

### WHAT IS THE CABINET COMMITTEE ON SECURITY (CCS)?

The Cabinet Committee on Security recently cleared the acquisition of over 200 BrahMos extended-range supersonic cruise missiles for deployment on its warships.



#### What are Cabinet Committees?

- Cabinet Committees are **extra-constitutional**, meaning, they are not mentioned in the Indian Constitution.
- They are partly designed to **reduce the burden on the Union Cabinet** by allowing **smaller** groups of ministers to make decisions on specific policy areas.
- They are **constituted or reconstituted when a new government takes over** or the Cabinet undergoes a reshuffle.
  - All cabinet committees are **chaired by the prime minister or a senior cabinet minister** and will have a number of cabinet ministers as members. However, **if the Prime Minister is a committee member, he will be the head** of the committee.
- There are a **total of eight cabinet committees**, which are listed below:
- Appointments Committee of the Cabinet.
  - Cabinet Committee **on Economic Affairs.**
  - Cabinet Committee **on Political Affairs.**
  - Cabinet Committee **on Investment and Growth.**
  - Cabinet Committee **on Security.**
  - Cabinet Committee **on Parliamentary Affairs.**
  - Cabinet Committee **on Employment and Skill Development.**
  - Cabinet Committee **on Accommodation.**
  - Appointments Committee of the Cabinet
- **Presently, all committees except the Cabinet Committee on Accommodation and the Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs are headed by the Prime Minister.**

## About Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS):

- CCS is headed by the **Prime Minister**.
- The Committee discusses, debates, and is the **apex body** when it comes to the **appointments of the officials in the national security bodies**.
- It also makes all the important decisions on defence policy and expenditure and, generally, all matters of India's security.
- **Members:**
  - **Prime Minister** of India
  - **Union Minister of Defence**
  - **Union Minister of Home Affairs**
  - **Union Minister of Finance and Corporate Affairs**
  - **Union Minister of External Affairs**
- **Functions:**
  - The CCS deals with all the **issues related to the defence and security of India**.
  - The CCS deals with all issues **related to the law and order** of our country and **national security**.
  - It discusses different initiatives to take to enhance the national security of India.
  - It also deals with **policy matters of foreign affairs which may have a bearing on internal or external security** implications, including cases relating to **agreements with other countries on security-related issues**.
  - The Committee discusses the **political issues which can impact the security** of our nation.
  - It reviews the **conditions and the manpower of the national security bodies** and makes the **required changes** to increase national security.
  - The CCS considers each case that involves a **capital expenditure of more than Rs 1,000 crore** in respect of the **Department of Defence Production and Department of Defence Research and Development**.
  - It also deals with every **issue related to atomic energy** and also considers cases of an increase in the **firmed-up cost estimates or revised cost estimates**.

## RANI CHENNAMMA

Recently, several social groups across the country organised a national campaign Naanoo Rani Chennamma (I am Rani Chennamma too) to commemorate 200 years of Rani Chennamma's rebellion against the British East India Company.



- Chennamma was born in **Kakati**, a small village in today's **Belagavi district of Karnataka**.
- She became queen of Kittur (now in Karnataka) when she married **Raja Mallasarja** of the Desai family.
- After Mallasarja's death in 1816, his eldest son, **Shivalingarudra Sarja**, ascended the throne.
- Before his death in 1824, Shivalingarudra adopted a child, Shivalingappa, as the successor.
- However, the British East India Company refused to recognise Shivalingappa as the successor of the kingdom **under the 'doctrine of lapse'**.
- **Key facts about the Kittur Rebellion**
  - **John Thackery**, the British official at Dharwad, launched an attack on Kittur in October **1824**.
  - Rani Chennamma and her family were imprisoned and jailed at the fort in Bailhongal, where **she died in 1829**.

### What was the doctrine of Lapse?

- Under the doctrine of Lapse, any **princely state without a natural heir** would collapse and would be **annexed by the Company**.
- The princely state of Kittur was taken over by the **British East India Company in 1824** by imposing the 'doctrine of lapse', even before it was officially articulated by Lord Dalhousie, Governor General for the British East India Company, between 1848 and 1856.

## NAVIGATE BHARAT PORTAL

Recently, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting launched four portals — Press Sewa, National Register for LCOs, CBC, NaViGate Bharat.



### About NaViGate Bharat Portal:

- The ‘**National Video Gateway of Bharat** (NaViGate Bharat) is developed by the New Media Wing of the **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting**.
- It is a **unified bilingual platform** which hosts videos on the entire gamut of Government’s development-related and citizen welfare-oriented measures.
- It empowers citizens by providing a single platform with an interactive user interface to search, stream, share, and **download videos related to various Government schemes**, initiatives, and campaigns, with a filter-based advanced search option.
- The portal eliminates the hassle of searching for official and reliable information from multiple sources, providing a one-stop platform for media and the general public.

### Key facts about Press Sewa Portal

- It is developed under the **Press and Registration of Periodicals Act, 2023** (PRP Act, 2023) by the **Press Registrar General of India** (PRGI - erstwhile RNI).
- This portal aims to simplify the cumbersome registration procedures that were prevalent under the colonial PRB Act, 1867.
- **Key features**
  - **Online Application:** Publishers can file applications for title registration online, using Aadhar-based e-signatures.
  - **Probability Metre:** Indicates the likelihood of title availability.
  - **Real-time Tracking of application status:** Accessible through an intuitively designed dashboard.
  - **Dedicated DM Module:** Enables District Magistrates to manage applications received from publishers in a centralised dashboard.

Other portals:

- **National Register for Local Cable Operators (LCOs):**
    - It is the first step to bring registration of LCOs currently **with Post Offices** spread across the country under a Centralised Registration System.
    - A web form has been designed to collect information from local cable operators for the purpose of the National Register.
  - **Central Bureau of Communication (CBC):**
    - It is a vital unit within the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, established on December 8, 2017, through the amalgamation of the erstwhile Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP), Directorate of Field Publicity (DFP), and Song & Drama Division (S&DD).
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## NEW TRADE ROUTE TO ISRAEL INVOLVING MUNDRA PORT

### Why in news?

- As Houthis continue to attack Israel-linked ships in the Red Sea, Israeli transport minister recently announced an alternative route for trade, involving the Mundra port in Gujarat.

### What is Red Sea?

- **About**
  - Red Sea is narrow strip of water extending southeastward from Suez, Egypt, to the Bab el-Mandeb Strait.
  - Basically, it is a narrow inland sea between the Arabian Peninsula and Africa.
    - The Red Sea separates the coasts of Egypt, Sudan, and Eritrea from those of Saudi Arabia and Yemen.
  - The Gulf of Aqaba, a north eastern extension of the sea, reaches southern Israel and southwestern Jordan.
- **Significance**
  - The Red Sea contains some of the world's hottest and saltiest seawater.
  - It is one of the most heavily travelled waterways in the world, carrying maritime traffic between Europe and Asia.

- **Significance for India**

- **Freight rates for Indian shipments headed to Europe and Africa could surge as much as 25-30 per cent** if there is disruption along this route.
  - For India, the Red Sea trade route is the shortest trade route for ships moving from Asia to Europe.
  - India is heavily reliant on the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait for its crude oil, LNG imports and trade with parts of West Asia, Africa, and Europe.
- This route is vital for 30 per cent of global container traffic.

### Who are Houthis?

- **About**

- The Houthis are a Shiite Muslim sect and political and military organization that emerged in Yemen (which is predominantly Sunni) in the 1990s.
  - Named after the Houthi tribe, they are Zaydi Shias.
  - Zayadism is a sub-sect of Shia Islam and it believes in following the lineage of the Prophet Muhammad's family, as the political leader of the state.
- The Houthis are also known as Ansar Allah, which translates to "Supporters of God".

### What is the new route?

- Under this, goods would move:
  - from Mundra to ports in the UAE, such as Dubai's Jebel Ali Port, by sea, and
  - then via land through Saudi Arabia and Jordan to Israel.
    - Land corridor became feasible due to signing of the Abraham Accords (aimed at normalising ties between Israel and some Arab states) in 2020.
- A major part of the land transport will be carried out on trucks.
- A similar route might be used in the India Middle East Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) too.

- The ambitious project aims to link India to Europe via the Middle East, but its final shape is yet to be decided and the Gaza war has thrown a spanner in its progress.

## What are the benefits, costs of the new route?

- The land route will significantly cut travel time and costs for Israel, and will generate revenue for Saudi Arabia and Jordan in terms of transport fee and duties.
  - However, trucks can carry far fewer goods than a ship can, and to that extent, trade will be limited.
  - Also, the route depends on Israel maintaining friendly ties with the two countries, in a rapidly fluctuating situation in the Middle East.
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## GOVERNMENT ALLOWS DONOR EGG & SPERM IN SURROGACY

### Why in the News?

- There is new hope for couples dreaming to become parents via surrogacy.
- The Central government has amended **Surrogacy (Regulation) Rules, 2022** to allow use of a donor gamete – ova or egg cells and sperm.

### About Surrogacy:

- A surrogate, sometimes also called a gestational carrier, is **a woman who conceives, carries and gives birth to a child for another person or couple (intended parent/s)**.
- The surrogate agrees to give the child to that person or couple after the birth.
- **Types of Surrogacies:**
  - **Commercial Surrogacy:**
    - It includes surrogacy or its related procedures undertaken for a monetary benefit or reward (in cash or kind) exceeding the basic medical expenses and insurance coverage.
  - **Altruistic Surrogacy:**

- It involves no monetary compensation to the surrogate mother other than the medical expenses and insurance coverage during the pregnancy.

## Surrogacy in India:

- Since 1978, surrogacy has been practiced in India, which is also known for having a high rate of “**reproductive tourism**” and being a burgeoning hub of the fertility industry.
- Although commercial surrogacy was made legal, no bill or explicit rule was created and put into effect.
  - This led to a sharp rise in uncontrolled surrogacy in India by low-cost fertility clinics.
- Subsequently, in 2021, President of India gave assent to the **Surrogacy Regulation Bill, 2021** which was passed by the parliament.

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## KIRU HYDEL PROJECT

- Kiru hydroelectric power project is a **run-of-the-river** scheme being developed over the **Chenab River** in the **Kishtwar Tehsil of Doha district in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), India**.
  - The project will be constructed between Kirthai II (upstream) and Kwar (downstream) hydroelectric plants.
- The project is being developed by **Chenab Valley Power Projects (CVPP)**, a joint venture between -
  - National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC, 49%),
  - Jammu & Kashmir State Power Development Corporation (JKSPDC, 49%) and
  - Power Trading Corporation (PTC, 2%).
- It is being constructed at an estimated cost of **Rs 4,287 crore** for an installed capacity of
- It was awarded scoping clearance by the Ministry of Environment Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) in **2008**.
- The foundation stone for the hydroelectric power plant was laid in **2019**, while the deadline for initiating commercial operations is July 2025.



## Benefits of the Kiru Hydroelectric Power Project:

- The project will **address the energy deficiency** in the Northern region of India and will simultaneously improve the transportation, education, medical, and road transportation network in the region.
- The power plant will bring electricity to the rural area, which will **reduce the dependency of the locals on alternative sources of energy**.
- Increased power supply in the region will **enhance the development of small-scale and cottage industries in the region**, which will in turn provide jobs and revenue to the locals.

## What are the Corruption Allegations Surrounding the Kiru Hydel Project?

- Satya Pal Malik, who was the governor of Jammu and Kashmir between August 23, 2018, and October 30, 2019, had **claimed that he was offered a Rs 300-crore bribe for clearing two files**, including one pertaining to the project.
- In 2022, the J&K government had asked for a CBI probe into alleged malpractices (flagged earlier by Satya Pal Malik) in the awarding of two government contracts.
- **The award of civil works** (to Patel Engineering Ltd - a major infrastructure and construction company that was founded in 1949) has been called into question.
- The CBI has booked then CVPPPL chairman, MD and Directors, along with Patel Engineering.
- The FIR alleges that **guidelines for e-tendering** in the awarding of civil works in the project were not followed.
- Further, allegations of substandard work and failure to provide jobs to local youth have been made against the hydel project.