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MCQs

THE HINDU

The Gulf is calling and New Delhi must listen

Prelims : General Studies Paper I

Current events of national and international importance

Mains: General Studies 2

Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

Why in Focus?

- The changing **West Asian security architecture** is raising questions about whether India should move beyond its traditional **economic and diplomatic engagement**.
- The emergence of new **regional security partnerships**, amid a growing security vacuum, could affect India's **energy security, trade routes and strategic interests**.

Key Highlights

- India traditionally viewed West Asia primarily as a source of **energy**, a destination for **Indian workers**, and a major source of **remittances**.
- India followed a policy of balancing relations with competing regional powers while avoiding formal **security commitments** to any single country.
- This approach worked when the **United States** played the dominant role in maintaining West Asian security and regional stability.

- As the U.S. adopts **selective engagement**, a **security vacuum** has emerged, prompting regional states to seek **reliable security partners**.
- The **Mecca Joint Defence Agreement** involving **Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan** is presented as a sign of the changing regional security architecture.
- The growing influence of new security arrangements could affect India's **trade routes, energy security and Indian diaspora** in the Gulf.
- Regional conflicts and asymmetric threats have **exposed the vulnerability of ports, energy infrastructure and trade corridors**, as we have seen in the **Strait of Hormuz**.
- Disruptions around maritime chokepoints can directly affect **global supply chains and India's economic interests**.
- West Asian countries increasingly require cooperation in **naval security, intelligence sharing, defence technology and counter-terrorism**.

Implications

- India's traditional reliance on **trade ties and diaspora diplomacy** alone may be insufficient in a rapidly changing security environment.
- Instability in West Asia directly threatens India's **energy supplies, maritime trade and overseas citizens**.
- New regional security arrangements could marginalise India if it remains outside emerging **security architectures**.



- Greater Indian involvement could strengthen its role as a **net security provider** in the western Indian Ocean region.

Way Forward

- Expand **naval and maritime security partnerships** across key regional chokepoints.
- Develop **joint maritime patrols, logistics arrangements and surveillance networks** with friendly regional countries.
- Strengthen **defence-industrial cooperation, joint exercises and intelligence sharing**.
- Build flexible **bilateral and minilateral security partnerships** without entering rigid military alliances.
- Develop a strategic framework that protects India's interests while avoiding unnecessary involvement in **regional conflicts**.

Mains Question

Q. The changing security architecture of West Asia poses new challenges and opportunities for India. Examine the limitations of India's traditional approach towards the region and discuss the measures required for India to safeguard its strategic, economic and security interests. **(250 words)**

A BIT of a reset, with a wider debate

Prelims: General Paper 1

Current events of national and international importance.

Mains: General studies 3

Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization, of resources, growth, development and employment.

Why in Focus?

- India is revising its **2015 Model Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT)** and the revised draft is expected to be placed before the **Union Cabinet**. The aim is to make India more attractive to foreign investors while protecting the government's **right to regulate in the public interest**.

Key Highlights

- India adopted the **2015 Model BIT** after facing several disputes with foreign investors who alleged that India had violated investment treaty obligations.
- Based on this model, India has concluded only a few BITs. This suggests that many foreign investors feel that the model does not provide enough **protection to their investments**.
- The 2015 model gives greater importance to the **State's right to regulate** than to investor protection. This was intended to protect India's **policy space**, but has also created concerns among foreign investors.
- These concerns are further increased by **regulatory uncertainty, weak governance mechanisms and delays in the judicial system**, which can make investment in India more risky.
- Experts have suggested reforms such as easier access to **international arbitration**, stronger protection for foreign investments and better **investment facilitation**.
- The revision also raises the issue of a **democratic deficit**. Since investment treaties can affect citizens and government policies, their negotiation should not remain limited to government officials and experts.
- Countries such as the **UK and Australia** provide greater parliamentary oversight of treaties. **Norway and Colombia** have also used public consultations while preparing their investment treaty frameworks. India followed a similar approach when it invited public comments on its **2015 Model BIT**.

Implications

- India must find the right balance between **protecting foreign investors** and preserving the government's **right to regulate** in areas such as environment, health and public welfare.
- If investor protection remains weak, foreign investors may hesitate to invest due to concerns about **legal and regulatory risks**.
- At the same time, excessive investor protection may allow companies to challenge legitimate government policies through **international arbitration**.



- Limited involvement of **Parliament, experts, industry and civil society** can create a **democratic deficit** in the treaty-making process.
- Lack of transparency during negotiations can reduce **accountability and public trust** in international economic agreements.
- A well-balanced BIT can improve **policy certainty, investor confidence and India's position as an attractive investment destination**.

Way Forward

- The government should consult **international lawyers, economists, academics and investment experts** before finalising the revised model.
- **Industry bodies, law firms, arbitrators and civil society organisations** should also be given an opportunity to provide their views.
- The draft Model BIT should be **placed in the public domain** and public comments should be invited.
- The draft should be discussed in **Parliament and relevant Parliamentary Committees** to strengthen **democratic oversight**.
- The final framework should provide **strong but reasonable investor protection** while preserving India's **policy space, public interest and sovereign right to regulate**.

Mains Question

India's Bilateral Investment Treaty framework needs to balance foreign investment protection with the State's right to regulate. Discuss the limitations of the 2015 Model BIT and examine the need for greater parliamentary and public consultation in its revision. (15 marks, 250 words)

Warning on warming: On the UNEP report, Limiting Overshoot

Prelims: General Paper 1

Current events of national and international importance.

Mains: General studies 2

Bilateral, regional and global groupings and

agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.

Why in Focus?

- The **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** report **Limiting Overshoot** warns that crossing the **1.5°C warming limit** can cause irreversible losses. It stresses that strong climate action can still limit the extent of warming.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is the **leading global environmental authority within the United Nations**, established in **1972**. It coordinates international environmental action and provides scientific assessments on issues such as **climate change, biodiversity and pollution**. Its headquarters is in **Nairobi, Kenya**.

Key Highlights

- Even if all countries fully implement their current **climate pledges**, global warming could reach around **1.8°C**, while current policies could lead to about **2.6°C** warming.
- The report accepts that the world is entering a **1.5°C warming reality**, but argues that climate action can still reduce the extent and duration of **temperature overshoot**.
- It proposes an **"overshoot, peak and decline" pathway**, where temperatures temporarily rise above 1.5°C, reach the lowest possible peak and then decline below the limit by the end of the century.
- The report gives greater importance to **greenhouse gases beyond carbon dioxide**, particularly **methane**, which contributes significantly to current warming and has a shorter atmospheric lifetime than carbon dioxide.
- More than **155 countries** have joined the **Global Methane Pledge**, committing to reduce human-caused methane emissions by at least **30% from 2020 levels by 2030**. **India is not a member** of the pledge.
- India highlights **climate justice and Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR)**, arguing that developed countries with greater historical emissions should provide **climate finance and affordable technology** to developing countries.



- The issue is becoming more important ahead of **COP31**, as developing countries face pressure to strengthen mitigation while also demanding greater support for **adaptation and climate resilience**.

COP31 (31st Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC) will be held in **Türkiye** in **November 2026**, bringing countries together to strengthen global climate action and address issues such as **emission reduction, climate finance and adaptation**.

Implications

- Crossing **1.5°C** increases the risk of irreversible damage, extreme weather and ecosystem losses.
- Developing countries must balance **economic development, energy security and climate action**.
- Shortfalls in **adaptation finance and technology transfer** make climate resilience difficult for vulnerable countries.
- India faces growing pressure to demonstrate greater climate action while highlighting its **low per capita emissions and development needs**.

Way Forward

- Strengthen **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** and accelerate the transition to clean energy.
- Give greater attention to **methane reduction** for immediate climate benefits.
- Developed countries should enhance **climate finance, technology transfer and adaptation support**.
- India should combine its **climate justice position** with stronger domestic mitigation and **climate-resilient development**.

Mains Question

The 1.5°C warming limit is increasingly difficult to maintain, but climate action remains essential. Discuss the “overshoot, peak and decline” approach and the challenges faced by India in balancing climate action with development needs. (15 marks, 250 words)

KEYWORDS

EOS-05

- ISRO successfully launched the **Earth Observation Satellite-05 (EOS-05)** on **September 4, 2026**, aboard the **GSLV-F17 (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle-F17)** from **Sriharikota**.
- EOS-05** is India's first dedicated Earth-imaging satellite designed to operate from **Geosynchronous Orbit (GEO)** at about **36,000 km** altitude. Since its orbital period matches Earth's rotation, it can continuously monitor the same region, unlike **Low Earth Orbit (LEO)** satellites that pass over an area periodically.
- With a mass of **2,367 kg**, EOS-05 is the **heaviest satellite successfully placed into orbit by a GSLV**.
- The satellite serves as a replacement for the **EOS-03 mission**, which failed shortly after launch in **2021**.
- EOS-05 carries advanced sensors capable of operating across **visible, infrared, multispectral and hyperspectral wavelengths**, allowing detailed observation of changes on Earth's surface and in the atmosphere.
- Often described as an “**eye in the sky**”, it will provide **near real-time and high-frequency data** for monitoring **cyclones, cloudbursts and thunderstorms**, supporting faster disaster management.
- The satellite will also support **agriculture, forestry and water-resource monitoring**, making it important for **disaster management, environmental monitoring and strategic applications**.

Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT)

- C-DOT** was established in **August 1984** as an autonomous **telecom R&D centre** under the **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)**.
- It is a **registered society** under the **Societies Registration Act, 1860**.

Species In News

- It is a registered '**public funded research institution**' with the **Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR)**, Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India.
- C-DOT is known for developing technology that enabled **rural telephone exchanges** in India.
- C-DOT has developed the **Cell Broadcasting Service (CBS)** for sending emergency alerts related to **extreme weather events and natural disasters**.
 - ◆ The CBS system is operated by **State Disaster Management Agencies (SDMAs)**.

Pan-India Rescue and Rehabilitation Campaign

- The campaign was launched by the **National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)**, a **statutory body under the Ministry of Women and Child Development**.
- It was launched on **June 12** to combat **child labour, trafficking and exploitation**.
- It focused on the **identification, rescue and rehabilitation** of children engaged in child labour or vulnerable to trafficking.
- The campaign involved coordination with **State Governments, Union Territories, district administrations, labour departments and police authorities**.
- Targeted rescue operations were conducted at **child labour and trafficking hotspots**.
- It also monitored **rehabilitation, restoration, educational mainstreaming and compensation** for rescued children.
- The campaign resulted in the rescue of over **3,800 children** and the registration of over **575 FIRs**.

Stegodyphus sarasinorum

- Indian researchers mapped the first comprehensive **molecular and functional profile** of the venom gland of *Stegodyphus sarasinorum*, identifying compounds with potential **anti-cancer and antimicrobial properties**.
- *Stegodyphus sarasinorum*, known as the **Indian cooperative spider**, is one of the rare **permanently social spider species**. It lives in structured colonies, builds **communal silk nests**, and captures prey cooperatively.
- The species is native to **South and Southeast Asia** and is widely distributed across the Indian subcontinent, including **India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Myanmar**.
- **Multi-omics analysis** identified **31 protein components and 81 metabolites** in the venom gland. Notable findings included **hemocyanin proteins** and unique peptides such as **U12 and U20 lycomaxins**.
- Laboratory studies showed **dose-dependent cytotoxicity** against certain cancer cells such as **Dalton's Lymphoma Ascites** and the ability to disrupt **bacterial cell membranes**, highlighting potential for developing **anti-cancer therapies and antimicrobial drugs**.





Places in News

Yemen

- **Yemen** is located at the **southwestern corner of the Arabian Peninsula**.
- It shares land borders with **Saudi Arabia** to the north and **Oman** to the northeast.
- It is bounded by the **Red Sea** to the west and the **Gulf of Aden and Arabian Sea** to the south.
- Yemen is a largely **mountainous and arid country**, although some areas receive enough rainfall for agriculture.
- It has **no permanent watercourses** due to its generally arid climate.
- Yemen is predominantly **rural**, with about **two-thirds of its population living in the countryside**.

