Prelim Bits 03-01-2024 | UPSC Daily Current Affairs

Designated Terrorist under UAPA

Gangster Goldy Brar, the mastermind behind the murder of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala, was declared a designated terrorist by the Centre under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

UAPA

- The UAPA aims to prevent unlawful activities and terrorist activities in the country.
- **Terrorist Act -** Any act committed with intent to threaten or likely to threaten the unity, integrity, security, economic security, sovereignty of India or any section of the people in India or in any foreign country.
- **2019 Bill -** Originally only covering organizations that engage in terrorism, the Act was amended in 2019 to allow the government to designate individuals as terrorists too.
- The *2019 Bill* sought to empower the *central government to designate an individual a terrorist* if they are found committing, preparing for, promoting, or involved in an act of terror.
- A similar provision already existed in Part 4 and 6 of the legislation for organisations that can be designated as a terrorist organisation.
- The 2019 amendment did not clarify the standard of proof required to establish that an individual is involved, or is likely to be involved, in terrorist activities.

The designation of an individual as a global terrorist by the United Nations is associated with sanctions including travel bans, freezing of assets and an embargo against procuring arms, however, the 2019 amendment did not provide any such detail.

- **Appeal -** Under the amendment, the central government set up a review committee comprising a chairperson (a retired or sitting judge of a High Court) and three other members.
- The review committee will be empowered to order the government to delete the name of the individual from the schedule that lists terrorists, if it considers the order to be flawed.
- Apart from these two avenues, the individual can also move the courts challenging the government's order.

Satinderjit Singh, popularly known as Goldy Brar has become the 56th person to

be named an individual terrorist under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

Individual Terrorists

- The central government may designate an individual as a terrorist through a notification in the official gazette, and add his name to the Fourth Schedule to the UAPA.
- The government is not required to give an individual an opportunity to be heard before such a designation.

An individual who is convicted in a terror case is legally referred to as a terrorist, while those suspected of being involved in terrorist activities are referred to as terror accused.

References

1. The Indian Express – Goldy Brar a designated terrorist under UAPA
2. Deccan Herald – Goldy Brar designated 'terrorist' under UAPA
3. Hindustan Times – Goldy Brar declared 'terrorist' under UAPA

National Maritime Domain Awareness Centre (NMDAC)

India is poised to establish a National Maritime Domain Awareness Centre (NMDAC) in response to emerging threats in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

NMDAC

- The Indian Navy's Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) in Gurugram, is on track to upgrade into the National Maritime Domain Awareness Centre in about three years.
- **Objective -** The primary objective of the NMDAC is to meticulously gather, analyze, and provide actionable intelligence to address maritime challenges.
- The center will maintain vigilant oversight of the expanding Chinese naval activities within the IOR.
- Once operational, the NDMA Centre will house people from 15 agencies under seven Ministries enabling exchange of maritime information in real-time across the board.
- The involved ministries include petroleum, defense, fisheries, shipping, among others.
- **BEL -** Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), a defense public sector undertaking, is entrusted with the responsibility of providing all the requisite hardware and software necessary for the NMDAC.

IMAC

- IMAC is the nodal agency for maritime information and monitoring and was set up after the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks.
- Approved by the Defence Acquisition Council in 2012, the IMAC became operational in

2014 and is located in Gurugram.

- IMAC serves as the nodal center of the National Command, Control, and Intelligence (NC3I) Network, and the Information Fusion Centre-Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) in 2018.
- Both function as hubs for maritime domain awareness for domestic and international information sharing.
- **NC3I -** It is the nodal centre of the National Command Control Communication and Intelligence System (NC3I).
- It is spearheaded by the Indian Navy.
- NC3I was established to link the operational Centres and lower echelons of Navy and Coast Guard spread across the country's coastline including the island territories.
- The NC3I, , links 51 stations, comprising 20 Navy and 31 Coast Guard stations, providing a comprehensive, real-time depiction of the approximately 7,500-km long coastline.
- **IFC-IOR -** In the case of the IFC-IOR, the center presently has 12 International Liaison Officers, with plans to increase this number to 40 by 2025-26.
- Additionally, the IFC-IOR has established agreements with 25 countries and 1 international maritime construct concerning the sharing of white shipping information.
- **Functions of the IMAC -**
    1. Tracks vessels on the high seas
    2. Gets data from the coastal radars
    3. White shipping agreements
    4. Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) transponders fitted on merchant ships
    5. Air and traffic management
    6. Global shipping databases management

Indian Ocean Region (IOR)

- The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is a vital maritime area spanning over 36 littoral and island countries.
- The region is strategically important due to its significant trade routes, natural resources, and geopolitical importance.
- It is home to some of the world's busiest sea-lanes, including the Straits of Hormuz and Malacca, which serve as a conduit for international trade.
- Major portion of the world population and comparatively younger population resides in this region.

References

1. The Hindu – National Maritime Domain Awareness Centre
2. Financial Express – India's Maritime Security Initiative
3. Swarajya – Upgrading India's Maritime Vigilance

Olive Ridley Turtles

At least 8 Olive Ridley turtles wash ashore dead along Chennai's southern coast.

- **Scientific Name -** *Lepidochelys olivacea*
- The Olive ridley turtles are the ***smallest and most abundant*** of all sea turtles found in the world.
- It gets its name from its olive colored carapace (shell), which is heart-shaped and rounded.
- **Habitat -** Olive ridleys are globally distributed in the tropical regions of the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian oceans.
- **Feeding -** The olive ridley is omnivorous (feeds on a wide variety of food items, including algae, lobster, crabs, tunicates, and mollusks).
- **Nesting -** The coast of ***Odisha*** is the largest mass nesting site for the Olive-ridley, followed by the coasts of ***Mexico and Costa Rica.***
- In the Indian Ocean, 3 arribada beaches occur in Odisha, India (***Gahirmatha, Devi River mouth, and Rushikulya).***
- The sex of hatchlings is determined by the *temperature of the sand.*

The mass nesting event is known as an ***arribada****, meaning "arrival by sea" in Spanish. It is found only in the genus Lepidochelys which includes the Kemp's ridley and olive ridley sea turtles*

- **Threats**
    1. Bycatch in fishing gear
    2. Direct harvest of turtles and eggs
    3. Loss and degradation of nesting habitat
    4. Predation of eggs and hatchlings
    5. Vessel strikes
    6. Ocean pollution/marine debris
    7. Climate change

Species of sea turtles in Indian waters	Conservation Status		
	IUCN	CITES	Wildlife Protection Act, 1972
Leatherback	Vulnerable	Appendix I	Schedule I
Loggerhead	Vulnerable		
Hawksbill	Critically endangered		
Green	Endangered		
Olive Ridley	Vulnerable		

References

1. WWF India | Olive Ridley Turtles
2. IUCN | Red list of species

Demonstration Fast Reactor Fuel Reprocessing Plant (DFRP)

Prime Minister dedicated to the nation, indigenously developed Demonstration Fast Reactor

Fuel Reprocessing Plant (DFRP) at the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu.

- **The plant -** It is a pilot for the bigger facility that would come up to reprocess the fuel that would come out of the two more 500 MW Prototype Fast Breeder Reactors (PFBR) that would come up later.

  A fast breeder reactor is one, which breeds more material for a nuclear fission reaction than it consumes and is the key to India's three-stage nuclear power programme.

- **Function -** This ground-breaking facility has the unique distinction of being the world's only industrial-scale plant capable of handling both carbide and oxide spent fuels from fast reactors.

  Spent fuel refers to the nuclear fuel that has been used in a reactor.

Fast Reactor Fuel Cycle Facility (FRFCF)

- The Fast Reactor Fuel Cycle Facility (FRFCF), which is being set up in Kalpakkam is expected to be completed by 2027.
- **Executed by -** The FRFCF project is executed by the Nuclear Recycle Board, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre and the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE).
- **Purpose -** The purpose of FRFCF is to reprocess the spent fuel of the fast breeder reactors.

References

1. PIB – PM dedicates to nation multiple development projects
2. IDRW – Demonstration fast reactor fuel reprocessing plant
3. ANI – PM dedicates demonstration fast reactor fuel reprocessing plant

Donkey Routes

Indians take 'donkey route' through Nicaragua to enter US, Canada.

Donkey Route - Europe

- **Serbia -** Last year, Serbia had to change its visa rules under pressure from the European Union.
- This was because the Balkan nation was being used by many, including Indians, as an illegal transit route to Europe.
- The visa-free regime for Indians, along with nationals from Turkey, Tunisia, Cuba and Burundi, was being exploited to get into Italy and France.
- **Reason-** Those travelling to EU countries from Serbia don not require a visa.

In October 2022, Serbia withdrew visa-free arrivals from the above-mentioned countries.

- **Donkers -** In most such cases, on arrival in the transit country, agents connect the migrants with the so-called 'donkers', or people smugglers, who help them enter their final destination illegally.

A 2009 report by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODOC) on Smuggling of Migrants from India to Europe highlights several cases of such migrants.

Donkey Route - U.S.A

- Migrants from South American and Caribbean countries, Africa, and Asia enroute to the United States through the Darien Gap Jungle.

The recent grounding of an Airbus A340 in Paris, carrying 303 Indian migrants enroute to Nicaragua, sheds light on the scale of this clandestine operation.

- For those headed to the US, the first step in the most popular donkey route from India is to reach a Latin American country.

According to the US Customs and Border Patrol (CBP), a staggering 96,917 Indians were arrested attempting to enter the US illegally in 2023 alone, placing Indians as the third-largest illegal immigrant community in the US.

- Countries like Ecuador, Bolivia, and Guyana have visas on arrival for Indian citizens.
- Some other countries, including Brazil and Venezuela, give tourist visas to Indians easily.
- **Irregular migration -** From the perspective of destination countries it is entry, stay or work in a country without the necessary authorization or documents required under immigration regulations.

Apart from Punjab, irregular migration is also being reported in high numbers from Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir.

Darien Jungle Gap

- It is a sparsely populated geographic region of the easternmost Isthmus of Panama

that extends into northwestern Colombia, around the Gulf of Urabá.
- It forms the physiographic link between Central and South America.

Over 100,000 minors crossed Darien gap in 2023 to reach US.

- **Features -** A hot, humid area typified by tropical rainforests, mangrove swamps, and low mountain ranges with cloud forest vegetation.
- The Pan-American Highway does not traverse Darién, which effectively blocks land transportation between Central and South America.
- **National Parks -** A pair of contiguous parks administer a large part of the region, Darién National Park in Panama and Los Katíos National Park in Colombia.

Darién National Park is a World Heritage Site in Panama.

References

1. The Indian Express – Donkey Routes
2. Deccan Herald – Indians take Donkey Route
3. Reuters – Record migrants crossed Darien Gap
4. Britannica – Darien

Other Important News
EXERCISE 'DESERT CYCLONE' • 1st edition of Exercise Desert Cyclone held recently in Rajasthan. • It is a ***Joint Military Exercise*** between ***India & UAE***. • **Aim –** To focus on enhancing interoperability and sharing best practices in Urban Operations.
Inoperative account by RBI • A savings or current account is treated as inoperative, if there are **no** 'customer induced transactions' in the account for a period of over ***2 years.*** • A customer induced transaction can be a financial transaction initiated by or done at the - Behest of the account holder by the bank or third party, or - A non-financial transaction, or - A KYC (know your customer) updation done in face-to-face physical mode or through digital channels such as internet banking or mobile banking application of the bank.
Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) • RGIA in Hyderabad was ranked 2nd among the top 20 global airports with the highest ***On-Time Performance (OTP)***, according to Cirium's annual report released recently. • **On-time performance (OTP)** is a measure of how punctual an airline's flights are compared to their scheduled times. • A flight is considered on-time if it arrives or departs within 15 minutes of its scheduled time.

Seperate Toilets for women in district courts

• Nearly 1/5th of the district courts in India lack separate toilets for women, according to a report published by the ***Centre for Research and Planning*** of the Supreme Court recently.
• The **Centre for Research and Planning** will serve as a bridge between academic research, legal and judicial education and the judicial systems.

PM Vishwakarma

• Jammu and Kashmir has become the first Union Territory (UT) to implement the PM Vishwakarma Yojana (PMVY) recently.
• It is an initiative that aims to empower and enhance the skills of the craftsman community (Vishwakarmas).
• ***18 traditional trades*** will be covered in the first instance under PM Vishwakarma.

The Kharsawan massacre of 1948

• The Kharsawan massacre occurred on ***January 1, 1948*** in the town of Kharsawan, which is now part of ***Jharkhand***.
• The massacre was similar to the ***Jallianwala Bagh incident in 1919***.
• The massacre occurred during a protest against the merger of ***Kharsawan with Odisha***.
• Police opened fire on a crowd of Adivasis, killing hundreds or possibly thousands.

Mount Lewotobi Laki-Laki

• Mount Lewotobi Laki-Laki is a mountain in ***Indonesia***.
• It is part of the Lewotobi twin volcano, which is located in the southeastern part of ***Flores Island***.
• The Lewotobi twin volcano is made up of the Lewotobi Laki-Laki (male) and Lewotobi Perempuan (female) stratovolcanoes, with summit craters less than 2 km apart.
• Mount Lewotobi Laki-Laki in Indonesia has erupted several times recently.

National Youth Award 2024

• Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has selected ***Bisathi Bharat*** of Anantapur district of Andhra Pradesh for the National Youth Award (NYA) recently.
• It is an award conferred ***annually*** to individuals and voluntary organisations serving in the arena of youth development.

South Coast Railway Zone

• The South Coast Railway (SCoR) Zone is ***India's 18th railway zone***, and its headquarters are in ***Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.***
• It was announced ***in 2019*** and still not started yet.

Amendment of Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules, 2021

• The Union government has now amended the Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules of 2021.
• It is to allow women government servants and pensioners to nominate their children for receiving family pension over their spouse.
• **Conditions –** At the time of the women's death, any proceedings for divorce, domestic violence, or dowry demands happen to be pending against the said spouse.
• Till now, the rules provided for the family pension to first go to the surviving spouse and the children became eligible to receive it only after the ***death of the spouse***.

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