

9<sup>th</sup> Nov, 2024

## 1. NSCN (I-M) Demands Third-Party Intervention in Naga Conflict, Threatens Armed Resistance Recent events of importance

### • Why in News:

- The Isak-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN I-M) has requested third-party intervention to resolve the longstanding Naga political issue with the Indian government.
- Accusing the Centre of betraying the 2015 Framework Agreement, NSCN (I-M) warns it may resume armed resistance if this proposal is denied.
- The group asserts that the Centre reneged on commitments to recognize a separate Naga flag and constitution, essential for honoring the Naga people's unique history and "shared sovereignty."

### • Naga Insurgency

#### ○ Background:

- The British annexed Assam in 1826, and in 1881, the Naga Hills too became part of British India.
- The Naga National Council (NNC) was formed in April 1946 to carry out **social and political upliftment of the Nagas**.
- After the return of the radical leader of Naga cause, Angami Zapu Phizo, from Burma in 1947, the faction of NNC demanding full impendence grew strong.

#### ○ Shillong Accord and the split of NNC

- The Shillong Accord was signed in 1975 by Government of India with a section of the NNC leaders.
- As part of the accord, the leaders agreed to abjure violence and work towards the solution of the Naga problem within the framework of the Indian Constitution.
- It was opposed by Phizo, Isak Swu and Muivah. Later, Isak Swu and Muivah formed the "**National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN)**" in January 1980
- Later, NSCN split into two factions, namely **NCSN (I-M) led by Isak & Muivah** and **NCSN (K) led by Khaplang**.

#### ○ Demand for Greater Nagaland

- The Nagas under NSCN (I-M) had various views for a new Nagaland.
- One was an independent nation of Nagaland **comprising the present Nagaland, the Naga inhabited areas of Manipur and Myanmar**.
- Another one was to integrate the Naga inhabited districts of Manipur with the state of Nagaland under the Indian Constitution

### • Naga Peace Accord

#### ○ Background

- Since 1997, NSCN (I-M) has been involved in negotiations with the Government of India and signed many ceasefire agreements.

#### ○ 2015 Framework Agreement (FA)

- On August 3, 2015, the Centre signed a framework agreement with the NSCN (I-M) to resolve the Naga issue.
- Both sides-maintained secrecy about its contents. Hence, the details of the agreements are not entirely clear. However, broad points included:
  - The government could go for **devolution of more powers** to Nagaland under provisions of Article 371 (A) of the Constitution of India.
  - The **army of NSCN-IM will be absorbed** in a new force to be raised on the lines of Home Guards.

## NSCN-IM threatens armed violence for first time since 2015 framework agreement

Yijaita Singh  
NEW DELHI

For the first time since signing a framework agreement in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015, the Isak-Muivah faction of the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM) has issued a statement threatening to "resume violent armed resistance against India".

The NSCN-IM warned it would resume the struggle if the Centre does not agree to third-party intervention to address its demands, which include a separate flag and constitution for the Nagas. It said "the violent confrontation



T. Muivah

shall be purely on account of the deliberate betrayal and breach of commitment by India and its leadership to respect and honour the letter and spirit of the framework agreement of August 3, 2015".

Signed by T. Muivah, general secretary, NSCN, and "chief political negotiator", the statement re-

leased on Thursday said NSCN shall protect the unique history, sovereignty, freedom, territory, flag and constitution for the Nagas "come what may".

A government source said the statement was drafted in the name of Mr. Muivah by his two China-based aides Phunthing Shimray and Pamshin Muivah. The 90-year-old is not keeping well, the source added. On September 20, Mr. Pamshin Muivah was appointed as national security adviser of NSCN. It had signed a ceasefire pact with the Centre in 1997.

CONTINUED ON  
» PAGE 10

- It would involve more autonomy to Naga tribes living in Manipur.
- The agreement, however, **does not include physical integration** of all Naga areas in terms of a boundary.
- The agreement was only a framework, with many details still to be hammered out.
- **Issues with Framework agreement**
  - **The issue of sovereignty**
    - The Framework agreement contains some clauses on ‘**sharing sovereign power**’ which is being interpreted differently by both sides.
    - The NSCN now argues that according to the agreement, its sovereignty has to be retained.
    - Any final agreement should be for peaceful coexistence of the two sovereign powers. This is not accepted by the Government.
  - **Poor draft of the framework agreement**
    - The wordings of the FA are vague, leaving for both sides to interpret the deal according to their own convenience.
    - E.g., FA at one point says, “**Inclusive peaceful co-existence of the two entities sharing sovereign power**”.
  - **Issue of separate flag and constitution**
    - NSCN(IM) contends that the idea of “sharing sovereign power” and “co-existence of the two entities” means:
      - Naga people will be **entitled to their own national flag and constitution**.
      - The FA was signed in 2015, when special status of Jammu and Kashmir existed.
      - However, the situation changed after scrapping of Article 370 and hence Centre cannot agree to such a demand.
  - **Smaller groups such as Naga National Political Group (NNPGs) got strengthened**
    - Another obstacle in the talks was that smaller groups such as NNPGs got strengthened during the tenure of previous interlocutor N Ravi.
    - He used the strategy of dividing the groups by giving more prominence to the smaller groups.
    - This annoyed the larger groups such as NSCN(IM) and they stayed away from the talks.
  - **Release of the copy of the sensitive Framework Agreement**
    - In August 2020, NSCN-IM released a copy of the sensitive Framework Agreement. This reduced the trust between the negotiating parties
- **Trust deficit between the then Governor of Nagaland and NSCN**
  - The group accused the then Nagaland Governor N Ravi, an interlocutor, of deleting a keyword.
  - In November 2017, Ravi signed an agreement with seven groups who had come together under the banner of the NNPGs.
  - This did not include the NSCN (IM), which considers itself the principal representative of Naga aspirations.
  - As a result, NSCN (IM) accused Ravi of attempting to “segregate the Naga civil society”.
  - Later, R N Ravi resigned as interlocutor for the Naga peace talks.





### 3. Test for Determining Minority Educational Institution (MEI) Status GS 2 (Governance)

#### • Why in News:

- Without determining whether Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) is a minority institution or not, a 7-judge bench of the Supreme Court overruled by a 4:3 majority a 1967 judgment by a 5-judge bench in Azeez Basha case.
- The majority opinion **laid down elaborate parameters** for testing the minority character of an institution and tasked a regular bench to adjudicate the 57-year-old controversy based on the parameters.

#### • Background of the AMU Minority Status Case:

- AMU's transformation from MAO college (1920)**
  - The Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental (MAO) college, established in 1877, was converted to AMU in 1920 by a central legislature Act.
  - The government argued this conversion changed its minority status which became a pivotal issue in later legal debates.

**SC's test of a 'minority institution'**  
The top court has laid down a 'holistic and realistic' test to determine the 'minority character' of an educational institution that would ensure special protections under Article 30

**When LS debated the 1981 Bill protecting AMU minority status**

**AMU's transformation from MAO college (1920)**

**Background of the AMU Minority Status Case:**

The Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental (MAO) college, established in 1877, was converted to AMU in 1920 by a central legislature Act. The government argued this conversion changed its minority status which became a pivotal issue in later legal debates.

- Azeez Basha case (1967):** The SC held that AMU was not established by the Muslim community but by a central legislature Act in 1920, disqualifying it as a minority institution under **Article 30** of the Constitution.
- Government amendments and legal developments (1981-2006):**
  - 1981:** An amendment to the AMU Act declared AMU was created by the Muslim community for their educational advancement.
  - 2005:** AMU introduced 50% reservation for Muslims in postgraduate medical courses.
  - 2006:** The Allahabad HC ruled against AMU's minority status, annulling the 1981 amendment and the 50% reservation policy.
- SC referral (2019):** The issue was brought before the Supreme Court, and in 2019, it was referred to a seven-judge Bench.
- Constitutional Protections and Benefits of MEIs:**
  - Article 30:** Under Article 30(1), minorities have the right to establish and administer educational institutions.
  - Article 15(5):** MEIs are granted special privileges, such as control over admissions and staff hiring, and exemption from reservations for SCs and STs under this provision.
  - Benefits of minority status:** Minority institutions can reserve up to 50% seats for minority students and enjoy autonomy in administration, fostering cultural and linguistic diversity.
- SC's Criteria for Determining MEI Status:**
  - The SC identified the following:**
    - The institution's purpose** should primarily aim to conserve minority language and culture.
    - Minority institutions may admit non-minority students** without losing their minority status.
    - Secular education** does not undermine minority character.
    - Government-aided institutions** cannot compel religious instruction; those fully state-funded cannot offer it.
  - Test for determining minority character:** The SC devised a **two-step test** to identify whether an institution holds a minority character.

- **Two-Fold Test to Establish Minority Status:**
  - **Establishment:**
    - Courts must investigate the origin and purpose of an institution's establishment, identifying community involvement in its formation.
    - Proof of establishment includes letters, funding records, and communications affirming that the institution's aim was predominantly for the minority community's benefit.
  - **Administration:**
    - MEIs are not obligated to appoint only minority members to administrative roles. However, administrative setup should reflect minority interests.
    - For pre-1950 institutions, courts must review whether the administration affirmed the minority's interest on the Constitution's commencement date.
- **Implications of SC Determining MEI Status Test:**
  - **Administrative autonomy affirmed:** This is seen as a significant development for institutions like St Stephen's College, which is currently in a dispute with Delhi University (DU) over its principal's reappointment process.
  - **Reignites minority status debate:**
    - The ongoing legal questions surrounding **Jamia Millia Islamia's (JMI)** minority status are closely connected to the AMU case.
    - According to JMI's standing counsel, the SC's decision on AMU's minority status will likely affect JMI's case as both involve similar legal principles about institutions created by legislative acts
- **Conclusion:**
  - The SC's verdict **brings AMU closer to securing its minority status** by clarifying criteria for minority character under Article 30. **However, the final determination of AMU's status awaits further review.**
  - This landmark judgment sets a precedent for MEIs, preserving minority rights in India's educational framework while ensuring alignment with constitutional provisions.

#### 4. Unshackling the Indian Rupee GS 3 (Economy)

- **Why in News:** Recent reports have highlighted the **Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) active intervention** in managing the **rupee's exchange rate against the US dollar**, which has raised concerns among economists and market participants. This shift from a flexible exchange rate policy to more active currency management has been described as problematic, as it may distort market signals and hinder economic growth.
- **Distortion of Market Signals**
  - **Interventionist Currency Policy:** The RBI's active role in buying and selling dollars to control the rupee's value has led to a significant reduction in exchange rate volatility, with the rupee-dollar volatility falling from an average of 5% to just 1.9% since 2023.
  - **Economic Principles at Stake:** The move to fix the exchange rate goes against the fundamental economic principle that prices should be determined by market forces, not state intervention. In a market economy, the price system conveys crucial supply and demand information.
  - **Historical Lessons from Fixed Exchange Rates:** India's pre-1991 experience with fixed exchange rates led to significant economic distortions, including shortages of goods and foreign exchange, ultimately contributing to the 1991 economic crisis. Many emerging economies have since moved away from such systems.



## • Theoretical vs. Practical Implications

- **Flexible Exchange Rate Advantages:** Under the previous system, a flexible exchange rate helped to smooth out economic cycles. The rupee's appreciation during periods of growth helped prevent overheating, while depreciation during downturns supported exports and economic recovery.
- **Real Exchange Rate Impact:** The new policy has led to a real appreciation of the rupee, making Indian exports more expensive and potentially harming India's export-driven growth strategies, including the "Make in India" initiative.
- **Shift from a Working System:** The shift to an inflexible exchange rate system has undone a functioning, flexible mechanism that allowed for natural adjustments, leading to better long-term economic stability and competitiveness.

## • Transparency and Market Uncertainty

- **Lack of Clear Communication:** The RBI has not provided transparency regarding its currency policy, leaving private market participants uncertain about the central bank's intentions and future interventions.
- **Market Confusion:** The lack of clear guidelines has created confusion about when and how the RBI will intervene, making it difficult for market players to anticipate currency movements and adjust their strategies accordingly.
- **Risk of Long-term Economic Costs:** Without a clear and transparent policy, the long-term costs of artificially stabilizing the currency could outweigh any short-term benefits, potentially distorting the market and undermining India's growth ambitions.

## Unshackle the rupee

Exchange rate needs to be able to respond freely to market forces



RAJESWARI SENGUPTA

RECENTLY, THERE HAVE BEEN several reports about the stability of the rupee against the US dollar. This is typically described as a positive development. But the central bank's decision to control the exchange rate is deeply problematic. Admittedly, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has always intervened in the foreign exchange market to smooth out fluctuations of the rupee. However, since 1991, the intervention has never been as great as it is today. The data speaks for itself. Over the two decades through 2020, the average annual volatility (that is to say, the movement) of the rupee-dollar (INR-USD) rate typically ran around 5 per cent. But between April 2023 and August 2024, the average volatility collapsed to 1.9 per cent, an extraordinarily low level not only compared to India's own past but also its emerging economy peers. To be clear, if exchange rate stability comes about as a natural outcome of market forces, it is welcome. For example, the euro-dollar exchange rate is one of the most stable, not because the central banks regularly intervene in the market — they do not — but because a vast number of players are freely able to take money in and out of these financial markets, creating huge but roughly balanced cross-border movements of capital, which keep the exchange rate stable. The rupee's recent stability, however, has not been driven by market forces. It has come about due to an apparent change in the RBI's currency policy. Since late 2022, the RBI has decided to actively intervene on both sides of the foreign exchange market, on some days buying dollars to prevent the rupee from appreciating and on other days selling dollars to prevent depreciation. It is only a small exaggeration to say that without any announcement or public debate, the rupee has become pegged to the dollar. There are several fundamental problems with this change in currency policy. To begin with, it goes against basic economic principles. For any country that aspires to be a developed economy, the price of any good, service or asset should not be determined by the state. Just as we do not want the price of tomatoes or computers to be fixed by the state, it is not a good idea to fix the price of the rupee either. The price should instead be left to the market. This is because the price system in a market economy performs a crucial function: It conveys information about demand and supply to buyers and sellers, who can then adjust their behaviour accordingly. As each group responds to this signal, demand is gradually brought into balance with supply. In contrast, when the state sets the price, information systems get distorted. One only needs to look at India's own history to see what can go wrong. In the pre-1991 era, controlled prices led to shortages of nearly every major good that

people wanted to buy, such as cars or telephones. Most scarce of all were imports, which people could not obtain easily because the pegged exchange rate led to shortages of foreign exchange. Ultimately, these problems led to the crisis of 1991, when the entire system broke down. This is not a uniquely Indian story. The list of countries that got into serious trouble after pegging their exchange rate is a long one, including major economies such as Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Russia, South Korea, Thailand and Turkey. That is why nearly all emerging economies have decided in recent years to free their exchange rates.

So much for theoretical principles. What about practice? After all, sometimes the practical problems of a theoretically best policy can be so large that it simply needs to be abandoned. But that was not the case here, which brings us to the next problem with the new currency policy: It did away with a long-standing system that was working perfectly well.

The previous flexible exchange rate policy had two practical advantages. First, the exchange rate moved up or down over the business cycle which in turn helped smooth out output fluctuations. During periods of high growth when exports were growing and foreign capital was flowing in, the rupee appreciated which prevented the economy from overheating. When the economy was in a downturn, the rupee depreciated, making Indian goods and services more attractive to foreigners, and promoting an export-led recovery.

Second, because these ups and downs balanced each other out, over long periods there was stability in the real exchange rate, that is the exchange rate adjusted for the difference in inflation between India and its trading partners. In contrast, the new inflexible system has already led to a significant real exchange rate appreciation, thereby making India's exports more costly to foreigners, and potentially undermining the Make in India drive.

All these bring us to the final problem — the lack of transparency. The central bank seldom communicates about its currency policy. As a result, it is not well understood why the RBI felt the need to break with a long-standing practice and bind the rupee so tightly to the dollar. It is also not clear whether this is a temporary policy or a more long-lasting change.

Consequently, private sector participants in the foreign exchange market are confused. They need to guess when they see imbalances in the market, such as capital flows exerting pressure on the exchange rate. Will the central bank intervene to prevent the exchange rate from moving? If so, when, by how much, or in which direction? No one knows. So, they do not know how to respond.

The exchange rate is the most important price in a market economy. If India wants to become a high-income economy, the exchange rate needs to respond freely to market forces, sending appropriate signals to market participants. If instead, the market gets distorted merely to stabilise the currency, this may prove costly in the long run.

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## 5. Digital Population Clock GS 1 (Social Geography)

- **Why in News:** Recently, Bengaluru's first digital population clock was inaugurated at the Institute for Social Economic Change (ISEC).
- **About Digital Population Clock:**
  - It will access real-time estimates of **Karnataka's and population of India**.
  - The project was jointly taken up by ISEC, and the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).
  - It would update the figures of the **state's population every 1.10 minutes** (one minute 10 seconds) and the country's population **every two seconds**.
  - It aims to **increase awareness of population dynamics** and provide accurate data for research.
  - The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) is installing similar clocks in 18 Population Research Centres across India.
  - The clock has been **equipped with a satellite connection** for precise timekeeping. It operates autonomously with all necessary components integrated into the system.
  - It is also equipped with **state-of-the-art software** and tools to facilitate detailed demographic studies.
  - **Significance:** The clock will play a pivotal role in advancing our understanding of population trends.
  - The new census data research workstation would further strengthen academic research, policy analysis, and capacity building in population studies.

## Bengaluru's first digital population clock to be inaugurated today

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

Bengaluru city's first digital population clock, which will display real-time estimates of the population of Karnataka and the country, will be inaugurated at the Institute for Social and Economic Change on Friday.

The population clock, a project jointly taken up by ISEC and the Union Minis-

try of Health and Family Welfare, would update the estimated Karnataka's population every one minute 10 seconds and the country's population every two seconds.

It has been set up at the entrance of ISEC with the objective of creating awareness about population growth of the country and providing authentic data for researchers and scholars.

## 6. Zambia

### GS 2 (International Relations)

- **Why in News:** Recently, India-Zambia held the 6th Session of the Joint Permanent Commission in Lusaka.
- **About Zambia:**
  - It is a **landlocked country** in south-central Africa.
  - It is situated on a high plateau and takes its **name from the Zambezi River**, which drains all but a small northern part of the country.
  - **Bordering countries:**
    - It is bounded to the north by the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, and to the south by **Zimbabwe and Botswana**.
    - **Tanzania** borders the country to the northeast, **Malawi** to the west and **Mozambique** to the southeast. **Angola** borders Zambia to the west and **Namibia** to the southwest.
  - **Economy:** Zambia's economy is heavily dependent on mining, in particular the mining of **copper**.
  - Most Zambians speak **Bantu languages** of the Niger-Congo language family.
  - **Major waterfall:** **Victoria Falls** on Zambezi River.
  - Zambia is home to **Lake Kariba**, the largest artificially created reservoir in the world by volume. It was created by constructing the Kariba Dam on the Zambezi River.
  - **Capital city:** Lusaka



## 7. PyPIM Platform

### GS 3 (Science and Tech)

- **Why in News:** Israeli researchers have developed PyPIM that enables computers to process data directly in memory, bypassing the need for the Central Processing Unit (CPU).
- **About PyPIM Platform:**
  - It combines the **Python programming language with digital processing-in-memory (PIM) technology**.
  - It uses new instructions to enable operations to be performed directly in memory.
  - The platform allows developers to write software for PIM computers using familiar programming languages like Python.
  - The researchers aim to tackle the **"memory wall" problem**, where increases in processor speeds and memory capacity outpace data transfer rates.
  - This innovation addresses **the energy- and time-intensive data transfers** between memory and the CPU, which have increasingly become bottlenecks in modern computing.
  - By performing some computations in memory, this approach reduces dependence on the CPU, leading to significant time and energy savings.
  - Traditional computer programs rely on separate hardware components for memory and processing, requiring data to be transferred from memory to the CPU for computation.
  - To support in-memory computing, the researchers developed a platform called PyPIM.



**MCQ Current Affairs**  
**9<sup>th</sup> Nov, 2024****1. Consider the following statements regarding the INS Vikrant:**

- A. It is India's first indigenously designed and manufactured aircraft carrier.
- B. It uses the Short Take-Off but Arrested Recovery (STOBAR) method to launch and recover aircraft.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**2. Consider the following statements regarding cyanobacteria:**

- A. These are microscopic organisms found naturally in all types of water.
- B. These organisms can multiply quickly in warm and nutrient-rich environments.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**3. Consider the following statements regarding the Horn of Africa:**

- A. It comprises the countries of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia.
- B. It is separated from the Arabian Peninsula by the Bab el-Mandeb Strait.

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 Digital Population Clock:**

- A. It is a joint project taken up by the ISRO and the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- B. It has been equipped with a satellite connection for precise timekeeping.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**5. Which of the following country developed PyPIM Platform?**

- a) Israeli
- b) India
- c) Germany
- d) Australia



**Answers Current Affairs**  
**9<sup>th</sup> Nov, 2024**

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

