

### GILGIT-BALTISTAN

According to the Union defence minister Rajnath Singh the central government's development journey in the Union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh has only begun, and its northward journey will be complete after reaching Gilgit-Baltistan.



#### About:

- Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) was formerly known as the Northern Areas.
- It is the northernmost territory administered by Pakistan, providing the country's only territorial frontier, and thus a land route, with China, where it meets the Xinjiang Autonomous Region.
- To G-B's west is Afghanistan, to its south is Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, and to the east, the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.
- It is Indian territory, part of the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir that acceded to India in full after Independence, and which has been under illegal Pakistani occupation.
- Gilgit Baltistan has been under the control of Pakistan since April 1949, when the leadership of the so-called Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) was forced to sign away this territory to Pakistan.
- However, the region does not have any place in the constitutional framework of Pakistan and has been kept under the tight control of the central government.
- Gilgit-Baltistan shares a border with Azad Kashmir, together with which it is referred to by the United Nations as "Pakistan administered Kashmir".

#### History:

- Gilgit was part of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir, but it was ruled directly by the British, who had taken it on lease in 1935 from Hari Singh, the Hindu ruler of the Muslim-majority state.
- On October 22, 1947, with Hari Singh dithering on accession to India, Pashtun tribal militiamen along with Pakistani forces poured into the Kashmir Valley and marched towards Srinagar in

accordance with a plan known as **Operation Gulmarg**. On the way, the lashkars engaged in massive plunder and looting in Baramulla.

- Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession with India on October 26, 1947. The Indian Army then landed in the Kashmir Valley and began an operation to push back the Pakistani invaders.

## COMMITTEES FOR GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL OF SOCIAL MEDIA USERS

**Grievance Appellate Committees will be set up within three months by the government for resolving social media users' grievances. In this regard, a gazette notification was issued by the Ministry Of Electronics And Information Technology recently to amend the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.**



### **About:**

- Each Grievance Appellate Committee will consist of a chairperson and two whole time members appointed by the Central Government.
- Any person aggrieved by a decision of the Grievance Officer may prefer an appeal to the Grievance Appellate Committee within a period of thirty days from the date of receipt of communication from the Grievance Officer.
- It also states that the Grievance Appellate Committee will adopt an online dispute resolution mechanism.
- Grievance Appellate Committee has been introduced for hearing appeals against decisions of the Grievance Officer appointed by the intermediary.
- Privacy policy and user agreements of intermediaries are to be made available in the Eighth Schedule Indian languages.

## 'ONE NATION, ONE POLICE UNIFORM'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently mooted the idea of 'One Nation, One Police Uniform'.



### About:

- His suggestion “One Nation, One Uniform” is in line with his broader attempt to introduce a uniform set of policies across the country. Currently, there is a ‘one nation, one ration’ card; ‘one

nation, one mobility’ card; ‘one nation, one grid’ and a ‘one nation, one sign language’.

### Law and order:

- The Indian Constitution puts police forces under the **jurisdiction of state governments**, and each of the 28 states have their own police force.
- Both ‘public order’ and the ‘police’ are placed in List II (State List) of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, which deals with the division of powers between the Union and States.
- While police personnel in India are often associated with the colour khaki, their uniforms do differ in varying degrees in different regions.
- Since state governments and even an individual force can decide the uniform their personnel wear, there are at times inconsistencies in their official attire. For example:
  - The Kolkata Police wear white uniforms.
  - Puducherry Police constables wear a bright red cap with their khaki uniforms.
  - Delhi Traffic Police personnel wear white and blue uniforms.

### New Uniform:

- The Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD), under the ministry of home affairs (MHA), had designed a new all-weather friendly ‘smart uniform’ for Indian police in 2017 in association with the National Institute of Design (NID) and sent a report to all the states and UTs.

## UN COUNTER-TERRORISM MEET: FROM 26/11 SITE, INDIA & US SEEK LISTING OF TERRORISTS, CHINA SAYS DON'T POLITICISE

### **In News:**

- Ambassadors of all countries in the U.N. Security Council attended a memorial for victims of the 26/11 terror attacks in Mumbai.
- This memorial was a part of a special session of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) at the Taj Mumbai hotel, one of the sites of the attacks in 2008.

### **UN Security Council - Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC)**

- In the aftermath of the 11 September attacks against the United States in 2001, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1373 (2001).
- This resolution, for the first time, established a dedicated Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) of the Council.
- The CTC is assisted by an Executive Directorate (CTED), which carries out its policy decisions and conducts expert assessments of the 193 United Nations Member States.

### **Focus Areas**

- The Counter-Terrorism Committee has a global mandate and focuses on specific thematic areas, which are:
  - Counter-terrorism strategies
  - Countering the financing of terrorism
  - Border security and arms trafficking
  - Law enforcement
  - Legal issues
  - Human Rights
  - Integrating gender into counter-terrorism
  - Countering violent extremism and terrorist narratives
  - Information and Communications Technologies
  - Foreign Terrorist Fighters

## News Summary

- India hosted a special meeting of the United Nations Security Council's Counter Terrorism Committee (CTC).
- This was the first such meeting of the UNSC-CTC in India since its establishment in 2001.
- The Permanent Representative of India to the UN serves as the Chair of the CTC for 2022.

## Key highlights

- **Theme**
  - The meeting held discussion on the overarching theme of **Countering the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes.**
  - It also discussed terror-financing through crypto-currency and use of drones in the new-age terrorism.
- **Wreath-laying ceremony at the 26/11 Memorial at the Taj hotel**
- **Address made by EAM S Jaishankar**
  - EAM S Jaishankar specified 5 points before the CTC to block financial resources that allow terrorism to thrive.
  - One of which was to ensure effective and transparent functioning of the UNSC sanctions regime and make sure they are not rendered ineffective for political reasons.
    - This is important in the context of China's repeated forestalling of UN sanctions on Pakistan based terrorists.
  - EAM recalled how it wasn't just an attack on Mumbai, but an attack on the international community as people of specific nationalities were identified before being murdered.
- **Presentation highlighting Pakistan's links with the 26/11 attacks was made**
  - Indian authorities played the recording of one of these terrorists, Sajid Mir, directing the 26/11 perpetrators.
    - China blocked a proposal for a UN ban on Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) commander Mir last month.
- **The issue of listing planners of the 26/11 Mumbai terror attack as global terrorists was raised**

- External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken raised this issue.
  - India has been urging the UNSC to reflect on the signals being sent each time a move to list a terrorist is blocked.
  - China has been blocking US and India's moves on the listing of Pakistan-based terrorists – Sajid Mir, Abdul Rauf Azhar, Abdul Rehman Makki being the more recent cases.
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## TWO MORE INDIAN BEACHES GET 'BLUE FLAG': WHAT IS THIS COVETED ECO-LABEL?

### **In News:**

- Two more beaches - **Minicoy Thundi beach and Kadmat beach in Lakshadweep** have been awarded the 'Blue Flag,' placing them among the world's cleanest and most environmentally friendly beaches, marinas and sustainable boating tourism operators.

### **About the Blue Flag program:**

- The Blue Flag is a distinguished **eco-label or certification** granted to coastal areas (for beaches, marinas and sustainable boating tourism operators) around the world as a mark of environmental honour.
  - A marina is a small harbour where mainly pleasure boats and yachts dock.
- The Blue Flag program is run by the Copenhagen, Denmark-based **Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)** - a non-profit organisation that contributes to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through its work.
  - It was established in **1987**, first in Europe, and certification has been granted on an annual basis since then. It has been implemented outside of Europe since **2001**.
  - So far, the label has been awarded to **5,042** beaches, marinas, and tourism boats in 48 nations.
  - Spain is the country with the most Blue Flag beaches, followed by Greece and France.



- In order to qualify for the Blue Flag, which is one of the most prestigious **voluntary awards** in the world, a series of stringent environmental, educational, safety and accessibility criteria must be met and maintained.

## Blue Flag Beaches in India:

- **India now has 12 blue beaches:**
  - Minicoy Thundi beach and Kadmat beach, both in Lakshadweep, are the **two new beaches**.
  - **The other 10 Indian beaches on the list are -**
    - Shivrajpur in Gujarat's Devbhumi Dwarka district;
    - Ghogla beach in Diu;
    - Kasarkod (Uttara Kannada) and Padubidri (Udupi) in Karnataka;
    - Kappad (Kozhikode) in Kerala;
    - Eden beach in Puducherry;
    - Kovalam (Chennai) in Tamil Nadu;
    - Rushikonda (Visakhapatnam) in Andhra Pradesh;
    - Golden beach in Puri, Odisha; and
    - Radhanagar Swarajdeep in Andaman and Nicobar.
  - Last year, Kovalam and Eden were awarded the Blue Flag. The remaining eight beaches were certified in 2020 and recertified last year.
  - **No Blue Flag nation has ever received recognition for 8 beaches in a single attempt.**
  - Taking the lead from the Blue Flag certification, India has launched its own eco-label **BEAMS** (Beach Environment & Aesthetics Management Services) as part of the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) project.
    - The Society of Integrated Coastal Management (SICOM) and the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change initiated BEAMS in 2020.
- **Significance of Blue Flag program:**

- **People will develop a strong desire to improve coastal cleanliness:** This is because the idea of connecting the public with their surroundings and encouraging them to learn more about their environment is central to the Blue Flag program's goals.
- **Environmental conservation:** Blue flag beaches have grey water treatment plants, solid waste management plants, solar power plants, solar lighting, and so on.
- **Promote tourism:** It encourages the administration to build new beaches in order to attract a big number of tourists and so promote tourism in the district.

## UDAN SCHEME

The Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) and the Airport Authority of India (AAI), recently signed an Operation and Management (O & M) agreement to facilitate commercial operations at Rourkela Airport under the RCS UDAN scheme.



### About:

### Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)-UDAN

- UDAN (Ude Deshka Aam Naagrik) is a regional airport development and "Regional Connectivity Scheme" (RCS) of the Union Government.
- The scheme UDAN envisages providing connectivity to un-served and under-served airports of the country through revival of existing air-strips and airports.
- Implementing Ministry: **Ministry of Civil Aviation**
- This is first-of-its-kind scheme globally to create economically viable flights on regional routes so that flying becomes affordable to the common man even in small towns.
- It is a key component of the National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) which was released by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (India) in 2016.
- The scheme is jointly funded by the central government and state governments.

### Two components of UDAN:

- **Airports:** The first component is to develop new airports and enhance the existing regional airports to increase the number of operational airports for scheduled civilian flights.



- **Flight routes:** The second component is to add several hundred financially-viable, capped-airfare, new regional flight routes to connect more than 100 under-served and un-served airports in smaller towns by using "Viability Gap Funding" (VGF) where needed.

## DEPARTMENT-RELATED PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEES

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information and Technology recently raised several questions on implication on data privacy of citizens with vague definitions of “public interest” and “national security” in the draft Indian Telecommunication Act, 2022.



**About:**

**History:**

- **17 DRSCs were established in Parliament in 1993** on the proposal of the Lok Sabha Rules Committee. Seven more similar committees were established in 2004 and their numbers were thus increased **from 17 to 24**.

**Objective:**

- The fundamental purpose of the Standing Committees is to make the Executive (i.e. the Council of Ministers) more accountable (particularly in financial matters) to the Parliament.
- They also help the Parliament to discuss the budget more effectively.

**Other Important Facts:**

- All the Ministries or Departments of the Central Government shall be governed by the 24 Standing Committees.
- **Each standing committee consists of 31 members** (21 from Lok Sabha and 10 from Rajya Sabha). The members of the Lok Sabha (or Rajya Sabha) are nominated by the Speaker (or Chairman) from amongst its own members.
- **A Minister cannot be appointed** to any of the DRSCs and if a member of a DRSC becomes a minister, he ceases to be a member of that committee.
- Each standing committee's term of office **is one year** from the date of establishment.
- Out of the 24, **8 DRSCs work under the Rajya Sabha and 16 DRSCs under the Lok Sabha**.

## CHHATH PUJA

The four-day Chhath Puja celebrations began across the country on October 28.



Chhath is a Hindu festival dedicated to the Sun god and his wife Usha in order to thank them for bestowing the bounties of life on earth. The Goddess who is worshipped during the famous Chhath Puja is known as Chhathi Maiya (also known as Usha, wife of the sun god).

- **Meaning of word chhath:** The word chhath means sixth and the festival is celebrated on the sixth day of the month Kartika of the Hindu lunar Bikram Sambat calendar.
- **Rituals:** The festival is observed over a period of four days. They rituals include holy bathing, fasting, standing in water for long periods of time, and offering prayers and food to the setting and rising sun.
- **Who observe it?** The main worshipers, called Parvaitin, are usually women. However, many men also observe this festival as Chhath is not a gender-specific festival.
- **Regions:** The festival is observed most elaborately in Mithila Province of Nepal, Terai-Madhesh region of Nepal, Indian states of Bihar, Jharkhand and UP. It is also more prevalent in areas where migrants from those areas have a presence.