



TATHASTU
Institute of Civil Services

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS



13th February, 2024



S.NO.	TOPIC
1.	QUIET DIPLOMACY: INDIAN NAVY VETERANS' HOMECOMING FROM QATAR SHOWCASES DELHI'S STRATEGIC APPROACH
2.	PRELIMS POINTERS

QUIET DIPLOMACY: INDIAN NAVY VETERANS' HOMECOMING FROM QATAR SHOWCASES DELHI'S STRATEGIC APPROACH

SOURCE: [Indian Express](#)

TAG: GS Paper II- **International Relations, Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests**

Mains Practice Question:

Q. Discuss the diplomatic challenges and strategies employed by India in securing the release of Indian Navy veterans from Qatar, highlighting the implications for India's foreign policy in the West Asian region. (150 words)

WHY IN NEWS?

- Qatar has released eight Indian Navy veterans who were previously sentenced to death on espionage charges.
- Seven out of the eight former Indian Navy personnel have now returned to India.
- This release, absolving them of espionage charges, signifies a noteworthy diplomatic achievement in the relationship between India and Qatar.

KEY ISSUES INVOLVED THE RELEASE OF INDIAN NAVY VETERANS FROM QATAR:

- ❖ **Diplomatic Challenges:**
 - The sentencing of eight former Indian Navy personnel to death by Qatar's Court of First Instance in October 2023 posed a significant challenge to India's foreign policy.
 - The primary objective was to secure the return of the citizens while ensuring that the burgeoning economic and strategic relations between New Delhi and Doha remained unaffected.
- ❖ **Diplomatic Strategy:**
 - India employed a strategy of quiet and patient diplomacy, overseen by the Prime Minister, to navigate the sensitive situation.
 - Despite intense media scrutiny, the diplomatic efforts were successful in securing the release of seven officers and one seaman, allowing them to reunite with their families.
- ❖ **Engagement with Monarchies in West Asia:**
 - Engagement with monarchies in West Asia demands a unique approach due to the considerable power held by the ruling class.
 - Personal rapport, such as that established by PM Modi, played a crucial role in influencing outcomes.
- ❖ **Sensitive Nature of Charges:**
 - The charges against the Navy veterans, who were employees of a Doha-based private company, Dahra Global, were sensitive and largely undisclosed.
 - While not publicly specified, reports suggested allegations of espionage for Israel, underscoring the delicate nature of the case.
- ❖ **Bilateral Ties:**
 - The episode underscores the deepening and broadening bilateral ties between India and Qatar beyond historical perspectives.
 - Strengthened relations offer trade opportunities and energy security, exemplified by recent multi-billion dollar agreements facilitating LNG imports from Qatar.



❖ **Geopolitical Context:**

- **Against the backdrop of the Israel-Hamas conflict and regional geopolitics, India's stance remained neutral, aiming to stay above regional conflicts.**
- However, challenges persist, including anti-India propaganda from Qatar-based media outlets and support for religious radicals within India.

INDIA-QATAR BILATERAL RELATIONS:

❖ **Bilateral Trade:**

- **In the fiscal year 2022-23, India's bilateral trade with Qatar amounted to US\$ 18.77 billion.**
- India's exports to Qatar during this period totaled US\$ 1.96 billion, while imports from Qatar stood at US\$ 16.8 billion, resulting in a **significant trade imbalance in Qatar's favour.**
- **India ranks as the third-largest export destination for Qatar**, following China and Japan, and is among **the top three sources of Qatar's imports**, alongside China and the US.
- **Qatar holds the position of being India's largest supplier of liquefied natural gas (LNG)**, contributing to over 48% of India's total LNG imports.

❖ **Defence Cooperation:**

- **The India-Qatar Defence Cooperation Agreement was initially signed in 2008** and subsequently extended for another five years in 2018, indicating ongoing collaboration in defence matters.
- India's regular participation in the biennial **Doha International Maritime Defence Exhibition and Conference (DIMDEX) in Qatar underscores the significance of defence ties.**
- **Joint naval exercises known as "Zair Al Bahr"** have been conducted by both nations, reflecting their commitment to enhancing military cooperation.

❖ **Indian Community:**

- **Qatar hosts a substantial Indian community, with over 800,000 Indian nationals residing in the country.**
- This community constitutes the largest expatriate group in Qatar, highlighting the strong people-to-people ties between the two nations.

SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIA-QATAR RELATION:

❖ **Political Significance:**

- Qatar's membership in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) holds political importance for India, particularly regarding issues such as Kashmir.
- India seeks Qatar's support for its bid for permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

❖ **Energy Security:**

- Qatar serves as the largest supplier of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to India, contributing nearly half of India's LNG imports, ensuring energy security for the nation.

❖ **Economic and Trade Ties:**

- India stands as one of the top four export destinations for Qatar, with significant exports including LNG, LPG, chemicals, petrochemicals, fertilizers, and plastics.
- India ranks among the top three sources of Qatar's imports, supplying commodities such as cereals, copper articles, iron and steel articles, vegetables, and fruits.



❖ Business Presence:

- Indian corporations such as L&T, Wipro, TCS, and TechMahindra have established a strong business presence in Qatar, contributing to economic growth and collaboration.

❖ Expatriate Community and Remittances:

- Approximately 800,000 Indian expatriates reside and work in Qatar, playing a vital role in the country's workforce.
- Remittances from Qatar, amounting to around 750 million dollars, significantly contribute to India's economy.

❖ Defence and Strategic Cooperation:

- India and Qatar have inked a Defence Cooperation Agreement to enhance bilateral defense cooperation, further solidifying strategic ties.
- Joint maritime exercises like Exercise Zair-Al-Bahr bolster maritime relations between the two nations.

❖ Cultural Exchanges:

- Vibrant cultural exchanges facilitated by community organizations affiliated with the Indian Cultural Centre (ICC) foster mutual understanding and cooperation.
- Qatar's support for India's resolution declaring June 21 as International Yoga Day exemplifies the depth of cultural ties between the two countries.

QATAR

❖ Location and Borders:

- Qatar is situated in Western Asia, occupying the Qatar Peninsula on the northeastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula.
- It shares its only land border with Saudi Arabia to the south.
- The Gulf of Bahrain, an inlet of the Persian Gulf, separates Qatar from Bahrain.

❖ Capital and Population: The capital city of Qatar is Doha, which accommodates over 80% of the nation's population.

❖ Economy:

- Qatar boasts a high-income economy, primarily driven by its substantial natural gas and oil reserves, ranking third-largest globally.
- Its economic strength has propelled Qatar onto the global stage, attracting attention as a prominent player in the energy market.

❖ Media Influence:

- Qatar is renowned for its influential media conglomerate, the Al Jazeera Media Network, which has garnered widespread recognition for its global reach and coverage.

❖ Host of Major Events:

- **Qatar made history by hosting the 2022 FIFA World Cup, becoming the first Muslim and Arab nation to host this prestigious event.**
- Additionally, **Qatar is set to host the 2030 Asian Games**, further solidifying its status as a hub for international events and sports.



TOPIC

DESCRIPTION

NITI AAYOG LAUNCHES GROW REPORT AND PORTAL

WHY IN NEWS?

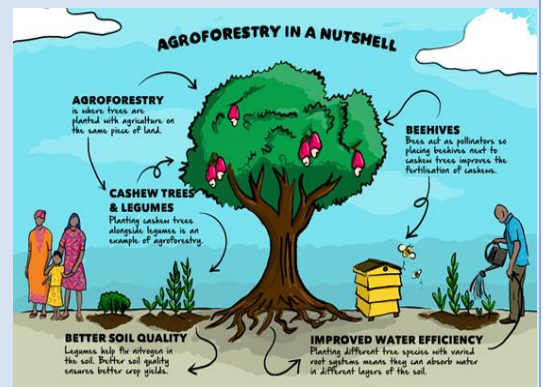
- ❖ *The NITI Aayog has launched the **Greening and Restoration of Wasteland with Agroforestry (GROW) initiative**, aiming to utilize advanced technologies like **remote sensing and GIS** for transforming India's wastelands into productive agroforestry zones.*

NITI AAYOG LAUNCHES GROW INITIATIVE

- ❖ **Initiative:**
 - ☛ NITI Aayog introduces the **Greening and Restoration of Wasteland with Agroforestry (GROW) initiative**.
- ❖ **Objective:**
 - ☛ Transform India's wastelands through **agroforestry for environmental conservation and sustainable land use**.
- ❖ **Technology Utilized:**
 - ☛ Employed **cutting-edge remote sensing and GIS technologies** for comprehensive analysis.

ABOUT REPORT AND PORTAL

- ❖ NITI Aayog led a **collaborative effort using remote sensing and GIS to assess agroforestry potential** across all Indian districts.
- ❖ Thematic datasets were used to **develop an Agroforestry Suitability Index (ASI)** for national-level prioritization.
- ❖ Detailed **state and district-level analysis** provided **valuable support for promoting greening and restoration projects**.
- ❖ The GROW portal offers universal access to state and district-level data, **revealing that agroforestry covers 8.65% of India's total geographical area**.



WHAT IS AGROFORESTRY?

- ❖ Agroforestry refers to the **deliberate use of woody perennials alongside agricultural crops and/or animals**.
- ❖ It involves various systems such as **agrisilvicultural, silvopastoral, and agrosilvopastoral, optimizing land use and productivity**.

INDIA'S INDEX OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION (IIP)

WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ *India's **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** for December 2023 has been released, showing a growth of **3.8%** compared to the previous year.*

WHAT IS THE INDEX OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION (IIP)?

- ❖ **Definition:**
 - ☛ Indicator measuring changes in industrial product volume over time.
- ❖ **Compilation and Publication:**
 - ☛ Compiled monthly by the **NSO, Ministry of Statistics**.
 - ☛ Published to track **industrial activity trends**.
- ❖ **Composition:**
 - ☛ Composite indicator covering Mining, Manufacturing, Electricity.
 - ☛ Also includes **Basic, Capital, and Intermediate Goods** sectors.
- ❖ **Base Year:**
 - ☛ **2011-2012** serves as the reference period.



UNANI DAY 2024

❖ **Significance:**

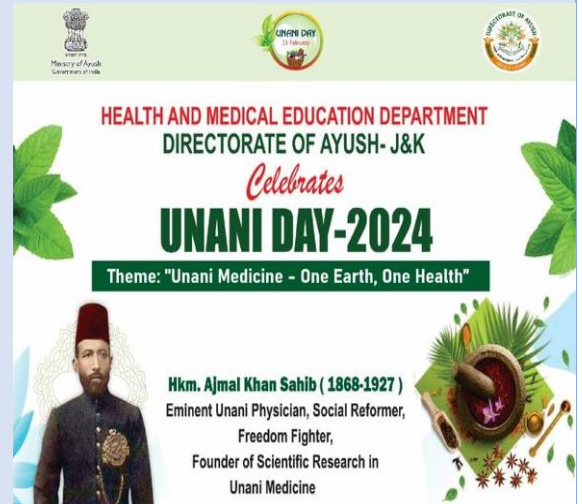
- ☛ Utilized by government bodies for **policy formulation**.
- ☛ Integral for **GDP estimation**, aiding economic analysis.

WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ *The **Unani Day 2024 and National Conference on Unani Medicine for One Earth, One Health, organized by CCRUM**, underscored India's global leadership in **Traditional Medicine, particularly Unani**, emphasizing evidence-based scientific research*

ABOUT THE UNANI DAY 2024

- ❖ **CCRUM** organized Unani Day 2024 and **National Conference on Unani Medicine in Delhi**.
- ❖ Highlighted India's leadership in Traditional Medicine, particularly Unani, emphasizing evidence-based research.
- ❖ **Theme: "Unani Medicine for One Earth, One Health"** stressed global health collaboration.
- ❖ Emphasized PM Modi's support for healthcare advancements and traditional medicine.
- ❖ **Tribute:** Paid homage to **Hakim Ajmal Khan**.



About CCRUM

- ❖ **Autonomous Organization:**
 - ☛ The **Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine (CCRUM)** operates autonomously under the **Ministry of Ayush, Government of India, established in 1978**.
- ❖ **Research Focus:**
 - ☛ CCRUM serves as the **apex government organization** for research in **Unani medicine**, conducting scientific research on both **applied and fundamental aspects of the Unani system of medicine**.
- ❖ **Research Centre:**
 - ☛ **With 23 research centres across India**, CCRUM's scientists and technical staff contribute to its research endeavours.
- ❖ **Notable Institutes:**
 - ☛ **NRIUMSD, Hyderabad:** Renowned for **treating vitiligo and chronic skin disorders**.
 - ☛ **CRIUM, Lucknow:** Recognized for its work on **musculoskeletal disorders**.
 - ☛ **RRIUM, Chennai:** Known for **research on infective hepatitis and chronic liver diseases**.

ATOM SMASHER

WHY IN NEWS?

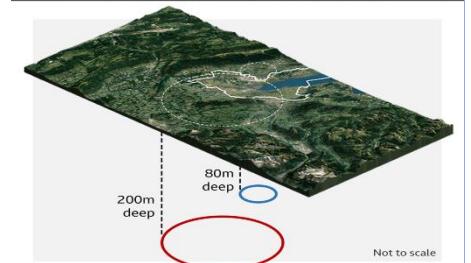
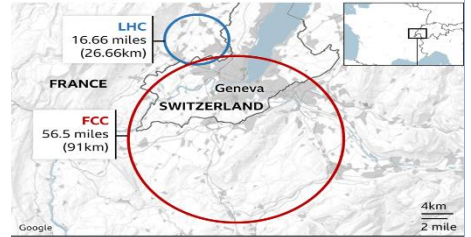
- ❖ *Leaders at **CERN**, the **European Organisation for Nuclear Research**, are confident in advancing plans for the **Future Circular Collider**, a larger and more powerful particle collider.*

ATOM SMASHER:



- Researchers at the world's biggest particle accelerator in Switzerland have submitted proposals for a new, much larger, supercollider.
- Its aim is to discover new particles that would revolutionise physics and lead to a more complete understanding of how the Universe works.
- Also to boost energy levels of the particle collisions to 100 TeV, or 100 trillion electron volts, about eight times more powerful than the Large Hadron Collider's 13 TeV
- If approved, it will be three times larger than the current giant machine.
- The biggest achievement of the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) was the detection of a new particle called the Higgs Boson in 2012. But since then its ambition to track down two holy grails of physics - dark matter and dark energy.

Proposed particle collider will be largest ever



Source: Cern

22nd LAW COMMISSION OF INDIA

WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ The 22nd Law Commission of India has submitted Report No. 286 titled "A Comprehensive Review of the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897" to the Government of India.

ABOUT THE LAW COMMISSION OF INDIA

- ❖ **Nature:**
 - ☛ Non-statutory body formed periodically by the Government of India.
- ❖ **Establishment:**
 - ☛ First established in 1955 after independence, succeeding the British Raj era Law Commission established in 1834 by the Charter Act of 1833, chaired by Lord Macaulay.
- ❖ **Purpose:**
 - ☛ Serves as an advisory body to the Ministry of Law and Justice.
 - ☛ It undertaking research and reviewing existing laws in India for reform and enactment of new legislation, either on reference from the Central Government or suo-motu.



22ND LAW COMMISSION CONSTITUTION

- ❖ The 22nd Law Commission, chaired by Justice (ret'd) Rituraj Awasthi, has been constituted after a gap of two and a half years since its approval by the Union Cabinet in February 2020.

Composition:

- ❖ Comprising Justice Awasthi as its head and five other members, including former judges and law professors

Tenure:

- ❖ The Commission's tenure is set for three years from the date of its constitution.