MANTHAN

JUNE 2025 : WEEK-3

Contents

1. G7 summit: Who is attending and what's on the agenda?

- Leaders of the Group of Seven (G7) countries – Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the US – met in the remote town of Kananaskis, Alberta, nestled in the foothills of the Canadian Rockies, for three days of intense discussions.

- This was the 51st G7 summit meeting.

- The first took place in 1975 in Rambouillet, France.

- Back then, it was known as the G6 meeting, as Canada did not become a member until the following year.

- Russia joined the forum in 1998, making it the G8, but was effectively expelled in 2014, following its annexation of Crimea.

- Since then, the forum has been known as the G7.

- The G7 represents 44 percent of global gross domestic product (GDP) but only 10 percent of the world's population.

- Within the group, the US is by far the largest economy.

- Having campaigned for the presidency on an "America First" message, Trump has frequently expressed displeasure about how much it contributes to global affairs.

Who is attending the G7 meeting this year?

- Canada is hosting this year's G7 summit for the seventh time, with Prime Minister Mark Carney leading the event. Alongside leaders from the G7 countries and the European Union, Carney has extended invitations to several non-G7 leaders as part of a broader diplomatic effort. Notable invitees include Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum, who recently confirmed her attendance, and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman was also invited, though his attendance remains uncertain.

- Carney defended his decision, emphasizing India's significant global economic role as the world's fifth-largest economy and a key player in international trade supply chains.

- He also highlighted recent diplomatic progress, including renewed law enforcement dialogue between Canada and India, as part of the rationale behind the invitation.
- Carney's broader strategy appears aimed at diversifying Canada's international partnerships beyond its traditional reliance on the United States.
- As part of this outreach, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has also been invited, along with leaders from Australia, Brazil, Indonesia, South Africa, and South Korea.
- These invitations reflect Carney's intent to make the G7 summit more globally inclusive and responsive to emerging geopolitical and economic realities.

Will they discuss US trade tariffs?

- During his current presidency, Donald Trump has imposed broad tariffs on all G7 member countries and many others globally, triggering a trade war. His stated goal is to reduce large trade deficits between the U.S. and its trading partners.
- However, trade tensions are unlikely to be formally addressed at the G7 summit, as host Mark Carney is expected to focus on preventing further fallout among member states, many of which are still seeking trade agreements with the U.S.
- The UK was the first to reach a deal with the U.S. in May, agreeing to lower tariffs on American goods from 5.1% to 1.8% and granting more market access.
- In return, the U.S. dropped elevated tariffs but maintained a universal 10% tariff. The EU and Japan are also aiming to finalize agreements before Trump's 90-day pause on reciprocal tariffs ends on July 9.
- Trump had a contentious history with the G7, notably storming out of the 2018 summit and criticizing Canadian PM Justin Trudeau. Experts believe he is less likely to repeat such behavior this year.
- John Kirton of the G7 Research Group noted Trump's improved relations with Carney and his desire to host a landmark G7 summit in 2027 as reasons for a more measured approach.

So, what will be on the agenda for this G7 meeting?

- The G7 Summit 2025 has outlined three primary agenda items: protecting global communities, building energy security while advancing the digital transition, and securing future partnerships.
- These core themes reflect the group's commitment to addressing pressing global challenges, including climate resilience, technological innovation, and strategic international cooperation.
- However, the ongoing conflict between Israel and Iran is expected to dominate the discussions, given its potential to escalate regional instability and global security concerns.
- If this conflict does not overshadow the entire summit, G7 leaders are also expected to deliberate on other significant global matters.
- Among these, global trade tensions will be a key focus, particularly as countries grapple with economic uncertainties and supply chain realignments.
- The continuing Russia-Ukraine war remains a central concern, with implications for energy supplies, geopolitical alliances, and humanitarian issues.
- Additionally, China's growing influence in global affairs—economically, militarily, and diplomatically—will be a critical discussion point. The G7 aims to present a unified front in managing strategic competition with China, balancing cooperation with caution.
- Overall, while the summit's official agenda covers a wide spectrum of forward-looking priorities, immediate geopolitical conflicts and major global power dynamics are likely to shape much of the conversation and outcomes.

Israel-Iran crisis

- Julia Kulik of the G7 Research Group stated that G7 discussions, initially expected to focus on the Russia-Ukraine war and Israel-Gaza conflict, will now likely shift toward Iran.
- She emphasized that leaders will question Donald Trump about failed negotiations and pressure him to de-escalate the situation with Israel. Highlighting the G7's role as a crisis-response body, she noted the timing of the meeting as crucial for quick action.
- Robert Rogowsky from the Middlebury Institute added that the recent Middle East crisis is unavoidable in G7 talks. He warned that the current escalation raises the risk of a full-scale regional war, forcing neighboring countries to determine their positions.

Global trade

- At the upcoming G7 summit, while Mark Carney aims to focus on less contentious topics like strengthening global supply chains for critical minerals, China is likely to feature prominently in discussions.
- A recent G7 finance ministers' statement highlighted concerns over "nonmarket policies and practices," widely interpreted as criticism of China's trade and lending strategies, which are seen as distorting global trade and increasing debt burdens in developing nations.
- Additionally, G7 leaders are expected to address growing security concerns over China's military expansion and rising tensions with Taiwan in the East and South China Seas.

Russia-Ukraine war

- Following a mid-March meeting in Quebec, G7 foreign ministers reaffirmed strong support for Ukraine and indicated that finance ministers were considering further sanctions on Russia if it did not agree to a ceasefire.
- In May, the UK and EU introduced new sanctions against Russia.
- However, former U.S. President Donald Trump, who has been in talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin, stated that the U.S. would not adopt similar measures.
- As a result, discussions this week are likely to focus on sanctions and efforts to secure a ceasefire.

Global development

- Global development, particularly in African countries, has long been a primary focus of G7 discussions.
- However, this year, the US has made clear that it wishes to de-prioritise economic and humanitarian assistance for other countries.
- It has largely shuttered the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and says it plans large cuts to funding for other health and development initiatives overseas, as well.

What meetings could take place on the sidelines of the G7 summit?

US-EU

- Donald Trump is expected to hold meetings with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Japan's prime minister, Shigeru Ishiba. Both leaders are eager to agree on a trade deal with Trump as soon as possible to avoid reciprocal tariffs, due to come back into place following a pause in early July.

US-Canada-Mexico

- Trump, Carney and Mexico's Claudia Sheinbaum may also hold a separate meeting of North American leaders on trade and border security. In February, Trump postponed his planned 25-percent import tariffs on Canadian and Mexican goods at the last minute. Canada's then-Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and

Sheinbaum both agreed to increase border security to prevent the trafficking of drugs and migrants into the US, averting a trade war. Trump says he has been particularly concerned about the flow of the drug fentanyl into the US from both Canada and Mexico.

US-South Africa

- South Africa's president, Cyril Ramaphosa, has told reporters he will have a second meeting with Trump during the G7 summit, following the two leaders' meeting in Washington, DC, when Trump accused South Africa of "genocide" against white farmers.
- Earlier in May, 59 white "refugees" were flown from South Africa to the US as part of a relocation plan for white South Africans devised by the Trump administration.

G7 (Group of Seven)

- The G7 (Group of Seven) is a powerful and influential intergovernmental organization consisting of some of the world's most advanced economies.

What is the G7?

- The G7 is a political and economic forum comprising seven major developed countries:
  - United States
  - United Kingdom
  - Canada
  - France
  - Germany
  - Italy
  - Japan

The European Union (EU) is also represented.

- Founded in the 1970s (originally as the G6 in 1975), it became the G7 with Canada joining in 1976.
- It has no permanent secretariat or legal binding authority but holds annual summits where leaders discuss pressing global issues.

Importance and Significance

1. Global Economic Power

- G7 countries represent ~45% of global GDP (2024 estimates).
- They are leaders in finance, technology, trade, and development aid.

2. Policy Leadership

- Sets the tone for global economic governance, including responses to recessions, inflation, or crises like the 2008 financial meltdown and COVID-19 pandemic.
- Influences institutions like the IMF, World Bank, WTO, and OECD.

3. Security and Geopolitical Influence

- Coordinates on global security challenges, including terrorism, cyber threats, Russia's war in Ukraine, and China's strategic behavior.
- Supports democratic values, international law, and human rights.

4. Climate and Development

- G7 leads on climate change initiatives (like climate finance and carbon reduction goals).

- Mobilizes aid for developing nations (e.g., G7's backing of the Paris Agreement, Just Energy Transition Partnerships).

Role of G7 in Global Affairs

1. Crisis Management
- Acts as a rapid-response forum to global crises (e.g., COVID-19, Ukraine war, financial crashes).

2. Global Governance Advocacy
- Promotes rules-based international order, reform in multilateral organizations, and strengthening of democratic institutions.

3. Sanctions and Diplomacy
- Coordinates sanctions regimes (e.g., against Iran, North Korea, and Russia).
- Influences diplomatic efforts like ceasefires, peacebuilding, and nuclear disarmament.

4. Technology and AI
- Shapes global discourse on digital economy, AI governance, cybersecurity, and internet regulation.

Successes of the G7

1. Economic Stabilization
- Played a central role during the 1980s debt crisis, the 2008 financial crisis, and post-pandemic recovery efforts.

2. Climate Commitments
- Backed the Paris Agreement (2015) and pledged significant climate finance for vulnerable countries.
- Agreed to net-zero emissions targets and reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

3. Ukraine Crisis Response (Post-2022)
- Provided billions in financial and military support to Ukraine.
- Imposed sanctions on Russia and supported alternative energy strategies in Europe.

4. Health and Pandemic Response
- G7 coordinated vaccine donations, COVAX funding, and global health security reforms post-COVID-19.

5. Debt Relief and Aid
- Championed debt forgiveness for the poorest countries (e.g., HIPC initiative).
- Mobilized development aid through the G7 Development Finance Institutions (DFIs).

QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following countries are not members of the G7?
   1. Canada
   2. United States
   3. Italy
   4. Russia
   5. Germany
   6. China

Select the correct answer using codes given below:

A. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 only

B. 1, 3, 4 and 6 only

C. 1, 3 and 4 only

D. 4 and 6 only

2. What is the primary role of the European Union within the G7, considering that the EU is not a single member country but a union of multiple member states?

A. To provide representation for the EU's economic policies in global forums

B. To advocate for climate change and sustainability policies within the G7

C. To mediate trade disputes between the US and other G7 members

D. To represent military cooperation and defense issues within the G7

3. In the 2025 G7 summit, why was India invited despite not being a G7 member?

A. India's status as a permanent member of the UN Security Council

B. India's critical role as the world's fifth-largest economy and a key player in global trade supply chains

C. India's increasing military cooperation with the United States

D. India's initiative in promoting sustainable energy solutions

2. Cyprus Confers Highest Civilian Honour "Grand Cross Of The Order Of Makarios III' Upon Prime Minister Modi

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi received a ceremonial welcome at the Presidential Palace in Nicosia.

- He held a one-on-one meeting with President Nikos Christodoulides, during which the President conferred upon him the Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III – the highest civilian honour of the Republic of Cyprus.
- The recognition added to the growing list of international accolades received by the Prime Minister. Expressing his gratitude, Prime Minister Modi said the honour was not just for him, but for the 1.4 billion people of India.
- The honour marks a significant moment in Prime Minister Modi's historic visit to Cyprus, the first by an Indian Prime Minister in over two decades.

Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III

- The Order of Makarios III is the highest national honour of Cyprus, instituted in 1991 and named after Archbishop Makarios III, the nation's first president.

Grades of the Order

- The order has six classes, in descending order of seniority:
  - Grand Collar (highest), typically for heads of state
  - Grand Cross
  - Grand Commander
  - Commander
  - Officer
  - Knight
- The insignia include a neck badge, breast star, and ceremonial collar worn on formal state occasions.

Grand Cross – Design & Significance

The Grand Cross insignia comprises:

- A gilded & enameled badge suspended from a broad ribbon (blue with yellow edges) worn at the neck.
- A matching eight-pointed breast star.
- Made by the prestigious French firm Arthus‑Bertrand, it typically measures about 100×66 mm and is crafted from gilt bronze with enamel detailing.
- Recipients are those who made exceptional contributions to Cyprus or who hold high diplomatic and cultural standing.
- **Order of Makarios III** – top Cypriot national order, 6 grades, awarded for service to Cyprus or as a diplomatic honour.
- **Grand Cross** is the second-highest grade, often conferred on top-level diplomats, leaders, or individuals with significant ties to Cyprus.
- The insignia is a richly styled, high-quality order badge and star, reflecting both prestige and ceremonial importance.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Civilian & State Honors from Foreign Nations

2016

- State Order of Ghazi Amir Amanullah Khan (Afghanistan's highest civilian honour) – June 4, 2016
- King Abdulaziz Sash (Saudi Arabia's highest civilian honour) – April 2016

2018

- Grand Collar of the State of Palestine (Palestine's top honour) – February 10, 2018

2019

- King Hamad Order of the Renaissance (Bahrain's highest civilian award for dignitaries)

- Order of Zayed (United Arab Emirates' highest civilian award)

- Order of the Distinguished Rule of Nishan Izzuddeen (Maldives' top civilian honour)

2020

- Legion of Merit (USA's high military honour, civilian equivalent) – honouring strategic partnership – awarded in 2020

2021 / 2024

- Order of the Druk Gyalpo (Bhutan's highest civilian award) – received first in December 2021, formally conferred in March 2024

2023

- Order of the Nile (Egypt's highest civilian honour) – June 2023

- Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour (France's top civilian/military award) – July 13, 2023

- Grand Cross of the Order of Honour (Greece's highest civilian decoration) – August 25, 2023

- Grand Companion of the Order of Logohu (Papua New Guinea's highest civilian award) – May 2023

- Companion of the Order of Fiji (Fiji's highest honour) – May 2023

- Ebakl Award (Palau's highest cultural/civilian honour) – May 2023

2024

- Order of St. Andrew the Apostle (Russia's highest state honour) – July 9, 2024

- Order of Excellence (Guyana's top civilian order) – November 2024

- Dominica Award of Honour (Dominica's highest civilian award) – November 2024

- Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger (Nigeria's top award) – November 17, 2024

- Honorary Order of Freedom of Barbados (Barbados' top civilian honour) – accorded November 2024; formally presented March 2025

- Order of Mubarak Al‑Kabeer (Kuwait's highest national honour) – December 2024

2025

- Sri Lanka Mitra Vibhushana (Sri Lanka's highest civilian honour for non-citizens) – April 5, 2025

- Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean (Mauritius's highest national award) – March 2025

- Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III (Cyprus's highest civilian honour) – June 16, 2025

Other major Recognition by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi

1. Environmental Leadership and Global Recognition

1. Champions of the Earth Award (2018)

- **By:** United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- **Category:** Policy Leadership
- **Reason:** For championing the International Solar Alliance and pledging to eliminate single-use plastic in India by 2022.
- **Note:** This is the UN's highest environmental honour.

2. Global Goalkeeper Award (2019)

- **By:** Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- **Reason:** For the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India Mission), which dramatically improved sanitation and public health.
- **Significance:** Recognizes impactful public health and sanitation efforts globally.

2. Digital and Technology Governance

Digital India Award (2015)

- **By:** Computer Society of India
- **Category:** E-Governance and Digital Infrastructure
- **Reason:** For initiating the Digital India programme aimed at transforming India into a digitally empowered society.

USIBC Global Leadership Award (2016)

- **By:** U.S.-India Business Council (USIBC)
- **Reason:** For contributions to India-U.S. relations, digital innovation, and Make in India.

3. Public Relations, Image Building, and Global Branding

1. Highest Rank in Time Magazine Reader's Poll for Person of the Year (Multiple Years)

- **Years:** 2014, 2016
- **Note:** Though not editorially chosen, he ranked highest in public votes, indicating strong global popularity.

2. Top Rank in 'World's Most Powerful People' by Forbes

- **Listed:** Multiple times (2015–2020)
- **Significance:** Highlighting influence over geopolitical, economic, and cultural affairs.
- Included in Time Magazine's "100 Most Influential People" List
- **Years:** 2014, 2015, 2017, 2020
- **Reason:** Recognized for his leadership, reform agenda, and influence on the global stage.

4. Development and Governance

E-Governance Award for Gujarat (as CM)

- **Years:** 2007, 2009, 2011
- **Reason:** For digitizing government services and promoting transparent governance during his tenure as Gujarat Chief Minister.
- United Nations Public Service Award to Gujarat (2010)
- **Category:** Public Service Delivery
- **Note:** Though not personally awarded to Modi, it recognized his administration's efficient grievance redressal system.

5. Religious and Cultural Influence

Philip Kotler Presidential Award (2019)

- **By:** World Marketing Summit Group
- **Reason:** For leadership, nation-building, and religious harmony.
- **Controversy:** Some questioned the origin of the award, but it was positioned as a global leadership honor in branding and governance.

6. Sports Promotion

Award by Olympic Gold Quest (OGQ)

- **Occasion:** For support towards Olympic athletes and Indian sports.
- **Role:** Promoted initiatives like Khelo India and Fit India Movement.

7. Miscellaneous Global Recognitions

Global Energy and Environment Leadership Award (2021)

- **By:** Cambridge Energy Research Associates (CERA)
- **Reason:** For advancing India's position in global energy transition and sustainable development.

Order of Zayed Book Listing (UAE)

- Though a civilian honour, Modi has also been recognized in literary compilations and leadership anthologies globally due to his ideological and administrative influence.

4. Which of the following countries conferred the Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III on Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in June 2025?

    A. Cyprus

    B. Greece

    C. France

    D. Russia

5. Which of the following awards has not been conferred upon Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi?

    A. Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour (France)

    B. Order of Excellence (Guyana)

    C. Order of the Nile (Egypt)

    D. Bharat Ratna (India)

6. Which of the following is not a reason for PM Modi receiving the Champions of the Earth Award from the UN Environment Programme in 2018?

    A. For championing the International Solar Alliance.

    B. For pledging to eliminate single-use plastic in India by 2022.

    C. For his efforts in global health and sanitation.

    D. For promoting climate action and renewable energy.

3. Magna Carta was signed on June 15, 1215

- Eight hundred and ten years ago, almost to the day, an English king agreed to a seminal document laying down principles that would help establish the foundations of modern democracies.

- The Magna Carta (Latin for "Great Charter") was signed on June 15, 1215, at Runnymede Meadows near London. English barons collectively sought to restrict King John's arbitrary orders and had him agree to several principles, most importantly that the king could only act under the law.

- Last month, Harvard University discovered one of the earliest versions of the document in its collections, dating back to the year 1300, previously assumed to be a copy.
- "Considered a key step in the evolution of human rights against oppressive rulers, Magna Carta has formed the basis of constitutions around the world," Harvard Law School noted on May 15.

Seeds in anger against high taxes

- The Magna Carta was sealed at a time when King John witnessed several military failures.
- In 1204, the King of France took Normandy and Anjou.
- To fund expeditions to take back those lands, John raised taxes on his subjects.
- The more immediate cause of the barons' rebellion against King John was his defeat in the battle of Bouvines in 1214, at the hands of the King of France, Philip II Augustus.
- In the medieval feudal structure, barons were granted varying sizes of land in exchange for their loyalty and services to the monarch, such as providing knights during wars.
- Such was the prevailing discontent against John's treatment of the barons and his insistence on launching wars despite constant defeats, that they refused support for the battle.
- He then allied with the German Holy Roman Emperor Otto and the Counts of Flanders and Boulogne, but lost.

Not accepted easily

- English historian J.C. Holt noted that agreements limiting royal power after military defeats were common in medieval Europe, but the Magna Carta was significant because it emerged in a society without a constitution or defined political rights.
- The 1215 charter, agreed at Runnymede, contained 63 clauses covering local and broad legal issues. Notably, Clause 39 protected free men from unlawful arrest without due process, and Clause 40 guaranteed timely justice.
- Though initially popularized across England, King John soon sought to annul it, leading to baronial rebellion and the invitation of the French prince to claim the English throne.
- After John's death in 1216, his son Henry III was crowned and the Magna Carta reaffirmed. Multiple versions of the document exist, with four original copies surviving today; a 1297 version sold for $21.3 million in 2007.

Lasting symbolism

- The Magna Carta primarily addressed power distribution between the king and the barons, excluding much of the population such as serfs and women.
- Although its modern connection to democracy is questionable, historian David Carpenter highlights its significance in imposing radical legal limits on the king's authority, establishing the principle that the king was subject to the law rather than above it.
- Key clauses from the Charter still influence UK law today, particularly regarding protection against arbitrary detention.
- During the American Revolution, the Magna Carta inspired colonists, who incorporated its principles into their state laws and the US Constitution to defend their rights.

Magna Carta, its impact on modern law, and its relevance in the Indian context

Magna Carta

- Magna Carta (Latin for "Great Charter") was originally issued in 1215 by King John of England.
- It was a historic document limiting the powers of the king and asserting certain legal rights.
- The charter primarily protected the rights and privileges of the barons and the church but also laid the groundwork for principles like due process, rule of law, and protection from arbitrary authority.
- Key clauses included protection from illegal imprisonment (habeas corpus), swift justice, and fair taxation.

Impact of Magna Carta on Modern Law

Foundation of Constitutional Law

- Magna Carta is seen as a foundational text for constitutional law worldwide. It introduced the idea that even the sovereign must abide by the law.

Rule of Law

- It reinforced that no one, not even the king, is above the law.

Due Process and Fair Trial

- The charter's clauses ensured that legal proceedings had to follow fair processes, influencing habeas corpus and judicial fairness.

Influence on Legal Systems

- It inspired later constitutional documents such as the English Bill of Rights (1689), the U.S. Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- The concept of individual rights and liberties owes much to Magna Carta's principles.

Parliamentary Democracy

- Magna Carta's demand for consultation over taxation laid the groundwork for representative government and the rise of parliamentary democracy.

Magna Carta's Influence in the Indian Context

Historical Influence

- British colonial rule brought English common law and legal principles to India.
- The British legal system in India was heavily influenced by English constitutional developments, including Magna Carta's principles.
- Concepts such as due process, rule of law, and judicial review were introduced into Indian legal practice during the British era.

Impact on Indian Constitution and Law

Rule of Law in Indian Constitution

- The Indian Constitution enshrines the rule of law, which traces its philosophical roots to Magna Carta.

- Articles like Article 14 (Equality before law) and Article 21 (Protection of life and personal liberty) echo Magna Carta's influence.

Due Process and Fundamental Rights

- Magna Carta's principles underpin the guarantee of due process in Indian law.
- Fundamental rights such as right to life and liberty protect against arbitrary state action, reminiscent of Magna Carta's clauses protecting free men from illegal imprisonment.

Judicial Review and Habeas Corpus

- Indian courts use habeas corpus writs extensively to protect personal liberty, a practice rooted in Magna Carta traditions.
- Judicial review powers of Indian courts also reflect the principle that government actions can be challenged legally.

Democratic Governance

- India's parliamentary democracy reflects the Magna Carta legacy of limiting sovereign power and empowering representatives.
- The Constitution's provisions for checks and balances and distribution of powers resonate with Magna Carta's spirit of restraining absolute power.

QUESTIONS

7. Which modern legal principle, enshrined in many democratic constitutions, traces its roots directly to Magna Carta's assertion that no one, not even the king, is above the law?

   A. Judicial Review

   B. Rule of Law

   C. Separation of Powers

   D. Right to Privacy

8. What is the primary reason why the Magna Carta is considered a foundational document for constitutional law worldwide?

   A. It limited the king's power and ensured that he could only act under the law.

   B. It established the idea of a written constitution.

   C. It was the first document to guarantee universal suffrage.

   D. It created the first system of checks and balances in government.

9. Which of the following statements about the Magna Carta is incorrect?

   A. It was originally signed by King John of England in 1215.

   B. It established the principle that the monarch was above the law.

   C. It introduced the idea of due process and habeas corpus.

   D. It contained 63 clauses addressing various legal and governance issues.

4. Bonn Climate Change Conference

- The annual Bonn Climate Change Conference began as more than 5,000 government delegates and stakeholders gathered in Bonn, Germany.
- The meeting, which will wrap up on June 26, will witness discussion on a wide range of issues, including the mobilisation of finance to tackle climate change.

What is the Bonn Climate Change Conference?

- The Bonn Climate Change Conference is an annual mid-year meeting that takes place under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) — an international agreement, signed in 1992, that has provided a basis for climate negotiations.
- The conference is formally known as the Sessions of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies (SBs).
- Along with the annual Conference of the Parties (COP), it is the only other regular climate summit hosted by the UNFCCC.
- It is attended by the members of SBs — essentially committees that assist UNFCCC's governing bodies in implementing and reviewing climate change agreements.
- The meeting is also attended by Indigenous representatives, international organisations, scientists, and civil society representatives.

The objectives

- The conference takes place to discuss technical and scientific aspects of climate negotiations, and set the agenda for COP, which usually takes place in November.
- "The results of the negotiations in Bonn are highly influential on decisions made at the COP. Recommendations made at the SBs frequently appear in final decisions acted upon by parties at the COP," according to a report on the website of Harvard Kennedy School.
- The Bonn Climate Conference is also the venue where the implementation of agreements set at the previous COP is discussed.

The key players

- The meeting is led by the SBs of the UNFCCC.

- There are two permanent SBs of the UNFCCC, the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA).

- SBI assists UNFCCC governing bodies in the assessment and review of the implementation of their decisions.

- It also facilitates discussions on financial and technical support to developing countries which are party to the UNFCCC.

- SBSTA advises governing bodies on scientific knowledge related to climate change.

This year's agenda

- One of the key topics during discussions will be the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), which is an attempt to identify a common global goal on adaptation, just like keeping temperatures below the 1.5 degrees Celsius threshold is a global goal on mitigation.

- Although GGA was established in the Paris Agreement in 2015, no major breakthrough came till COP28 in Dubai, where parties adopted a framework for defining global goals on adaptation.

Important Climate Change Conferences

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP Meetings

- COP21 (Paris Agreement, 2015): Landmark agreement where 196 countries committed to limit global warming to well below 2°C, preferably 1.5°C.

- COP26 (Glasgow, 2021): Focused on strengthening commitments, phasing out coal, and mobilizing finance for climate adaptation.

- Upcoming COP27 (Sharm El Sheikh, 2024): Expected to focus on adaptation, finance, and loss & damage.

Earth Summit (Rio de Janeiro, 1992)

- Established the UNFCCC and set the groundwork for international cooperation on environmental issues.

Kyoto Protocol (COP3, 1997)

- First legally binding emissions reduction targets for developed countries.

UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20, 2012)

- Focused on green economy and sustainable development goals (SDGs).

G20 Summits

- Often address climate finance, energy transition, and international cooperation on climate policy.

IPCC Reports (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change)

- Though not a conference, the IPCC's periodic scientific assessments heavily influence policy discussions at climate summits.

Major Impacts of Climate Change

Rising Global Temperatures

- Average global temperatures have increased by about 1.1°C since pre-industrial times, causing heatwaves and altered weather patterns.

Extreme Weather Events

- Increased frequency and intensity of hurricanes, cyclones, droughts, floods, and wildfires.

Sea Level Rise

- Melting glaciers and ice sheets contribute to rising seas, threatening coastal communities and ecosystems.

Ocean Acidification

- Increased CO_2 absorption lowers ocean pH, damaging coral reefs and marine biodiversity.

Loss of Biodiversity

- Habitat shifts and temperature changes threaten species survival, causing extinctions and ecosystem disruption.

Impact on Agriculture and Food Security

- Altered rainfall and temperature affect crop yields, increasing risks of hunger and malnutrition.

Health Impacts

- Increased spread of vector-borne diseases, heat stress, and respiratory issues.

Social and Economic Disruptions

- Climate change exacerbates inequalities, displaces populations (climate refugees), and threatens livelihoods, especially in vulnerable regions.

QUESTIONS

10. Which of the following is the primary function of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) during the Bonn Climate Change Conference?

    A. To assess and review the implementation of climate change decisions by the UNFCCC governing bodies.

    B. To provide financial support to developing countries.

    C. To advise governing bodies on scientific knowledge related to climate change.

    D. To organize and lead global climate negotiations on mitigation goals.

11. Which of the following best describes the significance of the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) that is being discussed at the Bonn Climate Change Conference?

    A. It aims to set a global goal for limiting global warming to 1.5°C.

    B. It seeks to establish a unified global framework for financial assistance for climate adaptation.

    C. It is a new global goal to enhance mitigation efforts related to fossil fuel reduction.

    D. It defines a common global goal on adaptation to climate change impacts, similar to the mitigation goal of limiting global warming.

12. Which major climate change agreement, signed during COP21, laid down the target to limit global temperature rise to well below 2°C, with efforts to limit it to 1.5°C?

    A. Kyoto Protocol

    B. Paris Agreement

    C. Earth Summit

    D. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

5. 'Cyber Suraksha' Exercise Launched To Boost National Cyber Security Preparedness

- The Defence Cyber Agency, operating under the aegis of the Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff, has launched a cyber security exercise titled 'Cyber Suraksha'.

- The exercise began on June 16 and will continue until June 27.

- 'Cyber Suraksha' is a multi-phased initiative aimed at enhancing cyber resilience at the national level.

- It brings together more than 100 participants from various national-level agencies and defence stakeholders. The exercise is designed to simulate real-world cyber threats and test the participants' ability to respond to them in a dynamic, gamified environment. By combining structured training with hands-on challenges, it seeks to reinforce secure practices and sharpen the analytical and defensive skills of the participants.

- A key feature of the exercise is the inclusion of a Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) conclave, which has been integrated to bridge the gap between technical execution and leadership roles.

- The conclave features discussions led by eminent speakers in the cyber security domain and will conclude with an immersive Table-Top Exercise, aimed at enhancing the strategic readiness of senior leadership.

- 'Cyber Suraksha' reflects a proactive approach by the Defence Cyber Agency to ensure continued cyber vigilance and foster a security-first culture across all levels of the national defence infrastructure.

- The agency also plans to make such exercises a regular feature to sustain a high level of preparedness and promote collaborative defence in the evolving cyber landscape.

"Cyber Suraksha"

- "Cyber Suraksha" (translated as Cyber Security or Cyber Protection) refers to the practices, technologies, and policies aimed at protecting systems, networks, and data from cyber threats, attacks, and unauthorized access.

Key Components of Cyber Suraksha

- Data Protection
- Encryption
- Backups
- Secure data storage

Network Security

- Firewalls
- Intrusion Detection Systems (IDS)
- Virtual Private Networks (VPN)

User Awareness

- Cyber hygiene
- Phishing and scam awareness
- Strong passwords and multi-factor authentication (MFA)

Endpoint Security

- Antivirus and antimalware software
- Regular software updates
- Device control policies

Incident Response

- Preparedness plans
- Cyber emergency helplines
- Reporting mechanisms (e.g., CERT-In in India)

Cyber Suraksha Initiatives in India

Cyber Surakshit Bharat Initiative

- Launched by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to strengthen cybersecurity in the public sector and build awareness among CISOs (Chief Information Security Officers).

CERT-In (Indian Computer Emergency Response Team)

- National nodal agency for responding to cybersecurity incidents and issuing advisories.

Digital India Programme

- Promotes secure and inclusive digital infrastructure for governance and citizens.

Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)

- A platform to tackle cybercrime, with a portal: cybercrime.gov.in

Best Practices for Cyber Suraksha

- Use strong, unique passwords and change them regularly.
- Install updates for apps and operating systems.
- Use licensed antivirus and anti-malware software.
- Avoid using public Wi-Fi for financial transactions.

National Cyber Security Preparedness

- National Cyber Security Preparedness refers to a country's strategic approach to preventing, detecting, responding to, and recovering from cyber threats and attacks.
- It includes the development of policies, frameworks, infrastructure, workforce capabilities, and international cooperation to secure cyberspace and ensure the safety of individuals, businesses, and government entities.

Key Components of National Cyber Security Preparedness

1. Policy and Legal Framework

- **Cybersecurity Policies:** Comprehensive national cybersecurity strategies (e.g., India's National Cyber Security Policy 2013).
- **Laws & Regulations:** Enactment of cyber laws like the Information Technology Act, 2000 (India), GDPR (EU), CLOUD Act (USA).
- **Data Protection Laws:** Laws governing privacy and secure handling of personal data.

2. Institutional Mechanisms

- **CERTs (Computer Emergency Response Teams):** National and sectoral CERTs handle incident response.

e.g., CERT-In (India), US-CERT, ENISA (EU).

- **NCIIPC:** In India, the National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre safeguards critical infrastructure.
- **Cyber Coordination Centres:** Centralized agencies to streamline cybersecurity operations (e.g., I4C in India).

3. Capacity Building

- **Workforce Training:** Skilling professionals in cyber forensics, incident response, ethical hacking.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Promoting digital hygiene through initiatives like Cyber Surakshit Bharat and Cyber Jaagrookta Diwas.

4. Cyber Threat Intelligence (CTI)

- Real-time sharing of cyber threat information among government, private sector, and international allies.
- Use of AI, machine learning, and big data analytics for proactive threat detection.

5. Critical Infrastructure Protection

- Designating and protecting Critical Information Infrastructure (CII) like power grids, telecom, and banking.
- Mandatory security audits and compliance protocols.

6. Incident Response and Recovery

- National cyber incident response plans.
- Simulation exercises like CyberDrills to test preparedness.
- Establishment of Security Operation Centres (SOCs).

7. International Cooperation

- Participation in global forums like UN GGE, Budapest Convention, QUAD Cyber Initiatives.
- Bilateral and multilateral cyber diplomacy efforts.

QUESTIONS

13. What is the primary objective of the 'Cyber Suraksha' exercise launched by the Defence Cyber Agency?

    A. To promote digital literacy among Indian citizens.

    B. To simulate real-world cyber threats and enhance national cyber resilience.

    C. To train soldiers in physical security measures against cyber-attacks.

    D. To establish the legal framework for cybersecurity in India.

14. Which of the following is a key component of National Cyber Security Preparedness that ensures critical infrastructure protection?

    A. National Cyber Incident Response Plans

    B. Security Operation Centres (SOCs)

    C. National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Centre (NCIIPC)

    D. Cyber Threat Intelligence (CTI)

15. What is the role of CERT-In in India's national cybersecurity framework?

    A. To coordinate cyber diplomacy with other nations.

    B. To provide financial support to businesses for cybersecurity upgrades.

    C. To respond to cybersecurity incidents and issue advisories.

    D. To enforce cybersecurity laws and regulations.

6. 2025 ICC World Test Championship final

- The 2025 ICC World Test Championship final was a Test cricket match played at Lord's, London from 11 to 14 June to determine the winner of the 2023–2025 ICC World Test Championship.

- It was played between Australia and South Africa.

- South Africa won the match by 5 wickets to win the third edition of the ICC World Test Championship.
- This marked South Africa's maiden win of the Championship.
- As winners, they received a cash prize of US$3.6 million, while the Australian team received a cash prize of US$2.1 million.
- This was also South Africa's second ICC victory after 1998.

Background

- During the 2023–2025 ICC World Test Championship, both South Africa and Australia emerged as the leading teams in terms of points.
- Going into the final Australia held the top position in the ICC Men's Test Team Rankings while South Africa secured the second spot.
- South Africa made their first-ever appearance in the WTC final, whereas Australia were the defending champions having won the previous edition against India in the 2023 final.
- In May 2025, the ICC revealed the prize money for the final. The champions received USD $3.6 million while the runners-up received USD $2.16 million.

ICC World Test Championship

- The ICC World Test Championship, often shortened to WTC, is a biennial cricket tournament organised by the International Cricket Council.
- It is played over two years and is the premier championship for Test cricket.
- The winners of the tournament are awarded the Test Mace, which was previously held by the leader of the Test Championship. South Africa are the current champions, having defeated Australia in the 2025 final at Lord's.
- WTC league games are organized by the host nation's cricket board, whereas the final is organized directly by the ICC.
- The inaugural ICC World Test Championship started with the 2019 Ashes series and finished with New Zealand lifting the trophy after defeating India in the final in June 2021.
- The second ICC World Test Championship started on 4 August 2021 with the England–India series and finished with Australia lifting the trophy after defeating India in the final in June 2023.
- The third ICC World Test Championship started on 16 June 2023 with the 2023 Ashes series and concluded with South Africa defeating Australia in the final.

2019–2021 Tournament

- The first tournament began with the 2019 Ashes series.
- In March 2020, matches were suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic, not resuming before July 2020, with several rounds of matches being postponed or ultimately cancelled.
- New Zealand became the first team to qualify for the final, when it was confirmed that the series between South Africa and Australia would not proceed, followed by India.
- The inaugural World Test Championship Final was played between India and New Zealand from 18 to 23 June 2021 at Rose Bowl, Southampton, England.
- Despite the opening and fourth day of the final being washed out by rain, New Zealand managed to win in the final session of the reserve day and lifted the first World Test Championship trophy.

Match Awards at Lord's (11–14 June 2025)

Player of the Match

- Aiden Markram (South Africa) – Scored a crucial 136 in the second innings to guide the chase of 282.

Winners' Medals

- Awarded to all members of the South African squad.

Runners-Up Medals

- Presented to the Australian players

ICC Trophy & Prize Money

ICC Test Championship Mace

- South Africa received the prestigious mace, symbolizing their status as Test World Champions

Prize Money

- **Champions:** US $3.6 million
- **Runners-up:** US $2.16 million

Tournament-wide Accolades & Stats

Test Cycle (2023–2025):

- **Most Runs:** Joe Root (1,968)
- **Most Wickets:** Pat Cummins (80)

QUESTIONS

16. The 2025 ICC World Test Championship Final, played between South Africa and Australia, was significant for which of the following reasons?

    A. It was the first-ever World Test Championship final held at Lord's.

    B. South Africa won their first-ever World Test Championship title.

    C. Australia successfully defended their title from the 2023 final.

    D. This final marked the beginning of the World Test Championship cycle.

17. Which of the following factors was NOT a part of the initial structure of the ICC World Test Championship, starting in 2019?

    A. The championship was designed to be a biennial competition.

    B. The final of the championship is played between the top two teams.

    C. All Test-playing nations automatically qualified for the final.

    D. The championship aimed to bring context to bilateral Test series.

18. Which of the following tournaments was the first edition of the ICC World Test Championship?

    A. 2019–2021

    B. 2021–2023

    C. 2023–2025

    D. 2017–2019

7. Escalation in West Asia: Israel-Iran Conflict, Nuclear Tensions, and Global Energy Ramifications

- The geopolitical landscape in West Asia took a dangerous turn on June 13, 2025, when Israel launched a direct military strike on Iran, targeting what Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu described as the "heart of Iran's nuclear enrichment program."

- The operation, dubbed "Operation Rising Lion," also killed two high-ranking officials of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).

- Netanyahu justified the attack as essential to roll back the "Iranian threat to Israel's very survival."

- Iran retaliated swiftly, launching over 100 drones in response.

- Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei condemned the attack, warning Israel would face a "bitter fate."

- This military confrontation coincides with a significant diplomatic development—on the same day, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors passed a resolution declaring Iran non-compliant with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), a development not seen in two decades.

IAEA Findings and Global Fallout

- The IAEA's decision follows revelations of "secret nuclear activities" at three undeclared Iranian sites, where Iran is suspected of enriching uranium beyond permitted levels.

- Iran's stockpile of 60% enriched uranium—dangerously close to weapons-grade—has already drawn repeated warnings.

- The IAEA's resolution opens the possibility of referring Iran to the United Nations Security Council, potentially triggering severe international repercussions.

- In response, Iran has threatened to withdraw from the NPT altogether, heightening global anxiety.

- Iran's Foreign Ministry and Atomic Energy Organization announced plans to open a new uranium enrichment site at a secure location to significantly boost uranium reserves. Tehran labelled the IAEA's resolution as "politically motivated and biased."

- The European signatories of the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)—the UK, France, and Germany—may now invoke "snapback sanctions," a clause that reinstates UN sanctions if Iran is found in breach.

- Despite the United States pulling out of the deal in 2018 under President Trump, the JCPOA remains nominally alive through Iranian and European engagement. However, it is set to expire in October 2025, leaving little time to salvage it.

Stalemated Nuclear Talks

- Since April 2025, the US and Iran have held five rounds of formal negotiations, the latest in Rome on May 23, aimed at preventing Iran from weaponizing its nuclear program in exchange for sanctions relief.

- The fundamental sticking point is Iran's insistence on its right to enrich uranium domestically—something it sees as a sovereign right.

- While the US agrees to Iran's peaceful use of nuclear energy, it opposes Tehran enriching uranium at levels that could be rapidly weaponized.

- The US has proposed that uranium enrichment be temporarily allowed within Iran but eventually outsourced to a regional consortium involving Arab nations and the US. Iran has rejected this outright.

- Supreme Leader Khamenei and Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi have reiterated Iran's right to independently enrich uranium as non-negotiable, citing it as essential to national dignity and security.

- Despite harsh rhetoric, neither the US nor Iran has exited the negotiating table. Tehran continues to express interest in a deal and future economic engagement, particularly with American companies, should sanctions be lifted.

Israel's Stand and Global Implications

- Israel has remained staunchly opposed to any deal that permits Iran to maintain enrichment capabilities.

- Prime Minister Netanyahu has demanded a more aggressive posture, calling for military destruction of Iran's nuclear infrastructure under American supervision. Israel is not a signatory to the JCPOA and has taken matters into its own hands through covert and overt operations that provoke a cycle of retaliation.

- Israel's unilateral action risks undermining the fragile diplomatic efforts between Iran and the West.

- Iran sees Israel and the US as acting in concert and has threatened to target US military installations in the region if Israeli aggression continues.

- Past Iranian responses have typically included attacks on American bases in Iraq.

- Israel's motives may also stem from domestic political pressures. European nations have imposed sanctions on Israeli leaders, including Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, over internal issues, potentially prompting Netanyahu to project strength through foreign policy action.

Strait of Hormuz: The World's Energy Lifeline at Risk

- Amid escalating tensions, the Strait of Hormuz has resurfaced as a global chokepoint of strategic concern.

- This narrow 33-km-wide waterway, situated between Iran and Oman, is the world's most critical maritime oil passage.

- It facilitates the export of about 25% of the world's oil and 25% of its LNG—primarily from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, and Iran.

- Following Israel's strikes, senior IRGC officials and Iranian lawmakers hinted at the possibility of closing the Strait.

- Though a full blockade remains unlikely given Iran's own reliance on the Strait and its economic ties with countries like China, even the threat of disruption has rattled global oil markets.

- India is particularly vulnerable, given it imports over 90% of its crude oil, with about 40% of it transiting the Strait of Hormuz.

- Any disruption could destabilize refinery operations, inflate shipping and insurance costs, and strain the country's economy.

- India's government has assured sufficient reserves—about 74 days of crude supply—but concerns remain over prolonged volatility.

Market Reactions and Strategic Uncertainty

- Oil markets have already responded. Crude prices surged 7% after the Israeli airstrike. Experts warn that even minor disruptions in Hormuz could add $5–$10 per barrel to global oil prices.

- With over 3,000 vessels transiting the Strait monthly, the risk to global supply chains extends beyond energy, affecting trade and inflation.

- Analysts widely believe that Iran will avoid fully closing the Strait, given the economic blowback and likely pressure from allies like China.

- However, the threat alone is enough to disturb global energy markets and heighten geopolitical risks.

India and Iran

Historical and Cultural Ties

- India and Iran share a deep cultural and historical connection dating back thousands of years, with influences in language, religion, art, and trade.

- Persian culture has had a significant impact on Indian civilization, especially during the Mughal era.

Diplomatic Relations

- India and Iran maintain diplomatic relations since India's independence in 1947.

- Both countries have embassies in each other's capitals: New Delhi and Tehran.

Economic and Strategic Cooperation

- **Energy:** Iran is a key supplier of crude oil to India, although India has occasionally reduced imports due to international sanctions on Iran.

- **Chabahar Port:** India has invested in developing the Chabahar Port in southeastern Iran. This port gives India strategic access to Afghanistan and Central Asia, bypassing Pakistan.

- **Trade:** Bilateral trade includes oil, petrochemicals, minerals, carpets, pharmaceuticals, and agricultural products.

- **Sanctions Impact:** U.S. sanctions on Iran have impacted India's economic engagement but India has tried to balance relations.

Geopolitical Dynamics

- India seeks to maintain friendly relations with Iran while also maintaining strong ties with the U.S. and Gulf countries.
- Iran is important for India's connectivity projects to Afghanistan and Central Asia.
- India also cooperates with Iran in counter-terrorism and regional stability efforts.

India and Israel

Historical Context

- **Diplomatic Relations:** India officially established full diplomatic relations with Israel in 1992.
- Before that, the relationship was limited due to India's close ties with the Arab world and its support for the Palestinian cause.
- **Early Contacts:** Despite the formal diplomatic delay, there were covert and limited contacts between the two countries, especially in defense and intelligence cooperation.

Defense and Security

- Israel is one of India's top defense suppliers.
- India imports advanced military equipment from Israel such as drones, missile systems (like Spike anti-tank missiles), surveillance technology, and radar systems.
- Both countries cooperate on counter-terrorism, intelligence sharing, and cybersecurity.

Agriculture and Water Technology

- Israel's expertise in drip irrigation, water management, and desert agriculture has been leveraged in various Indian states to improve agricultural productivity and water conservation.

Science and Technology

- Cooperation in innovation, technology startups, space research, and cyber technology.
- India and Israel have annual joint innovation funds to promote collaboration between startups and research institutions.

Trade and Investment

- Bilateral trade has steadily grown and covers sectors like diamonds, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, IT, and defense equipment.
- India is a significant market for Israeli technology and agricultural products.
- Efforts to boost trade include exploring Free Trade Agreement (FTA) possibilities.

Cultural and People-to-People Ties

- The Jewish community in India, though small, has historically played a role in cultural exchange.
- Growing tourism between the two countries.
- Increased cooperation in film, education, and cultural programs.

Political Relations

- High-level visits by leaders have deepened ties — Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the first Indian PM to visit Israel in 2017.

- Israel's Prime Ministers, including Benjamin Netanyahu, have visited India multiple times.

- Both countries often support each other on international forums.

Strategic Importance

- India views Israel as a key strategic partner in West Asia.

- Israel values India's role as a regional power and a democracy.

- The relationship balances India's relations with other West Asian countries.

QUESTIONS

19. What was the primary justification for Israel's military strike on Iran in June 2025, according to Prime Minister Netanyahu?

    A. To stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the region

    B. To target the "heart of Iran's nuclear enrichment program"

    C. To protect the Strait of Hormuz from potential closure

    D. To dismantle Iran's missile systems threatening Israel

20. How does the Strait of Hormuz factor into the global energy market, particularly concerning the recent geopolitical tensions between Israel and Iran?

    A. It facilitates the export of 25% of the world's oil and LNG, making it a key global chokepoint.

    B. It is the primary source of natural gas for the Middle East countries, particularly Iran.

    C. It serves as the main shipping route for China's energy exports to Europe.

    D. It is mainly used for the transportation of raw materials and goods, not energy supplies.

21. What role does India's geopolitical strategy play in balancing its relations with Iran and Israel amidst escalating tensions in the region?

    A. India seeks to maintain strong strategic partnerships with both Israel and Iran while balancing relations with the US and Gulf countries.

    B. India prioritizes strategic cooperation with Israel due to shared security interests in the region and ignores ties with Iran.

    C. India is primarily focused on strengthening ties with Iran, with little regard for its relationship with Israel.

    D. India is neutral, maintaining no formal ties with Israel or Iran.

8. What is the International Big Cat Alliance, launched by India?

- The first Assembly of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) was held in New Delhi, presided over by the Union Minister for Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav.
- He was endorsed as the President of the IBCA by the nine countries in attendance at the meeting – Bhutan, Cambodia, Eswatini, Guinea, India, Liberia, Suriname, Somalia and Kazakhstan. Here is what to know about the body.

What is the International Big Cat Alliance?

- The Indian government established the IBCA through the National Tiger Conservation Authority, under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, in March 2024.
- Its mandate is the conservation of seven big cats – the Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar and Puma.
- It aims "to facilitate collaboration and synergy among stakeholders, consolidating successful conservation practices and expertise and replicating them in range countries."
- The Union government has allocated Rs. 150 crore for the purpose from 2023-24 to 2027-28.
- There are 95 range countries (falling within the natural distribution of a species) for the big cats, including Canada, China, Congo, Ghana, Brazil, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia and the United States. Twenty-five countries have consented to be members of the IBCA, as of September 2024, including Bangladesh, Nigeria, Egypt, Suriname, Ecuador, Peru, Kenya and Rwanda.
- All UN member countries can become members after the framework agreement is signed and conveyed through a Note Verbale, a method of formal diplomatic communication.

What was the rationale behind the initiative?

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the IBCA in 2023 in Mysuru, commemorating the 50th anniversary of Project Tiger.
- That initiative came at a time when India's tiger population was rapidly dwindling.
- While there were an estimated 40,000 tigers in the country at the time of Independence, their numbers fell to around 1,800 by 1970 due to widespread hunting and poaching.
- The killing of the apex predators also has ripple effects on the rest of the ecosystem.
- As the IBCA has noted in a report, they regulate prey populations, which helps maintain the health of landscapes and prevents overgrazing that can lead to ecological calamities like wildfires and disease.
- Protecting big cats also safeguards the habitats they roam, which are home to many other species.
- Thus, the comprehensive effects of conserving these species can include mitigating natural disasters, conserving soil, controlling pandemics, supporting climate adaptation and contributing to climate change mitigation by storing and sequestering carbon.
- Project Tiger was instrumental in the creation of tiger reserves, beginning with nine zones in Assam, Bihar, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. These included the famous Kanha reserve in MP, the Jim Corbett reserve in Uttarakhand and Bandipur in Karnataka.
- At present, India has more than 3,600 tigers, accounting for 70% of the world's tiger population.
- However, challenges such as deforestation and instances of man-animal conflict remain.

QUESTIONS

22. What is the primary mandate of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)?

    A. Conservation of the habitat of all large mammals in the world.

    B. Conservation of seven big cat species and collaboration among range countries.

    C. Promotion of ecotourism and wildlife-related businesses.

    D. Preservation of the world's seven most endangered animals.

23. Which of the following was a significant rationale behind the creation of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)?

    A. To support the reintroduction of big cats to their native habitats.

    B. To regulate the global population of large carnivores.

    C. To commemorate the 50th anniversary of Project Tiger and combat the declining tiger population in India.

    D. To create a global sanctuary for all big cats in the wild.

24. What is the significance of protecting the big cat species under the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) in terms of ecological balance?

    A. Big cats regulate prey populations, prevent overgrazing, and mitigate ecological disasters like wildfires.

    B. Big cats help maintain soil fertility through predation.

    C. They act as primary pollinators for important crops in the ecosystem.

    D. Big cats' protection is essential only for tourism and economic growth.

9. New golden 'Trump Card', offering permanent residency in the US

- Around 70,000 people had signed up for the new golden Trump Card, a new visa scheme which would offer permanent residence in the country for $5 million.

- The announcement came after the US Department of Commerce last week launched a website — trumpcard.gov — for applicants to submit their name, region and email address, and specify whether they are applying as an individual or a business, in order "to be notified the moment access opens".

The Trump Card

- The Trump Card is a new immigration initiative introduced by U.S. President Donald Trump, aimed at wealthy foreigners.

- It offers residency, work rights, and a path to citizenship without the usual bureaucratic hurdles.

- Unveiled in February and showcased in April with a gold-colored card featuring Trump's image, the program is intended to replace the existing EB-5 visa, which grants green cards to immigrants who invest $800,000–$1 million in U.S. businesses that create jobs.

- In 2024, 14,000 such EB-5 visas were issued.

- The Trump Card is also designed to address the U.S. budget deficit and national debt, projected at $36.2 trillion.

- Howard Lutnick, a supporter of the plan, claimed that issuing 200,000 Trump Cards could generate $1 trillion in revenue.

- President Trump expressed high expectations for the initiative, predicting sales of up to a million cards and $5 trillion in funds, emphasizing its potential to attract wealthy individuals who would boost the economy.

The challenges

- The newly announced "Trump Card" initiative has generated considerable attention, but immigration experts remain skeptical about its potential success.

- Analysts argue that the program is unlikely to meet its ambitious goal of selling a million or more cards.

- A major reason for this is that, unlike the established EB-5 visa program—which allows foreigners to invest in U.S. projects in exchange for green cards—the Trump Card does not offer any financial return.

- Instead, it is essentially a $5 million donation to the U.S. government, according to immigration lawyer Darren Silver.

- Silver explained in an NPR interview that once potential participants understand that their payment is a non-refundable gift with no investment benefit or guarantee of immigration status, they quickly lose interest.

- Legal experts have also raised concerns about the program's legitimacy. Unlike the EB-5 program, which was authorized by Congress, the Trump Card has not received any formal legislative approval.

- This raises significant legal questions, as multiple immigration attorneys and politicians—across party lines—have argued that the President does not possess the legal authority to unilaterally implement such an initiative. Critics suggest that bypassing Congress to launch a program that could alter immigration policy may be unconstitutional or at least subject to legal challenge.

India and US relations after Donald Trump Reelected as President

- The re-election of Donald Trump as U.S. President in 2024 has ushered in a complex phase for India-U.S. relations, characterized by both strategic alignment and emerging tensions.

Strategic and Economic Engagement

1. Strengthened Defense and Trade Ties

- In February 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Washington, where he and President Trump set an ambitious goal—Mission 500—to elevate bilateral trade to $500 billion by 2030.

- Discussions also led to a new 10-year framework for the U.S.-India Major Defense Partnership, signaling deeper defense collaboration.

2. Energy Cooperation

- India committed to increasing imports of U.S. oil and gas, aiming to balance the trade deficit and enhance energy security.

- President Trump welcomed this move, emphasizing the mutual benefits of energy trade.

Points of Contention

1. Trade Disputes and Tariffs

- Despite the positive engagements, trade tensions persist. President Trump has criticized India's high tariffs, labeling it a "tariff king" and a "big abuser" of trade relations.

- In response, India proposed a "zero-for-zero" tariff arrangement on auto parts to de-escalate tensions.

2. Immigration and Deportations

- A significant diplomatic issue arose in February 2025 when the U.S. deported 104 Indian nationals under stringent conditions, sparking criticism from India's opposition and calls for a more humane approach to immigration enforcement.
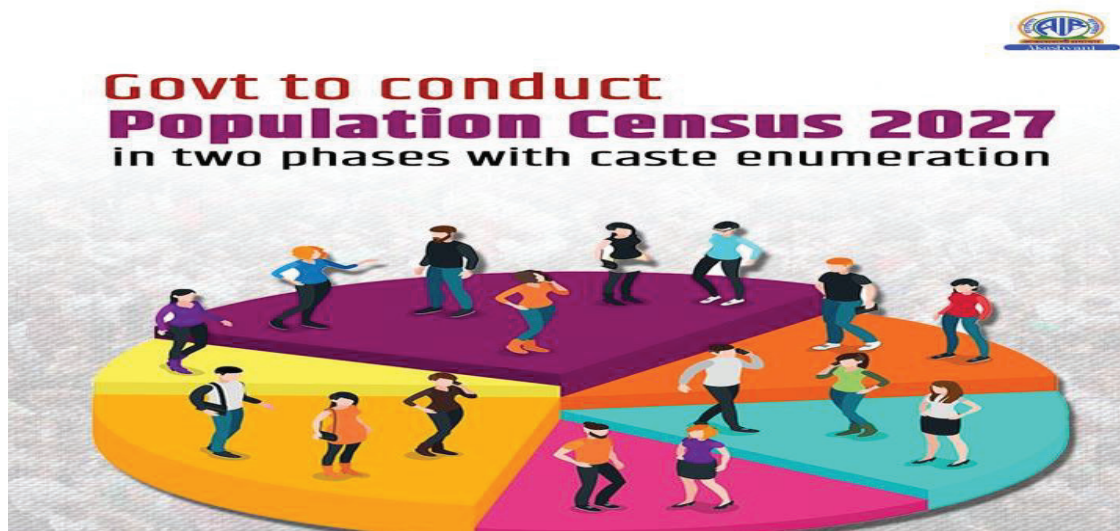
Regional Diplomacy and Ceasefire Controversy

- Tensions between India and Pakistan escalated in April 2025, leading to a ceasefire.

- President Trump claimed U.S. mediation facilitated the agreement; a statement contradicted by Prime Minister Modi, who emphasized that the ceasefire resulted from direct India-Pakistan military discussions, not third-party intervention.

QUESTIONS

25. What is the primary feature of the Trump Card immigration initiative introduced by the U.S. government?

    A. It grants green cards to foreigners investing in U.S. businesses that create jobs.

    B. It offers permanent residency and a path to citizenship for a $5 million donation to the U.S. government.

    C. It replaces the EB-5 visa program and provides financial returns on investments.

    D. It allows wealthy individuals to work in the U.S. without permanent residency.

26. How does the Trump Card differ from the EB-5 visa program in terms of its benefits for participants?

    A. The Trump Card offers investment returns and a guaranteed green card.

    B. The Trump Card offers a donation to the U.S. government, with no investment benefits.

    C. The EB-5 visa offers residency without any financial requirements.

    D. Both programs require substantial financial investment with guaranteed business returns.

27. The Trump Card program has been launched to address which of the following economic concerns in the U.S.?

    A. Reduce income inequality in the U.S.

    B. Boost U.S. technological innovation through foreign investment.

    C. Generate revenue to address the U.S. budget deficit and national debt.

    D. Increase labor participation from foreign workers in the U.S. economy.

10. How India conducts its Census — and what is new in 2027

- The government has formally announced that the 16th Census of India will take place in two phases, with the reference dates set as March 1, 2027, for most of the country and October 1, 2026, for snow-bound and remote regions such as Ladakh, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand. This census marks a significant milestone: it will include the first nationwide caste enumeration since 1931.

- Notification under Section 3 of the Census Act, 1948, came out in the Gazette with house-listing and housing enumeration running for several months before the population count begins in early 2027.

- The timing has already ignited political debate, especially over its implications for future delimitation of electoral constituencies and parliamentary seat distribution.

Why the Census matters

- The Census serves multiple critical functions.

- It is the basis on which electoral constituencies are drawn and seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

- Central grants to states and districts are often population-based, as are subsidies and ration allocations.

- Ministries ranging from Education to Rural Development use Census data to locate schools, primary health centers, and infrastructure projects.

- It helps the judiciary, planners, and scholars alike understand trends in migration, urbanisation, employment, and fertility.

- The Census is also crucial to the implementation of constitutional provisions. Article 82 of the Constitution mandates delimitation of constituencies based on the most recent Census.

- Article 330 and 332 reserve seats for SCs and STs in legislatures based on their population proportions.

- But beyond administration, the Census has also become a national mirror, reflecting changing patterns of identity, occupation, living conditions, and family structure.

- From capturing the impact of economic reforms to identifying vulnerable or underserved communities, it enables governments to deliver targeted welfare and better plan for the future.

How the Census is conducted

- The process is carried out in two broad phases: the House-listing and Housing Census, followed by the Population Enumeration.
- These phases are separated by several months and preceded by freezing of administrative boundaries (districts) by the states, a preparatory mapping exercise and training of enumerators.
- A total of 30 lakh enumerators, primarily school teachers, are estimated to be deployed for the conduct of Census.
- There are, in addition, almost another 1,20,000 functionaries at the district and sub-district levels who manage, oversee or support the Census work and about 46,000 trainers required to conduct the training.

House-listing phase

- Here, every structure in the country is visited to record the characteristics of buildings and households.
- Enumerators collect data on the head of the household, the number of members, on the use of the building (residential, commercial, etc.), the materials used in its construction, the number of rooms, ownership status, sources of water and electricity, the type of toilet, fuel used for cooking, and the availability of assets like TV, phone, vehicle, etc.
- This information helps build a profile of housing stock, access to amenities, and living conditions across India.
- Generally, this phase is conducted between March 1 and September 30 of the year proceeding the population enumeration year. Various states, depending upon their convenience, choose the months in which to conduct the house listing exercise.
- In this census, it is expected to be conducted in 2026.

Population enumeration

- This follows the housing census and focuses on individual data: name, age, sex, date of birth, relationship to the head of household, marital status, education, occupation, religion, caste/tribe, disability status, and migration history.
- Enumerators fill out a schedule for every person, even the homeless, and the process captures demographic and socio-economic details that form the heart of the Census database.
- The data is processed centrally and released in stages — first the provisional population totals, then more detailed tables disaggregated by various indicators. Robust quality control mechanisms, including re-checks and audits, are built into the process.
- The process of enumeration is expected to be completed within 20-21 days in the month of February 2027. It is expected the provisional data will be out within 10 days of the completion of the enumeration exercise, and final data in another six months.

How the 2027 Census is proposed to be conducted

- The 2027 Census will be the first digital census in India's history, with the use of mobile apps, online self-enumeration, and near-real-time monitoring. It is also the first since 1931 that will collect caste data for all communities.
- In a significant shift from 2011, the 2027 Census plans to allow self-enumeration for the first time, where households can log into a government portal or use an app to fill out their own details.
- Once self-enumeration is done, the system will generate a unique ID. Individuals who have self-enumerated will have to just present this ID when Census enumerator comes to their house.
- Enumerators would also use handheld devices or smartphones preloaded with the Census app.
- While a dual system, including paper enumeration is envisaged, sources said it is expected all enumerators will use the digital medium since smartphones are now ubiquitous and remuneration for digital census is higher.

- This digitisation is expected to reduce errors, speed up processing, and enable tighter quality control.
- The Registrar General & Census Commissioner of India (RGI) has already erected the digital infrastructure key to this shift. Enumerators have been trained to use mobile apps, geotagging tools, and cloud-based data upload systems.
- Real-time dashboards have been planned to track progress, flag inconsistencies, and push updates.
- The Census Management and Monitoring System (CMMS) would allow supervision and resolution of field issues without delay.

How will this Census be different from the 2011 Census?

- Both in terms of methodology and content, Census 2027 will be different from 2011.

Process and Technology

- Apart from the process being digital and allowing self-enumeration, Census 2027 will include:
  - **GPS integration:** While 2011 used physical maps and area lists, 2027 introduces GPS tagging of households and geofencing to avoid coverage gaps.
  - **Mobile tracking and validation:** Enumerators in 2027 will receive alerts for errors like inconsistent age or unrealistic household size, enabling real-time corrections. Such checks did not exist in 2011.
  - **Coding System:** For the 2027 Census, the Registrar General of India has introduced a new coding system to make data collection more accurate and efficient. Earlier, in the 2011 Census, information like caste, occupation, or mother tongue was written by hand, often leading to spelling mistakes and confusion during data processing.
  - Also, responses for some of the questions being canvassed were descriptive in nature.
- Data processing of these descriptive responses required human intervention and at times took years for a few questions, delaying data dissemination.
- It also involved risk of data biasness and errors because of diverse judgement of enumerators.
- To fix this, the 2027 Census will use a digital system where enumerators would select options from pre-loaded lists — called code directories with separate code for possible responses — on a mobile app.
- These lists included standardized codes for things like Scheduled Castes and Tribes, different languages, jobs, and places of birth.
- This approach required enumerators to select entries from standardised drop-down menus or picklists.
- This makes sure that entries were uniform across the country and could be quickly processed by computers.
- It is a major step towards making the census more modern and reducing errors caused by manual entry.

New questions in the 2027 Census questionnaire

- The RGI had prepared detailed questionnaire for both phases of the Census in 2018 itself.
- A test of the enumeration was conducted in 2019. Sources said the questionnaire for 2027 will almost remain the same with addition of caste enumeration.
- The house-listing operation will collect data under 34 columns, while population enumeration will have 28 columns, capturing extensive demographic, social, and economic data.

House-listing phase

New questions included

- Availability of internet connection in the house.
- Ownership of mobile phone and smartphone.
- Access to drinking water source inside the dwelling.

- **Gas connection type:** distinguishing between piped natural gas and LPG.
- **Vehicle ownership:** with distinctions between two-wheelers, four-wheelers, and commercial vehicles.
- Mobile number to be used for census follow-ups or information dissemination.

Type of Cereal Consumed in the household is to be recorded

- These additions reflect a growing emphasis on digital connectivity, clean energy access, and mobility as key development indicators.

Population enumeration phase

Among the most significant changes

- Caste enumeration for all individuals — not just SC/ST — has been reintroduced after 90 years (last done in 1931).
- New categories under reasons for migration, such as displacement due to climate events or natural disasters.
- Technology usage — questions on whether individuals used the internet or smartphones.
- Gender inclusion — explicit options to mark transgender identity.

Challenges in the field and how they're addressed

- Digital literacy among enumerators is a major concern.
- To resolve this, extensive training modules, simulations, and region-specific language interfaces have been designed.
- The app has been designed with user-friendly prompts, drop-down menus, and offline sync.

QUESTIONS

28. Which of the following is a new feature in the 2027 Census of India compared to the 2011 Census?

    A. Use of physical maps for data collection and error correction.

    B. Caste enumeration for all communities, not just SC/ST.

    C. Collection of data on annual income and savings.

    D. A completely manual data entry system for enumerators.

29. Which of the following technologies will be used for the first time in the 2027 Census to improve the accuracy and efficiency of data collection?

    A. GPS integration and geotagging for household data collection.

    B. QR codes for household identification.

    C. Blockchain for data verification.

    D. Satellite imaging for tracking population migration.

30. What is the key objective behind reintroducing caste enumeration in the 2027 Census after 90 years?

    A. To assess the economic status of various caste groups.

    B. To understand the social composition of the country more comprehensively.

    C. To determine the allocation of welfare resources to each caste.

    D. To examine the migration patterns of caste groups within India.

1. D The G7 was originally formed in 1975 as the G6, with the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, France, Germany, and Japan as the founding members. Russia joined the forum in 1998, making it the G8, but was expelled in 2014 following its annexation of Crimea. Since then, it has been referred to as the G7 again. Russia was expelled from the G8 in 2014 due to its annexation of Crimea, which was widely condemned as a violation of international law.

2. A The European Union is represented in the G7 by the European Commission President and plays an important role in providing representation for EU economic policies on the global stage. As the EU is a significant economic bloc, it participates in G7 discussions on issues such as trade, economic governance, digital economies, and climate change, among others. The EU's presence allows for the collective voice of its member states to be heard on key global issues, particularly those that affect international economic relations and policies.

3. B India's invitation to the 2025 G7 summit is largely based on its economic significance as the world's fifth-largest economy and its role in global trade supply chains. Prime Minister Mark Carney of Canada emphasized that India is a significant global economic player and that diplomatic progress, particularly with renewed law enforcement dialogue between Canada and India, also justified the invitation. India's growing geopolitical importance, especially in trade and economic affairs, was a key factor in its invitation, rather than being a formal G7 member.

4. A The Grand Cross of the Order of Makarios III is the highest civilian honor of Cyprus. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred this prestigious award during his visit to Cyprus in June 2025. The award recognizes exceptional contributions to Cyprus or individuals holding high diplomatic and cultural standing, and it was presented during Modi's first visit to Cyprus in over two decades.

5. D While Prime Minister Modi has received numerous international awards such as the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour (France), Order of Excellence (Guyana), and the Order of the Nile (Egypt), the Bharat Ratna has not been mentioned in the provided list of international awards. The Bharat Ratna is India's highest civilian honor, and while Modi has made significant contributions to India's development, it is not part of the awards listed here.

6. C The Champions of the Earth Award given by the UN Environment Programme in 2018 was specifically for PM Modi's leadership in environmental matters, such as promoting the International Solar Alliance and pledging to eliminate single-use plastic in India. His efforts in global health and sanitation were recognized with the Global Goalkeeper Award in 2019, not with the Champions of the Earth Award.

7. B The Rule of Law, which asserts that everyone, including the sovereign, is subject to the law, is a key principle traced directly back to the Magna Carta. The charter established the idea that the king must follow legal processes, thus reinforcing the Rule of Law that is foundational to modern democratic systems and legal frameworks.

8. A The Magna Carta is considered a foundational document for constitutional law because it limited the absolute power of the king and established the principle that the monarch could not act arbitrarily and must follow legal procedures. This idea influenced the development of many modern constitutions, including the U.S. Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Article 14 of the Indian Constitution guarantees equality before the law and prohibits discrimination by the state. This

principle mirrors the ideas from Magna Carta, which ensured that no person (including the king) was above the law, promoting the idea of legal equality that was pivotal in limiting the king's arbitrary power.

9. **B** The Magna Carta did the opposite of what is stated in option b. It established the principle that the king was not above the law and that even the monarch had to adhere to legal processes. This is one of the key reasons why the Magna Carta is so important in the evolution of constitutional law and the concept of rule of law.

10. **C** The SBSTA plays a crucial role in providing scientific and technological advice to the governing bodies of the UNFCCC. It helps in enhancing the understanding of scientific knowledge, especially in areas like climate change impacts, mitigation, and adaptation. This advisory role supports informed decision-making in climate negotiations. The SBI, on the other hand, focuses on implementation and financial support, not scientific advice.

11. **D** The Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) was established in the Paris Agreement in 2015 and aims to define a common goal for climate adaptation. Unlike the mitigation goal of limiting temperature rise to below 1.5°C, the GGA addresses how nations can adapt to the already occurring effects of climate change. It is significant in the context of shifting the focus towards adaptation as well as mitigation in climate policy.

12. **B** The Paris Agreement signed at COP21 in 2015 set the global goal to limit global temperature rise to well below 2°C, and aimed for 1.5°C if possible. This agreement is a landmark in climate negotiations, as it involves commitments from all countries to contribute to mitigating climate change and adapting to its effects. The Kyoto Protocol (COP3) set emission reduction targets but did not focus on temperature limits in the same way.

13. **B** The 'Cyber Suraksha' exercise is designed to test participants' ability to respond to real-world cyber threats. It aims to enhance cyber resilience at the national level, involving participants from national-level agencies and defence stakeholders. The exercise includes structured training, hands-on challenges, and a Chief Information Security Officers (CISOs) conclave to bridge the gap between technical execution and leadership roles.

14. **C** The NCIIPC is a crucial component of India's National Cyber Security Preparedness. It is responsible for safeguarding critical infrastructure like power grids, telecom, and banking. The NCIIPC ensures mandatory security audits and enforces compliance protocols to protect the country's essential services from cyber threats.

15. **C** CERT-In (Indian Computer Emergency Response Team) is the national nodal agency in India for responding to cybersecurity incidents. It provides timely advisories on vulnerabilities, threats, and cybersecurity incidents, helping businesses, government agencies, and citizens safeguard their digital infrastructure. CERT-In also coordinates incident responses and collaborates with international bodies for cyber threat mitigation.

16. **B** The 2025 ICC World Test Championship final was significant because South Africa won their first-ever title in the World Test Championship. They defeated Australia, the defending champions from the 2023 final. This was also the first time South Africa reached the final, marking a milestone in their cricket history.

17. **C** In the ICC World Test Championship (WTC), teams compete in a league format over two years, earning points based on their performance in bilateral Test series. Not all Test-playing nations automatically qualify for the final; only the top two ranked teams after the league phase play in the final. The purpose of the WTC is to bring context to individual Test series, not to automatically include all nations in the final.

18. **A** The first edition of the ICC World Test Championship took place from 2019 to 2021. The tournament began with the 2019 Ashes series, and New Zealand won the final against India in June 2021, becoming the first-ever World Test Champions. Subsequent editions followed, including the 2021–2023 and 2023–2025 tournaments.

19. **B** The military strike by Israel was justified by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as an essential move to counter the Iranian nuclear threat. Specifically, the strike aimed at the nuclear enrichment facilities of Iran, which Israel viewed as an existential threat to its survival. Netanyahu cited the need to roll back Iran's nuclear capabilities as the primary motive behind the operation.

20. **A** The Strait of Hormuz is a strategically significant maritime passage that facilitates the export of 25% of the world's oil and LNG. It is crucial for countries like Saudi Arabia, Iraq, the UAE, and Iran. Any disruption, even the threat of closure, would severely impact global oil markets and could significantly affect India, which imports over 90% of its crude oil, with 40% transiting through this narrow waterway.

21. **A** India aims to maintain friendly and strategic relations with both Israel and Iran, which are important partners in defense, trade, and regional stability. India's engagement with Israel includes defense cooperation, while its ties with Iran are essential for energy security and connectivity to Afghanistan and Central Asia through the Chabahar Port. India walks a delicate diplomatic line by balancing its relations with both countries while managing ties with the US and Gulf nations.

22. **B** The IBCA primarily aims to conserve seven big cat species: Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar, and Puma. It focuses on collaboration and synergy among stakeholders to consolidate and replicate successful conservation practices in range countries. This includes sharing knowledge and expertise for better management of these species across their natural habitats.

23. **C** The creation of the IBCA was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2023 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Project Tiger. Project Tiger was instrumental in addressing the rapid decline in India's tiger population, which had fallen to about 1,800 by 1970. The initiative aims to combat ongoing threats to tiger populations and extend the conservation framework to other big cat species globally.

24. **A** Big cats are apex predators that regulate prey populations, which helps maintain ecological balance. Their presence ensures that prey species do not overgraze the landscape, thereby preventing issues like wildfires and disease outbreaks. By safeguarding big cats, ecosystems remain healthier, and the negative impacts of ecological disruptions, such as soil erosion and biodiversity loss, are mitigated.

25. **B** The Trump Card program offers permanent residency and a path to citizenship in exchange for a $5 million donation to the U.S. government. Unlike the EB-5 visa that involves investing in U.S. businesses, the Trump Card does not offer financial returns or investments but rather acts as a donation. This initiative aims to attract wealthy individuals to help address the U.S. budget deficit.

26. **B** Unlike the EB-5 visa program, which requires participants to invest in U.S. businesses and offers a path to a green card, the Trump Card involves a $5 million donation to the U.S. government with no financial return or investment benefit. This makes it distinct from the EB-5 visa, which offers returns from business investments.

27. **C** The Trump Card initiative is designed to generate significant revenue to help reduce the U.S. budget deficit and address the national debt, which is projected to reach $36.2 trillion. By attracting wealthy individuals to invest in the U.S. through a non-refundable donation, the program aims to raise funds that could help alleviate fiscal challenges.

28. **B** One of the major changes in the 2027 Census is the reintroduction of caste enumeration for all communities, which was last done in 1931. This marks a significant shift from the 2011 Census, where caste data was collected only for Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST). The inclusion of caste data for all communities is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of India's social composition.

29. **A** In the 2027 Census, a key advancement is the integration of GPS tagging and geofencing to ensure that enumerators accurately cover all households. This technology was not present in the 2011 Census, where physical maps and area lists were used. The 2027 Census will allow real-time tracking and corrections, ensuring better coverage and reducing gaps in data collection.

30. **B** The reintroduction of caste enumeration in the 2027 Census aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of India's social composition. The data will help in assessing the distribution of caste groups, which is crucial for targeted welfare programs and policy planning. The last caste enumeration was done in 1931, and its absence in recent censuses has been a subject of debate. The 2027 Census will now provide detailed insights into caste-based demographics across the country.