

PUTIN'S NUCLEAR BLUFF HAS WORKED, IT HAS LESSONS FOR INDIA

Context

- India's foreign minister S Jaishankar's recent bilateral visit to Moscow is taking place amidst a heightened global perception of Russia's nuclear threat.
- The article discusses the possible learnings for India with respect to hostile neighbor Pakistan amidst Putin's nuclear bluff in ongoing Ukraine war.

Background

- The status of Russian nuclear forces on the ground has remained unaltered since President Putin ordered defence minister Sergei Shoigu to put the country's deterrence forces on high combat alert in February.
- However, there have been no signs of a higher state of nuclear readiness and Russia has since denied possible nuclear weapons use.

Deploying tactical nuclear weapons (TNWs)

- Even the speculations have not been about the possible use of Russian strategic arsenal but remained restricted to tactical nuclear weapons (TNWs).
 - Strategic nuclear weapons are larger (up to 1,000 kilotons) and are launched from longer range(over 5500 km).
- **About tactical nuclear weapon:** These are small nuclear warheads and delivery systems meant to carry out a limited strike in a smaller area and are designed for use in battle, as part of an attack with conventional weapon forces.
 - These are designed to engage objects in the tactical depth of enemy deployment (up to 300 km) to accomplish a tactical mission.
 - These can be "one kiloton or less (producing the equivalent to a thousand tonnes of the explosive TNT).
 - The largest can be as big as 100 kilotons. For instance, the atomic bomb the US dropped on Hiroshima in 1945 was 15 kilotons and thus a TNW.

- **Shifting war outcomes:** Limited use of TNWs is unlikely to change conventional battle outcomes unless these are used in large numbers, which is impractical as it would adversely affect the user's forces too and contaminate the battlefield.
- **About Non-Proliferation Treaty(NPT):** It is an international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to foster the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and to further the goal of disarmament.
 - The treaty was signed in 1968 and entered into force in 1970. Presently, it has 191 member states. India is not a member.
 - It requires countries to give up any present or future plans to build nuclear weapons in return for access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
 - It represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States.

Options for India

- **Transnational cooperation:** In conjunction with the intelligence agencies of friendly countries, precisely assess the disposition and deployment of Pakistani TNWs.
- **Arsenal deployment:** Accelerate the deployment of multilateral-layered missile defence batteries.
- **Strengthen domestic capabilities:** Buttress the Indian intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capacities.
- **Point-to-point communication:** Establish a hotline between the Pakistani Strategic Plans Division (SPD) and the Indian Strategic Forces Command
- **Technological upgradation:** Continue to improve nuclear weapons and delivery systems proportionate to the emerging threats and continued reliance on credible minimum deterrence.

[MHA ANNUAL REPORT UNDERLINES NEED TO UPDATE NATIONAL POPULATION REGISTER ACROSS COUNTRY](#)

In News:

- The Home ministry in its latest annual report has underlined the need to update the National Population Register (NPR) database across the country, except Assam.
- This is to incorporate the changes due to birth, death, and migration for which demographic and other particulars of each family and individual are to be collected.

National Population Register (NPR)

- The NPR is a register of usual residents of the country. It is mandatory for every usual resident of India to register in the NPR.
 - According to the Citizenship (Registration of Citizens and issue of National Identity Cards) Rules, 2003, a usual resident is:
 - a person who has resided in a local area for the past 6 months or more; or
 - a person who intends to reside in that area for the next 6 months or more.
 - It includes both Indian citizens as well as a foreign citizen.
- The objective of the NPR is to create a comprehensive identity database of every usual resident in the country.
- The first National Population Register was prepared in 2010 and updating this data was done during 2015 by conducting door to door survey.
 - The next National Population Register was to be held along with the Census 2021.
 - Due to the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic, the work of NPR updation and other related field activities got postponed.
- NPR is conducted by the Office of the Registrar General of India (RGI) under the Home Ministry.

Details required for NPR

- The demographic details are required for every usual resident on 21 points.
- This includes 'date and place of birth of parents', last place of residence, Permanent Account Number (PAN), Aadhar (on a voluntary basis), Voter ID card number, Driving License Number and Mobile Number.

- In the NPR done in 2010, the data was collected on the 15 points and it did not include ‘date and place of birth of parents’ and last place of residence.
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ELECTORAL BONDS CAN BE SOLD FOR 15 EXTRA DAYS DURING STATE ELECTIONS

In News:

- The department of economic affairs amended the electoral bonds scheme to allow their sale for 15 extra days during the year of general elections to the legislative assembly of states and Union territories with legislature.
 - So far, it was sold four times a year (in January, April, July and October) for 10 days as notified by the government.
 - With the latest change, 15 additional days will be provided in the years that have assembly elections, too.

Electoral Bond (EB)

- An electoral bond is a bearer instrument, like a promissory note, that is payable to the bearer on demand to donate their contributions to political parties.
- **Eligibility:**
 - Only political parties registered under Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 and which secured not less than 1% of votes polled in the last general election to the House of the People or the Legislative Assembly of the State, are eligible to receive electoral bonds.
- The electoral bond scheme was launched by the Union government in 2018.
- According to data available from SBI, as of August 2022, donations to political parties through electoral bonds (EBs) have crossed the Rs 10,000-crore mark.

Working

- A citizen of India or a body incorporated in India is eligible to purchase the bond.
- EBs are issued/purchased for any value, in multiples of Rs 1,000, Rs 10,000, Rs 1,00,000, Rs 1,00,000 and Rs 1,00,00,000 from the specified branches of the State Bank of India (SBI).

- SBI is the only bank authorised to sell these bonds.
- Anonymous cash donations were capped at Rs 2,000.
- EBs have a life of only 15 days during which it can be used for making donation only to the registered political parties.
- The bonds shall be available for purchase for a period of 10 days each in the months of January, April, July and October as may be specified by the Central Government.
- The bond can be encashed by an eligible political party only through a designated bank account with the authorised bank.
- The political parties have to disclose the amount to the Election Commission.

Criticism:

- The central criticism of the electoral bonds scheme is that it does the exact opposite of what it was meant to do: bring transparency to election funding.
- For example, critics argue that the anonymity of electoral bonds is only for the broader public and opposition parties.
- The fact that such bonds are sold via a government-owned bank (SBI) leaves the door open for the government to know exactly who is funding its opponents.
- This, in turn, allows the possibility for the government of the day to either extort money, especially from the big companies, or victimise them for not funding the ruling party.
- Hence, electoral bonds provide an unfair advantage to the party in power.

G20

Prime Minister will unveil the logo, theme and website of India's G20 Presidency on 8th November 2022.



About:

- G20 Presidency offers India an opportunity to contribute to the global agenda on pressing issues of international importance.

- **What is G20?** G20 is the premier forum for international economic cooperation representing around 85% of the global GDP, over 75% of the global trade, and about two-thirds of the world population.
- **Origin and Evolution:**
 - The G20 was formed in 1999 in the backdrop of the financial crisis of the late 1990s that hit East Asia and Southeast Asia in particular. Its aim was to secure global financial stability by involving middle-income countries.
 - The first G20 Summit took place in 2008 in Washington DC, US.
- **The members of the G20 are:** Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union.
- **Organizational Structure of G20**
 - The G-20 operates **without a permanent secretariat or staff.**
 - The **chair rotates annually among the members** and is selected from a different regional grouping of countries.
 - The chair is part of a revolving three-member management group of past, present and future chairs referred to as the
- **Working of G20:** The preparatory process for the G20 Summit is conducted through the established Sherpa and Finance tracks that prepare and follow up on the issues and commitments adopted at the Summits.
 - **The Sherpas' Track** focuses on non-economic and financial issues, such as development, anti-corruption and food security, while addressing internal aspects such as procedural rules of the G20 process.
 - **The Finance Track** focuses on economic and financial issues

LAW COMMISSION

Recently, the Retired High Court Chief Justice Rituraj Awasthi has been appointed as the chairperson of the Law commission.



About:

- The appointment comes after more than two years after the 22nd Law Commission was notified on February 24, 2020.
- **Status:** Law Commission of India is a **non-statutory body** and is constituted by a notification of the Government of India.
- **Background:**
 - **The Charter Act 1833** which was enacted by the British Parliament provided for the establishment of a Law Commission for consolidation and codification of Indian Laws.
 - In 1835, Lord Macaulay was appointed as Chairman of the First Law Commission.
- **Tenure:** The tenure of Law Commission is for **three years**.
- **Mandate:**
 - The Law Commission shall, on a reference made to it by the Central Government or suo-motu, undertake research in law and review of existing laws in India for making reforms therein and enacting new legislations.
 - It shall also undertake studies and research for bringing reforms in the justice delivery systems for elimination of delay in procedures, speedy disposal of cases, reduction in cost of litigation etc.
- **Composition & Eligibility:** It has no fixed composition, no defined eligibility criteria for its chair and members, and no set functions.

NATIONAL FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE AWARDS 2021

President of India recently presented National Florence Nightingale Awards 2021



About:

- The National Florence Nightingale Awards were instituted in the year 1973 by the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** as a mark of recognition for the **meritorious services rendered by nurses and nursing professionals to society**.

- The award is given to outstanding **Nursing personnel employed in central, State/UTs, Private, Missionary and Voluntary Organizations.**

Florence Nightingale

- Florence Nightingale was an English social reformer, statistician and the **founder of modern nursing.**
- Nightingale came to prominence while serving as a manager and trainer of nurses during the Crimean War, in which she organised care for wounded soldiers at Constantinople.
- Her efforts to formalize nursing education led her to establish the **first scientifically based nursing school**—the Nightingale School of Nursing, at St. Thomas' Hospital in London.

SC UPHOLDS EWS QUOTA IN 3-2 SPLIT VERDICT, CJI IN MINORITY

In News:

- A five-judge constitution bench of the Supreme Court, by a 3-2 majority, **upheld the validity of 103rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 2019.**

Background:

- Reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) of the society was granted based on the recommendations of a commission headed by **Major General (retd) S R Sinho.**
- The Commission was constituted by the then Union government in 2005, and submitted its report in 2010.
- To implement this, a Cabinet Note was prepared by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment in 2019.
- Based on this, the Cabinet, in 2019, decided to amend the Constitution (103rd Amendment) to provide reservation to EWS.

About EWS Reservations:

- The 103rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 2019 added Clause (6) to Article 15 of the Constitution to give the government the authority to make special provisions for the EWS among citizens who are not already eligible for reservation.

- The Act allows up to 10 per cent reservation in public and private educational institutions, whether aided or unaided, with the exception of minority-run institutions.
- The Act also added Clause (6) to Article 16 of the Constitution to make employment reservations easier.
- Article 16 of the Indian Constitution guarantees equal opportunity to all citizens in matters related to employment in the public sector.
- It was enacted to promote the welfare of the poor not covered by the 50% reservation policy for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs).
- The Act states unequivocally that the **EWS reservation will be added to the existing reservation.**



Eligibility Criteria:

- Candidate's annual family income must be less than Rs. 8 lakhs per annum,
- Their family must not own more than 5 acres of agriculture land,
- The residential flat area should be below 1000 sq. ft.,
- The residential plot's area should be below 100 square yards if in a notified municipality sector,
- The residential plot's area should be below 200 square yards if in a non-notified municipality sector.

Which institutions are covered?

- EWS certificate can be used to avail the 10% reservation for the GEN-Economically Weaker Section in higher education and government jobs all over India.

Supreme Court's Judgement:

SCO CASES	Justices Maheshwari, Trivedi and Pardiwala	Chief Justice Lalit and Justice Bhat
Issues		
Can reservations be provided on an economic criteria?	YES	YES
Can SC/ST/OBC groups be excluded from EWS reservation benefits?	YES, they form a separate disadvantaged group.	NO, SEBCs form the bulk of the poorest population of India.
Can EWS reservations exceed 50% limit?	YES, the 50% limit is flexible and applies only to SEBCs	NO, breaching the 50% limit here will be a gateway for further compartmentalisation

- Three judges, Justices Dinesh Maheshwari, Bela Trivedi, and S B Pardiwala, have upheld the validity of the 103rd amendment.

- **Justice Dinesh Maheshwari** has ruled that reservation based only on economic criteria does not violate the basic structure of the Constitution.
 - He also added that the exclusion of classes covered in Article 15(4) and 16(4) — that is OBCs and SC/STs — in the 103rd amendment does not damage the basic structure.
- **Justice Bela Trivedi** ruled that treating EWS as a separate class would be a reasonable classification, and that treating unequal equally would violate the principle of equality under the Constitution.
 - Justice Trivedi said that 75 years after independence, it was time to revisit the system of reservation in the larger interest of society.
- **Justice S B Pardiwala** observed that “Reservation is not an end, it is means, it should not be allowed to become a vested interest”.

Dissenting Judgement:

- The dissenting judgement has come from Justice S Ravindra Bhat and Chief Justice of India U U Lalit.
- **Justice Bhat** has ruled that while reservation on economic criteria is per se not violative of the Constitution, excluding SC/ST/OBC from the purview of EWS is violative of basic structure.
 - He has struck down Articles 15(6) and 16(6) for being discriminatory and violative of the equality code.
- **CJI U U Lalit** said he concurs entirely with the judgment of Justice Bhat.