

DISPUTE RESOLUTION BETWEEN STATES IN INDIA

Why in news?

- The border dispute between Maharashtra and Karnataka is intensifying, with both states hardening their stance.
- Recently, both Houses of the Maharashtra Assembly passed a unanimous resolution to support a legal battle to resolve the dispute.

Maharashtra-Karnataka border dispute

Historical Background:



- The Maharashtra and Karnataka boundary dispute has its origins in the reorganisation of states along linguistic lines via the **State Reorganisation Act, 1956**.
 - This Act, which took effect from 1 November, 1956, divided states on linguistic lines.
- Since its creation on May 1, 1960, Maharashtra has claimed that 865 villages, including **Belagavi** (then Belgaum), **Carvar** and **Nipani**, should be merged into Maharashtra.
 - Maharashtra claims that these are the regions where Marathi is the dominant language, should remain in Maharashtra.
- Karnataka, however, has refused to part with its territory.

Mahajan Commission:

- In October, 1966, the Centre constituted the Mahajan Commission headed by the then Supreme Court **Chief Justice Meher Chand Mahajan**, at the insistence of Maharashtra.
- **Commission's recommendations** –
 - While rejecting Maharashtra's claim over Belagavi (then Belgaum), the commission recommended 247 villages/places, including Jatt, Akkalkote and Solapur, to be made part of Karnataka.

- It also declared 264 villages /places, including Nippani, Khanapur and Nandagad, to be made part of Maharashtra.
- However, the commission's report was outrightly rejected by Maharashtra, and in 2004, it moved the Supreme Court.

News Summary:

How are disputes between states resolved in India?

- **Centre as a neutral mediator**
 - Attempts are often made to resolve inter-state disputes with the cooperation of both sides, with the Centre working as a facilitator or a neutral mediator.
 - If issues are resolved amicably, Parliament can bring a law to alter state boundaries.
 - Eg., Bihar-Uttar Pradesh (Alteration of Boundaries) Act of 1968 and the Haryana-Uttar Pradesh (Alteration of Boundaries) Act of 1979 was brought in similar fashion.
- **Judicial redressal**
 - The Supreme Court in its original jurisdiction decides disputes between states.
 - **Article 131 of the Constitution** allows SC to have original jurisdiction in any dispute:
 - between the Government of India and one or more States; or
 - between the Government of India and any State or States on one side and one or more other States on the other; or
 - between two or more States.
- **Inter-state Council**
 - Article 263 of the Constitution gives powers to the President to set up an Inter-state Council for resolution of disputes between states.
 - The Council is envisaged as a forum for discussion between the states and the Centre.
 - In 1988, the **Sarkaria Commission** suggested that the Council should exist as a permanent body, and in 1990 it came into existence through a Presidential Order.
 - In 2021, the Centre reconstituted the Inter-state Council and the body now has 10 Union Ministers as permanent invitees.
 - The standing committee of the Council has been reconstituted with Home Minister as Chairman.

ROAD FATALITIES IN INDIA

Why in News?

- According to a report published by the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, at least 8 out of every 10 occupants, nearly 83%, killed in accidents across India were not wearing seatbelts.

Major Highlights of the Report:

- As per the report, there were 4.12 lakh unfortunate incidences of road accidents during 2021 which **claimed 1,53,972 lives**.
- Young adults in the age group of 18-45 years accounted for 67.6% of victims during 2021.
- During the previous year 2020, country saw an unprecedented decrease in accidents, fatalities and injuries.
- This was due to the unusual outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic and resultant stringent nationwide lockdown particularly during March-April, 2020.
- Major indicators related with accidents have performed better in 2021 when compared to 2019.
- Road accidents decreased by 8.1 percent and injuries decreased by 14.8 percent in 2021 compared to 2019.
- Fatalities, however, on accounts of road accidents increased by 1.9 percent in 2021 corresponding to the same period in 2019.
- **Death due to not wearing Helmets/Seatbelts –**
- At least 8 out of every 10 occupants, nearly 83%, killed in accidents across India were not wearing seatbelts.
- Uttar Pradesh reported the maximum deaths of car occupants for not wearing seatbelts.
- Also, 2 out of every 3 who died in road crashes on two-wheelers were not wearing helmets.

DELIMITATION COMMISSION

Recently, the Election Commission of India said that it has begun the process of delimitation of Assembly and Parliamentary constituencies in Assam.



About:

- The Delimitation process in Assam will be **based on Census data from 2001**. The last delimitation of constituencies in Assam was **done in 1976 based on the 1971 Census**.

Who carries out delimitation?

- Delimitation is carried out by an independent **Delimitation Commission**, appointed by the Government of India under provisions of the **Delimitation Commission Act**.
- **Under Article 82**, Parliament is to enact a Delimitation Act **after every Census**. Once the Act is in force, the Union government sets up the Delimitation Commission.
- The Commission is supposed to determine the number and boundaries of constituencies in a way that the population of all seats, so far as practicable, is the same. The Commission is also tasked with identifying seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- It works in collaboration with the Election Commission of India.
- The **commission is composed of: a retired Supreme Court judge, the Chief Election Commissioner of India and respective State Election Commissioners**.
- In the history of the Indian republic, Delimitation Commissions have been set up four times: 1952, 1963, 1973 and 2002 under the Acts of 1952, 1962, 1972 and 2002.

[INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF SECURITIES COMMISSIONS \(IOSCO\)](#)

Recently, the Securities and Exchange of India proposed a framework for index providers to improve transparency and accountability in the domestic securities market.



About:

- The index provider shall be a legal entity incorporated under the Companies Act in the country of origin and should have a minimum net worth of Rs 25 crore.
- The proposed regulation shall apply to **index providers of both domestic and foreign**.

- The index providers must be assessed by independent external auditors to evaluate **adherence to International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO)** principles once in two years.

What is IOSCO?

- Established in 1983, it is the international body that brings together the world's securities regulators and is recognized as the global standard-setter for the securities sector.
- It works intensively with the G20 and the Financial Stability Board (FSB) on the global regulatory reform agenda.
- There are three categories of members: **Ordinary, Associate and Affiliate.**
- Recently, **the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA)** has become an **associate member** of this organisation.

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORT CORPORATION (NCRTC)

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has recently released recommendations on 'Spectrum Requirements of National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) for Train Control System for RRTS Corridors'



About:

What is NCRTC ?

- The NCRTC is a joint partnership institution between the Central Government and the participating states of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan and the NCT of Delhi.
- It works under the administrative control of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.
- **Objective:** It is mandated for implementing the Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) project across the NCR of India, ensuring a balanced and sustainable urban development through better connectivity and access.
- **Institutional Setup:**
 - NCRTC was formally incorporated on 21st August, 2013 as a **Company under the Company Act, 1956.**

- As a joint partnership project between the Center and the States, NCRTC would have **one nominated Director** each from the participating States, and **four nominee Directors** from the Government of India.
- The Secretary (UD) is the **ex-officio Chairman** of the Board of Directors and the **Managing Director, a nominee of MoUD**. NCRTC also has the flexibility of forming separate subsidiary companies for implementing specific projects.

Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS)

- National capital region (NCR) is a multi-state region with the National Capital as its centre. This region, spread over an area of about 35,000 km², comprises the entire National Capital territory of Delhi and some parts of the neighbouring states of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan.
- The National Capital Region Planning Board (NCRPB), in order to enhance the connectivity within the NCR, has proposed to connect urban, industrial (SEZs/industrial parks), regional and sub-regional centers through a fast rail based Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS).
- The objective of this system is to reduce dependence of commuters on road based transportation.

INDIA-AUSTRALIA ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND TRADE AGREEMENT

In News:

- The India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) comes into force from today.
- The aim of this agreement is to double the bilateral trade to \$50 billion in five years and ease movement of people, goods and services across borders.

COMES INTO FORCE FROM TODAY				
No. of years duty will become zero*	India's offer		Australia's offer	
	Tariff lines (%)	Value (%)	Tariff lines (%)	Value (%)
0	40	85.3	98.3	96.4
3	1.6	0.01		
5	7.2	3.3	1.7	3.6
7	21.2	0.3		
10	0.2	0.05		
Tariff rate quota	0.04	0.7		
Total offer*	70.3	89.7	100	100
Exclusion	29.7	10.3	0	0

*For India: On 125 tariff lines, duty will be reduced and not eliminated

• News Summary

India-Australia Bilateral Relation: In Brief

• India and Australia established diplomatic relations in the pre-Independence period, with

the establishment of India Trade Office in Sydney in 1941.

Strategic Relationship

- In 2009, India and Australia established a ‘Strategic Partnership’, including a Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation.
- This cooperation has been further elevated to **Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) in 2020**.
- The Australian foreign policy blueprint released in November 2017 sees India in the front rank of Australia’s international partnerships.
- In order to pursue the CSP, Foreign and Defence Ministers of both countries agreed to meet in a ‘2+2’ format biennially.

Economic and Trade Relationship

- As part of its efforts to develop strong economic relationship with India, the Australian Government commissioned the India Economic Strategy to 2035 in July 2018.
- This was done to define a pathway for Australia to unlock opportunities offered by Indian Economic growth.
- **Bilateral Trade:**
 - India had a trade deficit of \$8.5 billion with Australia in FY22, with \$8.3 billion worth of exports and \$16.8 billion worth of imports.
 - Total bilateral trade is expected to cross \$45-50 billion in five years from \$ 5 billion at present after the free trade deal comes into force.
 - India was the 8th largest trade partner of Australia with trade in goods and services representing 3% share of the total Australian trade in FY 2019-20.

Civil Nuclear Cooperation

- A Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement between the two countries was signed in September 2014 during the visit of then PM Tony Abbott to India.
- The agreement provides the framework for substantial new trade in energy between Australia and India.

Defence Cooperation

- During PM Modi's visit to Australia in November 2014, both sides decided to extend defence cooperation to cover research, development and industry engagement.
- Arrangement concerning Mutual Logistics Support (MLSA) and Implementing Arrangement concerning cooperation in Defence Science and Technology were concluded during the Virtual Summit held in June 2020.
- India and Australia conduct their bilateral naval exercise 'AUSINDEX' since 2015.
 - In 2018, Indian Air Force participated for the first time in the Exercise Pitch Black in Australia.
 - In October-November 2020, the Australian Navy participated in Malabar Exercises.

Repatriation of Indian Cultural Artifacts:

- A number of artifacts have been successfully repatriated to India in recent years. They include:
 - Bronze Idol of Nataraja from Art Gallery of South Australia (AGSA) (2019),
 - Nagaraja stone sculpture (2020),
 - two Dwarpala stone sculptures (2020).

G20 DIGITAL INNOVATION ALLIANCE (G20-DIA)

Recently, the Minister for Electronics & Information Technology launched G20-DIA as a part of India's G20 presidency.



About:

- **Objective:** To identify, recognize, and enable the adoption of innovative and impactful digital technologies developed by startups, from G20 nations as well as the invited non-member nations,
- It can address the needs of humanity in the six critically important sectors i.e **Agri-tech, Health-tech, Ed-tech, Fin-tech, Secured Digital Infrastructure, and Circular Economy.**
 - Startup products in these six sectors enabled through Digital Public Goods Infrastructure can create a global population-scale impact and reduce the digital divide and enable sustainable, and inclusive techno-socio-economic development.
- This summit which **will be held in Bangalore** on the sidelines of the Digital Economy Working Group (DEWG) meeting will be a multi-day program where top nominated startups from each of

the theme areas from all of the G20 countries and the non-member invited countries will showcase their solutions to the global community of investors, mentors, corporates, and other government stakeholders.

- This will create **cutting-edge digital solutions** in the six themes that bridge the digital divide between different segments of humanity and advance the world economy.

INDIA MUST BUILD AWARENESS ON POPULATION CONTROL

Context

- The article emphasises that India's focus should be on strengthening public health infrastructure and creating awareness about the need for population control rather than on forced population control measures.

Background

- A private members' Bill aimed at population control was introduced in the Lok Sabha recently.
- The bill came up after the United Nations raised a concern that the population of India can surpass China, becoming the world's most populous country.
- It stated that population rise is the most significant reason for India's slow rate of development and argued for an immediate need for population control.

Objective to bring Population Control Bill

- It aims **to amend Article 47** by adding Article 47A to the Indian Constitution.
- It proposes that -
 - The State shall **promote small family norms** by offering incentives in taxes, employment, education, etc., to its people who keep their family limited to two children.
 - The State shall **withdraw every concession** from and deprive such incentives to those not adhering to small family norm, to keep the growing population under control.

Key provisions of Population Control Bill

- **Two-child policy:** It proposes to introduce a two-child policy per couple.
- **Incentivizing adoption:** Through various measures such as educational benefits, taxation cuts, home loans, free healthcare, and better employment opportunities.

- **Birth spacings:** It also proposes to ensure healthy birth spacing through measures related to augmenting the availability, accessibility and affordability of quality reproductive health services.
- **Penalties for couples:** Couples not adhering to the two-child policy will be debarred from contesting in elections; becomes ineligible for government jobs, subsidies on various facilities, goods given by the government, etc.

Steps taken by government for population control

- **Mission Parivar Vikas:** For substantially increasing access to contraceptives and family planning services in high fertility districts with TFR of 3 and above.
- **New Contraceptive Choices:** g., Injectable contraceptive and a new method of IUCD (Intrauterine Devices) insertion immediately after delivery i.e., post-partum IUCD has been introduced.
- **Awareness building:** The packaging for Condoms, emergency contraceptive pills, etc., has been redesigned so as to increase their demand alongside **360-degree media campaign**.
- **Compensation scheme for sterilization acceptors:** **Health Ministry** provides compensation for loss of wages to the beneficiary and also to the service provider (and team) for conducting sterilizations.
- **Scheme for Home delivery of contraceptives by ASHAs:** At doorstep of beneficiaries.
- **Family Planning Logistic Management and Information System (FP-LMIS):** A dedicated software to ensure smooth forecasting, procurement and distribution of family planning commodities across all the levels of health facilities.
- **National Family Planning Indemnity Scheme (NFPIS):** The clients are insured in the eventualities of death, complication and failure following sterilization.