

Current Affairs 7th August 2025 by Right IAS**A red-eared slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*)**

The Red-eared slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*) is a semi-aquatic turtle, easily recognized by the distinctive red stripes behind each eye. They are a subspecies of the pond slider (*Trachemys scripta*) and are native to the southern United States and northern Mexico



Physical features Red-eared sliders have green and yellow striped bodies and shells. A thick red stripe behind each eye distinguishes them from other turtles. Females typically grow larger than males. As they age, some male sliders may develop melanism, turning their shells black.

Red-eared sliders thrive in still or slow-moving freshwater habitats like ponds, lakes, and rivers. They are semi-aquatic, meaning they live in both water and on land. Red-eared sliders are omnivores, meaning they consume both plants and animals.

In the wild, their diet consists of insects, snails, tadpoles, small fish, aquatic plants, and algae. **Invasive Species Concern:** The

red-eared slider is listed as one of the world's 100 worst invasive alien species by the IUCN

The Hindu

Microplastic Pollution along India's Coasts

Key Findings by Government Agencies
Main sources of microplastic pollution in Indian coastal waters: Riverine inputs
Abandoned, Lost, and Discarded Fishing Gear (ALDFG)



About Microplastics Definition: Tiny plastic particles ranging from 1 micrometre to 5 millimetres. **Types:** Primary microplastics: Manufactured in small sizes (e.g., in cosmetics, industry) Secondary microplastics: Formed from degradation of larger plastic products **Environmental Impact:** Toxic to marine and aquatic life Linked to tumours in organisms Persistent in the ecosystem; can enter the food chain

Conclusion Microplastic pollution is a growing environmental and health concern along India's coastline. Major contributors include river runoff and fishing activities. Presence in common food items highlights

the urgent need for regulation, cleanup, and awareness.

What Is the Maryam Mirzakhani New Frontiers Prize? Established in 2019 by the Breakthrough Prize Foundation to honor the legacy of Maryam Mirzakhani, the first woman to win the Fields Medal. Rajula Srivastava has won the Maryam Mirzakhani New Frontiers Prize for her work in harmonic analysis and analytic number theory. Awarded annually to up to three outstanding women mathematicians who have completed their PhDs within the past two years Each recipient receives \$50,000, which may be shared among multiple awardees

The Hindu

Decoding China — the lessons for a vulnerable India

Strategic Recall of Chinese Engineers Over 300 Chinese engineers have exited Foxconn's iPhone 17 manufacturing facilities in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.



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Though framed as a corporate decision, this move is strategically designed to hinder India's rise as a manufacturing hub. These engineers possess critical knowledge in production line setup, efficiency optimization, and high-tech troubleshooting their exit obstructs technology transfer to India. Geo-Economic Maneuvering The withdrawal is not merely logistical — it is a geo economic move aimed at delaying India's technological self-sufficiency. China is deploying economic statecraft to preserve its dominance in Asia by curbing

India's manufacturing growth, particularly in electronics and high-tech sectors.

Export Restrictions on Critical Materials China has placed informal curbs on the export of: Rare earths (gallium, germanium, graphite) Rare earth magnets (vital for EVs, electronics) Capital equipment for electronics, heavy machinery, solar production, etc.



These restrictions are mostly unofficial, using verbal orders and administrative delays, making them hard to contest but effective in disrupting Indian supply chains. Intent to Block India's Self-Reliance The overarching aim is to prevent India from

developing a high-value, self-reliant manufacturing base. This includes limiting access to: Raw materials Manufacturing infrastructure Human expertise These moves are a multi-pronged strategy to ensure India remains dependent on Chinese supply chains.

China's Domestic Economic Pressures China is dealing with: An aging and shrinking population A property crisis Overproduction and weak domestic demand Rising social welfare and pension burdens



These issues make export revenues critical for China's stability and growth. China's \$1 trillion trade surplus reflects excess industrial capacity, not internal economic strength. The government is using low-cost exports to flood markets, stay solvent, and dominate sectors globally. China's Broader Economic Statecraft

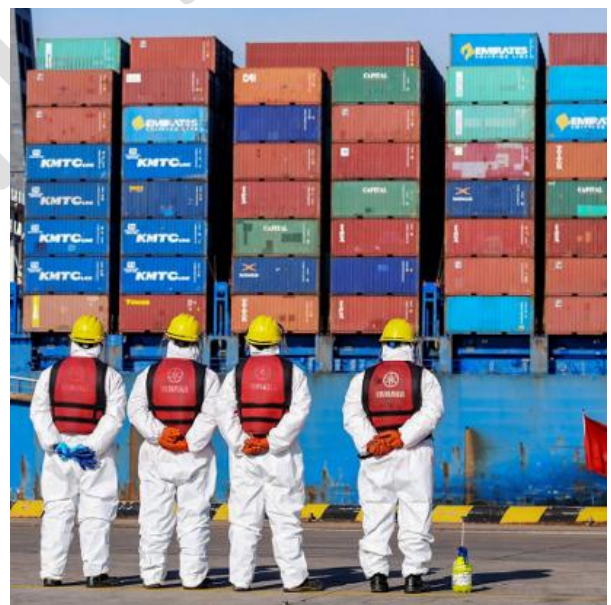
The Hindu

China's Broader Economic Statecraft

Chinese companies (e.g., BYD in EVs) use aggressive pricing to kill competition and capture global markets. Even overcapacity is being turned into a weapon to dominate international supply chains. This strategy

aims to eliminate emerging competitors like India, particularly in electronics and clean tech

India's Limitations and Strategic Vulnerabilities Despite ambition, India's manufacturing base is still developing and faces: Infrastructure gaps Bureaucratic inefficiencies High dependence on imports (chips, semiconductors, engines, sensors) Even basic assembly ("screwdriver technology") relies on foreign inputs. India's global manufacturing dream still depends heavily on external help Western Alignment and Fragilities While India is seen as a partner in Western "friend-shoring" efforts, recent U.S. tariff hikes (50%) on Indian goods, alongside leniency toward China, show: Geopolitical alignments are fragile



India cannot rely entirely on the West This reinforces the need for strategic autonomy in India's industrial policy.

China's Global Calculations China views India as "noise" to be managed, not a threat yet. Its energy is focused on

expanding influence in Pakistan, ASEAN, Africa, and Latin America. Beijing's intent is to neutralize potential regional challengers while strengthening its global supply chain grip



Key Lesson for India India must focus intensely on foundational reforms — infrastructure, education, supply chains, R&D — to become a true alternative to China. The takeaway from China's behaviour: "The onus is on us Indians." India's ability to rise as a competitive, self-reliant manufacturing powerhouse will depend on internal execution, not just external support or diplomacy.

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