

## Current Affairs 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2025 by Right IAS

### Resignation of Vice President in India

Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar, 74, resigned from his post citing health reasons on Monday. "To prioritise health care and abide by medical advice, I hereby resign as the Vice President of India, effective immediately, in accordance with Article 67(a) of the Constitution," Constitutional Provisions. The Vice President of India is the second-highest constitutional office. Article 67(b) of the Indian Constitution deals with the resignation of the Vice President.

#### Resignation Process

**To Whom Does the Vice President Resign?** The Vice President resigns by writing under his hand addressed to the President of India. No specific format is prescribed by the Constitution. **Effective Date:** The resignation becomes effective from the date it is accepted by the President. **Voluntary Act:** The resignation must be voluntary and not forced or obtained through coercion.

#### After Resignation: What Happens?

A vacancy is declared. Election to fill the vacancy must be held within six months. Until a new Vice President is elected, the office remains vacant. In the meantime, the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha presides over the House.

#### Related Provisions

Provision	Details
Article 63	There shall be a Vice President of India
Article 64	The Vice President shall be the ex-officio Chairman of the Rajya Sabha
Article 66	Manner of election of Vice President
Article 67	Term, resignation, and removal of Vice President

### The Hindu

#### UK-India Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and the role of Global Capability Centres (GCCs)"

Context India and the UK are moving towards finalizing a historic Free Trade Agreement (FTA). A

key area of collaboration under this FTA is the Global Capability Centres (GCCs) sector.

#### What are GCCs?

GCCs are offshore units set up by multinational companies for strategic functions like R&D, cybersecurity, analytics, etc. India is home to 1,500+ GCCs, employing 1.9 million people. India is emerging as a global hub for innovation, moving beyond just back-office operations. Importance of the UK-India FTA Could be a game-changer for deepening economic ties and expanding the GCC ecosystem. Can address regulatory challenges and improve mobility of professionals, digital/data governance, and IP frameworks. Helps UK companies access India's digital economy and India to attract investment in tech services.

**Why this matters for the UK Post-Brexit,** UK seeks greater access to digital and services markets. FTA allows the UK to strengthen its global innovation footprint through partnerships with Indian GCCs. **Why this matters for India Aligns with India's:** Digital economy goals Skilling and employment agenda Target to become a global service hub Opportunity to leverage British expertise in R&D and innovation. **Current Initiatives Supporting GCC Growth** Central Government Initiatives: MeitY formed a panel (NASSCOM, Zinnov, KPMG) to create a national GCC framework (Budget 2025). Focus areas: talent, innovation, infrastructure, legal facilitation. **State-level Efforts:** Uttar Pradesh hosted a GCC Conclave showcasing its readiness in cities like Lucknow, Varanasi, Kanpur, Prayagraj. States offering incentives, infrastructure support, and How FTA Can Help GCCs

#### Resolve issues like

Double taxation

Data localisation requirements

Misaligned digital standards

Promote:

Mobility of talent

Investment in services

Higher-value strategic roles in

Indian GCCs

Future Vision

The FTA can act as a "knowledge corridor" between UK and India.

GCCs can be the cornerstone of this corridor, enabling mutual growth.

A well-negotiated FTA will enhance India's position in the global value chain and create a resilient, innovation-based economy.

### The Hindu

#### International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

Basic Facts Full Form: International Civil Aviation Organization Established: 1944 (through the Chicago Convention) Headquarters: Montreal, Canada Parent Organization: United Nations Total Members: 193 member states (including India) India's Representation: India is a Council Member and also part of various technical committees. Objective and Purpose To ensure safe, secure, efficient, sustainable, and economically viable international air transport. To establish international standards and regulations for: Aviation safety Air navigation Airport infrastructure Environmental protection Security

#### Key Functions

Standard Setting

Sets global Standards and

Recommended Practices

(SARPs).

Covers everything from aircraft design, air traffic control to pilot licensing.

Safety Oversight, conducts safety audits and helps countries improve aviation safety systems.

Accident Investigations Provides a framework (like Annex 13) for investigating air accidents (e.g., Air India AI171

case). Facilitation of Global Air

Transport Works on visa policies, customs, cargo, and passengers' smooth flow.

Capacity Building Offers training, technical cooperation, and support for developing nations.

#### Key Agreements under ICAO

Chicago Convention (1944):

Foundation of ICAO; governs rights of each country over its airspace.

Freedoms of the Air: Set of rights allowing airlines to enter and land in another country's airspace

Environmental Initiatives CORSIA (Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation): Aimed at reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from international aviation. Structure of ICAO Assembly – Main decision-making body (meets every 3 years). Council – Executive body (permanent, elected by members). Secretariat – Administers ICAO's work; led by a Secretary-General. Air Navigation Commission Technical body for aviation standards. India and ICAO India is an active member and regularly participates in rule making. Host to ICAO's Regional Office for Asia-Pacific. Involved in air safety audits, aviation security programs, and training.

### The Hindu

#### U.S.–Israel–Iran Tensions & India's Strategic Interests

Escalating Threat of War Despite U.S. claims of curbing Iran's nuclear program under Trump, the risk of a U.S.–Israel Iran military conflict remains real. Political pressures in Israel and U.S. neo-conservative circles may override Trump's non-interventionist instincts. Implications of an Iran Regime Change Overthrowing Iran could establish

U.S. unipolar dominance in West Asia (Middle East). This would limit India's ability to engage with non-West-aligned states, undermining its multipolar world vision and weakening its great-power aspirations. Strategic Constraints for India India's engagement with diverse West Asian countries—Israel, Gulf states, Iran, Syria—would be disrupted. Energy imports would become dependent solely on U.S.-aligned regimes, reducing India's strategic autonomy.

Multipolarity vs. U.S. Unipolarity India supports multipolarity, opposing U.S.-led global dominance. Shared vision with Russia and China, Delhi emphasizes balanced global order. Aligning too closely with Washington could inadvertently strengthen U.S. hegemony and weaken others. Recent Frictions Indicating Wider Tensions U.S. threat of sanctions on importers of Russian oil (100% tariffs) spurred India's strategic pushback. Coverage such as The Telegraph labelling India as "enemy" following its deal with Russia shows a Western narrative shift. 6. India's Foreign Policy Orientation Delhi balances: Strategic autonomy, by avoiding Western dominance. Aligning with U.S. on China containment, without undermining its multipolar goals. The growing global rivalry ("New Cold War") reinforces India's stance against taking sides fully.

Recommendations for India Urge restraint over Iran to protect West Asian oil stability. Highlight risks to India (more dependent on imports) vs China (less dependent). Encourage the U.S. to embrace multipolarity as it supports both regional and global interests. Opportunity under Trump Administration Trump's non-interventionist platform aligns with India's interests. Some U.S. voices recognize the global trend towards multipolar power balance. Trump's domestic base prioritizes national and near abroad security, potentially tolerating other regional power centers.

## The Hindu

### Right to Vote in India – Legal Status

Context of the Issue Supreme Court is hearing petitions regarding Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar. This has reignited the

debate around the legal nature of the right to vote in India. 2. Types of Rights in India (a) Natural Rights: Inherent and inalienable rights (e.g., right to life and liberty). Not directly enforceable unless included within Fundamental Rights. (b) Fundamental Rights: Guaranteed under Part III of the Constitution. Directly enforceable in the Supreme Court under Article 32. (c) Constitutional Rights: Derived from the Constitution (but outside Part III). Examples: Right to property, trade, and taxation rules. Enforceable via High Courts under Article 226 or specific laws.

d) Statutory Rights: Granted through Acts of Parliament or State legislatures. Examples: Right to work (MGNREG Act), Tribal rights (Forest Rights Act), Right to food (NFSA). Enforceable through procedures under specific laws. 3. Constitutional Provision for Voting Article 326: Grants universal adult suffrage. Every citizen  $\geq 18$  years can vote unless disqualified. Parliament enacted: RP Act, 1950: Defines eligibility for voter registration. RP Act, 1951: Governs conduct of elections and disqualifications. Important Sections: Section 16 (RP Act, 1950): Non-citizens disqualified from voting. Section 19: Age ( $\geq 18$ ) and ordinary residence criteria. Section 62 (RP Act, 1951): Only those on electoral rolls can vote; prisoners disqualified.

5. Key Issues and Debate Conflicting interpretations on whether the right to vote is statutory or constitutional. Justice Ajay Rastogi (2023 dissent) linked it to: Article 19(1)(a): Freedom of speech and expression. Free and fair elections (part of Basic Structure doctrine). Current legal position: Statutory right shaped by Article 326 and relevant statutes. 6. Implications for Electoral Reform Growing demand to recognize voting as a constitutional right. Would provide greater protection and judicial oversight. Could impact voter suppression, disenfranchisement, and electoral transparency.

Conclusion: The right to vote is crucial to democratic participation. Though not yet a fundamental or constitutional right, it is increasingly seen as central to ensuring free, fair, and representative elections. Future judicial or

legislative action could elevate its legal status in India.

## The Hindu

### Generative AI and Copyright Law

The Central Legal Question: Whether the training and output of generative AI models using copyrighted material violates copyright laws is an unresolved global legal issue. The question involves: Legality of using copyrighted material for training. Ownership and IP rights of AI generated content. Whether such use constitutes fair use or infringement. Types of Legal Rights Involved: Copyright law: Protection of original literary, artistic, or intellectual works. Reproduction rights: Concern arises when AI models “copy” works for training. IPR frameworks: Differ by country (U.S. - Fair Use, EU - Text and Data Mining Exceptions, India - Fair Dealing under Section 52).

Key Global Legal Developments (U.S. Cases – 2025):

✂ Thomson Reuters v. Ross Intelligence Concerned the use of copyrighted legal content in AI model training. Still pending. ✂ Bartz v. Anthropic Judge Alsup (California): Training AI using copyrighted works = transformative, akin to learning. Pirated sources for training material still raise legal liability. Kadrey v. Meta Judge Chhabria (California): Meta’s use of copyrighted work was not proven to affect the original’s market. Ruling in favour of Meta under fair use. But raised ethical concern: AI companies must share value with copyright holders. Core Legal Concepts: Fair Use (U.S.): Allows limited use of copyrighted material without permission for transformative purposes. AI training can qualify if it doesn’t replace original work.

Text and Data Mining Exception (EU/U.K.): Permits data scraping for research and AI training, subject to licensing. Statutory Limitations: No global standard exists; many laws were written pre-AI era. Human authorship is essential for copyright in most regimes.

Database & IP Concerns: Use of databases and published works involves: IP Law, Contractual Obligations, and Data Privacy Laws. Key concerns:

Lack of clarity on IP protection for AI outputs. Ownership of AI-generated works still unregulated globally. Indian Legal Position: Copyright Act, 1957: Grants exclusive rights for reproduction, translation, etc. Section 52: Provides “fair dealing” exception (education, private use, review, etc.). No specific provisions for AI, but authorities claim existing law is sufficient. India supports international IP treaties like TRIPS and Berne Convention. Enforcement mechanisms exist, including for digital circumvention. Emerging Ethical & Economic Issues: Pirated content use in AI training is still legally risky. No compensation mechanism yet for original creators.

Courts and governments are under pressure to: Balance innovation and protection. Develop royalty-sharing frameworks. Conclusion: Recent U.S. rulings lean in favour of fair use for training AI, but draw a clear line against pirated content. There is an urgent need for clear, harmonised global laws addressing: Ownership, Licensing, and Compensation in the age of AI.

## The Hindu

### Human-Induced Earthquakes

Causes of Human-Induced Earthquakes Mining Groundwater extraction Construction of large dams (Reservoir-Induced Seismicity) Injection of fluids into the ground (e.g., fracking) Construction of tall buildings and coastal structures Mechanism Repeated loading and unloading of the Earth's crust disturbs the stress balance between tectonic plates. Can trigger seismic activity, especially in geologically sensitive areas. Groundwater Depletion and Earthquakes (India-Specific Case) Delhi-NCR Case Study (2003 2012): Seismic activity increased with severe groundwater depletion. Activity reduced after 2014, when groundwater levels stabilised. Delhi lies in Zone 4 (high seismic risk zone) with several faultlines.

Other Affected Regions Gangetic Plains: Excessive groundwater usage for water intensive crops. Palghar, Maharashtra: Earthquakes possibly due to fluid migration after rainfall. Western Ghats (Sahyadri Hills): Heavy rainfall altering stress regimes. Case Studies of Dam-Induced Earthquakes

Koyna Dam (Maharashtra, 1967): 6.3 magnitude quake; >180 people died. Attributed to heavy water load from Koyna dam. Mullaperiyar Dam (Kerala): Increase in tremors observed; region is quake-prone. Fracking and Energy Extraction Fracking involves injecting fluids under pressure to extract oil/gas. Causes underground stress changes → potential earthquakes. India has 56 fracking sites across six states.

Impact of Climate Change on Seismicity Melting glaciers → Reduced weight on Earth's crust → Fault reactivation.

Sudden heavy rainfall alters surface stress → May induce tremors. Longer droughts → Can reactivate faults (e.g., California, 2014). Indirect link via changing cropping patterns → Higher dependence on groundwater. Seismic Monitoring and Recommendations Strong seismic monitoring networks needed in quake-prone areas. Regulate dam operations: controlled filling/emptying (as done in U.S.). Avoid building large dams in seismically active zones like the Himalayas. Use scientific groundwater management in seismic risk zones. Cautions and Limitations Not all areas with groundwater depletion or dams experience quakes. Such quakes occur mainly along fault lines or deforming plates. Human activities do not create new faults but may trigger existing ones. Current science cannot precisely quantify how much strain is human-induced

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