

Current Affairs 30th November 2023 by Saurabh Pandey

India on Golan height

- India has voted in favour of a draft resolution in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) that expressed deep concern over Israel not withdrawing from the Syrian Golan.
- The Syrian Golan is a region in southwest Syria that was occupied by Israeli forces on June 5, 1967.
- The resolution, introduced by Egypt, was adopted by 91 votes in favour, eight against and 62 abstentions.
- Australia, Canada, Israel, the U.K. and the U.S. voted against it.
- The resolution also stressed the illegality of the Israeli settlement construction in the Golan.



The Hindu

Industry and Higher education

- First, HEIs and industry can only collaborate if they evolve shared goals. HEIs predominantly seek to educate students and conduct research.

- They often focus on creating theoretical knowledge.
- On the other hand, industries are profit driven and pursue practical applications of knowledge to enhance productivity and innovation.
- Second, there are cultural differences between how HEIs and industrial partners approach the issue of collaboration.
- Let us say an HEI is collaborating with an industrial partner (a renewable energy company) on a research project associated with sustainable energy
- Third, Indian HEIs must establish good communication channels with the industry.
- If a research team from a university is partnering with a pharmaceutical company, it needs to be acquainted with the industry's regulatory processes
- Fourth, Indian HEIs must focus on building trust. Let us suppose a university and a tech company are collaborating to develop a new software application.

- A professor may be an expert in developing algorithms, but the industrial partner may want solutions that can be implemented in real world products

- HEIs and industries should, therefore, work on developing a symbiotic relationship.

- Industries in specific domains should collaborate with research groups across different.

The Hindu

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Rat hole mining

- National Green Tribunal (NGT) banned it in April 2014.
- Rathole mining, of two types, is so named as it involves digging tunnels 34 feet deep, barely allowing workers to crawl in and out.
- They have to squat while extracting coal with pickaxes.
- The side cutting type of mining is usually done on hill slopes by following a coal seam dark brown or blackbanded coal deposited within layers of rock— visible from the outside.
- The second type called box cutting entails digging a circular or squarish pit at least 5 sq. metre in width up to a depth of 400 feet.
- Miners who drop down in makeshift cranes or using rope and bamboo ladders dig horizontally after finding the coal seam.

Why is such mining banned?

- The government has little control over the land in Meghalaya, a Sixth Schedule State where the Coal Mines Nationalisation Act of 1973 does not apply.
- The landowners are thus also the owners of the minerals beneath. Coal mining boomed after Meghalaya attained statehood in January 1972.
- However, the terrain and expenses involved discouraged mine owners from employing advanced drilling machines.
- So, labourers mainly from Assam, Nepal, and adjoining Bangladesh risked the hazards of rat hole mining asphyxiation

because of poor ventilation, collapse of mines due to lack of structural support, and flooding.

- Apart from issues of safety and health, unregulated mining led to land degradation, deforestation, and water with high concentrations of sulphates, iron, and toxic heavy metals, low dissolved oxygen, and high biochemical oxygen demand.
- At least two rivers, Lukha and Myntdu, became too acidic to sustain aquatic life. These factors led to the NGT banning rat-hole mining in Meghalaya in 2014
- Unlike in Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand, coal seams in Meghalaya are very thin.
- This, miners say, makes rat hole mining more economically viable than opencast mining.

• The Hindu

India and G20

- Assuming the G20 Chair, India sought to offer the world an alternative to status quo, a shift from a GDP centric to a human - centric progress. India aimed to remind the world of what unites us, rather than what divides us.
- Inclusive, ambitious, action oriented, and decisive these four words defined our approach as the G20 President, and the New Delhi Leaders' Declaration (NDLD), unanimously adopted by all G20 members,
- Inclusivity has been at the heart of our Presidency.
- The inclusion of the African Union (AU) as a permanent member of the G20 integrated

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- 55 African nations into the forum, expanding it to encompass 80% of the global population
- The first of its kind “Voice of the Global South Summit”, convened by India in two editions, heralded a new dawn of multilateralism.
- India mainstreamed the Global South’s concerns in international discourse and has ushered in an era where developing countries take their rightful place in shaping the global narrative.
- Inclusivity also infused India’s domestic approach to the G20, making it a People’s Presidency that befits that world’s largest democracy.
- Through Jan Bhagidari (people’s participation) events, the G20 reached 1.4 billion citizens, involving all States and Union Territories as partners.
- India delivered the G20 2023 Action Plan to Accelerate Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), taking a cross-cutting, action oriented approach to interconnected issues, including health, education, gender equality, and environmental sustainability.
- A key area driving this progress is robust digital public infrastructure (DPI).
- Here, India was decisive in its recommendations, having witnessed the revolutionary impact of digital innovations like Aadhaar, UPI, and Digi locker firsthand.
- Through the G20, we successfully completed the Digital Public Infrastructure Repository, a significant stride in global technological collaboration.
- For “One earth”, we introduced ambitious and inclusive aims to create urgent, lasting, and equitable change.
- The Declaration’s “Green Development Pact” addresses the challenges of choosing between combating hunger and protecting the planet, by outlining a comprehensive road map where employment and ecosystems are complimentary, consumption is climate conscious, and production is planetfriendly.
- In tandem, the G20 Declaration calls for an ambitious tripling of global renewable energy capacity by 2030. Coupled with the establishment of the Global Biofuels Alliance and a concerted push for Green Hydrogen, the G20’s ambitions to build a cleaner, greener world is undeniable.
- This has always been India’s ethos, and through Lifestyles for Sustainable Development (LiFE),
- The Declaration underscores our commitment to climate justice and equity, urging substantial financial and technological support from the Global North.
- For the first time, there was a recognition of the quantum jump needed in the magnitude of development financing, moving from billions to trillions of dollars.
- The G20 acknowledged that developing countries require \$5.9 trillion to fulfil their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by 2030.
- Given the monumental resources required, the G20 emphasised the importance of

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better, larger, and more effective multilateral development banks.

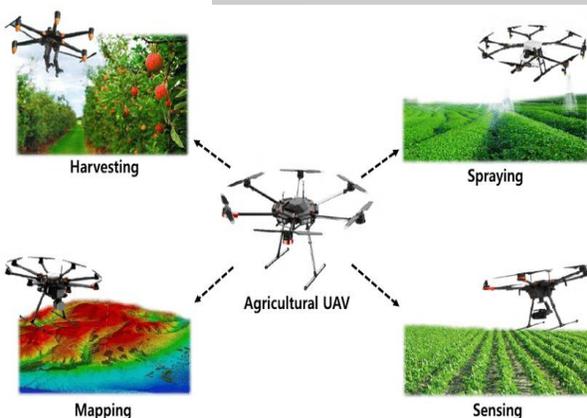
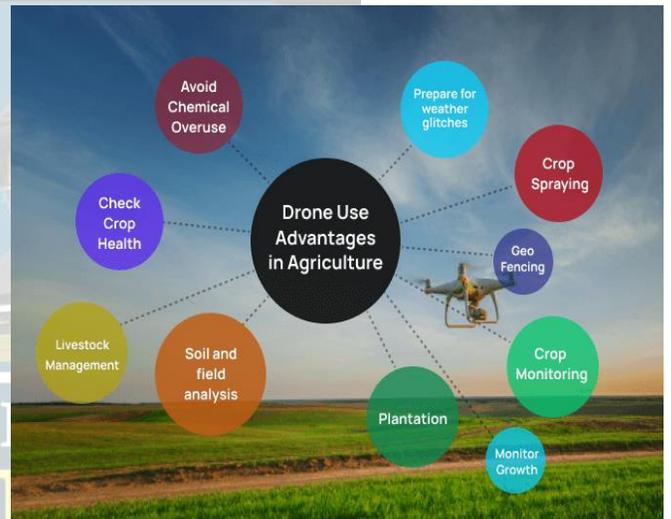
- Concurrently, India is taking a leading role in UN reforms, especially in the restructuring of principal organs like the UN Security Council, that will ensure a more equitable global order.
- Gender equality took centre stage in the Declaration, culminating in the formation of a dedicated Working Group on the Empowerment of Women next year.
- India's Women's Reservation Bill, 2023, reserving one-third of India's
- Terrorism and the senseless killing of civilians is unacceptable, and we must address it with a policy of zero-tolerance.



The Hindu

Drones application in agriculture

- The Centre will provide drones to 15,000 progressive women self-help groups (SHG) to be rented out to farmers for agricultural purposes.
- The drone services are envisaged to be used by the farmers for nano fertilizer and pesticide applications.



- Sri Lanka has reached an "agreement in principle" with India and the Paris Club group of creditors, including Japan, on a debt treatment plan that will help the crisis hit island nation tap the next tranche of the International Monetary Fund's nearly \$3-billion recovery package.
- The Paris Club is a group of mostly western creditor countries that grew from a 1956 meeting in which Argentina agreed to meet its public creditors in Paris.

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- It describes itself as a forum where official creditors meet to solve payment difficulties faced by debtor countries

What is Paris Club?

"The Paris Club is an informal group of official creditors whose role is to find coordinated and sustainable solutions to the payment difficulties experienced by debtor countries."

"As debtor countries undertake reforms to stabilize and restore their macroeconomic and financial situation, Paris Club creditors provide an appropriate debt treatment. Paris Club creditors provide debt treatments to debtor countries."



Club de Paris
PARIS CLUB

Facilitate with:

- Debt rescheduling
- Concessional rescheduling

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Paris Club – main principles:

- Solidarity
- Consensus
- Sharing Information
- Case by Case
- Conditionality
- Comparability of Treatment



CLUB DE PARIS
PARIS CLUB

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Born in 1956: when the first negotiation between Argentina and its public creditors took place in Paris.

Organization:

Leaders	
• Chairperson	Odile Renaud Basso
• Co-Chairperson	Guillaume Chabert
• Vice-Chairperson	Cyril Rousseau
• Secretary General	Geoffrey Cailloux

Terms:

Classic Terms: the standard terms available to any country eligible for Paris Club relief.

Houston Terms: for highly-indebted lower to middle-income countries.

Naples Terms: for highly-indebted poor countries.

Cologne Terms: for countries eligible for the IMF and World Bank's Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HiIPC).

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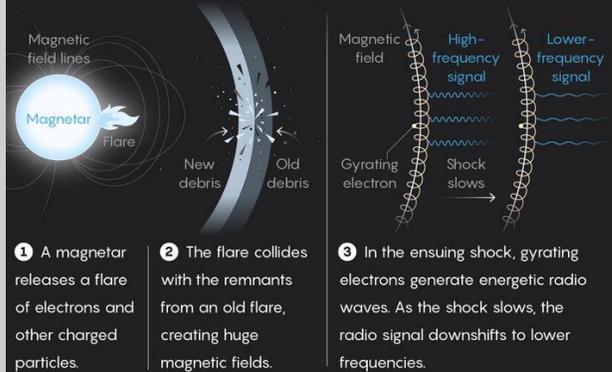
Fast radio burst

- In radio astronomy, a fast radio burst (FRB) is a transient radio pulse of length ranging from a fraction of a millisecond to 3 seconds, caused by some high-energy astrophysical process not yet understood.
- Astronomers estimate the average FRB releases as much energy in a millisecond as the Sun puts out in three days.
- Radio waves are a type of electromagnetic radiation with the longest wavelengths in the electromagnetic spectrum, typically with frequencies of 300 gigahertz (GHz) and below.

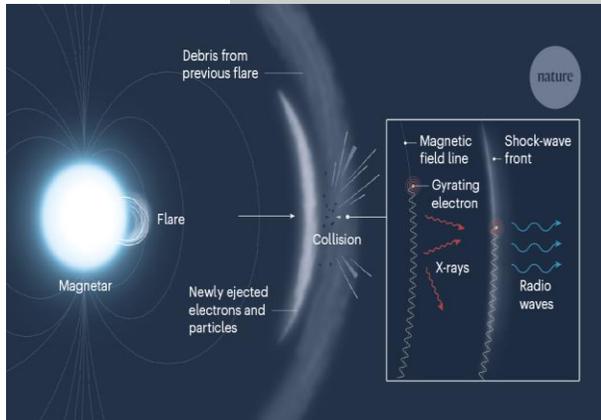


How Fast Radio Bursts Work

Fast radio bursts are brief, energetic blips of radio waves that originate far across the universe. At least one repeats, which has added to the challenge of explaining what might be creating them. A new model accounts for past observations and predicts specific features that should be seen going forward.



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towards cleaner energy, for which many countries require financial support.

5. Strong language highlighting a commitment to phasing out fossil fuels is expected to be a major point of discussion

6. In June 2023, the EU and the COP28 Presidency had pledged to seek support to increase renewable energy capacity worldwide and so help countries shift from the unabated use of fossil fuels.

The Hindu

COP 28 Aim

Six topics expected to dominate discussions.

1. The global stock take is a periodic review by countries to contain greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and transition their fossil fuel dependent energy systems to renewable energy sources

2. The COP28 Presidency and the U.N. Food Systems Coordination Hub announced a new partnership to elevate the role of food systems in achieving targets set in the Paris Agreement.

3. The idea of a 'loss and damage' (L&D) fund is to help developing countries cope with financial losses due to the climate crisis and environmental degradation. At COP27 in November 2022, representatives of countries party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change agreed to set up the L&D fund.

4. Larger provisions related to climate finance will be at the heart of COP28, including technology transfer and capacity building to reduce emissions and pivot

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