limited's (CIL) 40 coal blocks in and around the Lemru Elephant Corridor (LEC) will not be auctioned at the request of the Chhattisgarh government.



About Lemru Elephant reserve

- It is located in the **Korba district of Chhattisgarh.**
- It seeks to give **elephants a permanent habitat** while also minimising property damage and human-animal conflict.
- The reserve is part of an elephant corridor that connects Lemru (Korba), Badalkhol (Jashpur), Tamorpingla (Surguja).
- **Elephant reserves in India-** There are **33 notified Elephant Reserves (ERs)** in the country, spread over **14 states.**

What is Project Elephant?

- It was launched by the Government of India in 1992 as a **Centrally Sponsored Scheme** with following objectives:
 - To protect elephants, their habitat & corridors
 - To address issues of man-animal conflict
 - Welfare of captive elephants
- Through the Project (being mainly implemented in 16 states, or UTs), the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, provides financial and technical support to major elephant range states in the country.