



**TATHASTU**  
Institute Of Civil Services

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

## 6th June 2025



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**13<sup>th</sup> May 2025**

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- Odisha women led FPOs exporting mangoes
- Chenab Bridge

**Injustice in the delay**

**Why in News?**

- Census 2027 Data

**Syllabus**

- GS Paper 2 – Polity & Governance

**Injustice in the delay**

The announcement of the Census is welcome, but the delay is unjust

India's next decadal population census, initially delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic, is now scheduled to conclude by March 2027, after a further delay apparently fuelled by political motivations. The Census in 2021 did not take place as planned, thus impacting different aspects of governance, especially social security schemes for vulnerable populations that rely heavily on updated demographic data for effective and efficient delivery. For the first time, the Census will be digitally administered, enabling faster data gathering and easier accessibility for analysis, thereby allowing population-level data to be more dynamic. However, this technological adoption also heightens concerns regarding data theft and privacy. While the nature of the Census will evolve, transparency at all levels will be crucial to building public trust in the exercise. Preparations for this massive operation, which will reach every household, are underway, with more logistical details anticipated in the weeks ahead.

India stands at a demographic crossroads, facing the challenges of growing populations of the young and the old alongside significant regional variations in key indicators. Fresh data from the Census can help address many issues. For the first time since 1931, caste categories will be enumerated. While more reliable data on the socio-economic standing of caste groups can inform development planning, the potential for further social segmentation makes caste enumeration a double-edged sword. A critical aspect of the upcoming Census is its link to the next delimitation of Lok Sabha and Assembly constituencies, which will redraw India's electoral map. The Constitution mandates that the next inter-State delimitation be based on population figures from the first Census after 2026. The current distribution of Lok Sabha seats is based on the 1971 population spread. With the reference date for the Census set as March 1, 2027, for most of the country, this can pave the way for the next delimitation exercise. States that have experienced lower population growth in recent decades, particularly in the peninsular region, have expressed concern that their parliamentary representation will diminish if population becomes the sole criterion for redistribution. The Centre has yet to clarify its stance on this matter. With the Census now in motion, it is imperative for the Centre to engage with all stakeholders and build consensus on the sensitive issue of delimitation. Otherwise, the delay in the announcement of the Census will be taken to mean as an attempt to ensure that the ruling BJP benefits from the increased representation for the Hindi-speaking States.





## Key Takeaways from the Article

- **Digital Transformation in Census:**

- ♦ The **2027 Census** will be the first to utilize **mobile apps** for data entry, enabling **real-time processing** of data.
- ♦ The use of **Census Management and Monitoring System (CMMS)** will allow for better **management, monitoring**, and tracking of the **Census activities**, including the appointment of enumerators and supervisors

- **Inclusion of Caste Data:**

- ♦ For the first time, the **2027 Census** will include **comprehensive caste data**, marking a significant shift in the **type of data** collected.
- ♦ The **mobile apps** will be updated to accommodate the collection of caste-related data, a key change from previous censuses.

- **Use of Mobile Applications:**

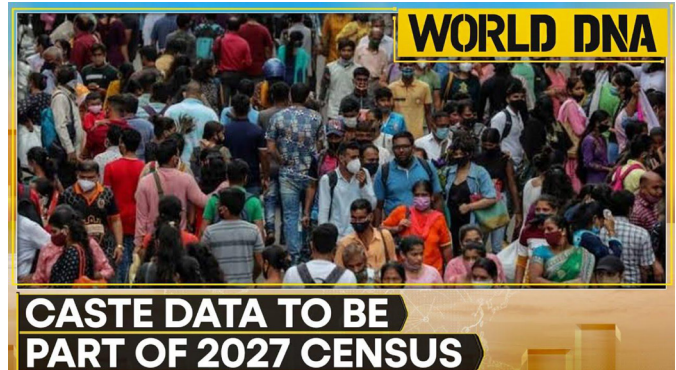
- ♦ The **Census 2021-Household and PECensus 2021 (Population Enumeration)** apps, developed for the planned 2021 Census, will be used in the 2027 Census, and **tweaked** to include **caste data**.
- ♦ These apps will be accessible only to **enumerators**, and their use will help streamline the **data collection process** while addressing challenges related to **manual data entry**

- **Real-Time Data Monitoring and Faster Processing:**

- ♦ Significantly **reduce delays** in processing and **publishing census results** in a more **timely manner** than past censuses, which took **up to a decade**.

- **Challenges and Backup Measures:**

- ♦ Acknowledging the possibility of **connectivity issues**, the Census will retain the option of using **paper schedules** in areas with poor network access, ensuring that no data is lost during the process.



### To be counted

India will be counting its people after a gap of 16 years in the first digital Census which will also include caste enumeration



**Crucial numbers:** An enumerator at a household in Hyderabad during the 2011 Census. FILE PHOTO

### October 1, 2026:

Reference date for Union Territory of Ladakh and the non-synchronous snow-bound areas of the U.T. of Jammu and Kashmir and States of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand

**March 1, 2027:** Reference date set for remaining parts of the country

### Around 24 lakh

enumeration blocks (EB) finalised for the 2011 Census are likely to be used for the 2027 Census. Each EB usually comprises 150-180 houses or 650-800 people

## Counting India's population

**COUNTING:** Details of all buildings are noted in the first phase. Population is counted in the second phase with enumerators filling out details on exhaustive manuals

**FIRST DIGITAL CENSUS:** A mobile app for collection of data and census portal has been developed

**2011**

The last census held

**2025**

Census 2021 likely to begin

**2026**

Data likely to be released

"If the government plans to conduct the survey next year, we would be very happy if it includes a caste census."

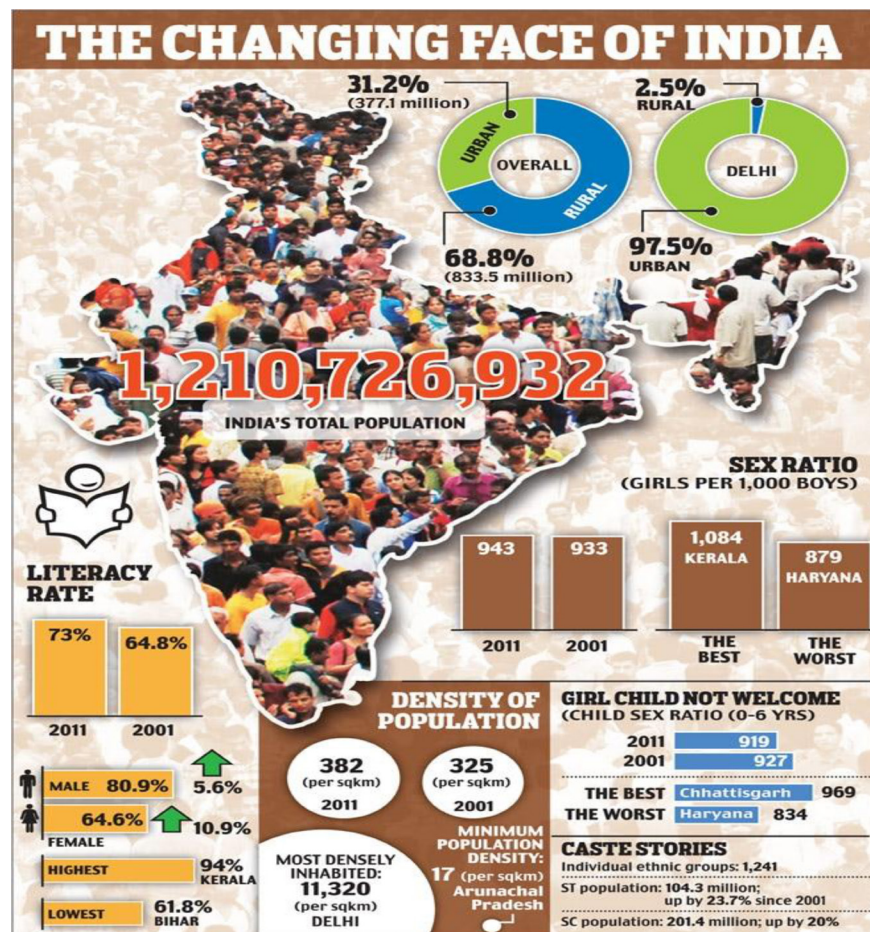
— **Rajiv Ranjan Prasad**, spokesperson, JD(U)

"It would be appropriate if an all-party meeting is held to clarify if the new census includes enumeration of all castes and determine strength of each state in the Lok Sabha."

— **Jairam Ramesh**, Congress

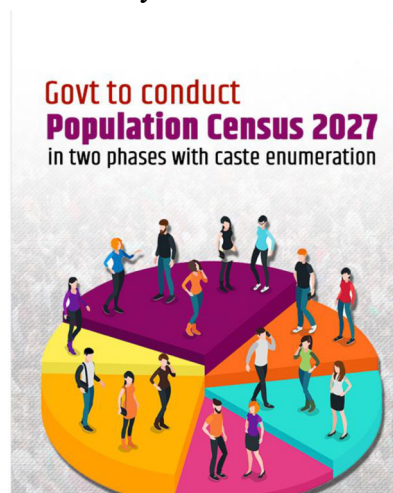






- **Scope of Census:**

- ◆ The 2027 Census will cover 33 crore households and 136 crore people, with an estimated 30 lakh enumerators spread across 24 lakh enumeration blocks.
- ◆ The data collection process will be massive, and the use of digital tools is crucial for handling such a largescale operation efficiently.







## Jaishankar stresses need to boost India-Central Asia links

### Why in News?

- India - Central Asia links

### Syllabus

- GS Paper 2 – International Relations

# Jaishankar stresses need to boost India-Central Asia links

More resources are required for that, the External Affairs Minister says, presses for intensifying trade through Chabahar port; he also calls for 'mutual settlement of trade' in national currencies

**Kallol Bhattacharjee**  
NEW DELHI

**M**ore efforts and resources need to be invested in improving India's connectivity with Central Asia, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said on Thursday highlighting the need to intensify trade through the Chabahar port in Iran.

At the India-Central Asia Business Council meeting ahead of the fourth India-Central Asia Dialogue scheduled for Friday, Mr. Jaishankar expressed support for "mutual settlement of trade" in national currencies.

"We are discussing this under the Joint Working Group on Chabahar Port under the India-Central Asia platform," said Mr. Jaishankar at the event organised by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), referring to the requirements to energise the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC), and greater use of Chabahar port to reduce travel distance and costs between India and Central Asia. Mr. Jaishankar spoke at the event which was also addressed by Murat Nur-



S. Jaishankar and Kazakhstan Deputy Prime Minister Murat Nurtleu signed an MoU to strengthen bilateral ties. @DRSJAISHANKAR/X

tleu, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan; Sirojiddin Muhriddin, Foreign Minister of Tajikistan; Rashid Meredov, Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan; and Saidov Bakhtiyor Odilovich, Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan.

At Friday's dialogue, the Ministers are expected to discuss trade, connectivity, technology, and development cooperation. "They will also share perspectives on challenges to regional security and other regional and global issues of mutual interest," said the Ministry of External Affairs in an announcement regarding the Minister-level meeting. The Foreign Minister-

level dialogue is being seen as significant as it comes a month after India conducted Operation Sindoor against terror targets in Pakistan and reached out to the Taliban administration in Afghanistan.

#### 'Come up with ideas'

Mr. Jaishankar further urged the business chambers to come up with ideas for enhancing bilateral ties between India and Central Asia ahead of a possible India-Central Asia leadership summit that he said could be held "sometime in the not so distant future". In the near future, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to travel for the Shanghai Cooperation Or-

ganization (SCO) meet in Tianjin, China. The first India-Central Asia summit was held in virtual mode on January 27, 2022 when Mr. Modi had hosted the heads of governments of the Central Asian countries. The third meeting of the Foreign Ministers was held during December 18-20, 2021 in New Delhi.

"I would say closer engagements between our banks and financial sector will definitely strengthen our economic interaction. Some beginnings have been made in terms of opening of Special Rupee Vostro Accounts in Indian banks by Central Asian banks and there has also been some discussions about use of UPI [Unified Payment Interface]. I would certainly support that very strongly as also the steps we could take to facilitate mutual settlement of trade in our national currencies," he said.

Mr. Jaishankar said India-Central Asia bilateral trade had touched \$2 billion and added the figure did "not reflect full potential". "The need to address this is today more urgent because of the uncertainties of the international economy," he said.



## Key Takeaways from the Article

- **India-Central Asia Connectivity and Trade:**
    - ◆ **S. Jaishankar** highlighted the **importance of improving connectivity** between India and **Central Asia**, emphasizing the **Chabahar port** in Iran as a key hub for trade.
    - ◆ India aims to enhance its **trade links** with Central Asia, with bilateral trade touching **\$2 billion**, though it is still far from its **full potential**.
  - **Mutual Settlement of Trade in National Currencies:**
    - ◆ Jaishankar emphasized the need for mutual **settlement of trade** between India and Central Asia using **national currencies** to avoid reliance on third-party currencies and improve **financial independence** in trade transactions.
    - ◆ **UPI (Unified Payment Interface)** and the opening of **Special Rupee Vostro Accounts** in **Indian banks** by Central Asian countries are seen as key initiatives to foster **financial collaboration**.
- INDIA'S FOOTPRINT IN THE CENTRAL ASIA**

India has a special focus on the importance of energy diplomacy, specifically with reference to building relationship with the energy-rich region of the Central Asia.

**UZBEKISTAN**  
Uzbek state-owned mining firm agreed in 2014 to supply 2,000 tonnes of uranium ore to India in a span of four years.

**KAZAKHSTAN**  
India signed a deal with Kazakhstan in 2013 to secure 5,000 tonnes of uranium for its nuclear reactors.

**TAJIKISTAN**  
India built Vozrob-1 hydro power station, keen to enhance ties in hydropower generation.

**KYRGYZSTAN**  
India strengthening ties with Kyrgyzstan signed agreements, including on cooperation in the fields of energy.

**TURKMENISTAN**  
India keen to build long-awaited Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline.

**INDIA**

Source: The MEA, Government of India

## INDIA'S FOOTPRINT IN THE CENTRAL ASIA

India has a special focus on the importance of energy diplomacy, specifically with reference to building relationship with the energy-rich region of the Central Asia.



**Source:** The MEA, Government of India





- **Use of Chabahar Port and INSTC for Enhanced Connectivity:**

- ◆ The **Chabahar port** in Iran is seen as a strategic gateway for **India to Central Asia**, as it helps reduce **travel distance** and **costs** in trade routes.
- ◆ The **International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC)**, under the India-Central Asia platform, is also highlighted as a key tool to facilitate this increased trade.



- **Economic, Technology, and Development Cooperation:**

- ◆ The **India-Central Asia Dialogue** focuses on enhancing cooperation in **trade, technology, and development**, with a key emphasis on **banking sector collaboration** and **economic interaction**.
- ◆ The forthcoming **India-Central Asia leadership summit** is expected to provide a platform to deepen ties in these areas.

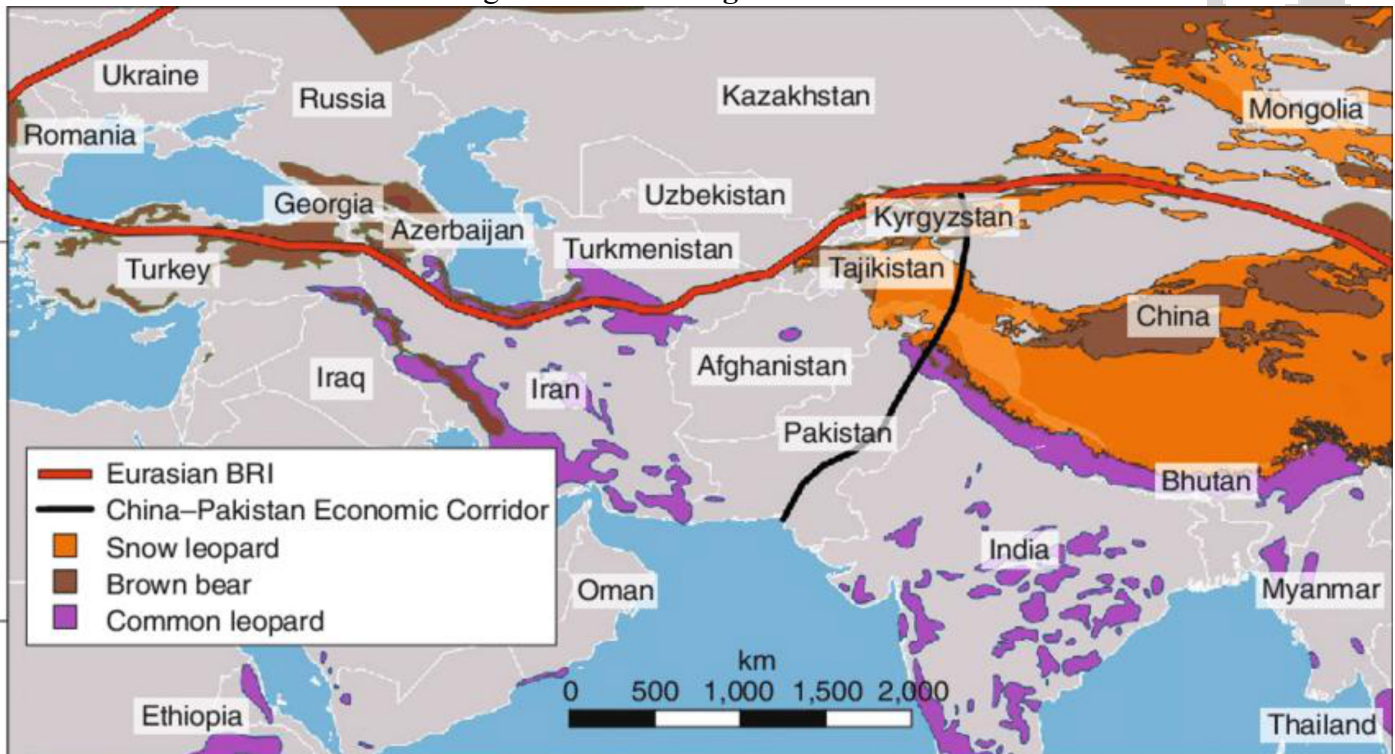






- **Geopolitical and Regional Cooperation:**

- ♦ Jaishankar mentioned the **growing role of India** in **regional security**, highlighting the challenges posed by **terrorism** and other geopolitical issues in the region.
- ♦ The **India-Central Asia dialogue** is seen as vital for addressing these concerns, especially in light of recent tensions involving **Pakistan** and **Afghanistan**.



- **Strategic Importance of the Dialogue:**

- ♦ The **Foreign Minister-level dialogue** is seen as a significant step in furthering **India's strategic engagement** with Central Asia, which has become more critical amid **global economic uncertainties**.
- ♦ India's involvement in **regional security discussions** and efforts to enhance **trade and diplomatic ties** with Central Asian countries reflect its **growing influence** in the region.

Timeline of The Spread of Buddha Dhamma	
<b>6th Century BCE</b>	Siddhartha Gautama attains enlightenment.
Emperor Ashoka promotes Buddha Dhamma across his empire.	<b>268-232 BCE</b>
<b>1st Century BCE</b>	Emergence of Mahayana and Nikaya traditions within Buddhism.
Ashoka's dhammaduta establish communities in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and beyond.	<b>3rd Century BCE</b>
<b>1st Century BCE</b>	Kasyapa Matanga and Dharmaratna spread Buddhism along the Silk Route to Central and East Asia.
Masters like Atisha Dipankara and Bodhidharma contribute to the dissemination of Buddha Dhamma in Tibet and East Asia.	<b>11th Century</b>





## A Eurocentric reset, a gateway for India

### Why in News?

- India – EU Relations

### Syllabus

- GS Paper 2 – International Relations

## A Eurocentric reset, a gateway for India

In a diplomatic move, with far-reaching consequences, United Kingdom Prime Minister Keir Starmer's new agreement with the European Union (EU) signals a powerful "reset" of their relations, resuming cooperation on food standards, fishing rights, defence and border checks. While this development may appear Eurocentric, it opens a gateway to possibilities and challenges for India that demand urgent attention.

The U.K. and the EU are among India's most important trade and diplomatic partners, and their renewed alignment could redraw India's global strategy map. For Indian exporters, this could simplify compliance and revive supply chain fluidity. For policymakers, this presents an opportunity to strengthen strategic alliances. For the diaspora, this could reshape education and migration prospects. In short, the U.K.-EU reset is not just a regional recalibration. It is a moment that could redefine India's trade corridors, diplomatic engagements, and soft power leverage in the West.

#### A reshaping of India's export dynamics

The renewed collaboration in areas such as food safety, customs coordination and fisheries is poised to significantly influence Indian exports to both regions. In FY2024, India's exports to the EU stood at \$86 billion, while exports to the U.K. totalled \$12 billion, highlighting their strategic role in India's external trade.

Post-Brexit, Indian exporters have grappled with navigating two separate regulatory regimes, especially in key sectors such as pharmaceuticals, textiles, seafood, and agro-based products. A harmonised U.K.-EU regulatory framework could simplify compliance, reduce redundancy and lower operational costs. India, a significant



**Vipin Benny**

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The U.K.-EU reset has the potential to redefine India's trade, diplomatic engagements and soft power leverage in the West

supplier of generic medicines to the U.K., fulfilling over 25% of its pharmaceutical needs, would benefit from a unified approval mechanism that accelerates clearances and enhances cost efficiency.

Similarly, Indian seafood exports, valued at ₹60,523.89 crore (approximately \$7.38 billion) in FY2024, could face fewer trade barriers if the food standards and fishing policies are aligned. However, tighter common standards might challenge Indian Small and Medium Enterprises, which often lack the capital and technical know-how. To remain competitive, India must strengthen its export ecosystem through initiatives such as the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) and the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme.

#### A stronger voice in global diplomacy

Beyond trade, the geopolitical dimensions are significant for India. A more synchronised U.K.-EU foreign policy, particularly in defence and the Indo-Pacific, offers India an avenue to enhance its multilateral coordination with the EU. India already operates under the EU-India Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025, and in 2022, it renewed its Comprehensive Strategic Partnership with the U.K., covering cyber security, climate action, and maritime security.

As the U.K. realigns its policies with the EU, India could benefit from cohesive western support on global platforms, such as the United Nations, the G-20, and the World Trade Organization (WTO). Strategic ties with France, Germany and the U.K. are vital to India's defence modernisation and technological ambitions, especially regarding naval power.

Notably, India-France bilateral trade reached \$15.1 billion in 2024-25; landmark defence

agreements with Germany and the U.K. have focused on technology transfer and joint development. A coordinated U.K.-EU defence policy could open doors for deeper trilateral or multilateral engagements in the Indo-Pacific, where shared concerns over China's assertiveness persist.

Additionally, India's leadership in the Global South – spotlighted during its G-20 presidency in 2023 – can be amplified by leveraging the U.K.-EU thaw to drive collective action on climate finance, digital infrastructure and global governance reforms. A unified West could become a more dependable ally for India if it engages with India, strategically and assertively, in the future

#### Enhancing trade and talent power

On the mobility front, India has the world's largest diaspora, which includes large communities in the U.K. and across the EU. In 2024, the U.K. issued more than 1,10,000 student visas to Indian nationals, placing India among the top sources of international students.

While post-Brexit restrictions limited access for Indian professionals to EU markets, renewed U.K.-EU border coordination could enable partial mobility, creating a semi-integrated talent corridor. This could also bolster India's migration pacts with Germany, France and Portugal by embedding them within a broader U.K.-EU framework.

These converging shifts – trade liberalisation, mobility reintegration, and foreign policy alignment – present rare diplomatic and economic opportunities. To seize these opportunities, India must accelerate reforms, modernise its export infrastructure, and assert its role in global governance.

### Key Takeaways from the Article

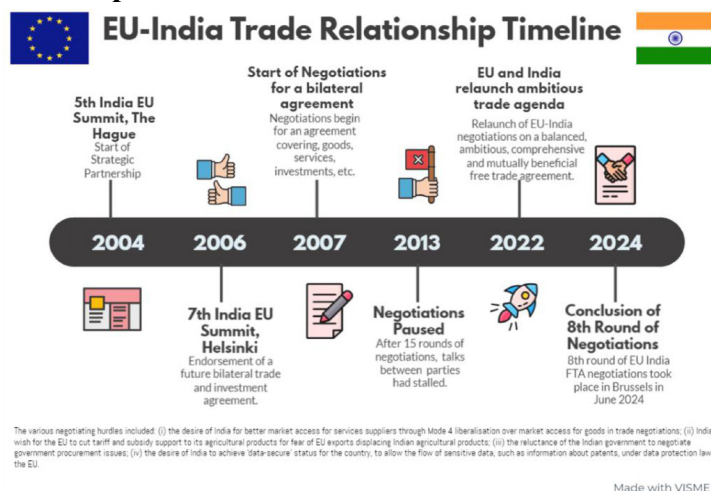
#### Economic Benefits for India:

- Trade and Exports
- Post-Brexit Challenges
- Pharmaceutical Sector
- Seafood Exports

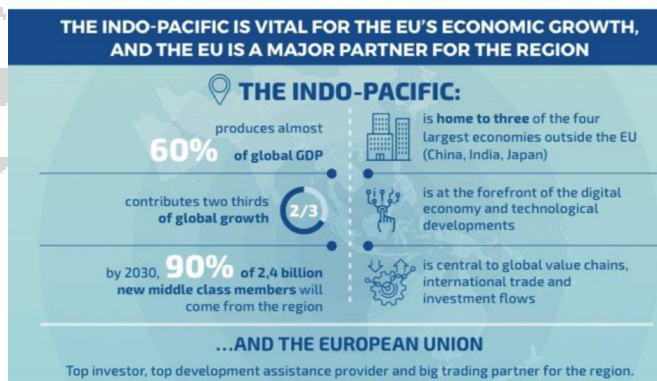




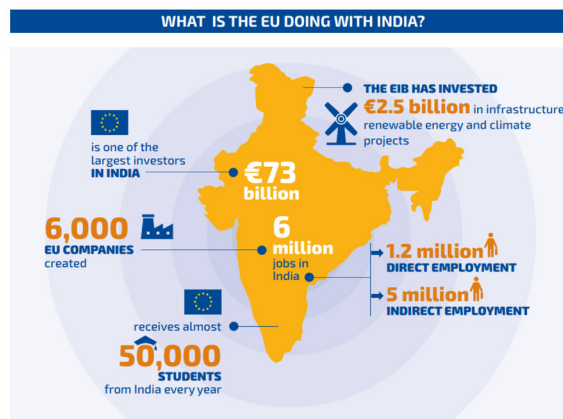
- Geopolitical Implications for India:
  - ◆ A coordinated UK-EU foreign policy can enhance India's multilateral diplomacy, particularly in the Indo-Pacific.
  - ◆ India's defence modernisation and technological ambitions.
  - ◆ Strategic Partnerships



- A Strategic Opportunity for India
  - ◆ The reset between the UK and EU presents India with the opportunity to revise its global strategy by strengthening its trade, diplomatic ties, and strategic alliances with the West.
  - ◆ This alignment could help India assert its leadership in the Global South and drive action on critical global issues such as climate finance, digital infrastructure, and global governance reforms.



- Importance of Policy Reforms for India:
  - ◆ India must modernise its export infrastructure and accelerate reforms to benefit from the new opportunities presented by the UK-EU reset.
  - ◆ Initiatives like the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) and the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme are vital for strengthening India's export ecosystem and ensuring sustainability and competitiveness in international markets. Importance of Policy Reforms for India:







## Araku Valley

- ◆ Location - ?
- ◆ Mined for - ?
- ◆ Often referred to - ?
- ◆ Tribes - ?
- ◆ GI Tag - ?

PICTURE OF THE WEEK  
Aspectacular sky



## Odisha women farmers export mangoes

- ◆ Successful Women-led FPO- Baladevju Women FPO in Odisha, led by Jyotirmayee Pradhan.
- ◆ Exported Mangoes - ?
- ◆ CSR Initiative by - ?



Women farmers sorting and grading mangoes in Odisha's Dhenkanal. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

### Odisha women farmers reap sweet success, export mangoes to Italy

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BHUBANESWAR

Jyotirmayee Pradhan, a woman farmer from Odisha's Dhenkanal district, has scarcely travelled beyond her home State, let alone boarded a flight to Italy. Yet, this summer, her mangoes have journeyed farther than she ever has.

Demand for the fruit has been so consistent that new orders arrive even before the previous consignments are unpacked. Together with a group of other women farmers, Ms. Pradhan has mastered the practice of harvesting mangoes without a blemish, sorting them by size, and packaging them to meet the standards of international markets.

From the orchards of central Odisha to cities across Europe, this mango export initiative has emerged as a story of quiet resilience and enterprise.

Ms. Pradhan is a board member of the Baladevju Women Farmers Producer Company Limited, a women-led Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) with over 1,000 shareholders.

The FPO has achieved a turnover of ₹1 crore by exporting mangoes to Dubai.

Promoted by consulting firm Grant Thornton Bharat and supported by HDFC Bank's Parivartan under the STREE (Social and Transformative Rural Economic Empowerment) programme, the FPO has begun exporting 'Amrapali' mangoes to European countries. As of June 4, the FPO has shipped 10 tonnes of mangoes to Italy. By the end of the mango season, it plans to export over 50 tonnes. The initiative is benefiting more than 100 women mango orchard owners.

Grant Thornton Bharat, in association with the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority, has engaged with over 33 FPOs in Odisha.

A turning point for the initiative was a training session on post-harvest handling of fruits, specifically tailored for women farmers. Support from government agencies followed. Aid was also extended towards value addition and processing.





## Chenab Bridge

### *Valley gets closer*



**All set:** A view of the Chenab Bridge, the world's tallest railway bridge, set to be inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi in J&K's Reasi district on Friday. The bridge is part of the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link, which will provide direct connectivity to Kashmir Valley. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT (REPORT: PAGE 14)

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