



**TATHASTU**  
Institute Of Civil Services

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

## 22nd April 2025



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**22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025**

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## Landmark Agreement

### Why in News?

- Increasing heatwaves frequency in India

### Syllabus

- GS Paper 3 – Science and Technology

#### Landmark agreement

The accord on pathogen access and benefit sharing is path-breaking


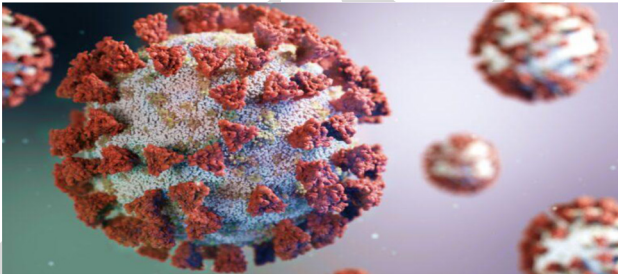
After nearly three-and-a-half years and 13 rounds of meetings, member-states of the World Health Organization (WHO) have agreed on measures to prevent, prepare for and respond to pandemics. On April 16, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body finalised a proposal for the WHO Pandemic Agreement. The draft, described as a "generational accord to make the world safer", is now ready to be adopted next month by the World Health Assembly. Though more limited in scope than the ambitious one first proposed by WHO, it is still a remarkable achievement considering the varied priorities and compulsions for the Global North and the developing countries, especially with the U.S. not a part of WHO since January. While the developed countries balked on firm commitments to sharing diagnostics, treatments, vaccines and technology transfers, developing countries hesitated to commit to sharing pathogen samples and genome sequences without assured access to tests, treatments and vaccines developed using the shared material. The disagreements are reminiscent of how Indonesia turned the spotlight on the inequitable H5N1 sample sharing mechanism in the mid-2000s in the absence of equitable and affordable access to vaccines developed using its samples.

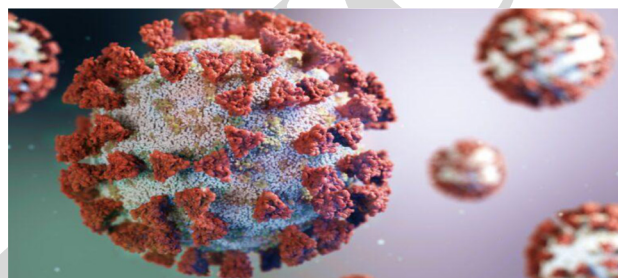
The first article that all countries agreed upon was the commitment to protect health-care workers better. The most remarkable achievement was in getting every country to agree on the pathogen access and benefit sharing system. Developing countries that share pathogen samples and genome sequence data are guaranteed to get access to any diagnostics, vaccines or treatments that are developed using the samples/data. Negotiations on how countries will share samples and vaccines/drugs are set to continue. Pharmaceutical companies have committed to donate 10% of their production to WHO and offer up to another 10% at affordable prices. The COVID-19 pandemic brought the inequitable vaccine distribution to the fore. Many developed countries stockpiled vaccines while many developing countries, especially those in Africa, were left waiting for vaccines. The case of vaccine manufacturers sharing the technology with developing countries during a pandemic has also been sorted out. The main debate centered around the conditions under which this transfer will happen. Countries have agreed that technology transfer will be on "mutually agreed terms", and not "voluntary" as pharma companies wanted it to be. According to the journal, *Nature*, besides "promoting equitable access to health products, the treaty underlines that countries should 'promote and otherwise facilitate or incentivise' the exchange of technology and know-how" that will enable developing countries to make their own vaccines.





## Key Takeaways from the Article

- **The WHO Pandemic Agreement:**
    - ◆ The **Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB)** of the **World Health Organization (WHO)** finalised a proposal for the **WHO Pandemic Agreement** on April 16, 2025.
    - ◆ The agreement is seen as a **“generational accord”** aimed at strengthening the world’s ability to prevent, prepare for, and respond to pandemics.
    - ◆ The agreement is expected to be formally adopted at the **World Health Assembly** next month.
  - **Pathogen Access and Benefit Sharing System:**
    - ◆ Ensures that developing countries that share pathogen samples and genomic data will be guaranteed access to **diagnostics, vaccines, and treatments** developed from these shared materials.
    - ◆ The agreement aims to **address inequities in vaccine distribution**, a glaring issue during the **COVID-19 pandemic**, where developed countries stockpiled vaccines while many developing countries, especially in **Africa**, faced significant delays in receiving vaccines.
- 
- 



## India, China at 75 – a time for strategy, not sentiment

## Why in News?

- ## ◆ 75 years of India – China Relations

## Syllabus

- ♦
- GS Paper 2**
- International Relations

## *India, China at 75 — a time for strategy, not sentiment*

**A**s India and China mark 75 years of diplomatic ties, we find ourselves not merely at a commemorative milestone but also at a pivotal juncture in Asian and global geopolitics. The relationship, once rooted in idealistic visions of Asian solidarity, has become a tightrope walk across a landscape defined by contested borders, strategic rivalry and deep mistrust. Yet, it is also a relationship layered with opportunities for cooperation, economic interdependence and a shared responsibility for regional stability.

**The 'China lens', the challenge**  
At the heart of this complex engagement is the stark reality that China is today the single most influential external factor shaping India's foreign policy. From border infrastructure to trade diversification and defence cooperation, nearly every strategic decision India makes is filtered through the 'China lens'. This is a structural challenge – one that requires us to balance deterrence with dialogue, sovereignty with economic interdependence, and competition with calibrated coexistence.

The 1962 war remains a traumatic marker in our bilateral history, reinforced in 2020 by the deadly Galwan Valley clash, which reopened old wounds and catalysed a shift in India's China policy. No longer can engagement paper over our fundamental differences. The Line of Actual Control (LAC) remains tense, heavily militarised and vulnerable to miscalculation. Over 60,000 troops are now permanently deployed in Eastern Ladakh, while both countries continue to fortify infrastructure on their respective sides.

Yet, military vigilance is only one piece of the puzzle. India's trade imbalance with China touched almost \$100 billion in 2024-25; yet, Beijing is one of India's largest trading partners. Despite efforts to ban Chinese apps and restrict certain investments, we remain economically entangled. Our dependence on Chinese components in sectors such as pharmaceuticals and electronics highlights a paradox: we deter at the border but depend on the marketplace. Full decoupling is neither feasible nor desirable in the

short term. This is why India's approach has evolved into what can best be described as "competitive coexistence". We seek to compete with China in defence, infrastructure and regional influence, while maintaining enough engagement given the constraints of economic decoupling. On platforms such as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), India and China engage as equals. In the Quad (Australia, India, Japan, the US), India is the only non-aligned democracy to uphold a free and open Indo-Pacific. The key lies in maintaining a



**Nirupama Rao**  
is a former  
Economic Secretary

and ensuring control over potentially adversarial situations. Our neighbourhood reflects the intensity of this competition. China's growing footprint in South Asia – from the Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka to the Pokhara Airport in Nepal and large infrastructure loans in the Maldives – has challenged India's traditional role as the regional anchor. While India has responded with development aid, defence cooperation, and connectivity projects, and demonstrating its effectiveness as first-responder in times of crisis, it must now go beyond reactive diplomacy to proactive, long-term engagement that wins hearts, not just headlines.

The recent remarks made by Bangladesh's interim leader Mohammad Yunus in Beijing – highlighting India's northeast as landlocked – were diplomatically charged. Although geographically accurate, the setting and subtext have raised concerns in New Delhi. Comments such as these reinforce China's strategic framing and also decline the urgency for India to close infrastructure gaps, build ties with its neighbours, and present itself as an even more reliable and responsive regional partner. Influence today is as much about narratives as it is about roads and ports.

**The America factor**  
India's position on China is further complicated by the return of Donald Trump to the White House. Mr. Trump's second term has revived unilateralism, weakened multilateralism, and sharpened U.S.-China rivalry. India may well find itself under pressure to align more closely with Washington, especially in defence cooperation and Indo-Pacific security. Yet, we must tread carefully. Strategic autonomy remains India's north star – and deeper ties with the U.S. must be balanced with the need to manage any boiling-over of antagonism with China.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks on the Lex Fridman podcast in March 2023 signalled a subtle recalibration. By evoking ancient India-China synergy and emphasising dialogue, he articulated a vision of "healthy competition and mutual cooperation". This approach, more conciliatory, is better understood as strategic storytelling – a message to Beijing that India is open to engagement, a signal to Washington of independent judgement, and a reassurance to domestic audiences of a steady hand at the helm.

China's response was also positive. Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning and her team warmly welcomed Mr. Modi's "pragmatic approach", reinforcing a rare moment of diplomatic alignment. Verification patrolling along the LAC resumed in January 2025, signalling tentative steps toward de-escalation. China has agreed to a joint press conference with India, and the two nations have agreed to a joint press conference.

Mechanism on hydrological data-sharing on rivers, and discussions are underway to reopen the transboundary intra and extra direct flows. These may appear symbolic, but they indicate that both sides are testing waters for limited rapprochement – what one might call a thaw without illusions.

However, the underlying risks remain unchanged. The planned dam by China on the Yarlung Tsangpo (the Brahmaputra) near Arunachal Pradesh has rekindled concerns about ecological security and water weaponisation. India has no water-sharing treaty with China, and transboundary rivers are open to abuse for mismanagement – or deliberate manipulation – of water flows presents a new dimension to the bilateral equation, one where sovereignty, environment, and mis-trust intersect in volatile

**The framework of a China policy**  
India's China policy must therefore rest on four pillars: military readiness, economic diversification, diplomatic engagement, and narrative control. We must deter without provoking, trade without depending, and ensure skilled negotiation to safeguard interests. This demands sharper strategic communication, faster execution of regional projects, and a foreign policy mindset that thinks in scenarios, not just headlines. As India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Miri recently said, the "three mutuals" – respect, sensitivity, and interest – must guide our way forward.

In a recent oped in *The Straits Times* (April 10, 2025), this writer had proposed that India and China embrace a model of “competitive coexistence” – not to downplay our rivalry, but to manage it responsibly. Asia can no longer rely solely on U.S. leadership in an era of global disruption. It needs a home-grown security architecture where India and China act as custodians of stability. For that, we must build guardrails – military, diplomatic, and economic – to prevent friction from becoming fire.

to prevent infection from becoming fire.  
 The stark contrast between the material and the immaterial let us not be bound by nostalgia or ceremony. This is a moment for strategy, not sentiment. India's goal must be clear: to define its place in a world reshaped by flux, rivalry, and shifting alliances. China will remain a structural challenge – but it is also a mirror, forcing us to confront our capabilities, choices, and ambitions. In that mirror, we must see not a straitjacket, but an opportunity for India to lead.

*(Adapted from the Gaston Sigur Memorial Lecture delivered by the writer at an Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University, Washington, DC, on April 15, 2025)*



### Key Takeaways from the Article

- **India-China 75 Years of Diplomatic Ties:**
  - ◆ **India and China** are marking 75 years of diplomatic relations.
  - ◆ This milestone comes at a critical juncture in the **global geopolitical landscape**.
  - ◆ The relationship between the two countries has evolved from one of **Asian solidarity** to one fraught with **border disputes**, **strategic rivalry**, and **mistrust**, while still offering opportunities for **cooperation** and **regional stability**.



- **The “China Lens” in Indian Foreign Policy:**
  - ◆ **China** is currently the most influential external factor in shaping India’s **foreign policy**.
  - ◆ India’s strategic decisions, especially in areas such as border infrastructure, trade diversification, and defence cooperation, are all heavily influenced by the **China lens**.
  - ◆ The **2020 Galwan Valley clash** and the **1962 war** continue to shape India’s approach to its neighbour.

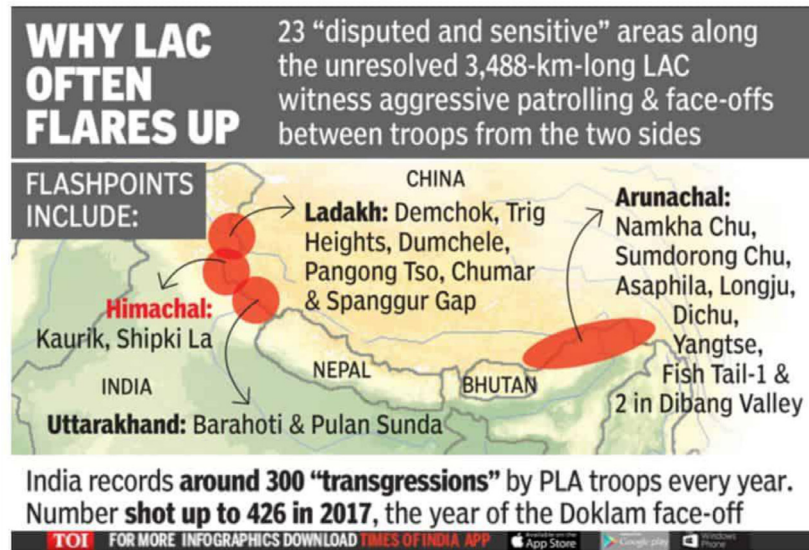






- **Military Tensions and Economic Dependence:**

- ◆ **Military Vigilance:** The **Line of Actual Control (LAC)** remains heavily militarised, with both sides maintaining large deployments.
- ◆ **Trade Imbalance:** India's trade imbalance with China was about **\$100 billion** in 2024-25.
- ◆ **Economic Paradox:** India is economically dependent on China for various sectors, especially **pharmaceuticals** and **electronics**.



- **"Competitive Coexistence" Strategy:**

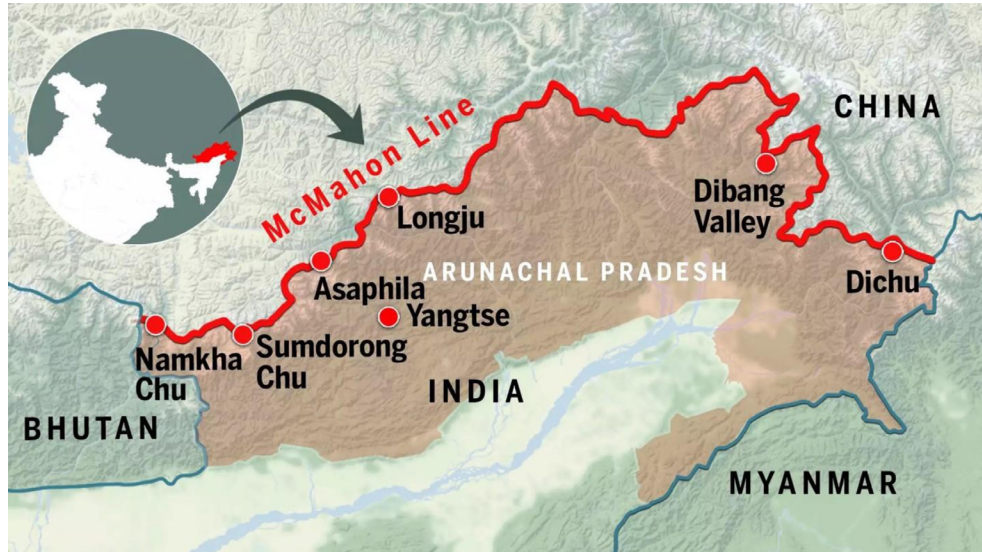
- ◆ **India's approach** has evolved into **"competitive coexistence"** — balancing deterrence with dialogue, sovereignty with economic interdependence, and competition with cooperation.
- ◆ India seeks to **compete with China** in areas such as **defence, infrastructure, and regional influence** while maintaining engagement due to the **economic interdependence** between the two.





- **China's Influence in India's Neighbourhood:**

- ◆ **China's growing footprint** in South Asia, including **infrastructure projects** in Sri Lanka, Nepal, and the Maldives, has challenged India's traditional role as the **regional anchor**.



- **U.S.-China Rivalry and India's Strategic Autonomy:**

- ◆ The return of **Donald Trump** to the White House has reignited **U.S.-China tensions**, which impacts India's strategy.
- ◆ While India has aligned with the U.S. on issues like the **Indo-Pacific** and **regional security**.
- ◆ **Prime Minister Modi's remarks** about "healthy competition" with China signal India's diplomatic flexibility.



MAP NOT TO SCALE

### THE FLASHPOINTS

#### Spot 1 Finger 5

(Pangong Tso, eastern Ladakh)

Date: May 5-6

Troops involved: 250

Injured: Several (on both sides)

#### Spot 2 Naku La sector

(ahead of Muguthang, Sikkim)

Date: May 9

Troops involved: 150

Injured: 4 Indian, 7 Chinese





- India's China policy in 2025 reflects a **balance of hard power and diplomatic maturity**. The future lies in:
  - ◆ Stabilizing border tensions
  - ◆ Ensuring fair economic practices
  - ◆ Building regional resilience
  - ◆ Promoting a vision where Asia is led by Asian powers working in mutual respect, not zero-sum competition.



## New pathways for India's creative economy

### Why in News?

- ◆ Creative Economy

### Syllabus

- ◆ GS Paper 3 – Indian Economy

## New pathways for India's creative economy

**F**ew countries have a unique history of innovations and creativity that changed the world. Yet, India's tryst with creativity and innovation ranges from the arts to science, from metallurgy to medicine, from astronomy and much more. As India works towards becoming a \$5 trillion economy, it needs to reify its approach to innovations, supported by creativity at all levels.

Globally, in 2022, exports of creative services surged to \$1.4 trillion, marking a 29% increase since 2017. Creative goods exports also experienced a 19% rise, reaching \$713 billion. Collectively, the creative economy generates annual revenues exceeding \$2 trillion and supports nearly 50 million jobs worldwide.

According to the United Nations Trade and Development (UNCTAD) report on the creative economy, Creative Economy Outlook 2024, three sectors are the main contributors of the creative economy (2022): software services (41.3%), research and development (30.7%), advertising, market research and architecture (15.5%).

India's creative economy has also demonstrated significant contributions. In 2019, creative goods and services exports totalled about \$121 billion, with creative services accounting for nearly \$100 billion. The design segment alone represented 92.5% of creative goods exports, while arts and crafts contributed around 9%.

As of 2024, India's creative industry is valued at \$30 billion and employs about 8% of the country's working population. Creative exports grew by 20% in the previous year, generating more than \$8 billion.

#### Creativity in creative economy

While investments into traditional creative economic sectors are booming in a country such as India, we still need to explore ways of being more creative and innovative to take the economic gains to new horizons, especially at the grass-root levels. This will ensure that such creations and innovations help local people. This will be a disruptive approach to promoting local economies. Research has shown that creativity



**Balakrishna Prasad**  
is the Country Head of the United Nations Programme, India, and a member of Team UN India

can be segmented into four types: deliberate and emotional; deliberate and cognitive; spontaneous and emotional; and spontaneous and cognitive. Creativity can be endogenous – triggered by one's own thoughts or imagination or exogenous – that is externally induced. It can be manifested concurrently or only episodically such as in crises or extreme climate events.

A significant part of local innovations falls into deliberate and cognitive as well as the spontaneous and cognitive segments. Creativity precedes innovation. While creativity can be individual-based, innovation can be bootstrapped but needs an institution to support its scale or formalisation.

In a country such as India, enormous creativity exists but such creativity is not translated into innovation many a time. Creators come up with ideas while innovators translate the ideas into products and services. We need investments to bridge the gap between creativity and innovation.

Pioneering work on identifying and recognising grassroots innovations by organisations such as the Grassroots Innovations Augmentation Network (GIAN) have resulted in popularising hundreds of grassroots creative ideas.

#### An example from Indonesia

Where does one start? Consider a pioneering creative solution, the Antrodram Project, that has been conceived by the students of Binus School in Bekasi, Indonesia.

The Antrodram Project began with one mission: to create a solution to flooding, a challenge that affects communities worldwide. Looking for ideas from the best source of inspiration, nature itself, the Binus team explored structures from the animal and plant kingdoms to find the perfect design.

Inspired by the nests of Indian Harvester ants, the students engineered a flood protection system that works with nature rather than against it. The ants have intricate tunnel systems that direct water away from their nests, keeping them safe and dry. The students were also inspired by natural structures such as 'rose petals and their

layered design to direct water; the lettuce leaf coral, with its intricate branching; the giant pill millipede which can roll into a compact shape; and the male frigate bird, known for its large, water-resistant throat pouch.

This is sheer creative brilliance but what we now need are investments to scale up these creative ideas into an innovation at scale that can be applied elsewhere. Take some examples of creativity from India such as the 'mitti cool clay refrigerator', pedal-operated washing machines or the amphibious bicycle. Each needs scale up to be commercially attractive with appropriate protection for the creative idea, design and application.

#### Investing in creativity and innovation

It is time that India invests more in creative pursuits at all levels – grassroots to technology-intensive ideas. Grassroots innovations need more investments to ensure the proof of concept demonstrated is supported by capital investments.

The innovation and associated intellectual property protection for such innovations, including informal ones, need better protection through adjustments to Indian intellectual property protection policies and regulations.

It is also time that the government invests in 'one district one innovation' modelled after the successful initiative of 'one district one product' initiative.

While the climate tech sector in India received \$2,653 million in 2023, the investments that grassroots creativity received seems to be very poor. Even if a small percentage of investments go to climate adaptation and mitigation actions that are creative and not working at the local level, India's ability to deal with climate change will be many times more.

What we need today is an ecosystem that balances creativity and innovations at all levels, backed by investments to ensure that India's ambitions to improve creative economic conditions are met.





## Key Takeaways from the Article

### India's Creative Economy and Global Context:

- ◆ India's creative economy is valued at **\$30 billion** in 2024, employing **8%** of India's workforce.
- ◆ In 2019, **creative goods and services exports** from India totalled about **\$121 billion**, with the majority of creative goods exports attributed to **design** and **arts & crafts**.
- ◆ **Global Trends:** Exports of creative services globally surged to \$1.4 trillion in 2022, with significant contributions from sectors like **software services (41.3%)**, **research and development (30.7%)**, and **advertising**.



### The Gap Between Creativity and Innovation in India:

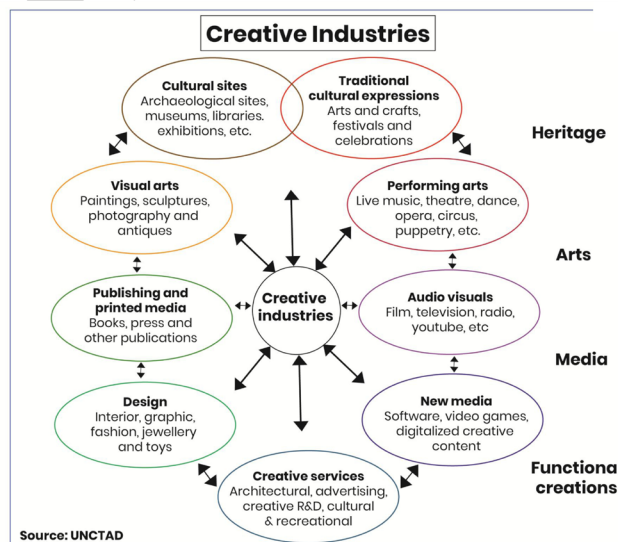
- ◆ **Creativity** is prevalent at grassroots levels in India, but innovation often remains stifled due to **insufficient** support and investment.
- ◆ There are **four types of creativity**:
- ◆ deliberate and emotional;
- ◆ deliberate and cognitive;
- ◆ spontaneous and emotional; and
- ◆ spontaneous and cognitive.

### Examples of Innovation:

- ◆ **Antrodam Project (Indonesia):** A nature-inspired flood protection system.
- ◆ **Indian Examples:** Innovations like the '**mitti cool clay refrigerator**', **pedal-operated washing machines**, **solarpowered water purifiers**, and **amphibious bicycles** are grassroots innovations that need investments to scale up.

### Status of creative economy in India:

- **\$30 billion industry** and responsible for employment of **nearly 8% of India's working population**.
- **1.5 times** increase in export of creative goods from 2010 to 2019.
- **About 20 %** contribution by creative occupation to Nation overall GVA.







- **Investing in Grassroots Innovation:**

- ◆ **Intellectual Property (IP):** The need for better protection of creative ideas through **intellectual property policies** that protect both formal and informal innovations.
- ◆ Grassroots innovations are **underfunded**, despite potential, especially in sectors like **climate tech** and other creative solutions for local development.



- ◆ The government should initiate a ‘**one district, one innovation**’ model to promote local creativity.

- **Way Forward**

- ◆ **Integrate creativity into national innovation policy.**
- ◆ Launch ‘**Creative India Fund**’
- ◆ Promote **STEAM (Science, Tech, Engineering, Arts, Math)** education in schools to foster balanced innovation.
- ◆ Partner with **UNESCO Creative Cities Network** to elevate Indian cities and towns globally.
- ◆ Establish **district-level creative labs** tied to local economic and environmental challenges.

### Why did China block exports of rare earth elements?

#### Why in News?

- ◆ China’s role in global supply chains

#### Syllabus

- ◆ **GS Paper 3 – Indian Economy**

## Why did China block exports of rare earth elements?

What are rare earth elements? Why did China restrict their imports? How do the restrictions impact India?

**Aroon Deep**

#### The story so far:

**A**mid the ongoing U.S.-China trade war, Chinese authorities have reportedly imposed export controls on rare earth elements (REEs) and magnets that are needed in a range of manufacturing activities, from semiconductor fabrication units to defence equipment. This has been one of the more recent salvos in the trade war between the two countries, but the export restrictions apply to any Chinese refinery that can export refined rare earths outside the country.

#### What are rare earth elements?

Rare earth elements are a series of 17 substances that are present in the earth’s crust. Unlike what the name may indicate, rare earths occur plentifully in nature, but the rarity comes from the ability to isolate them chemically and make them usable in industrial applications. Heavy and light rare earths occur naturally in several

countries, such as India, China, Myanmar, Japan, Australia and North Korea.

China’s curbs target dysprosium, gadolinium, lutetium, samarium, scandium, terbium, and yttrium, seven of the 17 elements classified as REEs.

Dysprosium’s so-called magnetic susceptibility makes it ideal for use in hard disks and car motors; gadolinium is used in nuclear reactors for shielding and in some medical equipment; lutetium and compounds with it are used in PET scanners and in petroleum refineries; samarium is used in powerful magnets in personal electronics; scandium-aluminium alloys are used in fighter aircraft; terbium is used in lighting for personal electronics; and yttrium is used in cancer treatments and superconductors.

#### What are China’s export restrictions?

Practically all heavy REEs used all over the world are refined in China. From personal electronics to defence, therefore, Beijing has enormous leverage

over the entire world for a range of supply chains for critical raw and intermediate materials. The export restrictions don’t appear to amount to an outright ban, but could interrupt supplies to countries for a few weeks as refiners work through the process of getting permits.

#### What is the impact on India?

Indian supply chains may not be immediately impacted by REE export restrictions in China. While the government has taken steps to boost domestic production of semiconductors and defence equipment, the more advanced stages of manufacturing typically happen abroad in countries like China itself, and Japan. The latter country has already taken steps to insulate itself from REE supply shocks, by building a months-long stockpile.

India has recognised the importance of REE production, as it is estimated to have 6% of their total deposits. Mining and refining activities tend to present great environmental strain, which have been

factors in India’s practically non-existent capabilities in those activities.

India has light REE extraction capabilities through the state-owned Indian Rare Earths Ltd, such as monazite extraction from beach sand in Kerala.

India imports a limited quantity of REEs. In a response to the Lok Sabha earlier in April, the Ministry of Mines said 2,270 tonnes of REEs were imported in 2023-24. As such, the country’s strategy depends on both boosting domestic production and imports.

#### What is the government’s plan?

“As a policy framework for utilizing critical minerals, including rare earth metals, the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) has been launched, which is India’s strategic initiative to secure critical mineral supply chain by increasing domestic critical minerals production and foreign supply sources,” the Ministry said in Parliament.

Critical minerals are a larger umbrella under which REEs fall.

“China’s restrictions on certain critical minerals, the Russia-Ukraine War, and other issues highlight the fragility of critical mineral supply and the need for diversifying sources,” the Ministry of Mines said in a presentation on the NCMM in January.

Under the NCMM, the government has said it will facilitate or engage in 1,200 exploration projects, award exploratory licenses to incentivise private exploration, and auction more critical mineral blocks.

#### THE GIST

▼ Amid the ongoing U.S.-China trade war, China has restricted the export of 17 rare earth elements that are essential materials in a wide range of industries – from being used in hard disks and car motors to superconductors and cancer treatment.

▼ With practically all REEs being refined in China, this move could interrupt supply chains across many countries for a few weeks.

▼ India may not be immediately impacted by the move; besides, the government has been working on realising the country’s potential in REE extraction.

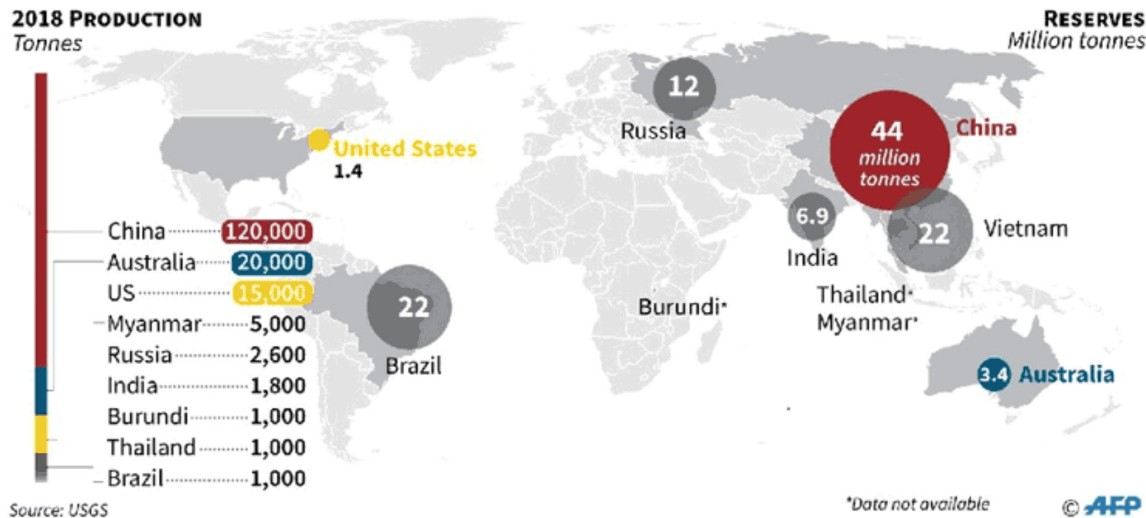




- **Rare Earth Elements (REEs):**

- ◆ Rare Earth Elements (REEs) are **17 substances found in the Earth's crust**, which are crucial for a variety of industrial applications, including **electronics, defense systems, and medical equipment**.

## Rare earth metals production and reserves



- These elements are crucial for the production of high-tech products like:

- ◆ **Dysprosium** – used in hard disks and car motors.
- ◆ **Gadolinium** – used in nuclear reactors and medical equipment.
- ◆ **Lutetium** – used in PET scanners and petroleum refineries.
- ◆ **Samarium** – used in magnets for personal electronics.
- ◆ **Scandium** – used in aircraft alloys.
- ◆ **Terbium** – used in lighting for electronics.
- ◆ **Yttrium** – used in cancer treatments and superconductors.

Atomic Number	Element	Symbol
21	Scandium**	Sc
39	Yttrium	Y
57	Lanthanum	La
58	Cerium	Ce
59	Praseodymium	Pr
60	Neodymium	Nd
61	Promethium*	Pm
62	Samarium	Sm
63	Europium	Eu
64	Gadolinium	Gd
65	Terbium	Tb
66	Dysprosium	Dy
67	Holmium	Ho
68	Erbium	Er
69	Thulium	Tm
70	Ytterbium	Yb
71	Lutetium	Lu

- **Import Dependency: India relies heavily on imports**

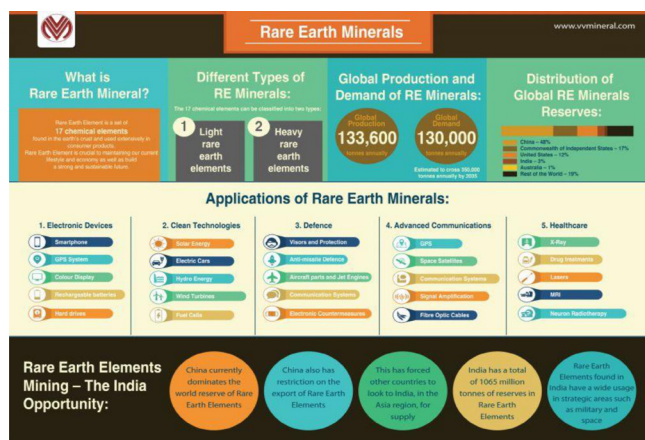
- ◆ for REEs, especially for high-purity materials used in high-tech applications.

- **Domestic Capability:**

- ◆ Operated primarily by **Indian Rare Earths Ltd. (IREL)**.
- ◆ Focuses on **light REE extraction**, but lacks **advanced refining and separation technologies** for heavy and high-purity REEs.

- **Current Imports (2023–24)**

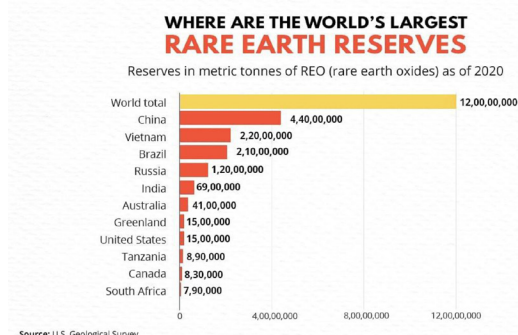
- ◆ **Total Imported: 2,270 tonnes of REEs.**
- ◆ **Key Suppliers:**







- ◆ **China** remains the largest source.
- ◆ **Japan** also supplies specialized REE materials.
- **India's Response and Government Initiatives:**
  - ◆ **National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM):** To secure the critical mineral supply chain, including REEs, through increasing domestic production and sourcing from foreign countries.
  - ◆ **Mining and Exploration Plans:** The government aims to **expand exploration efforts** for REEs, with **1,200 exploration projects** planned to identify and develop critical minerals.
  - ◆ **Incentivizing Private Exploration:** PPP in REE extraction.



### Article 355 & Writ of Mandamus

- ◆ **Article 355:** This article mandates the Union's responsibility to protect States from external aggression or internal disturbance and ensure governance in line with the Constitution.

## Won't directing Centre to 'protect' Bengal from violence amount to 'judicial incursion', asks SC

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday answered a plea to direct the Union government to invoke emergency powers and "protect" the State of West Bengal from violence with a question on whether such a measure would amount to a judicial incursion into the domains of the Executive and Legislature.

The judge's remark from the Bench came in response to a plea by advocate Vishnu Shankar Jain to hear his application to invoke Article 355 of the Constitution, mentioning the communal violence and deaths in West Bengal during protests against the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025.

Article 355 mandates it the "duty of the Union to protect every State against external aggression and internal disturbance and to ensure that the government of every State is carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution".

Mr. Jain pleaded for an urgent hearing of his plea on Tuesday. The court told him to file the plea.

**T.N. Governor case**  
Justice B.R. Gavai, who has been recommended to be appointed as the next Chief Justice of India, obliquely referred to criticism about the judiciary intruding on government and parliamentary terrains following an April 8 judgment in the Tamil Nadu Governor case. The court, in its verdict,

You want us to issue a writ of mandamus to the Union government to deploy paramilitary forces... Will it not be interfering with the Legislative and Executive domains? As it is, we are being accused of interfering with parliamentary and Executive functions



**JUSTICE B.R. GAVAI**  
Supreme Court judge

had issued timelines to the President and Governors for clearing Bills. Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar had later criticised the judiciary for acting like a "super-Parliament".

"You want us to issue a writ of mandamus to the Union government to deploy paramilitary forces... Will it not be interfering

with the Legislative and Executive domains? As it is, we are being accused of interfering with parliamentary and Executive functions," Justice Gavai remarked to Mr. Jain.

Separately, Justice Gavai's Bench asked a lawyer, who made an oral mentioning, to get Attorney-General R. Venkatarama-

ni's permission to initiate contempt of court proceedings against BJP MP Nishikant Dubey for his comments against the Supreme Court and the CJI Sanjay Khanna against the backdrop of the April 8 judgment. Under the law, the Attorney-General has to give his consent to file a contempt petition in the Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, another Bench of the Supreme Court headed by Justice Surya Kant saw a petitioner-advocate, Shashant Shekhar Jha, withdraw his petition seeking the setting up of a Special Investigation Team and a court-monitored probe into the violence in West Bengal.

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### Article 355 & Writ of Mandamus

- **Mandamus**
  - ◆ **Mandamus** is a Latin term meaning "we command."
  - ◆ It is a **writ** issued by a higher court, typically a **Supreme Court** or a **High Court**, directing a **public authority** or **government official** to perform a **specific duty** that is required by law and has not been carried out.
  - ◆ The writ is used to compel the performance of a duty that is mandatory and cannot be discretionary.

## WRIT

HABEAS CORPUS  
MANDAMUS  
PROHIBITION  
CERTIORARI  
QUO-WARRANTO

