

IRAN'S 'AXIS OF RESISTANCE'

Why in News? Iran recently launched an attack on Israel, in retaliation for an Israeli attack on its consulate in Damascus, Syria.

What is Iran's Axis of Resistance? It is a group built up over decades of **Iranian support** to resist Israel and U.S. influence in the Middle East. It consists of-

1. **Hamas-** a Sunni Islamist militant group operating in Gaza since 2007. It opposes Zionism, the 19th-century political project that advocates for an ethnic homeland for the Jewish people.
2. **Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ)-** Aims to establish an Islamic state in Palestine.
3. **Lebanon's Hezbollah-** Hezbollah, meaning "Party of God", is a Shiite militant organization set up by Iran's Revolutionary Guards in 1982 to fight Israeli forces that invaded Lebanon.
4. **Yemen's Houthis-** a militant group that has been fighting the civil war in Yemen for a decade. They control northern Yemen, including Sana'a. They have been attacking ships going through the Red Sea.
5. **Syria-** Supports Iran and Iran-backed forces have been deployed across much of Syria.
6. **Shi'ite groups of Iraq-** with ties to Iran emerged as powerful players after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion.

Why is Iran Backing Them? Iran has long been critical of Israel's creation in 1948, seeing it as a means for the US to influence the region for its strategic interests. Further, as a Shia-majority nation in a region where most powers such as US ally Saudi Arabia are Sunni-majority, Iran has attempted to assert itself with the help of these non-state actors forming the 'axis of resistance' as they provide the Islamic Republic with strategic depth, wide regional influence and access while insulating its leadership from the risk of their actions.

HOW THE JALLIANWALA BAGH MASSACRE CHANGED THE COURSE OF INDIA'S FREEDOM STRUGGLE?

Why in News? The Jallianwala Bagh massacre (on April 13, 1919) was a pivotal moment in the course of India's struggle for independence, as it marked a turning point in Indians' relationship with their British colonisers.

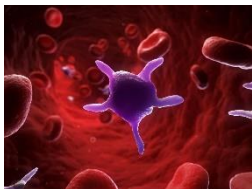
What is the Background of the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre? After the passage of the draconian **Rowlatt Act** in (March) 1919, **Punjab** (like the rest of India) was on the boil. To protest peacefully against the Rowlatt Act and the arrest of pro-independence activists **Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr. Satya Pal**, a large crowd gathered (during the annual Baishakhi fair) at **Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar**.

What Happened at the Jallianwala Bagh? **Michael O'Dwyer**, then the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, feared a large-scale resurrection - just like in **1857**. It is in this context that **Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer** ordered firing in Jallianwala Bagh on April 13, 1919.

What was the British Response to the Jallianwala Bagh? The immediate reaction of the British administration in Punjab was to condone Dyer's actions. However, for many Britons in India and back at home, **he was still a hero who saved British rule in India**. The **Hunter Commission** (constituted in 1919 to investigate the events surrounding the Jallianwala Bagh massacre) justified Dyer's decision to fire at the mob, with the exception that he ought to have issued a warning first.

How the Massacre Changed the Course of India's Freedom Struggle? The brutality at Jallianwala Bagh **stunned the entire nation**. It was the final nail in the coffin for the moral legitimacy of the British empire in India. Even the **most moderate** of Indian nationalists effectively lost faith in the Empire. Nobel laureate **Rabindranath Tagore** returned his knighthood in protest. Within months Mahatma Gandhi launched the **Non-Cooperation - Khilafat Movement** - the first pan-India movement for India's independence.

WHAT ARE PLATELETS?



Researchers have developed synthetic platelets that can be used to stop bleeding and enhance healing at the site of an injury.

- Platelets, or thrombocytes, are small, colorless cell fragments in our

blood that **help with clotting**. They are our body's natural bandage to stop bleeding.

- **Where are platelets made?**
 - They form in the soft tissue of your bones (bone marrow). The **largest cells in your bone marrow** (megakaryocytes) **make platelets**.
 - They form in the **shape of a plate**, which is where they get their name.
 - They are **smaller than red or white blood cells**.
- **How do platelets control bleeding?**
 - If one of your **blood vessels gets damaged**, it **sends out signals to the platelets**. The platelets then rush to the site of damage and form a plug (clot) to fix the damage.
 - The **process of spreading across** the surface of a **damaged blood vessel** to stop bleeding is **called adhesion**.
 - This is because when platelets get to the site of the injury, they **grow sticky tentacles that help them stick** (adhere) **to one another**.
 - They also send out chemical **signals to attract more platelets**.
 - The **additional platelets pile** onto the clot in a **process called aggregation**.

What is a healthy platelet count?

- A **normal platelet** count ranges from **150,000 to 450,000** platelets per microliter of blood.
- Having more than 450,000 platelets is a condition called **thrombocytosis**; having less than 150,000 is known as **thrombocytopenia**.

Symptoms of low platelets include **bruising easily and unusual bleeding**, such as excessive bleeding from a small cut or blood in urine or stool.

- Platelets can be **essential to surviving surgeries** such as organ transplant, as well as fighting cancer, chronic diseases, and traumatic injuries.
- **Donor platelets** are given to patients who **don't have enough** of their own, or when a person's platelets aren't working correctly.

FINANCIAL SERVICES INSTITUTIONS BUREAU (FSIB)?

FSIB recently recommended the name of SIDBI Chairman and Managing Director.



Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB) is a government body set up under the **Department of Financial Services (DFS)**, Ministry of Finance.

- The primary role of FSIB is to identify manpower capabilities and ensure proper selection of talent for senior positions at financial institutions owned by the government.
- It replaced the Bank Board's Bureau (BBB), which was declared an incompetent authority.
- **Structure:**
 - FSIB would be headed by a **chairman**, a **central government nominee**.
 - The board would comprise the **Secretaries of the DFS**, the **chairman of IRDAI**, and a **deputy governor of the RBI**.
 - Additionally, it will have **three part-time members** who are experts in **banking** and **three more from the insurance sector**.
- **Functions:**
 - To **recommend persons** for appointment as **whole-time directors (WTDs)** and **non-executive chairpersons (NECs)** on the Boards of Directors in Public Sector Banks (PSBs), financial institutions (FIs) and Public Sector Insurers (PSIs).
 - To advise the Government on matters relating to **appointments, transfers or extension** of term of office and termination of the services of the said directors;
 - It would also issue guidelines for selecting general managers and directors of public sector general insurance companies.
 - The final decision on the FSIB recommendation would be taken by the **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet**, headed by the Prime Minister.

- To advise the Government on the **desired management structure at the Board** level for PSBs, FIs and PSIs;
- To advise the Government on **a suitable performance appraisal system for WTDs** and NECs in PSBs, FIs, and PSIs;
- To **build a databank** containing data related to the performance of PSBs, FIs and PSIs;
- To advise the Government on the **formulation and enforcement of a code of conduct** and ethics for WTDs in PSBs, FIs, and PSIs;
- To advise the Government on evolving **suitable training and development programmes** for management personnel in PSBs, FIs, and PSIs;
- To help PSBs, FIs, and PSIs in terms of **developing business strategies** and **capital raising plan** etc.;
- To carry out such process and draw up a panel for consideration of competent authority for any other bank, financial institution, or insurer for which the Government makes a reference, after consultation with the regulator concerned with that bank, financial institution, or insurer.

WHAT IS GLOBAL FOREST WATCH (GFW)?

India has lost 2.33 million hectares of tree cover since 2000, according to the latest data from the Global Forest Watch monitoring project.



About Global Forest Watch (GFW):

- It is an **open-source web application** to monitor global forests in near real-time using satellite data and other sources. It is a project of the Washington-based nonprofit research organization, the **World Resources Institute (WRI)**.
- It is free and simple to use, enabling **anyone to create** custom maps, analyze forest trends, subscribe to alerts, or download data for their local area or the entire world.

- It refers to tree cover when talking about forest extent, loss, and gain. Tree cover is a convenient metric for monitoring forest change because it is easily measurable from space using freely available, medium-resolution satellite imagery.

Highlights of the GFW's annual forest loss data.:

- The **loss of primary forests**—those untouched by people and sometimes known as old-growth forests – in the tropics declined 9% last year compared to 2022.
- The world last year lost about **37,000 square kilometers** (14,000 square miles) of **tropical primary forest**, an area nearly as big as Switzerland.
- **Brazil**, the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, and **Bolivia** topped the ranking of tropical countries with the most primary forest losses.
- **Deforestation** globally rose by 3.2% in 2023.
- **India** has **lost 2.33 million hectares of tree cover since 2000**, equivalent to a six percent decrease in tree cover during this period.
- **Between 2001 and 2022, forests in India** emitted 51 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent a year and removed 141 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent a year. This represents a **net carbon sink** of 89.9 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent a year.
- **An average of 51.0 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per year** was **released** into the atmosphere as a result of tree cover loss in India.
- The data showed that **95 percent of the tree cover loss** in India from 2013 to 2023 **occurred within natural forests**.
- The GFW data showed that **five states accounted for 60 percent** of all tree cover losses between 2001 and 2023.
- **Assam** had the maximum tree cover loss at 324,000 hectares, compared to an average of 66,600 hectares. **Mizoram** lost 312,000 hectares of tree cover, **Arunachal Pradesh** 262,000 hectares, **Nagaland** 259,000 hectares, and **Manipur** 240,000 hectares.

PACE SATELLITE

NASA is now publicly distributing science-quality data from its newest Earth-observing PACE satellite.



- The **Plankton, Aerosol, Cloud, ocean Ecosystem (PACE)** satellite is placed in Sun-synchronous orbit.
- The primary science instrument for PACE is the **Ocean Colour Instrument (OCI)** which is designed to measure the **ocean's colour** across a spectrum from ultraviolet to shortwave infrared.
- It features two polarimeters – the **Spectro-polarimeter for Planetary Exploration (SPEXone)** and the **Hyper Angular Research Polarimeter (HARP2)**.
 - These two working together will offer complementary spectral and angular sampling, polarimetric accuracy, and spatial coverage.
 - It aims to provide improved **atmospheric correction** and a comprehensive range of aerosol and cloud science data beyond what the OCI alone could achieve.
- The synergistic payload of **OCI, SPEXone and HARP2** is poised to make significant breakthroughs in **aerosol-cloud-ocean research**.
- The OCI observes the **ocean, land and atmosphere** across a spectrum of ultraviolet, visible, and near infrared light. With this extensive spectral range, scientists can identify specific communities of phytoplankton.
- **Significance:** The data will allow researchers to study **microscopic life** in the ocean and particles in the air, advancing the understanding of issues including fisheries health, harmful algal blooms, air pollution, and wildfire smoke.
- With PACE, scientists also can investigate how the ocean and **atmosphere interact with each other** and are affected by a changing climate.

NEW ARMY DIVISION WITH A FOCUS ON EASTERN LADAKH

Why in news?

A plan that has been waiting for a long time to create a new Army division for possible deployment of troops to **eastern Ladakh** might happen this year. This is part of some changes being made for Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and the Ladakh area.

This is significant as India is commemorating the 40th year of Operation Meghdoot, under which it took control of the Siachen Glacier.

News army division

- **Creation of 72 Division**
 - The Army is considering raising the 72 Division for possible deployment in eastern Ladakh under the Northern Command.
 - The 72 Division was to originally function under the 17 Mountain Strike Corps (MSC) based in Panagarh (West Bengal).
 - A division has approximately 14,000 to 15,000 troops.
- **Restructuring of Army corps in the backdrop of the military standoff with China**
 - Currently, the Army has four strike corps — the Mathura-based 1 Corps, Ambala-based 2 Corps, Bhopal-based 21 Corps, and 17 MSC in Panagarh.
 - However, till 2021, only the 17 MSC was focused on China. The other three were focussed on Pakistan.
 - But in the backdrop of the military standoff with China which began in 2020, a restructuring was carried out in 2021 to keep two of the strike corps for the mountains facing China.
 - The 1 Corps and 17 Corps were restructured to focus on the northern and eastern borders to tackle Chinese threats.

Situation around LAC after Galwan incident

- India and China pushed in nearly 50,000-60,000 troops each along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) following the deadly clashes in the Galwan Valley in June 2020.
- Friction points such as Galwan Valley, north and south banks of Pangong Tso and the Gogra-Hot Springs area have seen some resolution in the last three years with the creation of buffer zones.

WHAT IS DOXXING?

In recent, doxxing incidents are increasing over internet across the globe.



- The word “doxxing” is derived from “**dropping dox**”. It is a form of online harassment involving the **publication of personal information** about an individual without their consent.

- This information can include details such as their full name, home address, telephone number, place of work and other sensitive information.
- It is often carried out to expose, threaten, or intimidate someone and can lead to severe consequences, such as physical harm, stalking, or loss of employment. Such information is usually obtained through illegal methods such as **hacking or theft**.

How to prevent?

- Use strong passwords that are not repeated across platforms, and set up multi-factor authentication where possible.
 - Avoid posting photos that reveal your neighbourhood, house facade, house keys, identifiable landmarks etc.
 - Reporting through the **National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal online** etc.
-