

INTERNATIONAL RELATION

- **Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)**
- CONTEXT: Raksha Mantri during Defence Ministers' meet in Uzbekistan said that SCO member states must fight together & eliminate terrorism in all its forms. Raksha Mantri proposed to host a workshop in India in 2023 on the theme 'Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief - Risk mitigation and Disaster Resilient Infrastructure' for the Defence Ministries of SCO Member States. He also suggested an annual seminar on 'Topic of Interest' among the defence think tanks of SCO countries.
- What is SCO?
- The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation.
- The main goals of the SCO are following:
- strengthening mutual confidence and good-neighbourly relations among the member countries
- promoting effective cooperation in politics, trade and economy, science and technology, culture as well as education, energy, transportation, tourism, environmental protection and other fields
- Making joint efforts to maintain and ensure peace, security and stability in the region, moving towards the establishment of a new, democratic, just and rational political and economic international order.
- SCO pursues its internal policy based on the principles of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equal rights, consultations, respect for the diversity of cultures and aspiration towards common development.
- SCO pursues its external policy is conducted in accordance with the principles of non-alignment, non-targeting anyone and openness.
- What are the historical key points of SCO?
- Before creation of SCO in 2001, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia and Tajikistan were members of the Shanghai Five.
- Shanghai Five (1996) emerged from a series of border demarcation and demilitarization talks which the four former Soviet republics held with China to ensure stability along the borders.
- It was after the accession of Uzbekistan to the organization in 2001, the Shanghai Five was renamed the SCO.
- Note that India and Pakistan became members in 2017. Also on 17th September, 2021, it was announced that Iran would become a full member of the SCO.
- Which countries are the part of SCO?
- Eight countries enjoy the status of the SCO full members: India, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan; four countries — Afghanistan, Belarus, Iran and Mongolia — have an observer status with the SCO, and six countries — Azerbaijan, Armenia, Cambodia, Nepal, Turkey and Sri Lanka have a dialogue partner status.
- How does the SCO work?
 The Heads of State Council (HSC) is the highest decision-making body in the SCO.
- It meets once every year to take decisions and give instructions on all important issues regarding SCO activity.
- The Heads of Government Council (HGC) meets once per year to discuss a strategy for multilateral cooperation and priority directions within the Organisation's framework, to solve important and pressing cooperation issues in economic and other areas, as well as to adopt the Organisation's annual budget.
- In addition to sessions of the HSC and HGC, there are also mechanisms of meetings on the level of Speakers of Parliament, Secretaries of Security Councils, Foreign Ministers, Ministers of Defence, Emergency Relief, Economy, Transportation, Culture, Education, Healthcare, Heads of Law Enforcement Agencies, Supreme Courts and Courts of Arbitration, and Prosecutors General.
- The Council of National Coordinators of SCO Member States (CNC) is in charge of coordinating interaction within the SCO framework.
- The Organisation has two permanent bodies the Secretariat in Beijing (China) and the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) in Tashkent.
- Russian and Chinese are the official working languages of the SCO.
- What is the SCO RATS?
- It was established to combat terrorism, separatism and extremism.
- The Executive Committee of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is the permanent body of the SCO RATS based in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan.
- The Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure operates in accordance with the SCO Charter, the Shanghai Convention on Combating Terrorism, Separatism and Extremism, the Agreement among the SCO member states on the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure, as well as documents and decisions adopted in the SCO framework.
- What is the SCO Business Council?
- The Business Council of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation was founded on June 14, 2006 in Shanghai. It is a nongovernment entity that unites the highly authoritative business community representatives of the SCO member states with an eye towards expanding economic cooperation, establishing direct relations and a dialogue between the business and financial communities, and facilitating the practical promotion of multilateral projects.



- In addition to energy, transport, telecommunications, lending and the banking sector, the council focuses on such
 priorities of interstate cooperation between the SCO countries as education, research and innovative technology,
 as well as healthcare and agriculture.
- The SCO Business Council's Permanent Secretariat is headquartered in Moscow.
- **❖** What else you should know about India and SCO?
- India, Pakistan and other member-states of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in May 2022 deliberated on boosting cooperation in combating various regional security challenges at a meeting hosted by New Delhi.
- The three-day meeting took place under the framework of the SCO's Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS).
- A major focus of the discussions was to be on the situation in Afghanistan, especially in dealing with the threat from terror groups active in the Taliban-ruled country. Pakistan, has sent a three-member team an official each from the Interior, Defence and Foreign ministries for the meeting.
- India assumed chairmanship of the Council of Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure of SCO (RATS SCO) on October 28, 2021 for a period of one year. India has shown keen interest in deepening its security-related cooperation with the SCO and its Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure, which specifically deals with issues relating to security and defence.
- While participating in the SCO Foreign Ministers' meeting at Tashkent in Uzbekistan, Foreign minister of India said the response required includes resilient and diversified supply chains as well as reformed multilateralism. "zero tolerance for terrorism in all its manifestations is a must". Also reiterated India's position on Afghanistan and highlighted India's humanitarian support that included wheat, medicines, vaccines and clothing. Also underlined the potential of Chabahar port for SCO's economic future and spoke of the economic progress in India, stressing the relevance of start-ups and innovation. Cooperation in traditional medicine is in the common interest of SCO members, he said. Described the meeting of Foreign Ministers as "very useful in preparing for the Samarkand summit" which is likely to be attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2022.

WORLD HISTORY (CULTURE)

- ❖ Why an emperor's embalmed heart is on a 'state visit' to Brazil
- **❖** CONTEXT: Brazil is set to commemorate 200 years of independence from Portugal, and the celebrations include the embalmed heart of Dom Pedro I, Brazil's first emperor.
- It was on September 7, 1822 that Pedro I had issued a declaration of Brazilian independence from Portugal.
- The Portuguese government agreed to loan the heart to Brazil for three weeks for the bicentennial celebration, after which it arrived in Brasilia in an airforce plane and its stay will be treated as a "state visit".
- The heart will receive full state guest honours before returning to Portugal after Brazil's Independence Day.
- Pedro I 'the Liberator'
- When Napoleon and his troops conquered Portugal in 1807, the royal family, including Pedro, fled to the country's flourishing colony, Brazil. Pedro remained here as regent when his father, King John, returned to Portugal in 1821 due to a political revolution in Lisbon. He was 22 years old by this time.
- Brazil had a degree of political autonomy since 1808 but this was threatened when the Portuguese parliament wanted to reinstate its colonial status. When the parliament demanded that Pedro return to Lisbon, he declared Brazil's independence. Within three months, he was crowned emperor and within a couple of years, he had defeated all armies loyal to Portugal. He abdicated the throne 1831 and went back to Portugal, where he led an army in Porto in support of the constitutionalists amid a bid to return the country to absolute monarchy. Portugal too celebrates him as a champion of representative rule.
- ***** The embalmed heart
- Dom Pedro I died in Portugal in 1834 at the age of 35 because of tuberculosis. According to his dying wishes, his
 heart was removed from his body, preserved and placed in an altar in the church of Our Lady of Lapa in Porto,
 Portugal.
- In 1972, Brazil was given back the rest of his remains to commemorate 150 years of the country's independence. Those remains are kept at a museum in Sao Paulo.
- The heart of Dom Pedro I is preserved in formaldehyde in an urn-shaped vase.
- The 9kg urn, the Guardian said, will be on display for 17 days at Itamaraty Palace, the headquarters of Brazil's foreign ministry.
- Celebrations around the organ
- The 188-year-old embalmed heart is at the centre of Brazil's ceremonies. "The coming of Pedro I's heart to Brazil will be an opportunity for the Brazilian people to pay a tribute to a central figure of Brazil's independence process," Brazil's Foreign Ministry said in a statement.
- The organ arrived from Portugal on Monday in a Brazilian air force plane. President Jair Bolsonaro welcomed the reliquary with a cannon-fired salute.
- Bolsonaro, who is running for re election, has been criticised for playing politics with the celebrations through the use of Dom Pedro I's heart.
- Meanwhile, during its stay in Brazil, the heart will also be under the watch of a Portuguese police official.
- Embalmed for eternity

- Embalming was prevalent as a technique across civilisations, starting right with the mummification of ancient Egyptians (although most organs were removed from the body, except the heart). King Richard I (Richard, the Lionheart) died in 1199 and his heart was sent to Rouen, where it was embalmed and entombed in a sarcophagus bearing his image in the Church of Notre-Dame. It was placed in a small lead box, with the inscription on the lid: 'Here is the heart of Richard, King of England'.
- In 2015, five embalmed hearts were found in heart-shaped lead urns underneath the basement of the Convent of the Jacobins in Rennes, France. In some cases, burials found a romantic aspect, in which a spouse would be buried with the embalmed heart of their beloved.

PRELIMS

1. Manusmriti, the ancient Sanskrit text

- ❖ CONTEXT: The Vice Chancellor of Jawaharlal Nehru University, Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit, recently criticised the Manusmriti, the ancient Sanskrit text, over its gender bias. Her remarks came while delivering the keynote address at the B R Ambedkar Lecture Series organised by the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- Pandit said that the Manusmriti has categorised all women as "shudras", which is "extraordinarily regressive".
 She also referred to recent case in which a Dalit boy in Rajasthan was allegedly beaten by his teacher for touching a water pot, and subsequently died due to his injuries.

❖ What is Manusmriti?

- The Mānavadharmaśāstra, also known as Manusmriti or the Laws of Manu, is a Sanskrit text belonging to the Dharmaśāstra literary tradition of Hinduism. Composed sometime between the 2nd century BCE and 3rd century CE, the Manusmriti is written in sloka verses, containing two non-rhyming lines of 16 syllabus each.
- The text is attributed to the mythical figure of Manu, considered to be ancestor of the human race in Hinduism. There has been considerable debate between scholars on the authorship of the text. Many have argued that it was compiled by many Brahmin scholars over a period of time. However, Indologist Patrick Olivelle (Manus Code Of Law: A Critical Edition And Translation Of The Mānava Dharmaśāstra, 2005) argues that Manusmṛiti's "unique and symmetrical structure," means that it was composed by a "single gifted individual," or by a "strong chairman of a committee" with the aid of others.

***** What is the text about?

- The Manusmriti is encyclopedic in scope, covering subjects such as the social obligations and duties of the
 various castes and of individuals in different stages of life, the suitable social and sexual relations of men and
 women of different castes, on taxes, the rules for kingship, on maintaining marital harmony and the procedures
 for settling everyday disputes.
- At its core, the Manusmriti discusses life in the world, how it is lived in reality, as well as how it ought to be, according to Wendy Doniger and Brian Smith (The Laws of Manu, 1991). They argue that the text is about dharma, which means duty, religion, law and practice. It also discusses aspects of the Arthashashtra, such as issues relating to statecraft and legal procedures.
- According to Olivelle, the aim of the text is to "present a blueprint for a properly ordered society under the sovereignty of the king and the guidance of Brahmins."
- It was meant to be read by the priestly caste and Olivelle argues that it would likely have been part of the curriculum for young Brahmin scholars at colleges, and would have been referenced by the scholarly debates and conversations on the Dharmasastras at that time.

What is its significance?

- According to Doniger and Smith, "by the early centuries of the Common Era, Manu had become, and remained, the standard source of authority in the orthodox tradition for that centrepiece of Hinduism, varṇāśrama-dharma (social and religious duties tied to class and stage of life)".
- They argue that it was a very significant text for Brahmin scholars it attracted 9 commentaries by other writers of the tradition, and was cited by other ancient Indian texts far more frequently than other dharmaśāstra.
- European Orientalists considered the Manusmriti to be of great historical and religious significance as well. It was the first Sanskrit text to be translated into a European language, by the British philologist Sir William Jones in 1794. Subsequently, it was translated into French, German, Portuguese and Russian, before being included in Max Muller's edited volume, Sacred Books of the East in 1886.
- For colonial officials in British India, the translation of the book served a practical purpose. In 1772, Governor-General Warren Hastings decided to implement laws of Hindus and Muslims that they believed to be "continued, unchanged from remotest antiquity," according to Olivelle. For Hindus, the dharmasastras were to play a crucial role, as they were seen by the British as 'laws,' whether or not it was even used that way in India.

❖ Why is it controversial?

• The ancient text has 4 major divisions: 1) Creation of the world. 2) Sources of dharma. 3) The dharma of the four social classes. 4) Law of karma, rebirth, and final liberation. The third section is the longest and most important section. The text is deeply concerned with maintaining the hierarchy of the four-fold varna system and the rules that each caste has to follow. For the author of the text, the Brahmin is assumed to be the perfect representative of the human race, according to Doniger and Smith, while Sudras, who are relegated to the bottom of the order, are

DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

given the sole duty of serving the 'upper' castes. Some verses also contain highly prejudicial sentiments against women on the basis of their birth.

- There are many verses in the text that are considered controversial, including a few mentioned below:
- Chapter 8, sloka 21: "When a Sudra interprets the Law for a king, his realm sinks like a cow in mud, as he looks on helplessly"
- Chapter 8, sloka 129: "Even a capable Sudra must not accumulate wealth; for when a Sudra becomes wealthy, he harasses Brahmins."
- Chapter 8, sloka 371: "When a woman... becomes unfaithful to her husband, the king should have her devoured by dogs in a public square frequented by many."
- Chapter 5, sloka 148: "As a child, she must remain under her father's control; as a young woman, under her husband's; and when her husband is dead, under her sons'. She must never seek to live independently"
- Chapter 2, sloka 13: "It is the very nature of women here to corrupt men. On that account, prudent men are never off guard in the presence of alluring young women."
- (Above slokas cited from Manu's Code of Law, translated by Patrick Olivelle and Suman Olivelle, 2004)
- On December 25, 1927, Dr B R Ambedkar had famously burned the Manusmriti, which he saw as a source of gender and caste oppression.

2. Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle (FCEV)

- **CONTEXT:** A hydrogen fuel cell bus developed by KPIT-CSIR in Pune was unveiled by Jitendra Singh, Union minister of state for Science and Technology, recently.
- The hydrogen fuel cell uses hydrogen and air to generate electricity, producing only heat and water in the process.
- A hydrogen fuel cell bus is a Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle (FCEV) that produces electricity by combining hydrogen and oxygen atoms. The two gases react across an electrochemical cell similar to a conventional battery cell to produce electricity, water and small amounts of heat. This electricity is then used by electric motors to propel the vehicle forward.

❖ What is a hydrogen fuel cell?

- Fuel cells work in a similar manner to conventional batteries found in electric vehicles but they do not run out of charge and don't need to be recharged with electricity.
- They continue to produce electricity as long as there is a supply of hydrogen. Just like conventional cells, a fuel cell consists of an anode (negative electrode) and cathode (positive electrode) sandwiched around an electrolyte.
- Hydrogen is fed to the anode and air is fed to the cathode. At the anode, a catalyst separates the hydrogen molecules into protons and electrons and both subatomic particles take different paths to the cathode.
- The electrons go through an external circuit, creating a flow of electricity that can be used to power electric motors. The protons, on the other hand, move to the cathode through the electrolyte. Once there, they unite with oxygen and electrons to produce water and heat.

❖ What is the advantage of a hydrogen FCEV?

- The primary advantage of hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles (FCEV) is that they produce no tailpipe emissions. They only emit water vapour and warm air.
- Another advantage is that they are more efficient than internal combustion engine vehicles.
- Hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles have another advantage when it comes to refuelling time, which makes them
 more practical than battery-powered electric vehicles for public transportation purposes. Even with the fastest
 charging technologies, it could take hours to charge a battery-powered electric bus.
- Meanwhile, hydrogen can be refilled in a fuel cell vehicle in a matter of minutes, nearly as fast as an internal combustion engine can be refilled with fossil fuels.

***** What are the challenges with FCEVs?

- While FCEVs do not generate gases that contribute to global warming, the process of making hydrogen needs energy often from fossil fuel sources. That has raised questions over hydrogen's green credentials.
- Also, there are questions of safety hydrogen is more explosive than petrol. Opponents of the technology cite
 the case of the hydrogen-filled Hindenburg airship in 1937. But Japanese auto industry players argued that a
 comparison was misplaced because most of the fire was attributed to diesel fuel for the airship's engines and a
 flammable lacquer coating on the outside.
- Hydrogen fuel tanks in FCEVs such as the Mirai are made from highly durable carbon fibre, whose strength is
 assessed in crash tests, and also trials where bullets are fired at it. The Mirai and Clarity have a triple-layer
 hydrogen tanks made of woven carbon fibre, which the manufacturers claim is completely safe.
- The other major hurdle is that the vehicles are expensive, and fuel dispensing pumps are scarce. But this should get better as scale and distribution improves.

\(\text{How environment-friendly are hydrogen fuel cell vehicles? } \)

- Using a battery-powered electric vehicle doesn't mean that the vehicles produce no emissions, but rather, that they produce no tailpipe emissions.
- Since a majority of the electricity in the country comes from fossil fuels, and the biggest source of hydrogen in the world currently is also fossil fuels, these vehicles do cause a large number of emissions with their usage.



- However, just like we are moving towards renewable sources of electricity, we could also move towards renewable methods of generating hydrogen in the future.
- So, even if these vehicles do contribute to emissions right now, the fuel that they need could be produced using renewable methods such as solar and wind energy.
- 3. Arth Ganga
- CONTEXT: Asok Kumar, the Director General of the National Mission for Clean Ganga, spoke about the Arth Ganga model during his virtual keynote address to the Stockholm World Water Week 2022. Since 1991, the Stockholm International Water Institute has been organising the World Water Week every year to address global water concerns.

***** The concept

- PM Modi first introduced the concept during the first National Ganga Council meeting in Kanpur in 2019, where he urged for a shift from Namami Gange, the Union Government's flagship project to clean the Ganga, to the model of Arth Ganga. The latter focuses on the sustainable development of the Ganga and its surrounding areas, by focusing on economic activities related to the river.
- At its core, the Arth Ganga model seeks to use economics to bridge people with the river. During his keynote
 address, "strives to contribute at least 3% of the GDP from the Ganga Basin itself," and added that the Arth
 Ganga project's interventions are in accordance with India's commitments towards the UN sustainable
 development goals.

Features

- Under Arth Ganga, the government is working on six verticals. The first is Zero Budget Natural Farming, which
 involves chemical-free farming on 10 km on either side of the river, and the promotion of cow dung as fertiliser
 through the GOBARdhan scheme.
- The Monetization and Reuse of Sludge & Wastewater is the second, which seeks to reuse treated water for irrigation, industries and revenue generation for Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).
- Arth Ganga will also involve Livelihood Generation Opportunities, by creating haats where people can sell local products, medicinal plants and ayurveda.
- The fourth is to increase public participation by increasing synergies between the stakeholders involved with the
 river.
- The model also wants to promote the cultural heritage and tourism of Ganga and its surroundings, through boat tourism, adventure sports and by conducting yoga activities.
- Lastly, the model seeks to promote institutional building by empowering local administration for improved water governance.

ANSWER WRITTING

Q. 'Terrorism is emerging as a competitive industry over the last few decades." Analyse the statement.

In recent years, with the emergence of new terrorist organizations like ISIS, Boko Haram etc. terrorism has become a competitive industry. Like mafia organizations, where one-upmanship is often based on who has the most guns, money or local power, terrorist groups too have a pecking order.

The current competitive market in terrorism means that groups are trying to distinguish each other through the practice of more memorable violence. They need to do so because this is the only way in which they can be heard, become popular enough to attract recruits and distinguish themselves from other similar groups. In order to do so the terrorist groups are trying to out-do each other in the intensity and scope of violence and bloodshed they can cause so that more people can identify with them and join them. For example- while some years back, Al-Qaeda was the most dreaded terrorist group of the world, this position has later overtaken by ISIS. One of the reasons for this can be because ISIS encourages lone-wolf attacks which are easier for its followers to carry out without actually travelling to join the group to fight in combat.

Various terrorist organizations are also in competition with each other to get control of various natural resources such as oil reserves in Middle East countries, cultivation of Opium, arms dealing etc.

Competition over establishing their ideologies all around the world has also instigated terrorist organization for example multiple groups are fighting with each other in Syria. So in recent time terrorism has become a competitive industry that has spread its influence all over the world.

MCQs

- 1. Which of the following statements is not true with respect to hydrogen fuel cell vehicles?
 - **a)** Hydrogen can be refilled in a fuel cell vehicle nearly as fast as an internal combustion engine can be refilled with fossil fuels.
 - **b**) Hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles (FCEV) are that they produce no tailpipe emissions.
 - c) Hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles (FCEV) are more efficient than internal combustion engine vehicles.
 - d) A hydrogen fuel cell bus is a Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle (FCEV) that produces electricity by combining hydrogen and carbon atoms.
- 2. Consider the following with regards to Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)
 - 1. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is a permanent intergovernmental military alliance.



- Exercise PEACEFUL MISSION is a multilateral Exercise, which is conducted biennially as part of military diplomacy between Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) member states.
- 3. India is a member of SCO

Choose the correct statement using the codes given below

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) All of the above
- Consider the following:
 - 1. Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
 - Missile Technology Control Regime
 - Shanghai Cooperation Organization

India is a member of which of the above?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3
- Consider the following statements:
 - 'Manusmriti' was translated in English by William Jones.
 - 'Abhijnana Shakuntalam' was translated in English by James Prinsep.
 - Kalidas is known as 'the Shakespeare of India'.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 2 only
- Consider the following statement/s related to the Manusmriti
 - Smrtis dealt with the performance of duties, customs and laws prescribed according to Dharma.

- d) Neither 1 nor 2

 Consider the following statement with regards to the concept 'Arth Ganga'

 1. In simple terms, 'Arth Ganga' implies a sustainable development model
 related to Ganga.

 2. As part of this process, farmers will '
 zero budget farming statement will '
 Chos.

Choose the correct statement using the codes given below

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2
- 7. Consider the following statements regarding Zero Budget Natural Farming:
 - 1. It is a method of chemical-free agriculture based on traditional Indian practices.
 - It encourages intensive irrigation and deep ploughing of the fields.

Which of the above statement is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2
- With reference to GOBER DHAN scheme consider the following statements
 - 1. The ministry of Jal Shakti has launched the GOBAR DHAN scheme.
 - The scheme is being implemented as part of the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin)
 - It aims to augment income of farmers by converting biodegradable waste into compressed biogas (CBG) Select the correct statement using the codes given below?
 - a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) All of the above
- Recently which of the following country commemorate its 200 years of independence from Portugal?
 - a) Chile
- b) Brazil 10. Joint military exercise called 'Yudh Abhyas' is conducted between India and which of the following country?
- c) Argentina
- d) Ecuador

- a) Japan
- b) Australia
- c) UK
- d) USA