



## News Analysis (29 Jul, 2021)

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### No Parliamentary Immunity for Vandalism: SC

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#### Why in News

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Recently, the **Supreme Court** has **rejected Kerala government's plea to withdraw criminal cases** against its MLAs who were charged in the assembly.

The ruling Kerala government had appealed, to the Supreme Court, to withdraw a criminal case against their leaders **who destroyed public property and disrupted a Budget speech** on the State Assembly floor in 2015.

#### Key Points

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- **Arguments of the Petitioner:**
  - The Kerala Government **had claimed parliamentary privilege**, arguing that the incident occurred inside the Assembly hall.
  - They had **claimed immunity from criminal prosecution**.
  - They had argued that the **prior sanction of the Speaker was necessary** before the registration of an FIR by the police.

- **Highlights of the Judgement:**

- **Parliamentary Privileges are Not Gateways of Immunity:** The legislators who indulge in vandalism and general mayhem cannot claim parliamentary privilege and immunity from criminal prosecution.
- **Vandalism is Not Essential Legislative Action:** Lawmakers possess privileges that are essential for exercising public functions.
  - Vandalism and destruction inside the House are not essential for exercising legislative function.
- **Vandalism and Right to Protest:** Vandalism on the Assembly floor **could not be equated with the right to protest** by Opposition legislators.
  - No member of an elected legislature can claim either a privilege or immunity to stand above the sanctions of the criminal law (**Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, 1984**), which applies equally to all citizens.
  - Destruction of public property could not be equated with the exercise of **freedom of speech**.
- **Maintaining Public Trust:** Legislators should act within the parameters of the public trust imposed on them to do their duty.
  - They had taken office swearing true allegiance to the Constitution.
  - They had to uphold the sovereignty and integrity of India and had to perform the duty imposed on them by the people who elected them.

- **About Parliamentary Privilege:**

- Parliamentary privileges are certain rights and immunities enjoyed by members of Parliament, individually and collectively, so that they can “**effectively discharge their functions**”.
  - When any of these rights and immunities are disregarded, the offence is called a breach of privilege and is punishable under law of Parliament.
- The Constitution (**Article 105 for Parliament and Article 194 for State Assemblies**) mentions two privileges, i.e. freedom of speech in Parliament and right of publication of its proceedings.
- **Rule No 222 in Chapter 20 of the Lok Sabha Rule Book** and correspondingly **Rule 187 in Chapter 16 of the Rajya Sabha rulebook** governs privilege.

- **Individualistic Privileges:**

- **Freedom of Speech:** The members of Parliament/state assembly enjoy freedom of speech and expression.
  - **No member can be taken to task anywhere outside the four walls of the House** (e.g. court of law) or cannot be discriminated against for expressing his/her views in the House and its Committees.
  - However, a member has the privilege of freedom of speech in Parliament, he has no right to publish it outside Parliament.
- **Freedom from Arrest: No member shall be arrested in a civil case 40 days** before and after the adjournment of the House and also when the House is in session.
  - It also means that **no member can be arrested within the precincts of the Parliament** without the permission of the House to which he/she belongs.
- **Exemption from Attendance as Witnesses:** The members of Parliament/ assemblies also enjoy freedom from attendance as witnesses.

- **Collective Privileges:**

- **Right to Publish Debates and Proceedings:** Parliament/Assembly can prohibit the press to publish its proceedings, when needed.
- **Right to exclude strangers:** Parliament/Assembly enjoys the right to exclude strangers (no-members or visitors) from the galleries at any time and to resolve debate with closed doors.
- **Right to Punish Members and Outsiders:** In India, the Parliament/Assembly has been given punitive powers to punish those who are judged guilty of contempt of the House.

Source: TH

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## **SCO Defence Ministers' Meeting**

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### **Why in News**

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Recently, the **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)** Defence Ministers' Meeting took place in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

The Defence Minister of India addressed the grouping and said **India is committed to working within the SCO framework** for helping create & maintain a secure & peaceful region.

# Member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation



## Key Points

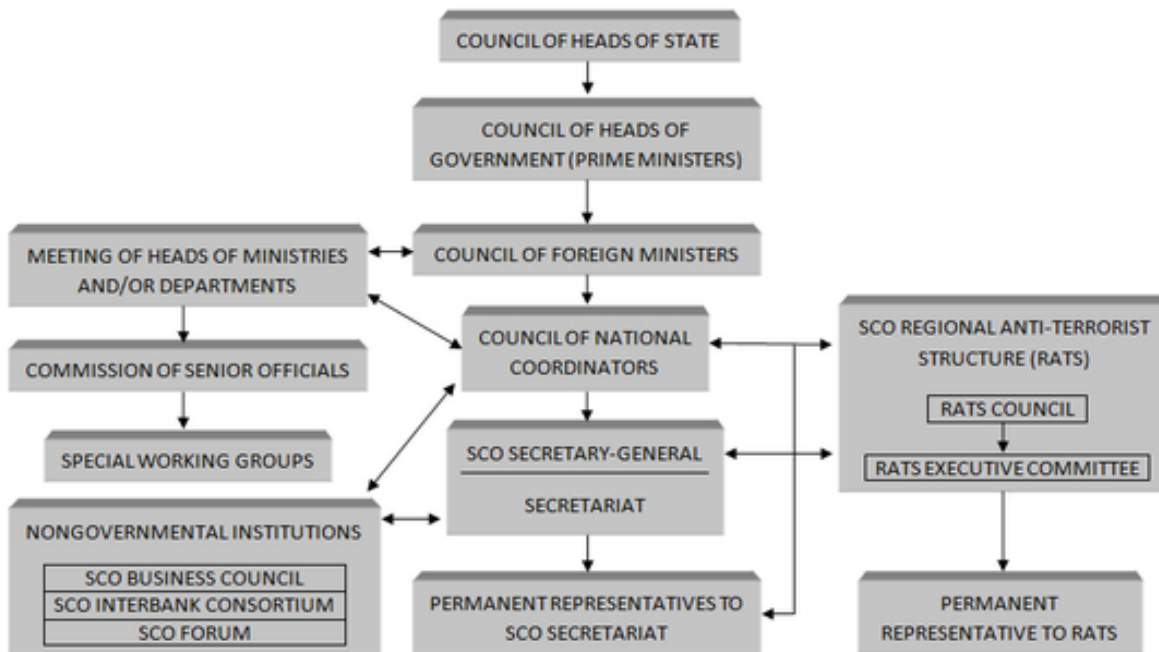
### Major Highlights of Defence Minister's Address:

- o **Terrorism** is the most serious threat to international peace and security and support to any acts of terror is a crime against humanity.  
India reaffirms its resolve to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.
- o The geo-strategic location of India makes it both a “**Eurasian land power**” as well as a stakeholder in the **Indo-Pacific**.
- o Highlighted non-traditional security challenges like **pandemics, climate change, food security, water security and associated societal disruptions** can impact national and international landscape.
- o In dealing with Covid-19 pandemic, India has been at the forefront to provide support and assistance to countries through its **Vaccine diplomacy**.
- o India’s initiative on **coalition for disaster resilient infrastructure (CDRI)** was also an example of how countries were coming together to create and share capabilities to deal with humanitarian assistance and disaster relief issues.

SCO

- The SCO was founded at a summit in **Shanghai in 2001** by the presidents of Russia, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.
- Presently, the SCO comprises **eight member states** namely **India, Kazakhstan, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.**
- SCO nations together encompass nearly **half the human population** and it covers approximately **three-fifths of the Eurasian continent** in terms of geographical expanse.
- The SCO, seen as a **counterweight to NATO**, is an eight-member economic and security bloc and has emerged as one of the largest transregional international organisations.
- India was made an **observer at the SCO in 2005.**
- India and Pakistan became its **permanent members in 2017.**

### THE STRUCTURE OF THE SHANGHAI COOPERATION ORGANISATION



## India's Opportunities and SCO:

- **Regional Security:** SCO will enable India, as an integral part of the Eurasian security grouping, to neutralise threats like religious extremism and terrorism in the region.

It is due to this, India has shown keen interest in deepening its security-related cooperation with the SCO and its **Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS)**, which specifically deals with issues relating to security and defence.
- **Connect With Central Asia:** SCO is also a potential platform to advance India's **Connect Central Asia policy**.

India's ongoing engagement with SCO can be seen through the **prism of reconnecting and re-energising ties with a region** with which India has shared civilizational linkages, and is considered the country's extended neighbourhood.
- **Dealing With Pakistan & China:** SCO provides India with a forum where it can constructively engage both China and Pakistan in a regional context and project India's security interests.
- **Bringing Stability in Afghanistan:** SCO, also an alternative regional platform to delve into the rapidly changing **situation in Afghanistan**.

So far India completed 500 projects in Afghanistan and is continuing with some more, with a total development aid of \$3 billion.
- **Strategic Importance:** Acknowledging the strategic importance emanating from the region and SCO, the Indian Prime Minister had articulated the foundational dimension of Eurasia being '**SECURE**'. The letters in the word SECURE are:
  - S for **Security of our citizens,**
  - E for **Economic development** for all,
  - C for **Connecting the region,**
  - U for **Unite our people,**
  - R for **Respect for Sovereignty and Integrity,** and
  - E for **Environment protection.**

## Way Forward

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- There is a need to provide **high priority to the “consolidation of trust”** in the security domain within the SCO as well as strengthening ties with partners of the grouping bilaterally on the **basis of equality, mutual respect and understanding.**
- The SCO member countries should **develop joint institutional capacities** that respect individual national sensitivities and yet **generate a spirit of cooperation** to create contact and connectivity between people, societies and nations.
- Member countries should realise that they have collective stakes to create a safe, secure and stable region that can contribute towards **progress and improvement of human development indices.**

## **US Secretary of State's Visit to India**

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### **Why in News**

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Recently, in his **visit to India**, the **US Secretary of State** mentioned that **actions by India and the US will shape the 21<sup>st</sup> century**.

- The visit **reciprocates** the visit by India's **External Affairs Minister (EAM) to the US in May 2021**.
- The US Secretary of State and India's EAM have also had **detailed conversations** in the **UK (at the G7 meeting)** and **Italy (at the G20 meeting)**.

### **Key Points**

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- **Major Discussions:**

- **Afghanistan:**

- There is **no military solution to the conflict**, and that taking over the country by force would not help the Taliban gain the international recognition or legitimacy it desires, including the lifting of sanctions and travel bans against the Taliban leadership.

India mentioned **Pakistan was an exception to the consensus for a peaceful political settlement.**

- An **Afghanistan that did not respect the rights of its people**, and an Afghanistan that committed atrocities against its own people **would not be part of the global community.**

Afghanistan **has to be inclusive and fully representative of Afghan people.**

- **Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific:**

- Both share a vision of free, open, secure and prosperous **Indo-Pacific.**
- Highlighted cooperation in the Indo-Pacific as part of the **QUAD (Quadrilateral Framework)** with Japan and Australia, and clarified that QUAD is not a military alliance at all.

- **Covid- Vaccination:**

- Discussed the **Quad's initiative** to provide Indian-made **Covid-vaccines** in the Indo-Pacific region.
- The **US announced a USD 25-million grant for India's vaccine programme**, and promised to strengthen **vaccine supply chains** to enhance production.

- **Climate Change:**

Under the **US-India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda 2030 Partnership** launched in April 2021, the two sides intend to launch a new climate action and finance mobilisation dialogue and relaunch the strategic clean energy partnership.



- **US' Stand:**
  - Termed the **Indo-US relationship as one of the most important partnerships in the world.**
  - Both share a **commitment to democratic values** which is part of the **bedrock of their relationship** and reflective of **India's pluralistic society and history of harmony.**
    - Both believe in **human dignity, in equality of opportunity, the rule of law, fundamental freedoms**, including freedom of religion and belief.
    - People deserve to have a voice in their government and be treated with respect no matter who they are.
  - Cited **business cooperation, educational engagement, religious and spiritual ties and ties between millions of families** as some of the **key pillars of the overall relationship.**
  - Referred to the **rising global threats to democracy** and international freedoms and talked about **democratic recession (Human Rights Issues in China)**, noting that it is **vital for India and the US to continue to stand together** in support of these ideals.
  - **Interreligious relations, media freedom, farmers' protests, love 'jihad'** violence and minority rights were part of the discussion that the US Secretary of State had with a group of people, including a representative of the **Dalai Lama.**
- **India's Stand:**
  - India-US bilateral ties have **enhanced to a level that enables the two nations to deal collaboratively with larger issues.**
  - Welcomes **US' strong commitment to strengthen the India-US strategic partnership** that is anchored in shared democratic values and is a force for global good.
  - Responded to the US concerns on the issues with a number of points, making it clear that the **quest for a more perfect democracy applied to both the US and India.**
  - India's policies of the last few years had been to right wrongs done historically, and that **while freedoms are important, they should not be equated with the lack of governance**".

## Current State of India-US Ties

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- **Defence:**
  - India and US inked **important defence pacts** in the last few years and also **formalised the four nation alliance of QUAD**.  
The alliance is seen as an important counter to China in the Indo-Pacific.
  - The **Malabar exercise** in November 2020 portrayed a high point in Indo-US strategic ties, it was the **first time in 13 years that all four countries of QUAD came together** sending a strong message to China.
  - **India now has access to american bases** from **Djibouti in Africa** to Guam in the Pacific. It can also access advanced communication technology used in US defence.
  - India and US have **four foundational defence agreements**:
    - **Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geospatial Intelligence (BECA)**.
    - General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA).
    - Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA).
    - **Communication Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA)**.
- **Trade:**
  - The previous US government **ended India's special trade status (GSP withdrawal)** and also imposed several bans, India also retaliated with bans on 28 US products.
  - Current **US government has allowed all the bans by the previous government to expire**.
- **Indian Diaspora:**
  - There is a **growing presence of Indian diaspora in all spheres in the US**. For example the current Vice-President (Kamala Harris) of the US has a strong Indian connection.
  - There are **several Indian origin people holding strong leadership positions in the current US administration**.
- **Covid-Cooperation:**
  - When the US was reeling under a deadly **Covid** wave last year, **India rushed important medical supplies and eased export restrictions to help the country**.
  - Initially the US showed hesitancy in returning the favour when India needed it, however the **US quickly changed its stance and rushed supplies to India**.

## Way Forward

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- There is a **huge potential to boost bilateral trade between the countries** especially on account of increasing **anti-China sentiment in both the nations**.
- Thus, the negotiation should **focus on the resolution of various non-tariff barriers** and other market access improvements as early as possible.

- In order to counter China in the maritime domain, **India needs to fully engage with the US and other partners in the Indo-pacific region**, in order to preserve the freedom of navigation and the rules-based order.
- In international politics, **there are no permanent friends and no permanent enemies, only permanent interests**. In such a scenario India must continue to pursue its foreign policy of **strategic hedging**.

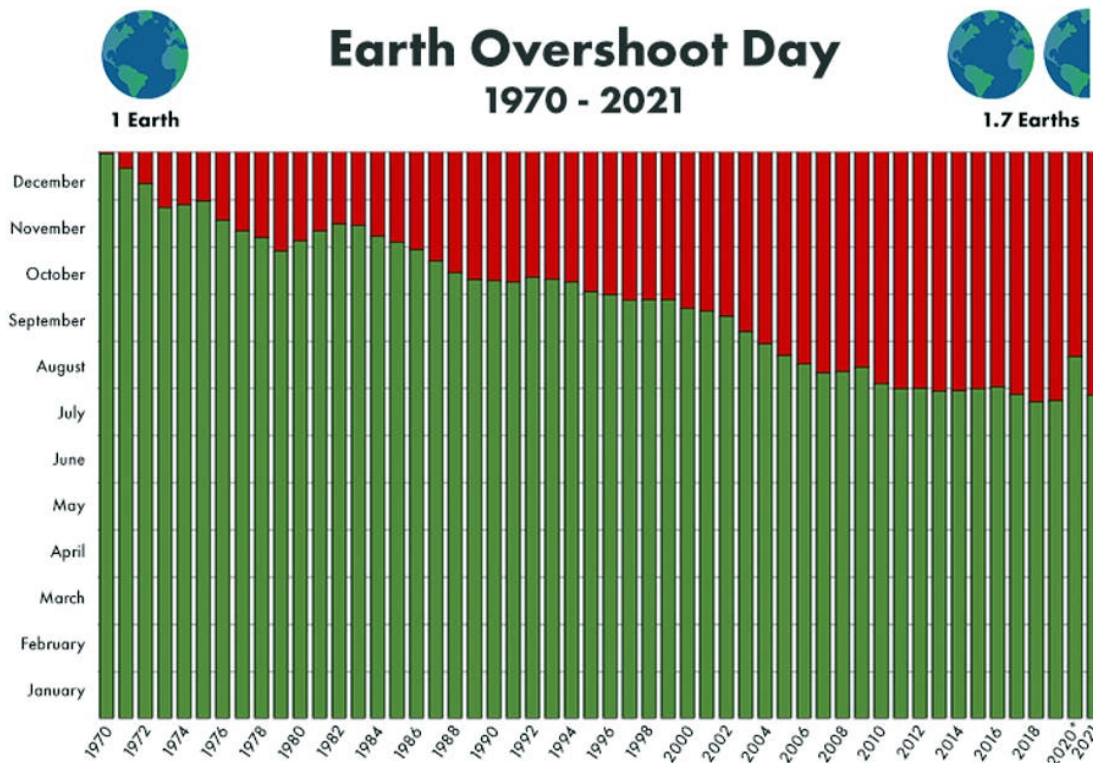
**Source: TH**

## Earth Overshoot Day, 2021

### Why in News

According to the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), humanity has again **used up all biological resources that our planet regenerates** during the entire year by **29<sup>th</sup> July, 2021**.

- **Humanity currently uses 74% more** than what the **planet's ecosystems can regenerate** — or 1.7 Earths.
- From Earth Overshoot Day until the end of the year, **humanity operates on ecological deficit spending**.



### Key Points

- **About:**

- The day marks the date when **humanity's demand for ecological resources (fish and forests, for instance) and services** in a given year exceeds what the Earth can regenerate in that year.
- The **concept of Earth Overshoot Day** was first conceived by **Andrew Simms of the UK think tank New Economics Foundation**, which partnered with Global Footprint Network in 2006 to launch the first global Earth Overshoot Day campaign.
  - **Global Footprint Network** is an **international non profit organization** founded in the year 2003. It's key strategy has been to make **available robust Ecological Footprint data**.
  - The Ecological Footprint is a metric that comprehensively **compares human demand on nature against nature's capacity to regenerate**.
- Earth Overshoot Day is **computed by** dividing the planet's biocapacity (the amount of ecological resources Earth is able to generate that year), by humanity's Ecological Footprint (humanity's demand for that year), and multiplying by 365, the number of days in a year:  
$$(\text{Earth's Biocapacity} / \text{Humanity's Ecological Footprint}) \times 365 = \text{Earth Overshoot Day}$$

- **Causes:**

- The prime driver was the **6.6% increase in the global carbon footprint** in 2020. According to the **World Health Organization (WHO)**, a carbon footprint is a measure of the **impact people's activities** have on the amount of **carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) produced through the burning of fossil fuels** and is expressed as a weight of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions produced in tonnes.
- There was also a **0.5% decrease** in 'global forest biocapacity' due to a rise in **deforestation of the Amazon's rainforests**.  
Some **1.1 million hectares of rainforest were lost in Brazil alone**, which is home to the largest swathe of Amazonian rainforest.

- **Predictions:**

- Even worse, there would be a **43% year-over-year increase in deforestation in 2021**.
- The **carbon footprint of transportation** will be **lower this year** than pre-pandemic levels.
  - CO<sub>2</sub> emissions **from road transport and domestic air travel** will be 5% below 2019 levels.
  - CO<sub>2</sub> emissions due to **international aviation** will be 33% below 2019 levels.
- But **global energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions** will **increase 4.8% from last year** as economies try to recover from the **impact of Covid-19**.
- **Global coal use** is estimated to constitute **40% of the total carbon footprint**.

- **Suggestions:**
  - A business-as-usual scenario will simply not work if the date for World Overshoot Day is to be pushed behind.
  - A number of measures can be taken such as **cutting down on food wastage, commercial technologies for buildings, industrial processes and electricity production and cutting down on transportation.**
- **Related Global Initiatives:**
  - **The Conference of the Parties (COPs):**
    - For nearly three decades the **United Nations (UN)** has been bringing together almost **every country on earth for global climate summits** called COPs.
    - In that time **climate change** has gone from being a fringe issue to a **global priority.**
    - This year will be the **26<sup>th</sup> annual summit** – giving it the name **COP26** will take place in **Glasgow, UK.**
  - **Paris Agreement:**
    - It is a legally binding **international treaty on climate change.** It was adopted by 196 Parties at COP 21 in Paris in December 2015 and entered into force in November 2016.
    - Its goal is to limit **global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius**, compared to pre-industrial levels.
- **Some Indian Initiatives:**
  - **National Clean Air Programme (NCAP)**
  - **Bharat Stage-VI (BS-VI) emission norms**
  - **UJALA scheme**
  - **National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)**

**Source: DTE**

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## **Non-Bank PSPs to Join Centralised Payment System**

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### **Why in News**

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Recently, the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** allowed non-bank Payment System Providers (**PSPs**) to participate in **Centralised Payment Systems (CPS - RTGS and NEFT)**, as direct members.

### **Key Points**

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- **Allowed in a Phased Manner:**
  - In the first phase, PSPs such as **Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs), card networks and White Label ATM (WLA) operators** will be allowed access.
    - ATMs set up, owned and operated by non-banks are called **WLAs**.
  - Presently, **only banks and select non-banks** such as **NABARD** (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development) and **Exim Bank** (Export-Import Bank of India) are allowed access to CPS owned by RBI – NEFT and RTGS.
- **Separate IFSC to Non-Banks:**
  - It means allotment of a separate **Indian Financial System Code (IFSC) to non-banks**, opening a current account with the RBI in its **core banking system (e-Kuber)** and maintaining a settlement account with the RBI.
    - **IFSC** represents the 11 digit character code that helps identify the individual bank branches that participate in the various online money transfer options like NEFT and RTGS.
    - **Core Banking System** is a solution that enables banks to offer a multitude of customer-centric services on a 24x7 basis.
  - It will also mean **membership of Indian Financial Network (INFINET) and use of Structured Financial Messaging System (SFMS)** to communicate with CPS.
    - **INFINET** is a membership-only Closed User Group (CUG) Network that comprises the RBI, Member Banks and Financial Institutions.
    - **SFMS** is India's backbone for inter-bank financial messaging & CPS.
- **Significance:**
  - **Minimizing risk of payment ecosystem:**
    - Direct access for non-banks to CPS lowers the overall risk in the payments ecosystem.
  - **Reduction in cost of payments:**
    - It also brings advantages to non-banks like reduction in cost of payments, minimising dependence on banks, reducing the time taken for completing payments.
  - **Mitigating failure or delay in fund execution:**
    - Risk of failure or delay in execution of fund transfers can also be avoided when the transactions are **directly initiated and processed by the non-bank entities**.
  - **Increasing efficiency and better risk management:**
    - Non-bank entities shall transfer funds from their Current Account to RTGS Settlement Account and vice versa during the operating hours.
    - It will increase efficiency, innovations, improve standards of data security as well as better risk management.

## Centralised & Decentralised Payment Systems

- CPS in India are **Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS)** and **National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT)** systems, both owned and operated by the Reserve Bank.

- **RTGS:** It enables **real-time transfer of funds to a beneficiary's account** and is **primarily meant for large-value transactions.**

Real time means the processing of instructions at the time they are received and gross settlement implies that settlement of funds transfer instructions occurs individually.

- **NEFT:** It is **an electronic fund transfer system in which the transactions received up to a particular time are processed in batches.**

It is generally used for fund transfers of up to Rs. 2 lakh.

- The **decentralised payment systems** will include **clearing houses managed by RBI (Cheque Truncation System (CTS) centres)** as well as **other banks (Express Cheque Clearing System (ECCS) centres)** and any other system as decided by RBI from time to time.

## E-Kuber

- e-Kuber is the **Core Banking Solution of the Reserve Bank of India** which was introduced in 2012.
- The centralisation thus makes a **“one-stop” shop for financial services a reality.** Using CBS, customers can access their accounts from any branch, anywhere, irrespective of where they have physically opened their accounts.
- Almost **all branches of commercial banks**, including the Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), are brought into the core-banking fold.
- The e-kuber system can be accessed either **through INFINET or Internet.**

Source: IE

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## DICGC Bill, 2021

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### Why in News

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Recently, the Union Cabinet has cleared the **Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) Bill, 2021.**

The failure of banks such as **Punjab and Maharashtra Co-operative (PMC) Bank**, **Yes Bank** and **Lakshmi Vilas Bank** reignited the debate on the low level of insurance against the deposits held by customers in Indian banks.

### Note

- **Deposit Insurance:** It is a protection cover against losses accruing to bank deposits if a bank fails financially and has no money to pay its depositors and has to go in for liquidation.

- **Credit Guarantee:** It is the guarantee that often provides for a specific remedy to the creditor if his debtor does not return his debt.

## Key Points

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- **Coverage:**
  - The bill will cover **98.3% of depositors and 50.9% of deposit value** in the banking system, **way above the global level of 80% and 20-30%**, respectively.
  - It will **cover all types of banks**, which also include **regional rural banks** and **co-operative banks**.
  - It will cover **banks already under moratorium** and those that **could come under moratorium**.

**Moratorium** is a legally authorized period of delay in the performance of a legal obligation or the payment of a debt.
- **Insurance Cover:**
  - It will **provide funds up to Rs 5 lakh to an account holder within 90 days** in the event of a bank coming under the moratorium imposed by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**.
    - Earlier, account holders had to wait for years till the liquidation or restructuring of a distressed lender to get their deposits that are insured against default.
    - The Rs 5-lakh deposit insurance cover was **raised from Rs 1 lakh in 2020**.

**The Damodaran Committee** on 'Customer Services in Banks' (2011) had **recommended a five-time increase in the cap to Rs. 5 lakh** due to rising income levels and increasing size of individual bank deposits.
  - Within the **first 45 days of the bank being put under moratorium**, the **DICGC would collect all information** relating to deposit accounts. In the **next 45 days, it will review the information and repay depositors** within a maximum of 90 days.
- **Insurance Premium:**
  - It **permits raising the deposit insurance premium by 20% immediately, and maximum by 50%**.

The premium is **paid by banks to the DICGC**. The Insured banks pay advance insurance premiums to the corporation **semi-annually within two months from the beginning of each financial half year**, based on their deposits as at the end of previous half year.
  - It has been **raised from 10 paise for every Rs 100 deposit, to 12 paise and a limit of 15 paise** has been imposed.
  - This is **only an enabling provision** and the **determination of an increase in the premium payable would involve consultations with the RBI** and require government approval.



## Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation

- **About:**
  - It **came into existence in 1978** after the merger of **Deposit Insurance Corporation (DIC) and Credit Guarantee Corporation of India Ltd. (CGCI)** after passing of the **Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation Act, 1961** by the Parliament.
  - It **serves as a deposit insurance and credit guarantee for banks** in India.
  - It is a **fully owned subsidiary of and is governed by the RBI.**
- **Coverage:**

Banks, including regional rural banks, local area banks, foreign banks with branches in India, and cooperative banks, are mandated to take deposit insurance cover with the DICGC.
- **Types of Deposits Covered:**

DICGC insures all bank deposits, such as saving, fixed, current, recurring, etc. **except the following** types of deposits:

  - Deposits of **foreign Governments.**
  - Deposits of **Central/State Governments.**
  - **Inter-bank** deposits.
  - Deposits of the **State Land Development Banks** with the State co-operative banks.
  - Any amount due on account of any **deposit received outside India.**
  - Any amount which has been **specifically exempted by the corporation** with the previous approval of the RBI.
- **Funds:**
  - The Corporation maintains the **following funds** :
    - Deposit Insurance Fund
    - Credit Guarantee Fund
    - General Fund
  - The **first two** are funded respectively by the insurance premia and **guarantee fees received and are utilised for settlement** of the respective claims.
  - The **General Fund is utilised for meeting the establishment and administrative expenses** of the Corporation.

Source: TH

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## Juvenile Justice Amendment Bill, 2021

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### Why in News

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Recently, the **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Bill, 2021**, was passed in the Rajya Sabha.

The bill seeks to amend the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015.

## Key Points

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- **Background:**

- The **National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)** audit of **Child Care Institutions (CCIs)** in 2020, 90% of which are run by NGOs, found that 39% CCIs were not registered, even after the 2015 amendment was brought in.
- It also found that **less than 20% CCIs, especially for girls, had not been set up in some states**, 26% child welfare officers were not there.
- Moreover, **three-fifths have no toilets, one-tenth have no drinking water and 15% of homes don't have provisions for separate beds** or diet plans.
- **Rehabilitation of children is not a priority** for childcare homes and children are reportedly kept in such institutions to get funds.

- **Key Amendments Proposed by the Bill:**

- **Serious Offences:** Serious offences will also include offences for which **maximum punishment is imprisonment of more than seven years**, and minimum punishment is not prescribed or is of less than seven years.

Serious offences are those for which the punishment under the Indian Penal Code or any other law for the time being is imprisonment between three and seven years.

- **Non-cognizable Offences:**

The present Act provides that an offence which is punishable with imprisonment between three to seven years to be cognizable (where arrest is allowed without warrant) and non-bailable.

The Bill **amends this to provide that such offences will be non-cognizable.**

- **Adoption:** Presently, the adoption order issued by the court establishes that the child belongs to the adoptive parents. The Bill provides that instead of the court, the **District Magistrate (including Additional District Magistrate) will issue such adoption orders.**
- **Appeals:** The Bill provides that any person aggrieved by an adoption order passed by the District Magistrate **may file an appeal before the Divisional Commissioner, within 30 days** from the date of passage of such order.
- **Additional Functions of the District Magistrate:** These include: supervising the District Child Protection Unit, and conducting a quarterly review of the functioning of the Child Welfare Committee.
- **Designated Court:** The Bill proposes that all offences under the earlier Act be tried in children's court.
- **Child Welfare Committees (CWCs):** It provides that a person will not eligible to be a member of the CWC if he/she
  - has any record of violation of human rights or child rights,
  - has been convicted of an offence involving moral turpitude,
  - has been removed or dismissed from service of the central government, or any state government, or a government undertaking,
  - is part of the management of a child care institution in a district.
- **Removal of Members:** The appointment of any member of the committee **shall be terminated by the state government after an inquiry** if they fail to attend the proceedings of the CWCs consecutively for three months without any valid reason or if they fail to attend less than three-fourths of the sittings in a year.

- **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children), Act, 2015:**

- Parliament introduced and passed the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act in 2015 to replace the Juvenile Delinquency Law and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children Act) 2000.
- The Act **offered provisions to allow trials of juveniles in the age group of 16-18 years** as an adult who were found to be in conflict with the law, especially heinous crimes.
- The Act also **offered provisions regarding adoption**. The Act replaced the Hindu **Adoptions and Maintenance Act (1956)** and Guardians of the ward Act **(1890)** with more universally accessible adoption law.
- The Act enabled smooth functioning of **adoption procedures for orphans, surrendered,** and abandoned children while making the **Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA)** the statutory body for adoption-related matters.

**Source: PIB**

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## **Kanjeevaram Silk Sari: Tamil Nadu**

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### **Why in News**

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National award winning artisan weaver, B Krishnamoorthy, has created a **repository with samples of all the designs, patterns and motifs traditional to Kanjeevaram silk sari weaving**, preserving fine pieces for next generation.



### **Key Points**

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- **About Kanjeevaram Sarees:**

- Traditionally, the **Kanjeevaram is a sari** that is usually handwoven in **mulberry silk** and has **pure gold or silver zari** that renders it a festive quality.  
Handloom silk saree is identified as the most luxurious and classy fabric in Indian traditional clothing.
- Originating from the village '**Kanchipuram**' in **Tamil Nadu**, Kanjeevaram is considered the queen of silk sarees.
- The **temple architecture of south India** and especially around Kanchipuram has historically served as a mood board for **design inspiration for the traditional Kanjeevaram motifs**.  
One can spot motifs such as the **mythical creature called the Yali** (an elephant-lion fusion), the **Ganda Berunda** (a two-headed majestic mythical bird) and the **ubiquitous temple border called reku**.
- Tracing its long and rich history from the **Chola Dynasty**, Kanchipuram sarees today are considered as one of the **oldest and rich legacies of the Indian textile industry**.
- Kanchipuram silk has also received **Geographical indication (GI Tag)** in 2005-06.

- **Other GI tagged Sarees:**

- **Tamil Nadu:** Kandangi Saree, Thirubuvanam silk sarees, Kovai Kora Cotton Sarees
- **Uttar Pradesh:** Banaras Brocade
- **Karnataka:** Ilkal Saree, Molakalmuru Saree
- **Andhra Pradesh:** Uppada Jamdani Sarees, Venkatagiri Sarees, Mangalagiri Saree
- **Kerala:** Balaramapuram Sarees, Kasaragod Sarees, Kuthampully Sarees
- **Telangana:** Gadwal Saree, Pochampally Ikat (logo)
- **Madhya Pradesh:** Chanderi Saree, Maheshwar Sarees
- **Odisha:** Orissa Ikat, Bomkai Saree, Habaspuri Saree
- **West Bengal:** Santipore Saree, Baluchari Saree, Dhaniakhali Saree
- **Maharashtra:** Paithani Sarees and Fabrics, Karvath Kati Sarees and Fabrics
- **Chhattisgarh:** Champa Silk Saree
- **Gujarat:** Surat Zari Craft, **Patola Saree**.

- **Silk Production in India:**

- India is the **second largest producer of silk** in the world, producing around **18% of the world's total silk**.
- There are **five major types of silk of commercial importance**, obtained from different species of silkworms. These are **Mulberry, Oak Tasar & Tropical Tasar, Muga and Eri**.
  - Except mulberry, other non-mulberry varieties of silks are wild silks, known as vanya silks.
- India has the unique distinction of producing all these commercial varieties of silk.
- **South India is the leading silk producing area** of the country and is also known for its famous silk weaving enclaves like Kancheepuram, Dharmavaram, Arni, etc.
- The Government of India in 2017 launched a scheme called **“Silk Samagra”** for the development of sericulture in the country.

**Source: TH**

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## **SLDE and GHG Calculator**

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### **Why in News**

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Recently, the government has launched the **Secured Logistics Document Exchange (SLDE)** along with a **Calculator for GreenHouse Gas (GHG) Emissions** to boost **Ease-Of-Doing Business** in the country.

In **World Bank's** Ease-Of-Doing Business **Report, 2020** India was ranked **63** out of 190 countries.

### **Key Points**

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- **Secured Logistics Document Exchange:**
  - The SLDE platform is a solution to **replace the present manual process of generation, exchange and compliance of logistics documents** with a digitized, secure and seamless document exchange system.
  - It will **enable generation, storage and interchange of logistics-related documents digitally** using **Aadhaar** and **blockchain**-based security protocols for data security and authentication
  - It will also provide a **complete audit trail of document transfer**, faster execution of transactions, **lower cost of shipping and overall carbon footprint**, easy verification of authenticity of documents, lowered risk of fraud, etc.

- **GreenHouse Gas Emission Calculator:**
  - The GHG Calculator is an efficient, **user-friendly tool and provides for calculating and comparing GHG emissions** across different modes.
  - It allows for **commodity-wise comparison of GHG emissions** and total cost of transportation, including their environmental cost, between movement by road and rail.
  - The tool is intended to **facilitate appropriate modal choice for all concerned.**
- **Benefits:**
  - **Improved Efficiency:**  
Initiatives will improve **logistics efficiency, reduce logistics cost, and promote multi-modality and sustainability** in a big way, also help **fill the gap areas** where no action has yet been taken either by private players or any of the line ministries.
  - **Achieving Targets:**  
It will help achieve the targets of **improved India's ranking in Logistics Performance Index (LPI)**, reduction in logistics cost and establishment of indigenous India-specific metrics for continual improvement in logistics.  
India ranked **44<sup>th</sup> on the LPI in 2018.**
- **Related Initiatives:**
  - **Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC):**  
It is a **high speed and high capacity railway corridor** that is exclusively meant for the transportation of freight, or in other words, goods and commodities.
  - **National Logistics Law 2020:**  
It aims to **streamline the logistics ecosystem in the country**, with a view to promote growth of the sector and also to add impetus to enhance export competitiveness and ranking in LPI.
  - **Logix India 2019:**  
It was organized by the Ministry of Commerce & Industry and the **Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO)** as an **initiative to improve logistics cost effectiveness** and operational efficiencies for India's global trade.
  - **Multimodal Logistics Park:**  
The park will **reduce trade cost by 10%** and have cargo capacity of 13 million metric tons (MMT) per year.
  - **Fast Tracking Freight in India:**  
Recently it was launched to make goods transport cost-effective and to **reduce India's logistics cost.**
  - **Port Community System 'PCS1x':**  
The platform has the **potential to revolutionize maritime trade in India** and bring it at par with global best practices and pave the way to improve the Ease of Doing Business world ranking and **LPI ranks.**

**Source: PIB**

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