



# PLUTUS ACADEMY

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## Current Affairs

[5th January 2021]

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3. Japan may become the 6th Eye
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# Topic-1: SC Judgment on Central Vista Project

## Context:

- The Supreme Court has recently given a judgement on the Central Vista Project of the Government of India. The Central Vista Project has got a clearance from the Supreme Court of India.

## Background:

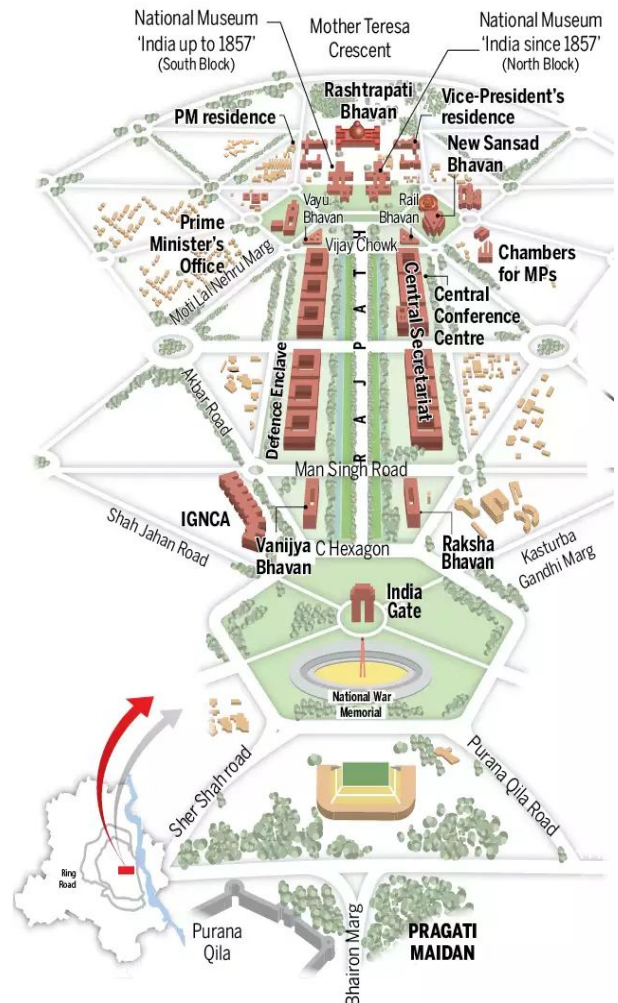
- The Central Vista Project was announced in September, 2019 by the Government of India. It envisages a new triangular Parliament building, with seating capacity for 900 to 1,200 MPs. It will be constructed by August, 2022 when the country will be celebrating its 75th Independence Day.
- The petitions challenged the 2019 notification by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) regarding changes in land use for the redevelopment.

## What is the Central Vista Project?

- It is a plan to redevelop the 3-km long stretch from Rashtrapati Bhawan to India Gate.

## What does it include?

- It includes New Parliament Building, Common Central Secretariat, New residences for the Prime Minister and Vice President and New building for the Prime Ministers Office (PMO). The estimated cost for the project is Rs. 20,000 cr.



## Topic-2: National Metrology Conclave 2021

### Context:

- Recently, the Prime Minister of India has virtually addressed the National Metrology Conclave 2021 which was organised by Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-National Physical Laboratory (CSIR-NPL), New Delhi, on its 75th year of inception.
- During this conclave, the prime minister has dedicated **National Atomic Timescale** and **Bhartiya Nirdeshak Dravya Pranali** to the Nation and laid the foundation stone of **National Environmental Standards Laboratory**. He also called upon the scientific community to strengthen the value creation cycle in Science, Technology and Industry.

### **What is Metrology?**

- Metrology is the scientific study of measurement. It establishes a common understanding of units, crucial in linking human activities.

### **What is the National Atomic Timescale?**

- **The National Atomic Time Scale** generates **Indian Standard Time** with an accuracy of 2.8 nanoseconds. Now Indian Standard Time is matching the International Standard Time with the accuracy range of less than 3 nano second.

### **How is it going to benefit India?**

- India has become self-reliant in measuring the time within the range of a nano second. Achieving the accuracy level of 2.8 Nano Second is a huge capability in itself.
- This will be a big help for organizations like ISRO who are working with cutting edge technology.

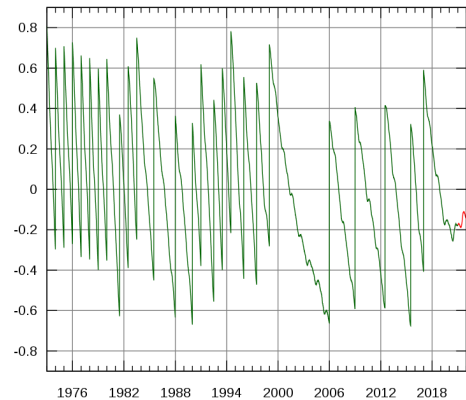
- Modern technology related to banking, railways, defense, health, telecom, weather forecast, disaster management and many similar sectors will be benefited greatly from this achievement.

### What is International Atomic Time (TAI)?

- International Atomic Time (*'temps atomique international'* (TAI), in French) is a high-precision atomic coordinate time standard based on the notional passage of proper time on Earth's geoid.
- It is the principal realisation of Terrestrial Time (with a fixed offset of epoch). It is also the basis for Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), which is used for civil timekeeping all over the Earth's surface.

### What is a Leap Second?

- A leap second is a one-second adjustment that is occasionally applied to Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), to accommodate the difference between precise time (as measured by atomic clocks) and imprecise observed solar time (known as UT1 and which varies due to irregularities and long-term slowdown in the Earth's rotation).



### What is a value creation cycle?

- A value creation cycle is a scientific invention that creates a technology and technology leads to industry development. The industry, in turn, invests further in science for new research. This cycle keeps on taking us in the direction of new possibilities.

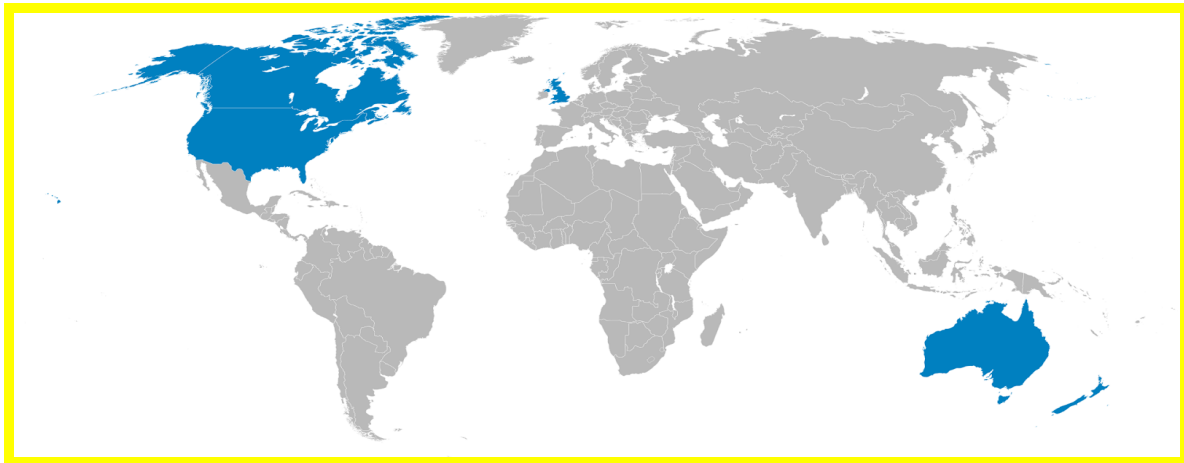
### **National Environmental Standards Laboratory:**

- The **National Environmental Standards Laboratory** is a state of the art body under the **CSIR NPL** that is established for measuring the performance of various air ambient & emission pollution monitoring equipment like Online Continuous Emission Monitoring Equipment (OCEMS), Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring System (CAAQMS) etc. with the financial assistance provided by the MoEF&CC.

## **Topic-3: Japan may become the 6th Eye**

### **Context:**

- Recently few media outlets have stated that Japan may become a member of the **Five Eyes** group, therefore got the name **6th Eye**.



### **About the Five Eye Group**

- It is a network of intelligence sharing of **five countries**:

The USA

Canada

The UK

Australia

## New Zealand

- It is apparently the best intelligence sharing network.
- These Countries are part of the **UKUSA agreement**.
- **Though, not clearly stated, the foundation year is said to be 1946.**

### **Significance:**

- Japan is going to be the First Asian country and the first non English speaking country to join the Five Eyes group.
- In recent years, it has been noticed that the western countries have shown a major tilt towards India.
- Japan has played a vital role in reporting the conditions of Uighur Muslims in the People's Republic of China.
- It can help India to gather intelligence of its neighbouring countries.



### **Did you know?**

A senior Australian officer ridiculed Japan, on the question of including Japan in the **Five Eyes group** a decade ago, and cited the examples of Germany and France having better intelligence capabilities than Japan.

## Topic-4: Migratory birds found dead near Pong Dam lake

### Context:

- Over 1500 birds have been found dead at **Pong Dam Wildlife sanctuary** in Himachal Pradesh in mysterious condition.



### Recent Development:

- Since its construction in 1974, the wetlands around Maharana Pratap lake has been an attraction for the Migratory birds from the colder regions of Siberia.
- Every year around 1.5 lakh birds from around 114 species visit these wetlands during winters.
- Over 1500 migratory birds have been found dead at Pong dam wildlife sanctuary.
- Among the dead birds are:

Endangered **bar headed goose**

Black headed gull

River tern

Common teal

Shoveler etc.



**Bar headed goose**

### **About Pong Dam Wildlife Sanctuary:**

- Pong Dam is located on the **Beas river** in the Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh.
- It was constructed in **1974**.
- It forms **Maharana Pratap Sagar** behind it.
- The area around Maharana Pratap lake consists of wetlands, which has been designated as a Wildlife sanctuary.
- Due to the presence of wetlands, it has been a **Ramsar convention** site.

### **Some recent mass death incidences of birds and animals:**

- Ducks died in Kuttanad, Kerala in December, 2020  
**Cause : Riemerella anatipestifer(bacteria)**
- Asiatic Lions lions died in Gir National park, Gujarat in 2018.  
**Cause: Canine Distemper Virus**
- Elephants died in Nandankanan zoo of Odisha in 2019.  
**Cause: Endotheliotropic herpes virus**
- 18,000 birds died at Sambhar lake, Rajasthan in 2019.  
**Cause: Avian botulism**
- More than 350 elephants died in Okavango delta, Botswana in 2020  
**Cause: Cyanobacteria**

### **Opinion:**

Whenever such mass deaths take place, it is a grave concern for the environment.

It could be due to **2 reasons:**



- **Anthropogenic:** Strict implementation of the laws and regulations can avoid it.
- **Natural:** Identifying the cause as soon as possible and trying to curb it, so that the deaths can be controlled.

## **Topic-5: Should Madrasas be turned into Regular school?**

### **Context:**

- Recently the Government of Assam has passed a bill to turn the Madrassas into regular schools.

### **Key provision of the bill:**

1. Title of the bill is “ Assam Repealing Bill -2020”
2. The bill repeals two existing acts
  - a. The Assam Madrassa Education (provincialisation) Act 1995
  - b. The Assam Madrassa Education (provincialisation of services of employees and reorganisation of madrassa Education Institution) Act 2018
3. All the state run Madrassas will be dissolved
4. The records of all the madrassas, the details of their bank account and the staff shall be transferred to the SEBA.
5. Higher secondary madrasa which are running under SEBA will have to drop the Name “ Madrassa” from their Introduction and will have to start functioning as a regular school.

6. Teaching Staff especially those teachers who are teaching the religious subjects will be trained to teach other subjects.
7. The bill is covering only those private madrassa which are running under the state board.

### **Board of Secondary Education Assam (SEBA)**

The Board of Secondary Education, Assam commonly known as SEBA is the state level authority for conducting examinations and providing assurance for the quality of education imparted in schools within Assam, India that are affiliated to it.

### **Objective of the bill**

1. There is the need of the hour that education should not be centered only towards religion but it should become more quality and employable education. It is well known that the focus point of madrassa's education is religion, by converting them in regular school it will overhaul the education system
2. The target section who were studying in Madrasa are minorities, their education is more or less inclined toward religious orthodoxy now they will also be able to get skill oriented education that will open the gate of different career opportunities for them.

### **Sachchar Committee:**

This committee was formed by the government of India to look at the present status of minorities in the country. The recommendation of the committee are as follows-

- Committee had recommended a body i.e "Equal Opportunity Commission" to look after the grievances of the minorities.
- The committee had found that there is very less representation of minorities in public bodies, to increase their participation nomination procedure has to be followed, that will not only increase their participation but also increase their acceptance in the society.

- Committee recommended that the rate of muslim employment in the public bodies should be increased.
- Sachchar committee had recommended that a mechanism should be established to link Madrassas with higher secondary regular school
- According to the committee the degrees given by madrassa should be recognized in defense, bank and civil services entrance exams.

### **Arguments against the bill:**

According to some scholars the bill is curtailing the autonomy and the independence of madrassa.

- Scholars also argued that this bill is infringement of fundamental right which was given under Article 25, Article 29 & Article 30.

**ARTICLE 25** - Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion

**ARTICLE 29** - Any citizens residing in India having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.

**ARTICLE 30** - All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

- According to them some minorities are known by their unique religious and cultural diversity but this bill will propagate their marginalisation by deviating them from their uniqueness.

### **Arguments in the favour of the bill:**

- By removing religious orthodoxy from the education system the bill will strengthen the thread of secularism.
- When Madrassa is converted into regular school then it will bring uniformity in the education system.
- Scholar says that the minority people who were the students of madrasa will now be able to get quality, skill oriented and employable

education so their career opportunities will increase and their isolation from the society can also be removed.

## **Topic-6: India's 8th term in UNSC**

### **Context:**

- As the start of new year 2021 India officially begins its two year term as a non permanent member of UNSC. The country's flag has been installed in the UNSC stake. The installation of the tricolour has been done by India's permanent representative to the UN TS Trimurthy. This is the 8th time that country has the seat in UNSC.

### **UNSC:**

It is one of the six principal organs of the United nation which has to ensure the peace and security of the world. other 5 organs are as follows-

- General Assembly
- Economic and social council
- Secretariat
- International Court of Justice
- Trusteeship council

### **What are the Focus points for India**

- Minister of external affairs has stated that India's main priority will be counter terrorism. India will try to achieve a concrete and result oriented action at the security council for an effective response to curb the terrorism.
- India should call for more transparency in lifting or non lifting of sanctions on entities or individuals involved in terror activities
- India has done so many things in the best interest of the people of the whole world either it is sending peacekeepers, working

for the refugees or working in the era of COVID. India should bring these things in the light and will try to utilise these work for his candidature as the permanent member.

### **What are the prime challenges as the 8th term:**

- Global environments have completely changed from 2011-12 when it was India's first term as a non permanent member. Now the world needs a different approach to deal with the post covid world.
- Various scholars argue that nowadays various problems have emerged because of the impediments in UNSC. According to them the P5 nations who have the veto powers hardly come on the same page for any matter, there are various conflicts between them and the Nation who joins as a non permanent member has hardly any say in the matters.

#### **What is P5:**

The five permanent members of UNSC i.e USA, Russia, China, France and United Kingdom is collectively known as P5.

- The world of 1945 when UNS formed was significantly different from the present world order therefore major reform in the permanent membership is the need of the hour.
- A new line should have to be redrawn between peace, development and security in the post covid era.
- Scholars also stated that India has a very challenging task to push for the reform in Permanent membership as the P5 countries are simply not interested in this and there is great divide between the countries who want reform in it, such as coffee clubs have different opinions and G4 have totally different opinions.

#### **Coffee club:**

This is a nickname of a movement known as Uniting for consensus which has been developed to oppose the reform in UNSC

**What is G4:**

Group of 4 nation i.e India, Japan, Brazil, Germany who is supporting each other for the permanent membership in the UNSC

**Why does the UNSC need reform?**

- When UNSC was created that time also the permanent members were 5 but today when there is huge change in geopolitical order then also the permanent members are 5.
- When one see the membership of UNSC, it is to be noted that Europe is overly represented, Asia is less represented and Africa is not represented
- Middle east countries wants a representation of a muslim nation there
- UNSC is always alleged when P5 have to exercise the veto power, it is said that the countries use veto power in their benefit.

**Way forward -**

- One should not over expect that India is going to achieve some magical result in the context of UNSC reform as the P5 are not ready for this, but efforts are needed from Indian side for this.
- Side by side India should focus on some othe issues such as the agenda setting system of UNSC, Human Rights violation issues and the issues of terrorism which are equally important.

## Topic-7: Space Sector will boost “Atma Nirbhar Bharat”

### Context:

- Recently, the Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr. Jitendra Singh stated that **ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation) in collaboration with the private sector will boost “Atma Nirbhar Bharat”**.
- The proposed range of space activities includes **Small Satellite Launch Vehicle, Geospatial services, Satellite Constellation, Application products**, etc.



### About IN-SPACe:

- **Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe or INSPACE)** is an organisation under the **Department of Space**, Government of India. The centre will act as a facilitator and regulator of space activities in India.

### Background:

- The establishment of IN-SPACe was announced in June 2020 by the Minister of State for Space. Later the Union Cabinet approved its creation.

### Functions:

- IN-SPACe will act as a link between the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and private sector companies, assessing "how best to utilise India's space resources and increase space-based activities."
- The centre will evaluate demands of private sector

