

### THE PARADOX OF BRICS, ITS NEW PATHWAY

#### Context

- There have been many multilateral groupings that prospered and lost their relevance with time.
- The case of **BRICS** is truly remarkable. Despite several achievements, it began to lose its sparkle but still many countries want to join BRICS.

#### The Concept of BRICS

- **BRICS** is an acronym for five regional economies: **Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa**.
- The first four were initially grouped as "BRIC" in 2001 by an economist Jim O'Neill, who coined the term to describe fast-growing economies that would collectively dominate the global economy by 2050.

#### Evolution of BRICS

- The leaders of BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) countries met for the first time in St. Petersburg, Russia, on the margins of G8 Outreach Summit in July 2006.
- After a series of high-level meetings, the 1st BRIC summit was held in Yekaterinburg, Russia on 16 June 2009.
- Later, BRIC group was renamed as **BRICS** after South Africa was accepted as a full member at the BRIC Foreign Ministers' meeting in New York in September
- BRICS has held 14 summits in the past 13 years.

#### Significance of BRICS

- BRICS is an important grouping bringing together the major emerging economies, comprising 41% of the world population, having 24% of the world GDP and over 16% share in the world trade.
- BRICS countries have been the main engines of global economic growth over the years.
- Over a period, BRICS countries have come together to deliberate on important issues under the three pillars of political and security, economic and financial and cultural and people to people exchanges.

## Countries eager to join BRICS

- **Latin America (4)** – Argentina, Nicaragua, Mexico, and Uruguay.
- **Africa (5)** – Nigeria, Algeria, Egypt, Senegal, and Morocco.
- **Asia (10)** – Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Türkiye, Syria, Iran, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Thailand, Kazakhstan, and Bangladesh.

## Options for Expansion

- **Mega expansion** that raises the membership from five to 21, thus surpassing the G-20.
- **Limited admission** of 10 new members, two each supported by an existing member.
- **Admission of only 5 new members**, one each supported by an existing member, with none of the other four using their veto.
  - **India favours expansion** if it is based on agreed criteria and moves gradually.
  - If the third option win consensus, **Argentina, Egypt, Indonesia, UAE, and Bangladesh are the most likely states to make the cut.**

## The New Pathway for BRICS

- **Expected Deliberation on Expansion**
  - The next BRICS summit will be hosted by **South Africa on August 23-24.**
  - It could take **decisions on expansion and its criteria.**
  - Preparatory meetings of the Foreign Ministers and the National Security Advisers are certain to deliberate on this subject.
- **Address the internal imbalance and strengthen the BRICS:** When the leaders talk, they should reflect on strengthening BRICS and redressing the internal imbalance.

## PARAKH

The Ministry of Education organised a workshop recently with the aim of unifying the 60 school examination boards operating in different States and union territories under one umbrella.



### Why in news?

- The workshop will study school assessments, examination practices and

equivalence of boards across the country.

- The main component of this plan is **PARAKH or the National Assessment Centre** which has been set up as an organisation under the National Council of Educational Research and Training.

## What is PARAKH?

- The benchmark assessment framework - PARAKH, has been proposed by the NEP 2020.
- It will function as a standard-setting body for student assessment and evaluation for all school boards in the country and will put an end to the emphasis on rote learning.
- The mandate of PARAKH is to work on **bringing the school boards across the States and the Union Territories to a common platform.**
- “As a first step, a workshop on PARAKH will act as a common platform for interaction of all concerned stakeholders in order to develop a holistic approach that ensures a fair assessment system which promotes equity in performance and equivalence in assessment of students.
- The aim is to **establish a unified framework that enables seamless transitions for students moving between different boards or regions.**
- This includes aligning curriculum standards, grading systems, and evaluation methodologies to enhance the credibility, recognition of certificates, and grades obtained across boards,

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## SENGOL

**A historical sceptre from Tamil Nadu 'Sengol' will be installed at the new Parliament building to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on May 28.**



### About Sengol:

- **Origin:**
  - It was used on August 14, 1947, by then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru when the transfer of power took place from the British. It was kept in a museum in Allahabad.
  - The word Sengol is derived from the Tamil word 'Semmai', meaning 'righteousness'. It is a civilisational practice from the Chola kingdom, which was among the leading kingdoms in the Indian sub-continent for centuries.

- **Symbolic:**

- According to Tamil tradition, a high priest presents a sceptre to a newly crowned king as a symbolic gesture of power transition.
- The one accorded the 'sengol' is expected to impart a just and impartial rule. C Rajagopalachari, the last Governor General of India, suggested that this tradition, observed by the Chola dynasty, could serve as a significant symbol of India's freedom from British rule.

- **Features:**

- The 'Sengol' was crafted by a renowned jeweller in Madras Vummidi Bangaru Chetty. This impressive sceptre measures five feet in length and features a 'nandi' bull at the top, representing the concept of justice.

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## 76<sup>th</sup> WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Recently, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare delivered the keynote address at a side event session on “Heal in India & Heal by India” at the 76th World Health Assembly, in Geneva.



### About the event:

‘Heal by India’ initiative is designed with **an intent to increase health workforce mobility** from India to **different parts of the world** to serve the world as per the Indian Philosophy of ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’ (The World is One Family).

- ‘Heal in India’ initiative **seeks to provide “integrated and holistic treatment” to the world in India** and enhance patient mobility for access to world class, affordable and quality healthcare services”.

### World Health Organization (WHO)

- WHO is a **specialized agency** of the United Nations responsible for international public health.
- It is headquartered in **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- It was established in 7 April 1948, which is commemorated as **World Health Day**.
- **Work:** the agency leads global efforts to expand **universal health coverage** and direct and coordinate the world’s **response to health emergencies**.

- **The World Health Assembly (WHA)**, composed of representatives from all 194 member states, serves as the agency's supreme decision-making body.
  - **Funding:** Voluntary donations from member states.
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## WHAT IS INSURANCE INFORMATION BUREAU OF INDIA (IIB)?

The Insurance Information Bureau of India (IIB) recently approached Cyberabad police stating that hackers from Russia encrypted their data through ransomware attack.



### **About Insurance Information Bureau of India (IIB):**

- IIB has been established by the insurance regulator, **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** in the year 2009, as a data repository and analytics body.
- It was registered as an **independent nonprofit earning society** on 21st November, 2012 under the **Andhra Pradesh Societies Registration Act 2001**.
- IIB was mandated to be **market neutral** and provide **independent and non judgmental analysis** to all stakeholders.
- It acts as the **Sole Repository and Analytics Body** for the entire **Insurance Sector** in India.
- **All the registered Insurance Companies** in India are mandated to submit data under Life, Motor, Health, Fire and Other Miscellaneous lines of Insurance business to **IIB**.
- It handles **huge data** and provides **analytical insights** and services to the stakeholders **through web services and applications**.

### **Key facts about Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI):**

- It is an **autonomous and statutory body** established under the **IRDA Act 1999**.
- It is the **apex body** that supervises and regulates the **insurance sector in India**.
- **Objective:** To protect the interests of policyholders, to regulate, promote and ensure orderly growth of the **insurance industry in India**.
- **Nodal Ministry:** Ministry of Finance
- **Head Office:** Hyderabad.

- **Composition:** IRDAI is a **10-member body**- a **Chairman**, **five full-time members**, and **four part-time members** appointed by the **Government of India**.

## **What is a Ransomware?**

- It is a type of **malware (malicious software)** that **locks a victim's data** or device and threatens to **keep it locked**—or worse—**unless the victim pays a ransom** to the attacker.

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## **WHAT ARE SMALL MODULAR REACTORS (SMRS)?**

Science and Technology Minister recently said that India is working on new technologies such as the small modular reactors.



### **About Small Modular Reactors (SMRs):**

- They are **advanced nuclear reactors** that have a **power capacity of up to 300 MW(e) per unit**, which is about **one-third of the** generating capacity of **traditional nuclear power reactors**.
- **SMRs**, which can produce a large amount of low-carbon electricity, **are:**
  - **Small**– physically a **fraction** of the size of a **conventional nuclear power reactor**.
  - **Modular** – making it possible for systems and **components to be factory-assembled and transported** as a unit to a location for installation.
  - **Reactors** – harnessing **nuclear fission** to generate heat to **produce energy**.
- **Advantages:**
  - **Relatively small physical footprints;**
  - **Reduced capital investment;**
  - **Can be factory-built** unlike the conventional nuclear reactors that are built on–site;
  - **Ability to be sited in locations not possible for larger nuclear plants;**
  - Provisions for **incremental power additions;**
  - It also **offer distinct safeguards, security and nonproliferation advantages**.
- They can be **used for power generation, process heat, desalination, or other industrial uses**.
- **SMRs can offer a carbon free, clean energy alternative to fossil fuels**.

## POWER TO PROMULGATE, REPROMULGATE ORDINANCES

### Why in News?

- The central government recently promulgated an Ordinance to undo a unanimous verdict of a 5-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court.
- The SC verdict gave the Delhi government control over the transfer and posting of officials in the National Capital Territory (NCT), except with regard to public order, police, and land.

### Power to Promulgate Ordinance:

- **Article 123** of the Indian Constitution empowers the **President** to promulgate Ordinances during recess of Parliament.
  - **Article 213** deals with the broadly analogous powers of the Governor to promulgate an Ordinance when the state legislature is not in session.
- **Article 123** reads “if at any time, **except when both Houses of Parliament are in session**, the President is satisfied that circumstances exist which render it necessary for him to take immediate action, he may promulgate Ordinances.”
  - Since the President acts on the advice of the Council of Ministers (Article 74), **it is in effect the government that decides to bring the Ordinance.**
- An Ordinance **shall have the same force and effect** as an Act of Parliament. But the government is required to bring an Ordinance before Parliament for **ratification**.
- If the government fails to do so **it will lead to its lapsing at the expiration of 6 weeks** from the reassembly of Parliament.
- The Ordinance **may lapse earlier if the President withdraws it/** if both Houses pass resolutions disapproving it (rejection, however, imply the government has lost majority.)

### Repromulgation of Ordinance:

- As lawmaking is a legislative function, Ordinance power is provided for **urgent requirements**.
- Therefore, to avoid lapsing of an Ordinance (6 weeks after the two Houses reassemble), **it has to be converted into an Act** (through Parliamentary ratifications) by then.
- **Repromulgation** of an Ordinance, on the other hand, essentially extends its life and allows the executive to usurp legislative power.

### SC Verdicts on Promulgation/ Repromulgation of Ordinances:

- **RC Cooper Case (1970):** On the basis that no immediate action was required and that the ordinance had solely been issued to avoid debate and discussion in the legislature, the President's decision to promulgate the ordinance might be challenged.
- **D C Wadhwa v. State of Bihar (1986):** It would be a colourable exercise of power for the Government to ignore the Legislature and re-promulgate the Ordinance while continuing to regulate the life and liberty of its citizens through Executive-made Ordinances.
- **Krishna Kumar Singh v. State of Bihar (2017):** A 7-judge Bench of the court reiterated that legislation should normally be done by the legislature, and the Governor's power to issue an Ordinance is in the nature of an **emergency power**.
- **Repeated re-promulgations** without bringing the Ordinance to the legislature would usurp the legislature's function and would be unconstitutional.

### **Ordinance w.r.t Power over Services in the NCT:**

- It gave the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi, who is appointed by the Centre, **power over services**.
- It established a **National Capital Civil Service Authority** - comprising the Chief Minister and two senior IAS officials.
- It would decide matters by majority of votes of the members present and voting - essentially **creating a situation in which the view of the elected CM could potentially be overruled**.

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## [CJI CHANDRACHUD CONDEMNS 'FORUM SHOPPING': WHAT IS THIS PRACTICE?](#)

### **Why in News?**

- Recently, to a litigant appearing before him, the Chief Justice of India (CJI) **DY Chandrachud** said that he will not permit forum shopping.

### **What is Forum Shopping?**



- **When litigants or lawyers attempt to deliberately move their case to a particular judge or Court where they think the judgment could be more favourable, they are said to be "forum shopping."**



- Webster's dictionary defines forum shopping as –
  - “practice of choosing the court in which to bring an action from among those courts that could properly exercise jurisdiction based on a determination of which court is likely to provide the most favourable outcome.”
- Lawyers think about which is the right forum to approach as part of their litigation strategy.
- For example, one could directly approach the Supreme Court via a public interest litigation case instead of the concerned High Court because the issue could get more eyeballs.

### **Criticism of this Practice:**

- Forum shopping is an obvious **attempt to circumvent the process or avoid a particular judge and that is why it is frowned upon by the judges.**
  - Judges have cited the injustice caused to the other party in the case and overburdening some courts over others and interfering with judicial process.
  - Even the US and UK courts have criticised the practice of forum shopping as something to be avoided or prohibited.
    - For instance, in the US, it has been reported that more than 40% of the patent suits are filed in a Federal Court in East Texas.
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