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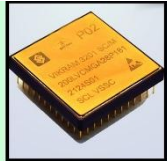
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Current Affairs - 03 September 2025

WHAT IS VIKRAM 3201?



Vikram 3201

- It is **India's first fully indigenous 32-bit microprocessor.**
- **Designed by the Vikram Sarabhai Space Center (VSSC), Vikram 3201 has been built by the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) Semiconductor Laboratory (SCL) in Chandigarh.**
- Unlike processors in everyday devices like smartphones or laptops, this one is **designed specifically for rockets and satellites.**
- It is an **upgrade to Vikram 1601, a 16-bit processor that has powered ISRO's launch vehicles since 2009.**
- The Vikram 3201 marks the **first time India has indigenously designed and fabricated a processor of this scale and specification for launch vehicle avionics.**
- What will the Vikram 32-bit Processor do?
 - The chip's job is to **handle navigation, control, and mission management in launch vehicles**, performing the **split-second calculations** needed to keep rockets stable and on course.
 - Because space environments are harsh, the chip is manufactured to **military-grade standards** and rigorously tested to ensure it can keep **working in extreme heat, cold, vibration, and radiation.**
 - The Vikram 3201 is built to **withstand the extreme conditions of space missions**, including temperatures from **-55 degrees Celsius to +125 degrees Celsius.**
 - Unlike its predecessor, the new chip **supports 64-bit floating-point operations, Ada programming language compatibility**, and features on-chip 1553B bus interfaces for reliable communication during missions.
 - It can **handle substantial memory** and execute complex instructions needed for launching satellites and space vehicles.



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COCONUT DEVELOPMENT BOARD



- It is a **statutory body** established under the **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare**, Government of India
- It was established for the **integrated development of coconut production** and utilization in the country with focus on productivity increase and product diversification.
- The board came into existence on **12th January 1981**.
- **Regional offices:** It has regional Offices at **Bangalore** in Karnataka, **Chennai** in Tamil Nadu, **Guwahati** in Assam and **Patna** in Bihar.
- **Headquarters:** Kochi in Kerala
- **Functions of Coconut Development Board**
 - Adopting **measures for the development** of the coconut industry, inter alia
 - Imparting **technical advice** to those engaged in coconut cultivation and industry
 - **Providing financial and other assistance** for the expansion of the area under coconut
 - Encouraging adoption of modern technologies for processing of coconut and its products
 - Adopting measures to **get incentive prices** for coconut and its products
 - **Recommending measures** for improving marketing of coconut and its products
 - **Recommending measures for regulating imports** and exports of coconut and its products
 - Fixing grades, specifications and standards for coconut and its products.

BHARATI INITIATIVE



- BHARATI, stands for **Bharat's Hub for Agritech, Resilience, Advancement and Incubation for Export Enablement**.



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- It has been designed to **empower 100 agri-food and agri-tech startups**, accelerate their journey, promote innovation and create new export **opportunities for young entrepreneurs**.
- It is conceived as APEDA's vision to **achieve \$50 billion in agri-food exports** for its Scheduled Products by 2030,
- It is structured to complement and enhance industry and **government-led incubation programmes** in the **agriculture, food and food processing sectors**.
- It seeks to drive innovation in high-value categories such as **GI-tagged agri-products, organic foods, superfoods**, novel processed Indian agri-foods, livestock products and AYUSH products.
- The initiative also aims to attract startups working on advanced technologies such as AI-based quality control, **blockchain-enabled traceability, IoT-enabled cold chains** and agri-fintech, while addressing critical areas like innovative packaging, sustainability and sea protocols.
- BHARATI seeks to **resolve export challenges** related to product development, value addition, quality assurance, perishability, wastage and logistics.
- By fostering a collaborative ecosystem, the programme will connect agri-food innovators, tech-driven solution providers and **SPS-TBT-focused startups to deliver scalable, cost-effective solutions** that enhance India's global competitiveness.
- It will create **globally competitive agri-products**, fuel demand-driven backward integration for food innovation and boost global demand for Indian food, beverage and processed food products and services.
- The initiative includes a **nationwide awareness campaign** to engage stakeholders and attract solution-oriented startups from across India, along with an application and selection process through the APEDA website to **shortlist 100 startups** for the export enablement programme.
- **Significance:** The initiative marks a significant step to strengthen India's agricultural and processed food exports.



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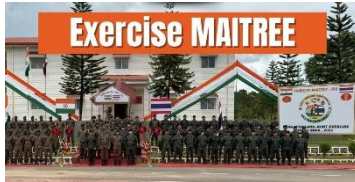
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EXERCISE MAITREE



- It is the joint military exercise **between India and Thailand.**
 - Exercise MAITREE, **instituted in 2006**, is one of the important joint training exercises between India and Thailand.
 - The bilateral exercise is part of the ongoing **military-to-military exchange programme** between the two countries and aims to enhance **cooperation, interoperability** and mutual understanding between the Indian Army and Royal Thai Army.
 - The current edition further reinforces the bilateral defence cooperation and reflects the shared commitment of both Armies towards peace, stability and security in the region.
 - The **13th edition** of the exercise was held at Fort **Vachiraprakan in Tak Province, Thailand.**
 - The Indian Army contingent is being represented by a **Battalion of the Madras Regiment.**
 - The joint exercise will focus on company level counter-terrorist operations in **semi-urban terrain under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.**
 - The programme includes **tactical drills, joint planning, special arms skills**, physical fitness and raiding operations. The exercise will culminate with a 48-hour validation exercise, simulating realistic operational scenarios.
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ONE IN 100 DEATHS IS BY SUICIDE: WHO

- Mental health is an integral part of health; it is more than the absence of mental illnesses.
- It is the foundation for well-being and effective functioning of individuals. It includes mental well-being, prevention of mental disorders, treatment and rehabilitation.



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- **Most Common Disorders** - Anxiety and depressive disorders are the most prevalent, together making up over two-thirds of all mental health conditions in 2021.
- **Rising Global Prevalence** - Between 2011 and 2021, mental disorders grew faster than population growth, raising the global age-standardized prevalence to 13.6%, a 0.9% increase in a decade.

Age-Related Trends

- **Young Adults (20–29 years):** Largest increase in prevalence (+1.8%) since 2011.
- **Children (<10 years):** Depressive disorders are rare.
- **Middle-Aged Adults (40–69 years):** Depressive disorders surpass anxiety, peaking between 50–69 years.
- **Gender Differences**
 - **Males:** More prone to attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), autism spectrum disorders, and intellectual developmental disorders.
 - **Females:** More affected by anxiety, depression, and eating disorders.

Prospects for Reducing Suicide Rates by 2030

- Suicide remains the leading cause of death among young people worldwide, but progress in reducing rates is insufficient to meet the UN's **target of a one-third reduction by 2030**.
 - Current trends indicate only a 12% reduction will be achieved.
 - Experts stress that sustained financing, strong leadership, and effective execution of prevention programs are crucial.
 - Suicide is driven by **multiple factors** — including family history, vulnerable temperament, early trauma, stressful environments, isolation, stigma, and lack of accessible mental health services.
 - Tackling these risks holistically is essential for meaningful progress.
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WHAT IS WET AND DRY LEASE OF AIRCRAFTS?

Wet and Dry Lease



- In a wet lease, airlines acquire a fully operational aircraft along with a crew (pilots and cabin crew), maintenance personnel, and insurance (aircraft, crew, maintenance, and insurance).
 - The lessee retains control over commercial operations (schedules, routes), while the lessor manages the operational aspects.
 - This option is ideal for short-term exigencies such as seasonal spikes, route testing, or covering for grounded aircraft.
- In a dry lease, the airline rents only the aircraft itself, without crew, maintenance, or insurance.
 - The lessee assumes full responsibility for these operational components, employing their own crews, arranging maintenance in accordance with DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation) regulations, and obtaining appropriate insurance coverage.
- Dry leases are well-suited for long-term fleet expansion or modernization strategies.
- Aircraft leasing in India is governed by a robust legal framework, with the DGCA playing a pivotal role.
- Operations of an aircraft on wet lease are not encouraged by the DGCA, as the crew is often not approved by Indian authorities.

What is Damp Leasing?

- The damp lease is a more limited variant of the wet lease.
- It is a leasing agreement under which an airline, the lessor, leases one of its aircraft, including flight crew and maintenance services, to another air operator.
- However, unlike wet leasing, damp leasing does not include cabin crew, who must be assigned by the lessee.
- For this reason, a damp lease is referred to as a partial wet lease: the lessee is responsible for providing his own competent cabin crew.



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WHAT IS THE FOREIGNERS TRIBUNAL (FT)?



- These are **quasi-judicial** bodies formed through the **Foreigners (Tribunals) Order of 1964** under **Section 3** of the **Foreigners' Act of 1946**, to let local authorities in a State refer a person suspected to be a foreigner to tribunals.
- **Are FTs meant only for Assam?**
 - The **Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964**, **applies to the whole of India**, yet **FTs exist only in Assam as of now**.
 - **In other states**, if any **illegal immigrant** is found, he is **produced before a local court** and dealt with as per the **Foreigners Act, 1946**.
 - **Prior to the 2019 amendment** to the **Foreigners (Tribunals) Order, 1964**, **only the Centre** was **empowered to establish FTs in states**, but **after this amendment**, the **power has been granted to states as well**.
- **Composition:** Each FT is **headed** by a member **drawn from judges, advocates, and civil servants with judicial experience**.
- **Powers:** According to the 1964 order, an FT has the powers of a **civil court** in certain matters, such as **summoning and enforcing the attendance of any person and examining him or her on oath and requiring the production of any document**.
- **Functioning:**
 - A **tribunal is required to serve a notice** in English or the official language of the State to a **person alleged to be a foreigner within 10 days** of receiving the reference from the authority concerned.
 - Such a **person has 10 days to reply** to the notice and **another 10 days to produce evidence** in support of his or her case.
 - An FT **has to dispose of a case within 60 days** of reference.
 - **If the person fails to provide any proof** of citizenship, the FT **can send him or her to a detention centre**, now called **transit camp**, for deportation later.



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INDIA NEEDS MORE WOMEN JUDGES IN THE SUPREME COURT

- Since its establishment in 1950, the Supreme Court has had only eleven women judges, constituting roughly 3.8% of the 287 judges appointed to date.
- This small proportion highlights the slow pace of gender inclusion. The appointment of Justice Fathima Beevi in 1989 was a landmark moment, but subsequent progress has been limited.
- The Collegium decision in August 2021, which elevated three women judges simultaneously, briefly increased women's representation above 10%.
- This was unprecedented, but the momentum was not sustained, and subsequent appointments reverted to established patterns of exclusion.
- The demographic profile of these eleven judges also reveals further gaps. No woman judge has ever been appointed from the Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes, and only Justice Fathima Beevi has represented a religious minority.
- Moreover, the pathway of direct elevation from the Bar, often regarded as an important route into the higher judiciary, has overwhelmingly benefited men.
- While nine male lawyers have been appointed directly to the Supreme Court since 1950, only one woman, Justice Indu Malhotra, has achieved this distinction.

Structural Barriers to Advancement

- Another notable trend is the relatively late age at which women judges are appointed to the Court. This restricts their tenure and limits their ability to attain seniority.
- For example, several women judges have served for fewer than three years, diminishing their influence in the Court's institutional processes.
- This has also affected their opportunities to participate in the Collegium, which plays a decisive role in appointments.



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- **Justice Nagarathna is expected to become the first woman Chief Justice of India in 2027**, but her term will last only 36 days, an appointment more symbolic than substantive in institutional impact.
- **These patterns suggest that structural barriers**, rather than individual merit, have constrained women's advancement.
- **The absence of systematic efforts to address these barriers perpetuates a cycle of underrepresentation.**

The Collegium System and Gender Blindness

- **The process of judicial appointments through the Collegium system has long been criticised** for its opacity.
- While the Memorandum of Procedure outlines the broad framework, where the Chief Justice of India, in consultation with the four senior-most judges, makes recommendations that are forwarded to the executive, **the actual criteria guiding selection remain unspecified.**
- Although caste, religion, and regional representation are occasionally cited, **gender has not been institutionalised as a factor.**
- **Attempts at transparency have been inconsistent.** During the tenure of Chief Justice Dipak Misra, Collegium resolutions with stated reasons were made public, but this practice has not been consistently followed by his successors.
- **The absence of clarity creates a system in which gender considerations remain at the margins**, dependent on the priorities of individual decision-makers rather than embedded within institutional policy.

Conclusion

- **The analysis of women's representation in the Supreme Court of India reveals structural and procedural gaps** that perpetuate gender imbalance.
 - **The issue is not simply about fairness to women candidates but about the institutional legitimacy** of the judiciary itself.
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