DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

21st August 2025

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Mains Manthan

- Bills that oust arrested PM, CMs trigger House chaos (Page No – 01)
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Prelims Saarthi

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- Global Solar Alliance plans to establish research hubs in India

1. Bills to oust arrested PM, CMs trigger House chaos

Why in News?

- Bills to oust arrested PM, CMs

Syllabus

- **GS Paper 2** – Indian Polity

Bills to oust arrested PM, CMs trigger House chaos

The Bills were referred to a Joint Committee after a voice vote; Centre says the Bills are to bring morality back into politics; Amit Shah and K.C. Venugopal spar over the former's 2010 arrest

Sandeep Phukan
Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Opposition and ruling party MPs exchanged barbs in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday over the government's claim of bringing in political morality through three new Bills allowing the removal of elected representatives arrested on serious criminal charges.

As the Bills were introduced, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Congress leader K.C. Venugopal engaged in a sharp spat over Mr. Shah's 2010 arrest while he was Home Minister of Gujarat.

Trinamool Congress MPs escalated their protest by tearing copies of the proposed legislation in front of Mr. Shah's seat, resulting in a brief jostle between Opposition and ruling party MPs. BJP members stepped in to shield Mr. Shah, while the Trinamool accused them of "pushing and shoving" women MPs.

As the Home Minister introduced the three Bills, Opposition MPs shouted that they were "unconstitutional and anti-federal". A resolution was passed by a voice vote to refer them to a Joint Committee of Parliament that will have 21 members from the Lok Sabha and 10 from the Rajya Sabha. The Committee has been mandated to submit its report to the House by the Winter Session.

Later in the day, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said that the Bills would take the country back to "medieval times when the King could remove anybody at will".

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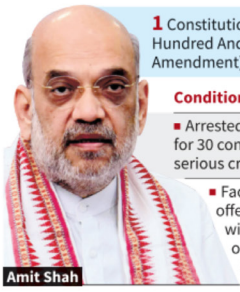
Bills in focus

The three Bills tabled by the Home Minister propose the removal of Prime Minister, Chief Ministers and Ministers under certain conditions



1 Constitution (One Hundred And Thirtieth Amendment) Bill, 2025

2 Government of Union Territories (Amendment) Bill, 2025

3 Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2025

Conditions for removal:
- Arrested and detained for 30 consecutive days on serious criminal charges
- Facing charges of offences punishable with imprisonment of five years or more

Removal authority:
- **The President** (for PM and Union Ministers)
- **Governors** (for CMs and State Ministers)
- **Lieutenant-Governors** (for Ministers in Union Territories)

Additional provision: The legislation allows for the possibility of reappointment once the detained Minister or Chief Minister is released

Key Highlights

Three Bills Proposed:

Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill, 2025

Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2025

Government of Union Territories (Amendment) Bill, 2025

These Bills are designed to remove the **Prime Minister, Chief Ministers, and Ministers** who are arrested and detained for serious criminal charges (punishable with 5 years or more imprisonment) for **30 consecutive days**.

Political Debate:

The government argues that the Bills are to bring **political morality** into the system.

Opposition MPs, including Congress leader K.C. Venugopal, argue the Bills are **unconstitutional** and **anti-federal**.

Trinamool Congress MPs protested by **tearing copies of the Bill** in front of Amit Shah, leading to a brief **scuffle** between Opposition and ruling party MPs.

Key Opposition Points:

Rahul Gandhi: Criticized the Bills as a **step back to medieval times**, where the ruling government could oust elected leaders at will.

Asaduddin Owaisi: Warned that the Bills would turn India into a **police state**.

Manish Tewari: Argued that the Bills are a **political tool** for misuse, undermining the **criminal justice system**.

- **Home Minister's Response:**
  - Amit Shah defended the Bills, stating that he resigned in 2010 after false allegations and did not hold any **constitutional post until cleared.**
  - He emphasized that those with **serious charges** should not continue holding important posts, asserting **moral grounds.**

Committee Review:

The Bills were referred to a **Joint Committee of Parliament**, which will include 21 members from the Lok Sabha and 10 from the Rajya Sabha. The committee is expected to submit its report by the **Winter Session**.

Prelims PYQ (2012)

Q. The Prime Minister of India, at the time of his/her appointment: (2012)
(a) Need not necessarily be a member of one of the Houses of the Parliament but must become a member of one of the Houses within six months
(b) Need not necessarily be a member of one of the Houses of the Parliament but must become a member of the Lok Sabha within six months
(c) Must be a member of one of the Houses of the Parliament
(d) Must be a member of the Lok Sabha

2. Why India needs a national space law?

Why in News?

▪ India's Space Policy

Syllabus

▪ **GS Paper 3** – Science & Technology

Why India needs a national space law

What does the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 stipulate? Is it self-executing? Why is it important that countries enact their own national space legislations? What has been India's approach to space legislation? Why is creating affordable insurance frameworks for space startups crucial?

EXPLAINER

Shrawani Shagun

The story so far:

India is set to celebrate its second National Space Day on August 23. Following Chandrayaan-3's soft-landing near the lunar south pole to the upcoming Gaganyaan and Chandrayaan missions, as well as the Bharat Antariksh Station, the Indian space programme is set to make history many times over. Yet an essential component remains grounded – the legal architecture. In the race to explore, innovate, and commercialise outer space, a strong space law is necessary.

What about global space legislation?

The Outer Space Treaty of 1967 establishes that space is the province of all mankind, and therefore prohibits national appropriation, and places responsibility on states for national activities in space, whether conducted by the government or private entities. Its companion agreements create binding frameworks of rights, responsibilities, and liability rules. However, these treaties are not self-executing. According to Aarti Holla-Maini, director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), "The core United Nations treaties on outer space provide the foundational principles for all space activities: from the peaceful use of outer space to the responsibility and liability of states. National legislation is the means by which nations can give effect to these principles domestically, ensuring that their growing space sectors develop in a safe, sustainable, and internationally responsible way." India has ratified the key UN space treaties but it is still in the process of enacting comprehensive national space legislation.

While space policy may signal intent, law is what creates an enforceable structure. "National space legislation offers predictability, legal clarity, and a stable regulatory environment for both government and private actors," Rossana Deim-Hoffmann, UNOOSA Global Space Law Project Lead said. Many countries now have national space legislation. Japan, Luxembourg, and the U.S. have enacted frameworks to facilitate licensing, liability coverage, and commercial rights over space activities.

The ISRO carrying out the Well Deck trials of the Gaganyaan missions's crew module in 2024. FILE PHOTO

Will India enact similar legislation?

India's approach to space legislation reflects a methodical, incremental strategy. As space law expert Ranjana Kaul notes, "It should be understood that national space legislation includes two cardinal interdependent aspects: (i) technical regulations governing space operations in orbit by commercial entities – this is the first aspect of 'authorisation' process under Article VI [of the Outer Space Treaty]. The Department of Space is proceeding meticulously in this matter."

This methodical approach has yielded concrete regulatory developments, which includes the Catalogue of Indian Standards for Space Industry, critical for ensuring the safety of space operations; the Indian Space Policy, providing details of activities that non-governmental entities are encouraged to undertake; and the IN-SPACe Norms, Guidelines and Procedures (NPG) for implementation of Indian Space Policy, 2023, in respect of authorisation of space activities.

However, the second component is still pending. According to Dr. Kaul, "(ii) the overarching regulatory framework (textual part) – this is the ... 'space activities law' that will contain provisions of the OST that are meticulously, carefully, appropriately drafted."

What are industry perspectives?

From the industry's standpoint, the current regulatory transition creates significant operational challenges. Gp. Capt. T.H. Anand Rao (retd.), director of the Indian Space Association, identified priorities for national space legislation beginning with the fundamental need for a statutory authority.

"IN-SPACe, which currently operates without formal legal backing, requires clear statutory authority to strengthen its role as the central regulatory body," Mr. Rao said. "The national space law should clearly set out licensing rules, qualifications, application processes, timelines, fees, and reasons for acceptance or denial, to avoid unnecessary delays and confusion from multiple ministry approvals." The dual-use nature of space technologies creates particular complications, with companies facing delays from multiple ministry clearances even after provisional approvals. Clear FDI rules, such as allowing 100% FDI in satellite component manufacturing under automatic routes, would attract critical capital for startups to scale operations. This operational clarity extends to liability frameworks, with Mr. Rao emphasising that "while India is ultimately responsible internationally, private companies must hold proper third-party insurance to cover any damages. This includes creating affordable insurance frameworks for startups managing high-value space assets. Innovation protection remains equally crucial, "legislation should secure intellectual property rights without excessive government control, encourage partnerships among industry, academia, and government, and foster investor trust." This balanced approach would prevent migration of talent and technologies to more IP-friendly jurisdictions. Mr. Rao also stressed the need for mandatory accident investigation procedures, enforceable space debris management laws, unified frameworks for space-related data and satellite communications, and an independent appellate body to prevent conflicts of interest. Without statutory backing, IN-SPACe's decisions remain vulnerable to procedural challenges.

Shrawani Shagun is a researcher focusing on environmental sustainability and space governance.

THE GIST

- The Outer Space Treaty of 1967 establishes that space is the province of all mankind, and therefore prohibits national appropriation, and places responsibility on states for national activities in space, whether conducted by government or private entities.
- India's approach to space legislation reflects a methodical, incremental strategy.
- Gp. Capt. T.H. Anand Rao (retd.), director of the Indian Space Association, identified priorities for national space legislation beginning with the fundamental need for a statutory authority.

Key Highlights

Outer Space Treaty (1967):

The **Outer Space Treaty** sets the foundational principles for global space activities, ensuring that space is the **province of all mankind** and prohibiting **national appropriation.**

It places responsibility on **states** for space activities, whether by the government or private entities, but it is **not self-executing,** meaning **national space legislation** is required to give effect to its principles.

India's Current Approach:

India has **ratified key UN space treaties** but is still working on enacting comprehensive national space legislation.

The country has taken a **methodical, incremental approach** to space law, which includes:

- **Catalogue of Indian Standards for Space Industry** for safety.
- **Indian Space Policy** to guide non-governmental activities.
- **IN-SPACe Norms** for the implementation of space activities under Indian Space Policy, 2023.

Industry Challenges:

- The **Indian Space Association** highlights the need for **a statutory authority** for **IN-SPACe,** which currently lacks formal legal backing.
- There is a need for **clear licensing rules, timelines, and clear FDI rules** to attract **capital for startups.**
- There is a need to create **affordable insurance frameworks** for startups managing high-value space assets and to protect **intellectual property** in the sector.

Key Highlights

- **Operational Concerns:**
  - **Dual-use technologies** create complications in the regulatory process, as private companies often face delays from multiple ministry clearances even after provisional approvals.
  - **Mandatory accident investigations, space debris management laws, and unified frameworks** for satellite communications are also necessary to ensure effective governance.

Prelims PYQ (2024)

Q. Consider the following pairs:
Objects in space : Description
1. Cepheids : Giant clouds of dust and gas in space
2. Nebulae : Stars which brighten and dim periodically
3. Pulsars : Neutron stars that are formed when massive stars run out of fuel and collapse
How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?
(a) Only one (b) Only two
(c) All three (d) None

3. Agni 5 Missile

- **Successful Test of Agni-5:**
  - On **August 20, 2025,** India successfully test-fired the **Agni-5** intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) from the **Integrated Test Range** at **Chandipur**, Odisha.
  - The launch was conducted under the **Strategic Forces Command** and validated all operational and technical parameters of the missile.

India successfully tests Agni-5 missile

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

India on Wednesday successfully test-fired its intermediate-range ballistic missile Agni-5 from the Integrated Test Range at Chandipur, Odisha.

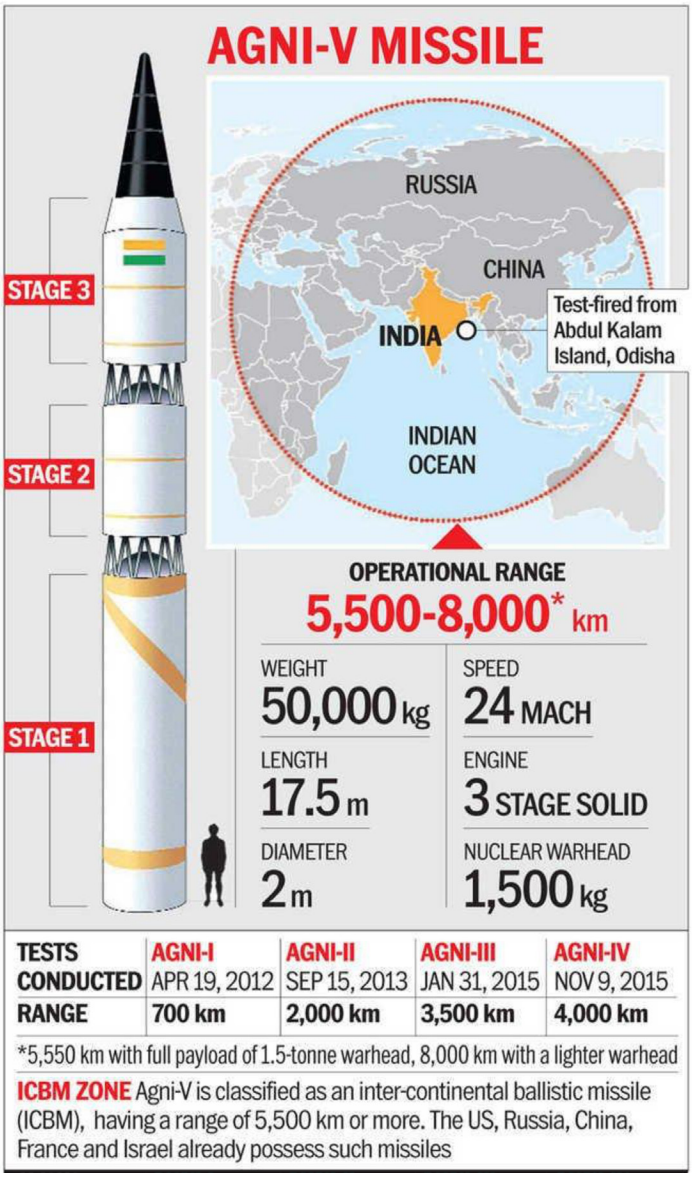
In a statement, the Defence Ministry said the launch validated all operational and technical parameters and was conducted under the aegis of the Strategic Forces Command. "The intermediate-range ballistic missile Agni-5 was successfully test-fired from Chandipur on August 20. The launch validated all operational and technical parameters," the Ministry said.

The missile tested on Wednesday was a variant of Agni-5, India's indigenously developed intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) with a range of 5,000 km. Designed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the system has been developed keeping in view the country's long-term security requirements.

The previous trial of Agni-5 was conducted on March 11, 2024, when the DRDO successfully tested the missile equipped with Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry Vehicle technology, allowing it to strike multiple targets with a single launch.

- **Agni-5 Missile:**
  - **Agni-5** is an **indigenously developed intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)** with a range of **5,000 km,** capable of carrying a **nuclear payload.**
  - Designed by the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO),** it has been developed to meet India's **long-term security requirements.**

- **Strategic Importance:**
  - Agni-5 is an important asset for India's **nuclear deterrence strategy** and strengthens its ability to target adversaries at long distances.
  - The missile's development underscores **India's focus on enhancing its defense and technological capabilities** for national security



Prelims PYQ (2023)

Q. Consider the following statements:
1. Ballistic missiles are jet-propelled at subsonic speeds throughout their flights, while cruise missiles are rocket-powered only in the initial phase of flight.
2. Agni-V is a medium-range supersonic cruise missile, while BrahMos is a solid - fuelled intercontinental ballistic missile.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
(a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

4. Global Solar Alliance

- **ISA's Expansion Plans:**
  - **The International Solar Alliance (ISA),** founded by India and France, is planning to establish **17 centres of excellence** across various countries by the end of the year. These centres will focus on **testing, lab training,** and providing a **start-up ecosystem.**
  - Additionally, a **Global Capability Centre (GCC)** will be set up in India, envisioned as a **"Silicon Valley for solar",** aimed at connecting these centres globally.

Global solar alliance plans to establish research hub in India

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

By the end of the year, the International Solar Alliance (ISA) will set up 17 centres of excellence in as many countries, and going ahead, establish a Global Capability Centre (GCC) in India, akin to a "Silicon Valley for solar", Ashish Khanna, director general, ISA, said at lecture here on Wednesday.

These 17 centres, which Mr. Khanna did not disclose, will provide testing, lab training, and a "start-up ecosystem" in "Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-like" universities, and the GCC would act as a "hub" connecting all these centres, Mr. Khanna said at an event organised by think tank The Energy and Resources Institute, adding, "Those 17 could soon rise to 50 as several countries are looking to India to improve their human capability."

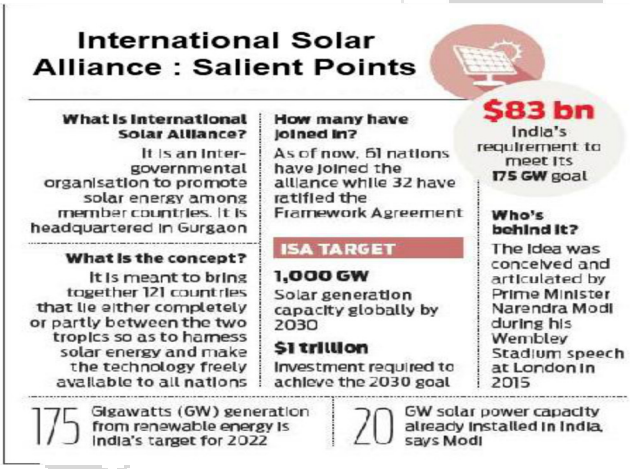
The ISA is a collaborative body set up by India and France, conceptualised on the sidelines of the climate Conference of Parties in 2015 in Paris. It is headquartered in Gurugram, Haryana, and has a membership of around 100 countries.

"Several countries are looking to engineers from India to supply the vital human capital necessary to implement solar projects. This includes digital tenders, operation and maintenance and all the reskilling that is needed in the world," he added.

India has cumulatively installed about 119 gigawatts (GW) of solar capacity as of July 2025, according to official estimates.

- **Focus Areas of the Centres:**
  - These centres will focus on improving **human capital** for solar energy projects, including digital tenders, operation, and maintenance, and reskilling for solar technologies.
  - The hubs will be similar to **Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs),** focusing on cuttingedge research and skill-building for solar technology.

- **India's Solar Energy Capacity:**
  - India has made significant strides in the solar energy sector, with an installed capacity of **119 GW** as of July 2025.
  - The nation is expected to play a crucial role in the global transition to solar power, providing both **technology and skilled workforce** to developing solar projects worldwide.



Prelims PYQ (2024)

Q. Consider the following:
1. Battery storage
2. Biomass generators
3. Fuel cells
4. Rooftop solar photovoltaic units

How many of the above are considered "Distributed Energy Resources"?
(a) Only one (b) Only two
(c) Only three (d) All four