

28<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2024

## 1. India – Spain Bilateral Relationship

### GS 2 (International Relations)

- **Why in News:** Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez is reaching Vadodra, Gujarat where he and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold bilateral talks and inaugurate the Final Assembly Line (FAL) plant of the C295 medium-lift tactical transport aircraft for the Indian Air Force.

- **Historical Ties:**

- India and Spain established diplomatic relations in **1956**.
- Though limited historical interaction existed prior, both nations' shared democratic values, commitment to global peace, and respect for multiculturalism have formed a strong foundation for bilateral ties.
- High-level visits, including by heads of state, have helped solidify this relationship over the years.

- **Bilateral Trade:**

- Spain is India's **6th largest trade partner** in the European Union.
- **Total Trade (2023): US\$ 8.25 billion**, a 4.2% increase from the previous year.
  - **India's Exports to Spain:** US\$ **6.33 billion** (growth of 5.2%).
  - **India's Imports from Spain:** US\$ **1.92 billion** (growth of 1.05%).
  - **Top Indian Exports:** Mineral fuels, chemical products, iron and steel, electrical machinery, apparel, nuclear reactors, marine products, and articles of iron and steel.
- **Foreign Direct Investment:**
  - **Spanish FDI in India:**
    - US\$ 3.94 billion (April 2000 - December 2023), with Spain as India's 16th largest investor.
    - Over 280 Spanish companies in India, focusing on metallurgical industries, renewable energy, automotive, ceramics, and infrastructure.
    - Major destinations: Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka.
  - **Indian FDI in Spain:**
    - ~US\$ 900 million; 80 Indian companies in Spain, primarily in software & IT services, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, and logistics.
    - India is among Spain's top 30 investors globally and top 5 from Asia.
- **Trade and Economic Cooperation Framework:**
  - **India-Spain Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation (JCEC):** Established in 1972; has met 12 times, with the latest meeting in April 2023 in New Delhi.
  - **India-Spain CEOs Forum:** Established in 2015; first formal meeting held in May 2017 in Madrid.

- **Strategic Significance and Cooperation:**

- The strategic relationship between India and Spain is steadily expanding, encompassing areas like **defense, counter-terrorism, and cybersecurity**:
- **Defense:**
  - Spain is a key partner in India's defense modernization, providing expertise in **aerospace and naval technology**.
  - Spanish companies are involved in defense projects, including submarine technology transfer and collaborations for military aircraft.

#### TATAS-AIRBUS PLANT IN VADODARA FOR C295 TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT

### Spain PM reaches today for inaugural of India's first pvt facility for military aircraft

Sanchez, Modi to hold bilateral talks

SHUBHAJIT ROY  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 27

SPAIN'S PRIME Minister Pedro Sanchez is reaching Vadodra Monday where he and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will hold bilateral talks and inaugurate the Final Assembly Line (FAL) plant of the C295 medium-lift tactical transport aircraft for the Indian Air Force.

The Vadodra facility is India's first private military transport aircraft production

plant, a partnership between Tata Advanced System Limited (TASL) and Airbus Defence and Space (Airbus DS).

Under the first 'Make in India' aerospace programme in the private sector, India is to acquire 56 C295 aircraft to replace the IAF's legacy Avro fleet.

Airbus is to deliver the first 16 aircraft in fly-away condition from its FAL in Seville, Spain. The remaining 40 aircraft will be manufactured and assembled by TASL at the Vadodra facility.

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Of the 56 C295 aircraft being acquired for the IAF, 16 will be delivered from Spain. Of these, six have already arrived.

**EXPLAINED**  
Entering the IAF

THE MEDIUM-LIFT C295 aircraft is replacing IAF's Avro fleet. The first 16 aircraft are being delivered in fly-away condition from the Airbus facility in Seville, Spain. The first of the remaining 40 aircraft to be made in Vadodra will roll out by 2026 and deliveries will be completed by 2031.

- **Counter-Terrorism:**
  - India and Spain actively cooperate in counter-terrorism and intelligence sharing, recognizing mutual concerns regarding global terrorism.
- **Sustainable Development and Climate Action:**
  - Both nations are committed to the **Paris Agreement** and actively collaborate on climate change and sustainable development goals.
  - Spain's expertise in renewable energy aligns with India's goal of increasing clean energy sources.
- **Common Groupings and Multilateral Cooperation:**
  - India and Spain engage collaboratively through several multilateral platforms, including:
    - **United Nations:** Both countries work together on issues of global peace, sustainable development, and humanitarian aid.
    - **G20:** As members of the G20, India and Spain share a commitment to addressing global economic challenges, trade reforms, and climate action.
    - **International Solar Alliance (ISA):** Spain is a member of the ISA, aligning with India's initiative to promote solar energy and sustainable development.
- **Indian Diaspora in Spain:**
  - The **Indian community in Spain** is relatively small but has been growing in recent years.
  - **Population:** As of 2023, approximately **55,000 Indians** reside in Spain, contributing actively to sectors like **hospitality, retail, IT, and healthcare**.
- **News Summary:**
  - Spain's PM **Pedro Sanchez** is visiting **India** from **October 28 to 30**, marking the first visit by a Spanish PM in 18 years.
  - Sanchez will hold **bilateral talks** with Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** in Vadodara, Gujarat, where they will inaugurate the **Final Assembly Line (FAL) plant** for the **C295 tactical transport**
    - It is India's first private military transport aircraft production facility, developed by **Tata Advanced System Limited (TASL)** in partnership with **Airbus Defence and Space**.
    - Under the **\$2.5 billion contract**, 56 C295 aircraft will be supplied, with the first 16 delivered from Spain and the remaining 40 assembled in Vadodara.
  - This plant is expected to produce its first "Made-in-India" C295 in **2026**, with all deliveries by **2031**.
  - The project aims to build a complete industrial ecosystem in aerospace manufacturing in India, with contributions from **Bharat Electronics Ltd, Bharat Dynamics Ltd, and private MSMEs**.
  - Several **MoUs** are expected to be signed, furthering cooperation in **trade, IT, infrastructure, renewable energy, defence, pharma, and tourism**.

## 2. Digital Arrest Scams

### Recent events of importance

- **Why in News:** During an episode of his radio programme Mann Ki Baat, Prime Minister Narendra Modi drew attention to "digital arrests", warning people against the scam.
- **What are Digital Arrest Scams?**
  - Digital arrest scams involve fraudulent individuals posing as government officials who contact victims via phone or video calls through platforms like WhatsApp and Skype.
  - The scammers typically accuse the victims of involvement in illegal activities, such as drug trafficking or handling suspicious packages.



- To make their deception convincing, these scammers often use elaborate setups that mimic police stations and wear costumes that include official badges.
- They employ intimidation tactics, making victims believe they are under "digital arrest."
- The pressure builds during lengthy calls where the scammers outline dire consequences for non-compliance, culminating in demands for money as a means to secure the victim's release or to stop the supposed legal proceedings

### • Government Response to Counter Digital Arrest Scam

- **Establishment of I4C:** The Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre was created under the Ministry of Home Affairs to address the growing menace of cybercrime, including digital arrest scams.
- **Blocking of Scammer IDs:** In collaboration with tech companies like Microsoft, I4C has successfully blocked over 1,000 Skype IDs associated with these fraudulent activities.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** The government has launched initiatives to educate the public about the risks of such scams. Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasized the role of educational institutions in spreading awareness
- **Inter-Ministerial Committee:** In response to a spike in transnational organized cybercrime, particularly from Southeast Asian countries like Cambodia, the government has formed a committee comprising various law enforcement and intelligence agencies to tackle these threats.
- **Reporting Mechanisms:** Citizens are encouraged to report suspicious calls immediately by using the cybercrime helpline (1930) or by filing complaints on the official cybercrime website (<http://www.cybercrime.gov.in>). Local police should also be informed to aid in investigations.

### 3. India-UAE bilateral investment treaty can broaden scope of trade GS 2 (International Relations)

- **Why in News:** The Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT) between India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) came into effect on August 31, 2024, replacing the earlier Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA). This treaty aims to enhance economic cooperation with the UAE, a significant source of foreign direct investment (FDI) for India. The BIT is particularly notable in the context of India's recent struggles with bilateral treaties and declining FDI inflows.
- **Key Provisions of the India-UAE BIT**
  - **Eased Local Remedy Requirement:** The new BIT has reduced the period for investors to exhaust local remedies before seeking international arbitration from five years to three years, reflecting a more flexible approach to dispute resolution.
  - **Negative Covenant on Third-Party Funding:** The treaty includes a clause prohibiting investors from utilizing third-party funding for disputes, which contrasts with a growing acceptance of such funding in India's legal landscape.

MANN KI BAAT

## PM cautions against 'digital arrest' frauds, says no govt agency makes such calls

DIVYAA

NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 27

PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi Sunday cautioned against "digital arrest" frauds, in which scammers posing as law enforcement officers call up people and threaten them of arrest to extract money. He said no government agency ever makes such calls.

The Prime Minister said probe agencies are working with states to deal with the problem but added that awareness is essential in protecting oneself from such scams.

In the 115th edition of his monthly radio address 'Mann Ki Baat', Modi said, "Beware of digital arrest frauds. There is no system like digital arrest under law. No government agency will ever contact you via phone or video call for such an investigation."

Sharing an audio, he said: "The conversation you just heard pertains to the fraud of digital arrest. This conversation is between a victim and a fraudster."

"The fraudsters impersonate as police, CBI, narcotics, at times RBI, using such labels, they converse as fake officers with a lot of

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Union Minister and BJP chief J.P. Nadda and other party leaders listen to the PM's 'Mann Ki Baat' programme in New Delhi. ANI



ARUSH KHANNA

THE BILATERAL INVESTMENT Treaty (BIT) between India and the United Arab Emirates came into force from August 31, 2024, replacing the earlier Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (BIPPA) which lapsed on September 12, 2004. The BIT marks a significant move to bolster economic cooperation with the UAE, a country which accounts for 3 per cent of the total FDI receipts in India and cumulative investments of \$19 billion between 2000-24.

This announcement comes at a time when India's bilateral treaties have dried up, more so, since the adoption of the model BIT in 2016. Despite having contested several BIT claims and suffering adverse awards in multi-billion dollar disputes from international tribunals, the model BIT was seen more as a knee-jerk reaction, a one-size-fits-all measure rather than a nuanced and calibrated approach towards cross-border trade. This resulted in the termination of 68 of the 74 BITs which were in force as of 2015. The difficulty in renegotiating terms with other countries under the 2016 model led to a decline in FDI. According to government data, between April 2023 and September 2024, FDI equity inflows declined 24 per cent whereas the total FDI, which also includes reinvested earnings and capital inflows, contracted by 15.5 per cent.

Harbouring aspirations of a \$5 trillion economy, the Indian government, in its 2024 Interim Budget promised a renewed push to re-energise economic ties with its trade partners. The India-UAE BIT is an important step towards fulfilling that promise. It is interesting

to note from the text of the treaty, India's softened and flexible stance in amending or dispensing with certain covenants from the model BIT. For instance, under the model BIT, an investor was mandated to first resort to local remedies under the Indian legal system for five years before taking recourse to international arbitration. This has been watered down to three years under the India-UAE BIT (Article 17).

## INDIA-UAE, BIT BY BIT

Bilateral investment treaty broadens scope of trade, suggests a more flexible stance

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Another noteworthy addition is the inclusion of a negative covenant prohibiting investors from availing third-party funding for contesting disputes. Historically, third-party funding in common law jurisdictions such as India was viewed in contravention of public policy under the colonial doctrine of charity and maintenance. However, these have been significantly diluted to embrace modern economic realities. Even the Supreme Court, in *Bar Council of India v. Advocates Association* (2018), held that financial assistance from an unrelated party to a dispute would not per se be deemed in contravention of public policy. A recently constituted expert committee by the Ministry of Law and Justice in its report (February 2024) has recommended the inclusion of third-party funding in our arbitration regime. In that light, a blanket prohibition

of third-party funding for investor-state disputes runs against the domestic tide which has started to embrace the concept.

The India-UAE BIT broadens the scope of trade by including portfolio investments (Article 14) which were specifically excluded in the model BIT. This would allow investors with financial holdings to take recourse under the BIT and make any disputes arising therefrom amenable to the investor-state dispute settlement mechanism (ISDS) under the BIT. The Global Trade Research Initiative has rightly flagged this issue by stating that it may increase India's exposure to disputes over financial instruments, even those that don't significantly contribute to economic development, moving away from the model BIT's focus on long-term investments.

Time will judge whether the treaty has managed to strike a fine balance between promoting foreign investment and the state's right to regulate. The discussions on the proposed FTAs with the UK and the EU are at an advanced stage. Negotiations with other countries such as Hong Kong, Australia, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Russia are also active. Notwithstanding what ensues, for the time being, given India's disappointing ratings in contract enforcement and current geopolitical conundrums, these steps should be viewed in the right spirit which hopefully paves the way for a robust cross-border economic ecosystem. BIT by BIT.

The writer, a lawyer, is partner at Nimes Law Offices

- **Inclusion of Portfolio Investments:** By broadening the scope to include portfolio investments, the BIT allows financial investors to seek recourse under its dispute settlement mechanisms, potentially increasing India's exposure to investment disputes.
- **Implications for India's Investment Climate**
  - **Balancing Investment and Regulation:** The BIT aims to find a balance between attracting foreign investment and maintaining the state's regulatory rights, essential for India's economic aspirations.
  - **Impact on Ongoing Trade Negotiations:** The treaty may influence India's ongoing negotiations for free trade agreements (FTAs) with the UK, EU, and other countries, as it sets a precedent for flexible investment terms.
  - **Long-Term Economic Goals:** Despite challenges in contract enforcement and geopolitical factors, the BIT is a step toward fostering a robust cross-border economic ecosystem, aligning with India's vision of becoming a \$5 trillion economy.

#### 4. 21st Livestock Census in India GS 3 (Animal husbandry)

- **Why in News:** The Union Government launched the 21st Livestock Census in New Delhi.
- **What is the Livestock Census?**

- Conducted every five years, the Livestock Census is a nationwide headcount of domesticated animals, poultry, and stray animals
- It aims to gather detailed information about the species, breed, age, sex, and ownership status of these animals.

- Since its inception in 1919, a total of 20 censuses have been carried out, with the most recent one conducted in 2019.
- The enumeration for the 21st census is scheduled to take place from October 2024 to February 2025.
- **Which Animals Will Be Counted?** The census will encompass a diverse range of animals, with data collected on 16 species, including: Cattle, Buffalo, Mithun, Yak, Sheep, Goat, Pig, Camel, Horse, Ponies, Mule, Donkey, Dog, Rabbit, Elephant

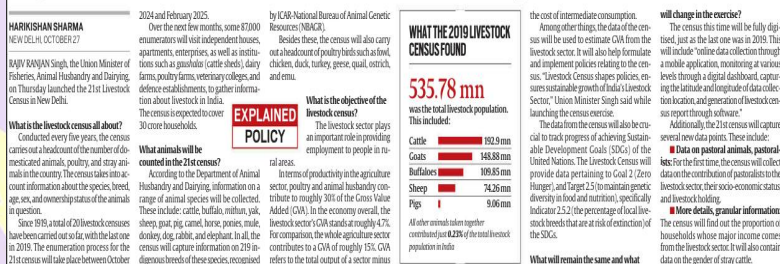
- In total, the census will account for 219 indigenous breeds recognized by the ICAR-National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR). Additionally, it will also include a headcount of various poultry birds such as chickens, ducks, turkeys, geese, quails, ostriches, and emus.

- **Objectives of the Livestock Census:** The livestock sector plays a pivotal role in the Indian economy, providing employment opportunities in rural areas and contributing significantly to the Gross Value Added (GVA) of the agricultural sector. It accounts for about 30% of the GVA in agriculture and around 4.7% of the overall economy.
- **Findings from the 2019 Livestock Census:** The last census revealed a total livestock population of approximately 535.78 million in India, broken down as follows:

- Cattle: 192.9 million
- Goats: 148.88 million
- Buffaloes: 109.85 million
- Sheep: 74.26 million
- Pigs: 9.06 million

- Together, other animals constituted just 0.23% of the total livestock population.

#### Significance of the livestock census, species it will cover





## 5. Tardigrades GS 3 (Environment)

- **Why in News:** A team of researchers has identified the genetic mechanisms that help a newly discovered species of tardigrades (*Hypsibius henanensis*) withstand high levels of radiation.
- **About Tardigrades:**
  - These are known as **water bears or moss piglets**, tardigrades have long fascinated scientists as they can **withstand extreme conditions**.
  - They are free-living tiny invertebrates belonging to the **phylum Tardigrada**.
  - Around 1,300 species of tardigrades are found worldwide.
- **Habitat:**
  - They are **considered aquatic** because they require a thin layer of water around their bodies to prevent dehydration, they've also been observed in all kinds of environments, from the deep sea to sand dunes.
  - Freshwater mosses and lichens are their preferred habitat, hence their nickname, moss piglet.
- Researchers found **three factors** that help this **species survive radiation**
  - It has ability to quickly repair double-strand breaks in DNA due to radiation exposure, by using a **protein called TRID1**.
  - The second factor involved a gene that was switched on during exposure to radiation, resulting in the generation of two proteins that are known to be important for mitochondrial synthesis of ATP—in tardigrades, it appears they also help with DNA repair.
  - It has ability to minimize damage from radiation by producing a large number of proteins that serve as **effective antioxidants**—they clear out free radicals before they can cause problems in the creature's cells
- **Significance:** The findings could one day be harnessed to help protect astronauts from radiation during **space missions, clean up nuclear pollution** or improve cancer treatment, according to a report in *Nature*.

**India's Nature Conservation Index rank 176, govt. slammed**

**Press Trust of India**  
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Sunday took a swipe at the BJP government over India being ranked 176 out of 180 countries on the Nature Conservation Index. Adding, "Should the bona fides of Israel's Ben Gurion University that co-developed the index be also questioned."

## 6. Nature Conservation Index GS 3 (Environment)

- **Why in News:** India with an abysmal score of 45.5 (out of 100) has been ranked 176th in the Global Nature Conservation Index, 2024.
- **About Nature Conservation Index:**
  - It is developed by **Goldman Sonnenfeldt School of Sustainability and Climate Change** at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.
  - The NCI is a data-driven analysis assessing each country's progress in balancing conservation and development.
  - It is aimed at helping governments, researchers, and organisations identify concerns and enhance conservation **policies for long-term biodiversity protection**.
  - This is the **first-ever edition** of the index which ranks countries based on their efforts vis-à-vis **four pillars**:
    - Managing protected areas, addressing threats against biodiversity, nature and conservation governance, and future trends in a country's natural resource management.
- **Highlights**
  - India's rank at the bottom is mainly attributed to **inefficient land management** and rising threats to its biodiversity.
  - The assessment highlighted multiple threats to India's biodiversity, including **habitat loss and fragmentation** caused by agriculture,

### HOW TARDIGRADES ARE ABLE TO RESIST HIGH LEVELS OF RADIATION

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 27

A TEAM of researchers has identified the genetic mechanisms that help a newly discovered species of tardigrades (*Hypsibius henanensis*) withstand high levels of radiation. The species comprises thousands of genes, which become more active when exposed to radiation. They protect the microscopic animals' DNA from damage and repair breaks, according to the scientists.

Their study, 'Multi-omics landscape and molecular basis of radiation tolerance in a tardigrade', was published in the journal *Science* last week. The scientists involved in the research are affiliated with several institutions in China.

The findings could one day be harnessed to help protect astronauts from radiation during space missions, clean up nuclear pollution or improve cancer treatment, according to a report in *Nature*. Lingxiang Zhang, a biologist at the Beijing Institute of Lifeomics and co-author of the study, told *Nature*, "This discovery may help improve the stress tolerance of human cells, benefiting patients undergoing radiation therapy."

#### How was the study carried out?

Zhang and his colleagues discovered a new species of tardigrade six years ago after they brought back moss samples from Funiu Mountain in China's Henan province to their laboratory.

They named it *Hypsibius henanensis* and began to analyse its characteristics. Also known as water bears or moss piglets, tardigrades have long fascinated scientists as they can withstand extreme conditions.

The team of scientists sequenced the genome of this new species and revealed that it had 14,701 genes, 30% of which were unique to tardigrades. They then exposed *Hypsibius henanensis* to radiation doses of gamma rays that were far beyond what would be survivable for hu-



Tardigrades have long fascinated scientists as they can withstand extreme conditions.  
Wikimedia Commons

mans, the *Nature* report said.

#### What did the study find?

The scientists discovered 2,801 of the genes in *Hypsibius henanensis* that were involved in DNA repair. More specifically, they found three factors that help this species survive radiation.

The first was its ability to quickly repair double-strand breaks in DNA due to radiation exposure, by using a protein called TRID1.

The second factor involved a gene that was switched on during exposure to radiation, resulting in the generation of two proteins that are known to be important for mitochondrial synthesis. In tardigrades, it appears they also help with DNA repair," according to a report by *phys.org*.

The third one was *Hypsibius henanensis*'s ability to produce different types of antioxidant pigments called betalains. These pigments can mop up some of the harmful reactive chemicals that radiation causes to form inside cells, the *Nature* report said.

Notably the researchers tested one of the tardigrade's betalains on human cells and found it significantly improved their survival rate after radiation exposure.

urbanisation and infrastructural development, with climate change posing an additional risk.

- The top-ranking countries were Luxembourg, Estonia, and Denmark, with others including Zimbabwe and Costa Rica finding their way into the top 10.

## 7. India's Expanding Space Program GS 3 (Science and Tech)

- **Why in News:** The Indian government has recently taken significant strides in advancing its space program, approving a series of ambitious projects that signal a new era of exploration. With plans for new missions to the Moon and Venus, along with a strong emphasis on collaboration with the private sector, India is poised to enhance its position in the global space arena.

### ● Key Approvals and Missions

- The Union Cabinet approved several critical missions under the **Gaganyaan human spaceflight program**, including four missions aimed at testing technologies for India's first space station, the **Bharatiya Antariksh Station 1**, expected to be operational by 2028. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will conduct one uncrewed Gaganyaan flight in addition to two planned missions. This initiative is supported by an additional funding of ₹11,170 crore.
- **Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV):** The Cabinet also greenlit the development of the Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV), with an allocation of ₹8,240 crore. This vehicle will be developed in collaboration with private industry to ensure a smooth transition to operational flights once testing is complete. The NGLV is expected to support a variety of future missions, including launching satellites into orbit.
- **Upcoming Space Missions**
  - **Venus Orbiter Mission:** Scheduled for launch in March 2028, this mission will cost ₹1,236 crore and aims to study the planet's harsh atmosphere and surface conditions.
  - **Chandrayaan-4:** Planned as a sample-return mission, this project will involve launching components using two LVM-3 rockets. It is designed to gather lunar soil and rock samples and return them to Earth by 2027 at a cost of ₹2,104 crore.
  - **Lunar Polar Exploration Mission (LUPEX):** A joint effort with Japan, this mission will utilize a new lander distinct from those used in previous Chandrayaan missions, facilitating future crewed lunar explorations.
- **Infrastructure Expansion**
  - The Space Commission has also approved the development of a third launch pad at Sriharikota, essential for testing and launching the NGLV, reflecting ISRO's commitment to expanding its infrastructure to meet growing demands.
- **Enhanced Surveillance and Training**
  - The Cabinet Committee on Security approved the Space Based Surveillance (SBS) project, which involves constructing 21 satellites by ISRO and 31 by private companies, totaling ₹26,968 crore. This marks a substantial increase from earlier phases of the project.
  - In preparation for international missions, Indian astronaut Sudhanshu Shukla has begun training at SpaceX's headquarters, getting ready for the Axiom-4 mission to the International Space Station.
- **Satellite Collaborations (NISAR and Proba-3):** India is gearing up for the launch of two important satellites:

## New rocket, plus moon and Venus missions, herald new beginnings

Building on the moon landing, ISRO is now planning a Venus mission and further moon exploration. A new launcher is being developed as the private sector also begins to take a hand in the space effort. A green propulsion system and low earth orbit satellite developed in the private sector will be seen in action soon

### INDIA IN SPACE

Prashant Mohan

**P**resident of the Indian government recently signed off on a series of new projects, including work on a new rocket that will take India to the moon and Venus.

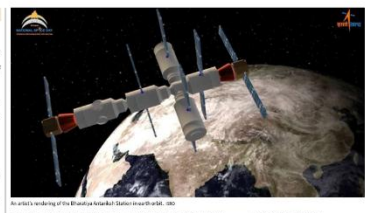
The space programme is thus on the cusp of a new era of exploration. India is also preparing to launch the NGLV and Proba-3 satellite, which will be the first of a series of satellites to be launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in the next few years.

The Union Cabinet on September 13 approved four missions under the Gaganyaan human spaceflight programme and the mission to test the Bharatiya Antariksh Station 1, by 2028. The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) also approved several other projects in the space arena.

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ISRO is working on the Bharatiya Antariksh Station 1, which will be the first of a series of satellites to be launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in the next few years.

**The Space Commission also approved a joint mission with Japan called the Lunar Polar Exploration Mission, for LUPEX. ISRO is also planning a Venus mission, which will be the first of a series of satellites to be launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in the next few years.**

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### THE GIST

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- **NISAR:** A collaboration with NASA, this Earth-observation satellite recently received its radar antenna in India and is set to launch in early 2025 using a Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle.
- **Proba-3:** From the European Space Agency, this mission will study the Sun's corona and is scheduled for a launch aboard a PSLV-XL vehicle.





**MCQ Current Affairs**  
**28<sup>th</sup> Oct, 2024**

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**1. Dong Feng-26 Missile, recently seen in the news, is developed by which country?**

- a) South Korea
- b) China
- c) North Korea
- d) None of the above

**2. Lord's Resistance Army, recently seen in the news, is an armed rebel group belonging to which one of the following regions?**

- a) East Asia
- b) Middle East
- c) South America
- d) Central Africa

**3. Consider the following statements regarding the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR):**

- A. It is the apex body for coordinating, guiding, and managing research and education in agriculture.
- B. The Union Minister of Agriculture is the President of the ICAR.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) A only
- b) B only
- c) A and B
- d) Neither of two

**4. Consider the following statements regarding Tardigrades:**

- A. They are known as water bears which can withstand extreme conditions.
- B. They can be observed in all kinds of environments, from the deep sea to sand dunes.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) A only
- b) B only
- c) A and B
- d) Neither of two

**5. Consider the following statements regarding the Nature Conservation Index:**

- A. It is a data-driven analysis assessing each country's progress in balancing conservation and development.
- B. It was developed by the United Nations Environment Programme.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) A only
- b) B only
- c) A and B
- d) Neither of two



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1. b
2. d
3. c
4. c
5. a

