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EOS-05 - INDIA'S "EYE IN THE SKY"

- The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched the 2,367-kg EOS-05, an advanced **Earth Observation Satellite** (EOS), aboard **GSLV Mk II-F17** from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota.
- The mission is significant because EOS-05 is India's **first** dedicated imaging satellite placed in a geosynchronous orbit, enabling near-continuous observation of the Indian landmass.
- The success also provided a major boost to the GSLV programme, following the failure of the EOS-03 mission in 2021 and subsequent setbacks involving PSLV missions.

A New Capability in Earth Observation:

- **"Eye in the Sky":**
 - EOS-05 has been positioned in a high-altitude orbit of around 36,000 km, above the South Asian landmass, at an inclination of about 19.28° to the equator.
 - **Geosynchronous orbit** means the satellite's orbital period matches Earth's rotation, allowing it to return to the same position relative to Earth at regular intervals.
 - A geostationary orbit is a special case of geosynchronous orbit—circular, equatorial and appearing stationary over one point on Earth.
 - EOS-05's inclined orbit is therefore more precisely described as geosynchronous rather than strictly geostationary.
 - Unlike conventional Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Earth-observation satellites, which periodically pass over the same region, EOS-05 can maintain an **almost-continuous watch** over the Indian region.
- **Advanced imaging:**
 - The satellite carries multi-spectral and hyper-spectral imaging capabilities, allowing -
 - Weather and cloud monitoring.

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- Rapid assessment of cyclones, floods and cloudbursts.
- Agricultural and crop assessments.
- Earth-resource monitoring.
- Near-real-time imagery for strategic applications.
- It can capture selected field images approximately every five minutes and cover the entire country in around 30 minutes.
- Its assured mission life is seven years, with the possibility of **operational longevity** beyond this period.

Strategic Significance:

- EOS-05 has been described as a “strategic satellite” and an “Eye in the Sky”.
- Its **high-altitude imaging** capability can strengthen India's ability to continuously monitor its territory and surrounding areas.
- **Its applications include:**
 - **Border surveillance:** Continuous observation can supplement existing terrestrial and space-based surveillance systems.
 - **Disaster management:** Rapid imagery can improve early warning, damage assessment and post-disaster response.
 - **Agriculture:** Frequent observations can support crop monitoring, agricultural assessment and planning.
 - **Weather monitoring:** Persistent observation is particularly valuable for tracking rapidly evolving weather systems.
- Thus, EOS-05 represents a shift from periodic Earth observation towards persistent, high-frequency space-based monitoring.
- The satellite's **multi-spectral** and **hyperspectral** capabilities also expand the range of information that can be extracted from imagery compared with conventional optical observation.

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NEPAL SEEKS CLIMATE COMPENSATION FROM MAJOR EMITTERS AFTER GLACIAL DISASTER

- Following a catastrophic glacial collapse and flash flood on August 26 that killed over 1,200 people, Nepal has launched a diplomatic demand for climate compensation from the world's three biggest emitters, the United States, China and India.

The Disaster and Nepal's Response

- Nepal's Foreign Minister declared that the country was "paying the ultimate price for a global crisis we did not create."
- What makes Nepal's response significant is not the scale of the tragedy alone but the shift in approach. Instead of issuing the customary appeals for humanitarian aid, Kathmandu launched a diplomatic offensive demanding direct climate compensation.
- By moving foreign policy from seeking charity to enforcing legal liability, Nepal has turned a national disaster into a global test of climate justice, forcing the international community to confront the limits of adaptation.

The Third Pole Paradox

- The injustice Nepal represents is stark in numerical terms.
- Nepal contributes a negligible 0.1% of global greenhouse gas emissions and generates almost all its electricity from renewable hydropower. Yet its geography places it at the epicentre of global warming.
- The **Hindu Kush Himalayas**, often called the "Third Pole", are warming at nearly twice the global average, melting glaciers at ten times their historical norms.

Economic Devastation

- Nepal's development strategy rested heavily on hydropower. The country had planned to harness its 43,000 MW of commercially viable capacity to become a regional energy exporter, and had only recently achieved net-exporter status.
- The August floods reversed this in a matter of days:
 - Approximately 10% of installed capacity was crippled

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- Older surface-level plants such as Devighat were wiped out
- Under-construction projects were completely buried in mud
- Nepal was forced to halt exports and import power to survive the winter
- Rebuilding will require climate-resilient, underground engineering, driving up future project costs by 10% to 12%.
- Total damages are estimated between \$4 billion and \$7 billion, roughly a tenth of Nepal's entire GDP.

Why This Matters Beyond Nepal?

- Nepal's diplomatic gambit has already altered the landscape, regardless of its immediate outcome.
- Even if Kathmandu does not extract a multi-billion-dollar cheque, its stance has exposed the profound inadequacies of global climate diplomacy.
- The gap between the scale of climate damage and the scale of available compensation is now impossible to ignore.
- More significantly, Nepal has shifted the framework from charity to liability, setting a disruptive precedent for the entire Global South that heavy emitters will find increasingly difficult to dismiss.

Implications for India

- This incident carries particular consequences for Indian climate diplomacy.
- India has long argued for differentiated responsibility based on historical emissions and per-capita metrics.
- Nepal's application of that principle within South Asia creates an uncomfortable position, one where India finds itself on the receiving end of an argument it has advanced globally.
- At the same time, India faces genuine Himalayan climate risk itself. Glacier retreat threatens river systems supporting hundreds of millions across northern India, making the region's ecological stability a shared rather than purely bilateral concern.

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AGENTIC AI SKILLING PROGRAM



- It is aimed at expanding access to **industry-aligned Agentic AI learning opportunities** and contributing to the development of a future-ready AI talent ecosystem in the country.
- It was launched by the **National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT), Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)**, in collaboration with Intel India.

What is Agentic AI?

- It is an **advanced form of artificial intelligence** focused on autonomous decision-making and action.
- It **consists of AI agents**—machine learning models that mimic human decision-making to solve problems in real time.
- Unlike traditional AI, which primarily responds to commands or analyzes data, **agentic AI can set goals, plan, and execute tasks** with minimal human intervention.
- “Agentic” indicates agency — the ability of these systems to act independently, but in a goal-driven manner.
- At its core, this technology is built on several key components:
 - **Perception:** Agentic AI starts by **gathering information from its surroundings** and different sources, such as sensors, databases, and user interfaces.
 - **Reasoning:** Using a **large language model (LLM)**, agentic AI analyzes the gathered data to understand the context, identify relevant information, and formulate potential solutions.
 - **Planning:** The AI then **uses the information it gathered to develop a plan**. This involves setting goals, breaking them down into smaller steps, and figuring out the best way to achieve them.

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- **Action:** Based on its plan, the AI takes action. This could involve performing tasks, making decisions, or interacting with other systems.
- **Reflection:** After taking action, the AI learns from the results. It evaluates whether its actions were successful and uses this feedback to adjust its plans and actions in the future.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION



- It is a specialized agency of the **United Nations (UN)** that leads international efforts to defeat hunger.
- It is the **oldest permanent specialized** agency of the UN, **established in October 1945**.
- **Mandate:** To improve nutrition, increase agricultural productivity, raise the standard of living in rural populations, and contribute to global economic growth.
- **Functions:**
 - The FAO coordinates the **efforts of governments and technical agencies** in programs for developing agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and land and water resources.
 - It leads international efforts to fight hunger.
 - It is **both a forum** for negotiating agreements between developing and developed countries and a source of technical knowledge and information to aid development.
- **Members:** It currently has **195 members – 194 countries** and the **European Union**. (India is a founding member of FAO)
- **Funding:** FAO receives its **funding from its member countries**.
- **Reports published by the FAO:** The State of the World's Forests (SOFO), The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (SOFIA), The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets (SOCO), The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI).
- **Headquarters:** Rome, Italy.

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THE GULF IS CALLING AND NEW DELHI MUST LISTEN

- For decades, India approached West Asia through **strategic caution, economic pragmatism** and diplomatic balancing.
- The region was primarily a source of **crude oil, employment and remittances**, while New Delhi maintained relations with competing powers such as Saudi Arabia, Iran, Israel and the UAE.
- This policy of **multi-alignment** allowed India to maximise economic benefits without becoming involved in regional conflicts, however, West Asia's geopolitical environment is changing rapidly.
- The changing American role, emerging regional security arrangements and growing threats to trade routes require India to reconsider its traditional approach. Economic influence alone can no longer guarantee strategic relevance.

Why Economic Ties Alone Are Insufficient?

- Economic relationships cannot protect infrastructure from **drones, asymmetric warfare**, terrorism and maritime disruption.
- Ports, energy facilities and logistics corridors can remain vulnerable despite massive technological investment.
- For India, instability directly threatens commercial interests and the welfare of its large Gulf diaspora.

The Strategic Gap Facing India

- India's dependence on **transactional diplomacy** is becoming a weakness.
- High-level visits, investment agreements, energy contracts and diaspora diplomacy remain valuable but cannot replace **naval protection**, intelligence cooperation and strategic deterrence.
- Regional powers increasingly seek defence cooperation, intelligence sharing, counter-terrorism capabilities and maritime security. If India remains hesitant, other powers will fill the strategic vacuum.

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The Hard Moves India Must Make

- India should evolve from a **beneficiary of regional stability** into an active contributor to security.
- It should expand maritime cooperation across the Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Oman, Gulf of Aden, Somali waters and Bab-el-Mandab.
- This requires **joint naval patrols, logistics access**, maritime surveillance and information-sharing networks with friendly regional states.
- India should also use its expanding **defence manufacturing ecosystem** to offer West Asian countries alternatives in military technology.
- Joint production, military exercises, defence research and technology partnerships should complement arms sales.
- Greater intelligence and counter-terrorism cooperation would further strengthen regional security.

Balancing Ambition with Strategic Autonomy

- India must increase its security role without becoming entangled in West Asian conflicts.
- Strategic engagement should therefore focus on **maritime security**, deterrence, intelligence and protection of economic interests, rather than permanent military intervention.
- Such an approach would preserve **strategic autonomy** while giving India greater influence over developments that directly affect its national interests.

Conclusion

- India's traditional West Asia policy succeeded because it matched the geopolitical conditions of its time.
- India needs a new balance between **economic engagement and security responsibility**.
- The objective should not be unnecessary military intervention but the creation of sufficient strategic capacity to safeguard Indian interests.
- **India must evolve** from being merely an economic partner to becoming an active and credible security stakeholder in West Asia.

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KEY FACTS ABOUT SUKHNA LAKE



- It is an **artificial lake** located in the city of **Chandigarh** at the **foothills of the Shivalik hills**.
- It came into existence in **1958** when the **Sukhna Choe**, a seasonal stream originating from the **Shivalik Hills**, was **dammed**.
- Initially spanning 230 hectares, the **lake's area diminished** to approximately 154 hectares by 2007 due to siltation, leading to the **creation of the Sukhna Lake Reserve Forest**.
- Over time, the **water level dropped** from 5 meters in 1958 to 2 meters by 2004, exacerbated by significant soil erosion from the 4,200-hectare catchment area.
- The **water flowing into the lake is heavily loaded with silt**. Due to higher run-off, there is an **accelerated pace of erosion in the catchment areas**, resulting in the **higher rate of sedimentation** in the reservoir of Sukhna Lake and streambeds.
- The lake is **fringed by a golf course to the south**, and the famous **Nek Chand Rock Garden** of Chandigarh to its west.
- The lake is declared a **National Wetland** by the Government of India.

During winter, Sukhna Lake transforms into a haven for diverse **migratory birds** such as **Siberian ducks, storks, and cranes**, hosting around 30 resident and migratory species.

- The lake is also a **part of the Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary**.
- Sukhna Lake has the **longest channel for rowing and yachting events in Asia**.