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Deoghar, Mob: -9162500508



India, U.S. sign pact to enhance defence ties

The framework charts ties across all the defence domains – land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace

The India-U.S. partnership will ensure an open, rules-bound Indo-Pacific region, Singh says on X

Hegseth says coordination is being stepped up, and defence ties have never been stronger

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

India and the United States have unveiled a 10-year defence framework, marking a new phase in their strategic cooperation aimed at “advancing peace, security, and stability in the Indo-Pacific”.

The “Framework for the U.S.-India Major Defence Partnership” was signed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and U.S. Secretary of War Pete Hegseth on the sidelines of the 12th ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on Friday. The development came amid strained ties due to Washington’s slapping of 50% tariffs on Indian goods.

According to the Ministry of Defence, both sides appreciated the continuing momentum in bilateral defence cooperation and



Sealing the deal: Rajnath Singh and Pete Hegseth shake hands after signing a 10-year defence partnership framework in Kuala Lumpur on Friday. [ANI](#)

reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening the partnership.

Progress review

They reviewed ongoing defence engagements, addressed emerging challenges, and discussed progress in defence indus-

try and technology collaborations, the Ministry said.

Mr. Singh posted on X: “Defence will remain the major pillar of our bilateral relations. Our partnership is critical for ensuring a free, open, and rules-bound Indo-Pacific region.”

Building on the 2013 joint Principles for Defence Cooperation and the 2016 recognition of India as a Major Defence Partner (MDP), the new framework charts a 10-year road map to deepen collaboration across all defence domains – land, maritime, air,

space, and cyberspace, a senior Defence Ministry official said.

The framework focuses on maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific, enhancing interoperability, and strengthening maritime security to ensure the free flow of commerce. It also seeks to expand cooperation with like-minded partners through mechanisms such as the Quad, prevent proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and bolster defence industrial innovation through advanced technology partnerships, the official said.

Both sides had already launched the COMPACT initiative (Catalyzing Opportunities for Military Partnership). Accelerated Commerce and Technology to drive transformative changes in key areas of defence cooperation.

The new framework underscores a shared intent to respond jointly to com-

mon security threats, deter conflict, and uphold the sovereignty and autonomy of regional partners, while laying the foundation for collective peace and prosperity in the region.

‘Priority partner’

The U.S. Secretary of War on Friday reiterated that India remains a priority partner for Washington in defence cooperation.

In a post, Mr. Hegseth stated that the framework advances the bilateral defence partnership, a cornerstone for regional stability and deterrence. “We’re enhancing our coordination, info sharing, and tech cooperation. Our defence ties have never been stronger,” he wrote.

The defence framework is expected to give unified policy direction to transform and expand the partnership between the two countries over the next decade, the Ministry added.

The Ministry further said that India and the U.S. continue to expand their defence relationship through regular military exercises, intelligence sharing, industrial collaboration, and joint mechanisms for strategic coordination with regional and global partners.

The meeting on Friday included delegation-level discussions followed by one-on-one interaction between the two leaders.

In May this year, Mr. Singh and Mr. Hegseth held a telephonic conversation to review ongoing and upcoming initiatives aimed at strengthening defence cooperation. During that exchange, Mr. Hegseth had invited Mr. Singh to visit the U.S. for in-person discussions to advance bilateral defence ties. Mr. Singh’s planned visit in August was, however, postponed amid tariff-related developments.

English Summary:

India and the United States have signed a **10-year defence framework agreement** to strengthen **strategic cooperation across all defence domains — land, sea, air, space, and cyberspace**.

The agreement, titled “**Framework for the U.S.-India Major Defence Partnership**,” was signed between **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** and **U.S. Secretary of War Pete Hegseth** on the sidelines of the **12th ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus)** in **Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia**.

This new framework aims to **advance peace, security, and stability in the Indo-Pacific region**, while expanding collaboration in **military technology, industrial production, and intelligence sharing**.

Key Highlights:

Parameter	Details
Agreement Title	Framework for the U.S.-India Major Defence Partnership
Duration	10 years
Signed By	Rajnath Singh (India) & Pete Hegseth (U.S.)
Venue	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (ADMM-Plus 2025)
Purpose	Strengthen strategic, technological, and operational defence cooperation
Focus Regions	Indo-Pacific, ASEAN, QUAD partnerships

Core Objectives of the Framework:

- Deepen Bilateral Defence Cooperation**
 - Strengthen **joint military exercises, intelligence sharing, and maritime security**.
 - Promote **defence innovation and technology transfers**.
- Enhance Indo-Pacific Stability**
 - Maintain a **free, open, and rules-based Indo-Pacific**.
 - Deter threats from **common adversaries** and preserve **regional autonomy and sovereignty**.
- Expand Industrial & Technological Collaboration**
 - Boost **joint research, co-production, and co-development** of advanced defence systems.
 - Build upon earlier agreements such as **COMPACT Initiative (Catalyzing Opportunities for Military-Technology Partnership)** and **Accelerated Commerce and Technology**.

Partnership (ACTP).

4. Interoperability & Strategic Integration

- Facilitate joint operations and compatibility among armed forces.
- Strengthen the role of the **Quad (India, U.S., Japan, Australia)** in regional security.

Historical Context:

Year	Milestone	Description
2013	<i>Joint Principles for Defence Cooperation</i>	Laid foundation for military cooperation.
2016	<i>India recognized as a Major Defence Partner (MDP)</i>	Gave India access to U.S. defence technology.
2020s	<i>COMCASA, BECA, LEMOA Agreements</i>	Enhanced logistics, intelligence, and geospatial cooperation.
2025	<i>New 10-Year Framework</i>	Deepens collaboration in emerging domains — space, AI, and cyber warfare.

Strategic Significance:

- **For India:**
 - Access to **cutting-edge defence technology** and **joint manufacturing** under *Make in India-Defence*.
 - Strengthened deterrence in the **Indo-Pacific** amid **China's assertiveness**.
 - Greater intelligence cooperation and maritime domain awareness.
 - **For the U.S.:**
 - Reinforces India's role as a **key security partner** in the Indo-Pacific.
 - Enhances regional **counterbalance against China**.
 - Facilitates secure logistics and interoperability with the Indian military.
-

Defence Domains Covered:

Domain	Focus Area
Land	Joint training, army-to-army cooperation
Sea	Maritime domain awareness, anti-piracy ops
Air	Advanced aircraft collaboration, aerial exercises
Space	Satellite intelligence and secure communications
Cyberspace	Cyber defence, data protection, AI integration

Statements from Officials:

Rajnath Singh:

"Defence will remain the major pillar of our bilateral relations. Our partnership is critical for ensuring a free, open, and rules-based Indo-Pacific region."

Pete Hegseth:

"We're enhancing our coordination, info sharing, and tech cooperation. Our defence ties have never been stronger."

Broader Geopolitical Implications:

- Reinforces India's **status as a "Priority Defence Partner"** for Washington.
 - Strengthens India's hand within the **Quad, ASEAN, and Indo-Pacific frameworks**.
 - Promotes **deterrence against Chinese maritime expansion** and **unilateral militarization** in the South China Sea.
 - Advances **collective prosperity, maritime freedom, and regional resilience**.
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Key Mechanisms Included:

- **Annual 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue** continuation.

- **Joint Intelligence Sharing Network** creation.
- **Military-industrial partnerships** for drones, naval vessels, and AI warfare systems.
- **Technology Transfer & Co-Development** under the *iCET (Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies)*.

Hindi Summary (हिंदी सारांश):

भारत और अमेरिका ने 10 वर्षीय रक्षा साझेदारी समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर किए हैं, जिसका उद्देश्य भूमि, वायु, समुद्र, अंतरिक्ष और साइबरस्पेस सभी क्षेत्रों में सहयोग बढ़ाना है।

- यह समझौता “फ्रेमवर्क फॉर द यू.एस.-इंडिया मेजर डिफेन्स पार्टनरशिप” नाम से हुआ।
- इसका उद्देश्य इंडो-पैसिफिक क्षेत्र में शांति, स्थिरता और सुरक्षा को सुदृढ़ करना है।
- दोनों देशों ने साझा अभ्यास, तकनीकी सहयोग, औद्योगिक विकास और खुफिया आदान-प्रदान को गहरा करने पर सहमति जताई।
- इससे भारत को उन्नत अमेरिकी रक्षा तकनीक तक पहुंच और चीन के प्रभाव को संतुलित करने में मदद मिलेगी।

Exam Relevance Table:

Topic	GS Paper	Relevance
India-U.S. Defence Cooperation	GS Paper 2	Bilateral Relations, Strategic Ties
Indo-Pacific & Quad	GS Paper 2	International Groupings
Defence Technology Transfer	GS Paper 3	Indigenous Defence Manufacturing
Maritime Security	GS Paper 3	Regional & Global Security Issues

UPSC Mains Practice Question:

“India’s growing strategic partnership with the U.S. reflects a shift from non-alignment to multi-alignment. Discuss how the 10-year defence framework will impact India’s security architecture and regional diplomacy.” (250 words – GS Paper 2)

'Probe agencies cannot force lawyers to reveal client info'

The CJI-led Bench of the SC records that lawyers were not at the beck-and-call of probe agencies; it says their ability to protect their clients without fear was part of their fundamental rights

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in a judgment on Friday held that investigating agencies cannot summon lawyers and coerce them to disclose any professional communication made in confidence with their clients.

A three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai said compelling a lawyer to prejudice his or her own client, without the latter's consent or knowledge, amounted to an "outrageous" infringement of the client's constitutional right against self-incrimination under Article 20(3) of the Constitution.

"The facts and circumstances of a crime committed, or an FIR registered, is not to be elicited from the advocate who represents the accused, which again is a reflection of the abject failure of the investigating agency. It is for the investigator to obtain independent evidence of the culpability of the accused. The position of trust the advocate occupies vis-à-vis his client cannot be put to test



The position of trust the advocate occupies vis-à-vis his client cannot be put to test by an attempt to breach the professional confidence, under Section 132 [of Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam], which has reflections of the constitutional protection against self-incrimination

SUPREME COURT JUDGMENT



by an attempt to breach the professional confidence, conferred with a solemn privilege under Section 132; which has reflections of the constitutional protection against self-incrimination," Justice K. Vinod Chandran, who authored the judgment for the Bench also comprising Justice N.V. Anjaria, observed.

Lawyer-client privilege

The judgment recorded that lawyers were not at the beck-and-call of probe agencies. Their ability to protect their clients without fear was part of their fundamental rights under Article 19(1)(g) and Article 21 of the Constitution, coupled with the provisions of the Advocates Act, 1961.

The court said lawyer-client privilege was protected in Section 132 of the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) of 2023, which mandates that an advocate cannot be coerced into revealing any information with respect to the client he represents or the cause he is engaged to prosecute or defend. The exceptions to this rule are clear. The confidentiality of the lawyer-client communication can be waived only with the consent of the client or if it was in furtherance of an illegal purpose or if a crime or fraud is committed as a result.

The judgment was based on a *suo motu* case registered by the Supreme Court after two senior advocates were summoned

by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for legal advice they gave their clients. The Bar had risen up in unison against the ED, which had quickly withdrawn the summons. In fact, even the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General had highlighted that the such summons by investigative agencies affect a large body of advocates in the country "whose voice is the voice of the victim, the accused, the marginalised and the downtrodden".

The court held that investigating or prosecuting agencies or the police cannot directly summon a lawyer to elicit the details of the case, unless there was something the investigating officer had knowledge of, which fell under the exceptions [of Section 132]. In such cases, the exception had to be specifically mentioned in the summons.

The court made it clear that summons issued against a lawyer by a probe officer should be approved by a superior officer not below the rank of a Superintendent of Police, whose satisfaction has to be recorded in writing.

English Summary:

The **Supreme Court of India**, in a landmark judgment led by **Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud**, ruled that **investigating agencies cannot compel lawyers** to disclose **confidential communications with their clients**, reaffirming the **principle of lawyer-client privilege** as a part of the **right to legal representation and personal liberty**.

The three-judge bench, headed by **CJI B.R. Gavai**, held that forcing an advocate to reveal client information amounts to an **"outrageous infringement" of constitutional protections** under **Article 20(3)**

(protection against self-incrimination) and **Article 19(1)(g)** (freedom to practice any profession).

Key Judgment Facts:

Parameter	Details
Bench Composition	CJI B.R. Gavai, Justice V.K. Chandran, Justice N.V. Anjaria
Provision Involved	Section 132 of the <i>Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA), 2023</i>
Issue	Whether investigating agencies (like ED, CBI, etc.) can summon lawyers to disclose client information
Verdict	No. Such coercion violates constitutional and professional privileges
Doctrine Involved	Lawyer–Client Privilege & Right Against Self-Incrimination

What the Supreme Court Said:

“The position of trust the advocate occupies vis-à-vis his client cannot be put to test by an attempt to breach professional confidence under Section 132, which has reflections of the constitutional protection against self-incrimination.”

Core Observations:

- Lawyers are **not at the beck and call of probe agencies**.
 - Their ability to **protect clients without fear** is an **integral part of fundamental rights**.
 - The **professional communication** between lawyer and client enjoys **constitutional protection**.
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Background of the Case:

- The case originated when **Enforcement Directorate (ED)** issued summons to several lawyers seeking information related to their clients’ cases.
 - The **Bar Council and Attorney General** opposed the move, stating it would **undermine the independence of the legal profession**.
 - The ED later **withdrew the summons**, but the Supreme Court took up the issue **suo motu (on its own)** to clarify the law.
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Key Legal Provision: Section 132, Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA), 2023

Provision	Explanation
Section 132(1)	Prohibits an advocate from being compelled to disclose communications made in confidence by a client during the course of employment.
Exception Clause	Disclosure may be allowed only if the communication was made in furtherance of an illegal purpose , or if the lawyer observed a crime committed post-consultation .

Thus, general disclosure to probe agencies **without client consent or legal justification** is **prohibited**.

Key Constitutional Provisions Invoked:

Article	Provision	Relevance
Article 19(1)(g)	Freedom to practice any profession	Lawyer’s independence in professional conduct
Article 20(3)	Protection against self-incrimination	Lawyers cannot be forced to reveal information incriminating their clients
Article 21	Right to life and liberty	Ensures fair legal representation and confidentiality

Broader Implications:

- Strengthens **professional ethics** and **trust between lawyer and client**.
- Restrains agencies like **ED, CBI, NIA, IT Dept.** from harassing advocates.
- Upholds **independence of the Bar**, a pillar of justice under Article 50 (Separation of Judiciary from Executive).

- Reinforces that **legal privilege ≠ immunity**, but **confidentiality is inviolable** except for unlawful acts.

Important Quotes from the Judgment:

“It is for the investigator to independently establish the culpability of the accused. The lawyer’s role is to defend, not to incriminate.”

“Compelling a lawyer to prejudice his own client’s defence strikes at the heart of justice.”

Ethical and Legal Context:

- **Advocates Act, 1961 – Section 126:** Prohibits advocates from disclosing client communications.
- **Bar Council of India Rules:** Recognizes confidentiality as a **professional duty**.
- **International Parallels:**
 - **UK:** Legal Professional Privilege under common law.
 - **U.S.:** Attorney–Client Privilege under Federal Rules of Evidence.

Hindi Summary (हिंदी सारांश):

सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने कहा कि जांच एजेंसियां वकीलों को उनके मुवक्किलों की गोपनीय जानकारी बताने के लिए मजबूर नहीं कर सकतीं।

- यह संविधान के अनुच्छेद 20(3) (आत्म-अभियोजन से सुरक्षा) और अनुच्छेद 19(1)(g) (व्यवसाय की स्वतंत्रता) का उल्लंघन होगा।
- न्यायालय ने कहा कि वकील और मुवक्किल के बीच की बातचीत गोपनीय होती है, और इसे सेक्शन 132 (भारतीय साक्ष्य अधिनियम, 2023) के तहत सुरक्षा प्राप्त है।
- कोर्ट ने इसे “वकील-मुवक्किल विशेषाधिकार” (lawyer–client privilege) कहा।

Exam Relevance Table:

Topic	GS Paper Relevance
Lawyer–Client Privilege	GS Paper 2 Polity & Judiciary
Fundamental Rights	GS Paper 2 Article 19, 20 & 21
Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, 2023	GS Paper 2 Legislative & Legal Reforms
Judicial Independence	GS Paper 2 Ethics & Legal Profession

UPSC Mains Practice Question:

“Discuss the constitutional and ethical significance of lawyer–client privilege in safeguarding the right to fair trial and the independence of the legal profession.”

(250 words – GS Paper 2)

Indian Railways to patronise 'Aabhar' online store in a bid to encourage local artisans

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

In a bid to promote local talent, the Indian Railways will patronise the newly launched 'Aabhar' online store that will showcase a range of exquisite gift items manufactured by indigenous tribes, handloom weavers and others coming under the ambit of One District One Product (ODOP) and Geographical Indication (GI) products.

The online store hosted by the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) sources gift items exclusively from the Central Cottage Industries Emporium (CCIE), Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), and various Central and State Handicraft and Handloom Emporiums.

Promoted with the 'Vocal for Local' campaign, the store would offer a va-



The store would offer a variety of traditional crafts that could be used in official events.

riety of articles and hampers that could be used in official events, ceremonies, and functions. The objective is to promote social inclusion and encourage local artisans and traditional industries.

Promote rich heritage

Sharing details of the website and liaison officers to facilitate the purchase, the Railway Board referred to a

note issued by the Chief Executive Officer, GeM, which stated that the purpose of the initiative was also to promote India's rich heritage through handlooms, handicrafts, artisanal goods, etc., by providing market access to local artisans, rural entrepreneurs and women-led enterprises. The GeM is aimed at supporting a sustainable and inclusive economic development.

To provide a market for local/ indigenous products and create additional income opportunities for the marginalised sections of society, the railways launched 'One Station One Product' (OSOP) scheme over its network a few years ago where articles, like artefacts made by indigenous tribes, handlooms by local weavers, and handicrafts like chikankari were showcased.

English Summary:

In a move to **promote local artisans, handloom weavers, and traditional industries**, the **Indian Railways** will patronise the newly launched '**Aabhar**' online store, hosted on the **Government e-Marketplace (GeM)**.

This initiative aims to **showcase and market indigenous products** such as **One District One Product (ODOP)** and **Geographical Indication (GI)** items produced by **tribal communities, handicraft workers,**

and rural entrepreneurs.

The project aligns with the government’s **‘Vocal for Local’** and **Atmanirbhar Bharat** initiatives, ensuring social inclusion and providing artisans with **sustainable income opportunities**.

Key Facts:

Parameter	Details
Platform	‘Aabhar’ Online Store (under GeM)
Launched By	Government e-Marketplace (GeM)
Supported By	Indian Railways
Collaborating Agencies	Central Cottage Industries Emporium (CCIE), Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), Central & State Handloom Emporia
Objective	Promote ODOP, GI-tagged products, handicrafts, and handlooms for official and ceremonial gifting
Motto	“Vocal for Local” & “Atmanirbhar Bharat”

Objectives of the Initiative:

- Promote Local Heritage & Handicrafts**
 - Provide an e-platform for traditional crafts, handlooms, and artisanal goods.
 - Highlight India’s cultural diversity through gifting items in official events.
 - Support Local Artisans & Women Entrepreneurs**
 - Offer direct **market access to indigenous artisans, rural entrepreneurs, and women-led enterprises**.
 - Reduce intermediaries to enhance profit margins for creators.
 - Encourage Sustainable & Inclusive Development**
 - Promote environmentally friendly products.
 - Ensure economic participation of marginalized and tribal communities.
 - Strengthen ODOP and GI Branding**
 - Boost products identified under **One District One Product (ODOP)**.
 - Create nationwide visibility for **GI-tagged crafts** like Banarasi silk, Madhubani art, Chikankari, etc.
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Key Features of ‘Aabhar’ Store:

Feature	Description
Product Range	Handlooms, handicrafts, tribal artifacts, Khadi items, GI products
Usage	Gifting, ceremonies, official functions
Source Agencies	CCIE, KVIC, Handicraft & Handloom Emporia
Target Users	Government departments, PSUs, and citizens
Promotion Drive	Under ‘Vocal for Local’ campaign
Market Accessibility	Through GeM – India’s e-Marketplace for government procurement

Broader Economic & Cultural Implications:

- **Boost to Rural Economy:**
Provides a **direct e-commerce market** for village industries and small producers.
- **Employment Generation:**
Creates livelihood opportunities for **tribal artisans, weavers, and micro-entrepreneurs**.
- **Cultural Revival:**
Encourages preservation of traditional art forms such as **Phulkari, Kalamkari, Warli, Madhubani**, etc.
- **Government Procurement Reforms:**
Encourages ministries and PSUs to purchase **locally made official gifts** rather than imported items.

Linked Initiatives:

Scheme/Initiative	Objective
One District One Product (ODOP)	Promote district-specific crafts and products
GeM (Government e-Marketplace)	Digital platform for transparent procurement
Khadi & Village Industries Commission (KVIC)	Promote rural industries and self-employment
GI Tag (Geographical Indication)	Protect and promote region-specific products
'One Station One Product' Scheme	Promote indigenous goods through Railway stations

Relation to 'One Station One Product' (OSOP):

- Launched by **Indian Railways** to **market local products** at railway stations.
 - The **Aabhar initiative** complements OSOP by providing an **online sales platform** for the same categories of products.
 - Together, these efforts **bridge offline and online markets**, increasing artisans' reach.
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Administrative Note (as per GeM):

- The initiative supports India's **rich cultural heritage** and **inclusive economic growth**.
 - The **Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of GeM** noted that the move promotes **rural entrepreneurship and women-led MSMEs**.
 - It also integrates GeM's goal of **sustainable procurement and local manufacturing** in public institutions.
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Hindi Summary (हिंदी सारांश):

भारतीय रेल ने 'आभार' (Aabhar) ऑनलाइन स्टोर को अपनाने का निर्णय लिया है ताकि **स्थानीय कारीगरों, बुनकरों और पारंपरिक उद्योगों** को बढ़ावा दिया जा सके।

- यह स्टोर **सरकारी ई-मार्केटप्लेस (GeM)** पर होस्ट किया गया है।
 - इसमें **ODOP (वन डिस्ट्रिक्ट वन प्रोडक्ट)** और **GI टैग उत्पादों** को शामिल किया गया है।
 - इसका उद्देश्य '**वोकल फॉर लोकल**' और '**आत्मनिर्भर भारत**' के तहत स्थानीय कारीगरों को बाजार उपलब्ध कराना और उन्हें सामाजिक रूप से सशक्त बनाना है।
 - इससे **ग्रामीण अर्थव्यवस्था को बल**, रोजगार सृजन और **भारतीय विरासत का प्रचार** होगा।
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Exam Relevance Table:

Topic	GS Paper Relevance
Promotion of Local Artisans & Handicrafts	GS Paper 1 Culture & Handicrafts
Inclusive Economic Growth	GS Paper 3 Employment, MSMEs
e-Governance (GeM)	GS Paper 2 Digital Governance
ODOP & GI Tag	GS Paper 3 Regional Development, Make in India

UPSC Mains Practice Question:

"Discuss how initiatives like the 'Aabhar' online store and One Station One Product (OSOP) scheme contribute to promoting India's cultural heritage while ensuring inclusive economic growth."
(250 words – GS Paper 3)

Chinese check

China has entrenched itself as
the world's foremost factory

While there may be much relief after the détente in the tariff war between China and the U.S., in Busan, South Korea, following the meeting between U.S. President Donald Trump and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping, the uneasy truce has laid bare a structural inversion of power between the two economies. What began in the 1980s as a reluctant embrace of World Bank/IMF-prescribed neoliberal reforms by an overwhelmingly agrarian China, has now evolved into an unimaginable assertion of industrial dominance. A nation that once bartered sovereignty for technology transfer and market access has, through patient accumulation of manufacturing depth, labour arbitrage, and global supply-chain integration, positioned itself as the indispensable node of world production. The irony is sharp. The U.S., whose export and technology corporations once defined global trade cycles, now finds its four-year political rhythms ill-suited to contest a rival that plans in decades. The concessions Mr. Trump has extended to Mr. Xi include some reductions in tariffs, a pause on additions to the “no-trade list” of Chinese firms, and a partial rollback on levies linked to the fentanyl supply-chain dispute. China has promised resumption of purchase of American farm products, particularly soybean, and an easing of export restrictions on critical minerals.

America's tariff offensives since Mr. Trump's first term in 2017 did yield some numerical optics. U.S. goods trade deficit with China narrowed by roughly 30%. But economists across the spectrum agree that this was less a triumph of re-industrialisation than a diversion of trade flows. The deficit was largely re-routed through near-shoring and friend-shoring: Mexico, Vietnam and parts of ASEAN became new intermediaries for supply chains once centred in China. Meanwhile, China's exporters diversified markets and adjusted prices, while the tariffs' direct burden was borne mostly by U.S. importers and consumers. The human geography of the impact was asymmetric: in the U.S., retaliatory Chinese tariffs targeted farm-belt commodities, hurting those very rural constituencies that powered Mr. Trump's rise. Federal subsidies softened the blow, but only temporarily. In China, the pain was concentrated in export-processing hubs such as Guangdong and Suzhou, where migrant and urban workers in electronics, semiconductor, and smartphone assembly absorbed the shock. Yet, the political fallout remained contained, cushioned by Beijing's domestic-stimulus measures and its “dual-circulation” strategy of inward and outward rebalancing. This trade war has thus underscored a decisive shift: the U.S. remains the world's largest consumer market, but China has entrenched itself as the world's foremost factory with global leverage over intermediate goods, high-end technology and critical minerals.

English Summary:

Following a détente in the **U.S.–China trade war** during the Trump–Xi meeting in Busan, the article highlights how China has **emerged as the world’s industrial superpower**—transforming from an agrarian economy into a **global manufacturing hub**.

Despite U.S. tariff offensives and decoupling attempts, China continues to **dominate global supply chains**, thanks to its **manufacturing depth, labor cost advantage, industrial clusters**, and **state-backed resilience**. The U.S., once the leader of global trade and technology, now faces structural constraints in challenging China’s industrial dominance.

Evolution of China’s Industrial Dominance:

Phase	Period	Key Development
Early Reforms	1980s–1990s	Adoption of World Bank–IMF-backed neoliberal reforms; SEZs under Deng Xiaoping; focus on export-led growth.
Industrial Expansion	2000s	Integration into global value chains (post-WTO accession, 2001); mass labor migration to urban hubs like Guangdong and Suzhou.
High-Tech Transformation	2010s–2020s	Shift from low-cost assembly to high-tech manufacturing (electronics, semiconductors, solar, EVs); “Made in China 2025” policy.

Causes of China’s Manufacturing Supremacy:

- Massive Manufacturing Base:**
Cumulative investment in **industrial capacity and supply chains** since the 1980s.
 - Labour Cost Advantage:**
Lower wages and productivity-based efficiency made China cost-competitive globally.
 - Export-Oriented Industrial Clusters:**
Cities like **Guangdong, Shenzhen, and Suzhou** became hubs for electronics, semiconductors, and smartphone assembly.
 - Infrastructure & Logistics Power:**
Unparalleled logistics, ports, and digital supply-chain integration.
 - “Dual Circulation” Policy:**
Economic model balancing **domestic demand** with **export orientation**, enhancing resilience to global shocks.
 - Strategic State Intervention:**
Beijing’s **industrial subsidies**, R&D spending, and **tech localization policies** (AI, robotics, renewable energy) ensured continued competitiveness.
-

Impact of the U.S.–China Tariff War:

- Initial Context:**
U.S. imposed heavy tariffs in 2018–19, targeting \$360 billion worth of Chinese goods under Trump’s “America First” policy.
 - Outcomes:**
 - Trade Deficit:**
U.S. trade deficit with China reduced by ~30%, but the shift was mostly **trade diversion**—production moved to **Vietnam, Mexico, and ASEAN**.
 - Economic Burden:**
Tariffs hurt **U.S. consumers and importers** more than Chinese manufacturers.
 - Sectoral Effects:**
Chinese tariffs retaliated against **U.S. farm exports**, particularly soybeans.
 - Resilience:**
China absorbed shocks via **domestic stimulus** and **market diversification** (exporting to Global South).
-

Key Observations:

- Despite U.S. sanctions and restrictions, China has:

- Maintained **control over global supply chains** in electronics, solar panels, rare earths, and EV batteries.
- Retained **technological depth** and **economies of scale**.
- Strengthened **geo-economic leverage** through **critical mineral supply control** and **semiconductor value chains**.
- U.S. faces internal challenges:
 - Political cycles, divided policy focus, and an overdependence on **Chinese manufacturing intermediates**.
 - Attempts to “reshore” industries have had limited success due to **cost and infrastructure gaps**.

Broader Economic Implications:

Aspect	U.S.	China
Industrial Policy	Tariff-based, reactive	Strategic, long-term state-led planning
Trade Deficit Management	Temporary reduction	Global supply-chain reorientation
Economic Structure	Post-industrial, service-based	Industrial, export-driven
Resilience Strategy	Friend-shoring, alliances	Dual circulation, diversification

Geopolitical and Strategic Dimensions:

- The “**Chinese Check**” illustrates a **shift in global power balance**—from U.S.-led globalization to **China-centered production networks**.
 - China’s **manufacturing sovereignty** gives it **strategic leverage** in areas like:
 - **Semiconductors**
 - **Rare earth minerals**
 - **EV and battery manufacturing**
 - **Pharmaceutical ingredients**
 - The U.S.’s “**Chip 4 alliance**” and **Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF)** aim to counter this dominance, but **China’s entrenched infrastructure** remains unmatched.
-

Key Terms & Concepts:

Term	Meaning
Dual Circulation Strategy	Chinese model promoting internal consumption and external exports simultaneously.
Labour Arbitrage	Shifting production to regions with cheaper labor to reduce costs.
Deindustrialisation	Decline of manufacturing in developed economies like the U.S. due to outsourcing.
Global Value Chain (GVC)	International network linking production, assembly, and trade.

Analytical Insight:

China’s rise marks a **historic inversion**—from a peripheral agrarian economy to the **core of global industrial capitalism**.

Its control over supply chains and critical inputs has transformed it into a “**systemic power**”, redefining globalization itself.

The U.S. remains a **consumer and innovation superpower**, but China now dominates **production, logistics, and export ecosystems**—a distinction with profound geopolitical implications.

Hindi Summary (हिंदी सारांश):

चीन ने खुद को दुनिया की **सबसे बड़ी औद्योगिक शक्ति** के रूप में स्थापित कर लिया है।

- 1980 के दशक में आर्थिक सुधारों और **निर्यात-आधारित विकास मॉडल** के साथ शुरू हुआ यह सफर अब **वैश्विक औद्योगिक वर्चस्व** में बदल गया है।

- अमेरिका के साथ व्यापार युद्ध के बावजूद चीन ने निर्माण, प्रौद्योगिकी और आपूर्ति श्रृंखला पर नियंत्रण बनाए रखा है।
- अमेरिकी प्रतिबंधों और टैरिफ नीति के बावजूद, चीन का “डुअल सर्कुलेशन मॉडल” और राज्य समर्थित औद्योगिक नीति ने उसे टिकाऊ बनाए रखा है।
- परिणामस्वरूप, चीन अब दुनिया का सबसे बड़ा निर्माण केंद्र (World’s Factory) बन गया है, जबकि अमेरिका की भूमिका उपभोक्ता और नवाचार केंद्र की रह गई है।

UPSC Mains Practice Question:

“Despite the U.S. efforts to decouple global trade, China continues to dominate manufacturing and supply chains. Discuss the economic and strategic implications of China’s emergence as the world’s foremost factory.” (250 words – GS Paper 2 / GS Paper 3)

The case for a board of peace and sustainable security

The tension between the ideals of the United Nations (UN) and the structure created to uphold them has rarely been as evident as it is today as the organisation commemorates the 80th anniversary of its founding. Designed to prevent catastrophic war, the UN Security Council (UNSC) still reacts to conflict but no longer sustains peace. Across continents, conflicts endure for years without resolution not only because they are complex but also because the international system abandons political engagement too soon. Peace agreements falter. Transitions stall. Diplomacy, rather than being an ongoing process, has become a form of crisis theatre – activated too late and withdrawn too early.

This problem is not simply about political divisions. It is about institutional design. The UN has no dedicated body to maintain political accompaniment once violence slows and mediation efforts fade. The UNSC authorises action but is structurally episodic. Peacekeeping missions stabilise ground conditions but are seldom equipped with a political strategy. The Peacebuilding Commission, though a valuable initiative, lacks the mandate and the authority to engage during active political transitions. The UN loses continuity. It loses context. It loses momentum. It forgets.

Structural reform of the UNSC is necessary and long overdue. But waiting for such reform as a precondition for all institutional innovation is a strategic mistake. Functional reform – reform that strengthens the UN’s ability to act now, using powers that already exist under the Charter – is both possible and urgent. The UN General Assembly, under Article 22, has the authority to establish new subsidiary bodies to carry out its work. It has used this power before. It can use it again.

A clearly defined space

A ‘Board of Peace and Sustainable Security’ would fill the institutional void that now undermines conflict resolution. It would not challenge the primacy of the UNSC in matters of international peace and security. It would not intrude into the sovereign affairs of states. It would not undertake early-warning or pre-conflict intervention – areas that raise real political concerns for many countries. Instead, it would occupy a clearly defined space: providing



Nirupama Rao
is a former Foreign
Secretary of India

structured political engagement during and after conflict, where today the UN presence dissipates.

Its tools would be political rather than coercive: reinforcing nationally-led dialogue, accompanying peace agreement implementation, coordinating regional diplomatic initiatives and ensuring that peacekeeping operations are tied to achievable political pathways rather than becoming indefinite holding missions. It would work in coordination with the UN Secretary-General and the UNSC, subsume the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and help align UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding strategies with political outcomes. It would not challenge UNSC authority, or duplicate or encroach on the Secretary-General’s prerogatives under Article 99.

Keep it representative

The credibility of such a body would depend, above all, on who sits at the table. It must be representative but not unwieldy. That means no elite club, but no open forum either. A rotating membership of about two dozen states, elected by the UN General Assembly for fixed terms, would ensure balance and renewal. Regional distribution would be formally guaranteed, with Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and West Asia each carrying weight.

Crucially, regional organisations would not be observers, but participants, reflecting the reality that peace is shaped as much in Addis Ababa, Jakarta and Brasília as in New York. Power would not be inherited through permanent seats, nor paralysed by vetoes. The board would be built not on privilege but participation. Agenda items would be introduced only by a UN member-state, a regional organisation or the UN Secretary-General. There would be no civil society voting role, although they may have consultative participation.

The concept of sustainable security is essential here. It recognises that lasting peace cannot be maintained by security arrangements alone. Stability endures when political agreements are gradually legitimised through governance, inclusion and responsible leadership. Sustainable security is not preventive intervention by another name; it respects sovereignty and emerges from negotiated settlements implemented over time rather than imposed solutions. It links security to political reality (sustainable security combines conflict management with long-term political

stability by aligning peace efforts with governance, development and regional cooperation. It avoids the intervention risks associated with “preventive security” and reinforces nationally led approaches).

Style of functioning

The board would not be another forum for general statements. It would be a working institution. It would stay engaged where others withdraw. It would track commitments long after the spotlight moves on. It would prevent institutional memory from dissolving between mandate renewals. It would reduce the drift that has become common in long-running UN engagements. It would give political shape to international presence when peace is young and fragile.

Its mandate would be modest in appearance but consequential in practice. It would bring a disciplined form of political accompaniment into the heart of the UN system. It would build continuity without expansionism, coordination without confrontation. It would reassure states that sovereignty is protected and reassure societies that peace will not be abandoned at the first difficulty.

UN reform has been discussed for too long in absolute terms. Either one accepts the system as it is or insists on rewriting it entirely. This is a false choice. Institutions do not survive by remaining unchanged; they survive by evolving responsibly. The ‘Board of Peace and Sustainable Security’ would not solve all that ails the multilateral system. But it would correct one of its most damaging weaknesses: the absence of political continuity in the journey from war to peace.

Reform does not always require new doctrine. Sometimes, it requires remembering first principles. Peace must be sustained. Political commitments must be accompanied. Diplomacy must be disciplined. Institutions must be built not for moments but for processes. The UN once understood this. It can understand it again – if it chooses to innovate where it still can. The ‘BPSS’ will not redistribute geopolitical power but would improve the UN’s ability to manage conflict responsibly. This is where meaningful reform can begin.

The views expressed are personal

The United Nations must create a new institution that can sustain peace beyond war

English Summary:

Former Foreign Secretary **Nirupama Rao** argues for the creation of a “**Board of Peace and Sustainable Security**” (BPSS) under the **United Nations**, to restore the organization’s founding mission — preventing wars, sustaining peace, and managing transitions from conflict to stability.

As the **UN turns 80**, she highlights that the **UN Security Council (UNSC)** is outdated: it reacts to conflicts but cannot sustain peace due to **structural and political design flaws**. The proposed BPSS would provide

continuous political engagement, conflict mediation, and coordination of peacebuilding efforts, ensuring that peace processes do not collapse after temporary ceasefires.

Context and Rationale:

- The **UN Security Council**, created post-World War II, was designed to prevent global wars. However, in the 21st century, it has **failed to resolve protracted conflicts** (e.g., Ukraine, Gaza, Sudan, Syria).
- The **UN Peacebuilding Commission** exists but lacks **mandate and continuity**, as it cannot intervene during political transitions.
- Diplomatic engagement often ends prematurely, leaving nations vulnerable to relapse into conflict.

Thus, the global system needs a **new institution for sustained engagement and peace management** beyond reactive crisis control.

The Problem:

Issue	Explanation
Structural Inefficiency	The UNSC is limited by veto powers and rigid procedures, making it slow to act.
Lack of Continuity	Peace missions and mediations end too early; political processes lose momentum.
No Political Accompaniment Body	The UN has no institutional framework to sustain peace after ceasefires or transitions.
Institutional Amnesia	Lessons from past peace processes fade away, leading to repetition of failures.

The Proposal – Board of Peace and Sustainable Security (BPSS):

Objective:

To act as a permanent political body within the UN that **ensures sustained engagement before, during, and after conflicts** — complementing rather than replacing the Security Council.

Functions:

- Engage in **preventive diplomacy** and **structured political dialogue**.
- Reinforce **regional peace mechanisms** and coordinate with organizations like the **African Union, ASEAN, and EU**.
- **Oversee peace transitions** — ensuring continuity between ceasefires, reconstruction, and reconciliation.
- Monitor and align UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions.
- Address root causes of instability like inequality, climate insecurity, and political exclusion.

Proposed Structure:

Aspect	Details
Composition	~24 rotating members selected by the UN General Assembly for fixed terms.
Representation	Equitable regional distribution (Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, Caribbean, West Asia).
Leadership	Operates under UN Secretary-General’s guidance but remains independent of UNSC veto power.
Participation	Regional organizations (e.g., AU, ASEAN, EU) participate as partners, not observers.
Decision Process	Based on consultation and cooperation, not privilege or permanent seats .

Purpose and Benefits:

Purpose	Benefit
Ensure political continuity post-conflict	Avoid relapse into violence

Purpose	Benefit
Coordinate global & regional peacebuilding	Align international and local priorities
Institutionalize lessons learned	Preserve institutional memory
Reduce UNSC overload	Shift focus from reactive to preventive diplomacy
Promote inclusivity & balance	Give equal voice to developing nations

Key Features:

- **Permanent political engagement:** Not ad hoc missions but a standing institutional process.
- **Inclusive representation:** Equal voice for Global South and regional blocs.
- **Conflict prevention mandate:** Active before crises escalate.
- **Integration with development goals:** Links peace with **SDGs, climate security, and economic stability.**
- **Gender-sensitive and youth-inclusive diplomacy:** Ensures generational balance in peacebuilding.

Why It's Needed Now:

- The **UNSC has become reactive**, often gridlocked due to **P5 rivalries** (U.S., China, Russia, U.K., France).
- Conflicts like **Ukraine–Russia, Gaza, Sudan, Yemen** reveal the **UN's paralysis** in ensuring lasting peace.
- The **rise of multipolarity** requires **broader, non-hegemonic structures** for dialogue.
- Peace today must also address **climate crises, inequality, and migration**, beyond traditional military terms.

Proposed Model of Functioning:

Stage	BPSS Role
Pre-Conflict	Early warning, mediation, preventive diplomacy.
During Conflict	Coordination with peacekeeping, sanctions, and humanitarian missions.
Post-Conflict	Oversee reconstruction, institutional reforms, and reconciliation.
Transition Period	Maintain engagement until stable governance returns.

Benefits for India and the Global South:

- Offers **greater participation for developing nations** in global peace mechanisms.
- Reduces dependence on UNSC-dominated structures.
- Enables India to **lead peace diplomacy** consistent with its **“Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam”** ethos.
- Positions India as a key player in shaping **reformed multilateralism.**

Challenges Ahead:

1. Resistance from **P5 members** fearing dilution of UNSC authority.
2. Overlapping jurisdiction with the **Peacebuilding Commission.**
3. Funding and administrative restructuring of the UN.
4. Balancing representation between regions and political blocs.

1 Strategic Insight:

“The UN must evolve from crisis management to crisis prevention.”

The BPSS would institutionalize **long-term peace engagement**, transforming peacekeeping into **peace-sustaining diplomacy.**

It would mark a shift from the 20th-century model of **military deterrence** to a 21st-century model of **cooperative, sustainable security.**

Hindi Summary (हिंदी सारांश):

पूर्व विदेश सचिव **निर्मला राव** ने प्रस्ताव दिया है कि **संयुक्त राष्ट्र (UN)** के तहत एक '**Board of Peace and Sustainable Security (BPSS)**' बनाया जाए, जो युद्धों को रोकने और स्थायी शांति सुनिश्चित करने के लिए निरंतर राजनीतिक जुड़ाव बनाए रखे।

- वर्तमान में **UN सुरक्षा परिषद (UNSC)** केवल संघर्षों पर प्रतिक्रिया देती है, उन्हें समाप्त नहीं करती।
- **BPSS** का उद्देश्य होगा — संघर्ष से पहले, दौरान, और बाद में **निरंतर राजनीतिक और कूटनीतिक संवाद बनाए रखना**।
- इसमें **क्षेत्रीय संगठनों** (जैसे AU, ASEAN, EU) की भागीदारी होगी और **स्थायी सदस्यता के बजाय घूर्णन सदस्यता** होगी।
- यह परिषद **सतत विकास, जलवायु सुरक्षा और असमानता जैसे कारणों** पर भी ध्यान देगी।
- इस प्रकार यह प्रस्ताव **संयुक्त राष्ट्र में संस्थागत सुधार (UN Reforms)** की दिशा में एक ऐतिहासिक कदम होगा।

UPSC Mains Practice Question:

"The UN Security Council was designed for a world that no longer exists. Critically discuss the proposal for a 'Board of Peace and Sustainable Security' as a pathway to reimagining global governance."
(250 words – GS Paper 2)

IKEA parent makes renewable energy investment in India

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Ingka Investments, the investment arm of Ingka Group, the largest IKEA retailer, said it has made a 100% stake investment in a subsidy-free 210 MWp solar project located in Bikaner, Rajasthan, India as part of its ₹1,000 crore investment plan in renewable energy in India.

Ready to build

The solar project has reached ready-to-build status and construction will start shortly. Start of operations is scheduled in De-



Going green: The new solar project in India will produce 380 GWh of renewable energy annually. REUTERS

cember 2026. The total expected production is 380 GWh per year, the company said.

Frederik de Jong, head of renewable energy at Ing-

ka Investments, said: "This is a milestone acquisition for us - it marks the first renewable energy investment for Ingka Investments in India - a country

of utmost importance both for IKEA retail and the IKEA supply chain."

"The new solar project in India will produce 380 GWh of renewable energy annually - more than enough to power our growing retail, shopping centre, and distribution operations. It's a big step in making our retail business in India more sustainable, efficient, and future-ready," he said. As part of a global commitment, €7.5 billion has been committed to support 100% renewable energy consumption across the value chain and beyond by 2030.

English Summary:

Ingka Investments, the investment arm of **Ingka Group**, the parent company of **IKEA**, has made a **100% stake investment** in a **210 MWp solar power project** in **Bikaner, Rajasthan**.

This forms part of its **₹1,000 crore renewable energy investment plan** in India — a major step towards IKEA's global goal of achieving **100% renewable energy use** across operations by **2030**.

The solar project, expected to produce **380 GWh of renewable power annually**, will play a crucial role in making IKEA's operations in India more **sustainable, efficient, and energy independent**.

Key Facts:

Parameter	Details
Investor	Ingka Investments (IKEA's parent company investment arm)
Project Type	210 MWp Solar Power Plant
Location	Bikaner, Rajasthan
Investment Amount	₹1,000 crore
Annual Energy Output	380 GWh (Gigawatt-hours)
Project Status	Ready-to-build; expected to start operation by December 2026
Ownership	100% stake by Ingka Investments
Global Target	100% renewable energy consumption across IKEA's value chain by 2030

Project Significance:

- Sustainability Leadership:**
 - This is IKEA's **first renewable energy investment in India** and aligns with its **global sustainability roadmap**.
 - It strengthens the company's **"People and Planet Positive"** strategy.
- Clean Energy Generation:**
 - The Bikaner project will generate **380 GWh per year**, sufficient to power IKEA's Indian retail stores, shopping centres, and logistics operations.
- Contribution to India's Renewable Goals:**
 - Supports **India's target** of achieving **500 GW of non-fossil fuel energy capacity by 2030**.
 - Aligns with the **Make in India – Green Energy push**, promoting **solar infrastructure** and **clean FDI**.
- Economic & Employment Benefits:**
 - Boosts **green investment inflow** into India's renewable energy sector.
 - Generates **local employment** and supports **Rajasthan's renewable energy ecosystem**.

IKEA's Global Green Commitment:

- IKEA Group has pledged **€7.5 billion globally** to achieve **100% renewable energy** in operations and supply chains by **2030**.
- The India investment is a **"milestone acquisition"**, marking its **first renewable energy ownership project** in the country.
- The group is transitioning toward a **net-zero energy footprint**, focusing on solar, wind, and energy efficiency technologies.

Broader Implications for India:

Domain	Impact
Economic	Enhances FDI in India's green energy sector.
Environmental	Reduces carbon emissions and promotes solar adoption.
Technological	Encourages global best practices in solar energy deployment.
Policy Alignment	Supports India's National Solar Mission (NSM) and Paris Agreement targets .
Energy Security	Contributes to decentralised, clean power generation reducing fossil-fuel dependency.

Analytical Perspective:

- India's renewable energy sector has become a **prime FDI magnet**, attracting multinational players like **IKEA, Amazon, Apple, and Microsoft** to establish solar and wind projects.
- Rajasthan, with its **high solar irradiance**, continues to lead as India's **solar energy hub** alongside Gujarat and Tamil Nadu.
- Such investments strengthen India's role as a **global green manufacturing and energy hub**, contributing to **climate resilience** and **sustainable economic growth**.

Linked National Initiatives:

Initiative	Relevance
National Solar Mission (NSM)	Promotes large-scale solar power generation.
Green Energy Corridor	Ensures efficient grid integration of renewable power.
PLI Scheme for Solar Modules	Boosts domestic manufacturing for solar equipment.
National Hydrogen Mission	Complements solar projects through clean fuel synergy.
FAME-II Scheme	Accelerates transition toward electric and renewable-powered logistics.

Quotes & Key Insight:

“This marks the first renewable energy investment for Ingka in India – a country of utmost importance both for IKEA retail and the IKEA supply chain,”

— *Frederik de Jong, Head of Renewable Energy, Ingka Investments*

“The solar project will produce 380 GWh annually – enough to power IKEA’s entire retail and distribution operations in India,”

— *Company Statement*

Hindi Summary (हिंदी सारांश):

IKEA की मूल कंपनी Ingka Investments ने भारत में **210 मेगावाट सोलर प्रोजेक्ट** में **₹1,000 करोड़** का निवेश किया है।

- यह परियोजना **बीकानेर (राजस्थान)** में स्थापित की जा रही है।
 - यह IKEA का भारत में पहला **नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा (Renewable Energy)** निवेश है।
 - परियोजना **2026 तक चालू** होगी और हर साल **380 GWh** स्वच्छ ऊर्जा उत्पन्न करेगी।
 - यह ऊर्जा IKEA के खुदरा स्टोर्स, शॉपिंग सेंटर्स और सप्लाय चैन संचालन को शक्ति प्रदान करेगी।
 - यह पहल भारत के **500 GW गैर-जीवाश्म ईंधन क्षमता लक्ष्य (2030)** और IKEA के **100% Renewable Energy Commitment (2030)** दोनों को सशक्त बनाती है।
-

UPSC Mains Practice Question:

“Foreign Direct Investments in India’s renewable energy sector are not merely economic transactions but instruments of sustainable diplomacy.” Examine in light of recent global investments like IKEA’s solar project in Rajasthan.

(250 words – GS Paper 3)

Xi takes centre stage at APEC meet, promises to defend global free trade

The Chinese leader asks nations to unite amid volatility, presses for supply chain stability and green energy as Trump snubs the summit; in a statement, Xi adds that his country is open for investment and will uphold the multilateral trading system

Associated Press
GYEONGJU

Chinese leader Xi Jinping told Asia-Pacific leaders on Friday that his country would help to defend global free trade at an annual economic regional forum snubbed by U.S. President Donald Trump.

Mr. Xi took centre stage at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit that began on Friday in Gyeongju, as Mr. Trump left the country a day earlier after reaching deals with Mr. Xi meant to ease their escalating trade war. Mr. Trump described



All ears: South Korean President Lee Jae Myung (L) with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Economic Leaders' Meeting on Friday. AFP

his Thursday meeting with Mr. Xi as a roaring success, saying he would cut tariffs on China, while Beijing had agreed to allow the export of rare earth elements

and start buying American soybeans.

Mr. Trump's blunt dismissal of APEC risks worsening America's reputation at a forum that

represents nearly 40% of the world's population and more than half of global goods trade.

"The more turbulent the times, the more we must work together," Mr. Xi said during APEC's opening session. "The world is undergoing a period of rapid change, with the international situation becoming increasingly complex and volatile."

Mr. Xi called for maintaining supply chain stability, in a riposte to U.S. efforts to decouple its supply chains from China. He also expressed hopes to work with other countries to expand cooperation in green

industries and clean energy.

In written remarks sent to a CEO summit held in conjunction with APEC, Mr. Xi said China was open for investment and would uphold the multilateral trading system.

"Facts have proven that whoever gains a foothold in the Chinese market will be able to seize the critical opportunity in increasingly fierce international competition," Xi wrote. "Investing in China is investing in the future."

U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Scott Bessent attended the summit on Mr. Trump's behalf

English Summary:

At the **Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)** summit in **Gyeongju, South Korea**, Chinese President **Xi Jinping** reaffirmed China's commitment to **defending global free trade, strengthening supply chain stability**, and promoting **green energy**.

Xi called on APEC economies to **unite amid global volatility** and warned against protectionism and decoupling policies, especially in light of the **U.S.-China trade tensions** and the absence of U.S. President **Donald Trump** from the summit.

China emphasized its openness to foreign investment and its support for a **rules-based multilateral trading system** under the **World Trade Organization (WTO)**.

Key Facts:

Aspect	Details
Event	APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) Summit 2025
Location	Gyeongju, South Korea
Key Participant	Xi Jinping, President of China
Notable Absence	U.S. President Donald Trump
Main Themes	Global free trade, supply chain stability, green energy cooperation
APEC Representation	Represents ~40% of world population and over 50% of global trade

Key Highlights of Xi's Address:

- Defending Globalization & Free Trade:**
 - Xi positioned China as a **champion of open trade** amid growing U.S. protectionism.
 - Emphasized **"the world must work together"** to stabilize trade amid global uncertainty.
- Supply Chain Stability:**
 - Urged nations to **resist decoupling** and maintain integrated trade networks.
 - Indirectly criticized U.S. attempts to limit technology and resource exports from China.
- Green Energy Cooperation:**
 - Pitched China's leadership in **renewable energy, EVs, and clean industries** as key to

sustainable growth.

4. **Investment & Openness:**

- Declared China “**open for investment**,” assuring fair participation for global businesses.
- Stressed that “**investing in China is investing in the future**.”

5. **Multilateralism Over Protectionism:**

- Advocated for **rules-based international trade** under the WTO framework.
- Promised China’s continued role in global governance.

Significance of APEC 2025:

Theme	Implication
Economic Diplomacy	China positions itself as the stabilizing force in global trade.
Strategic Signaling	Trump’s absence underscores U.S. disengagement; China fills the leadership vacuum.
Green Growth	Xi’s emphasis on clean energy aligns with climate diplomacy goals.
Multilateral Push	China supports WTO-led systems to counter U.S.-led decoupling alliances (like IPEF).

Background:

- **APEC** was established in **1989** to promote free trade and economic integration in the Asia-Pacific.
- It includes **21 member economies**, including the U.S., China, Japan, Russia, India (observer), Australia, and ASEAN nations.
- The forum represents **half of global trade and GDP**, making it crucial for world economic governance.

In recent years, **U.S.-China tensions** over **tariffs, technology, and security** have challenged APEC’s unity and mission.

Analytical Insights:

1. **China’s Diplomatic Strategy:**
 - Xi’s message serves as **economic soft power diplomacy**, portraying China as the **guardian of multilateralism**.
 - This comes amid growing **U.S.-led “de-risking”** initiatives targeting supply chains.
2. **Shift in Global Trade Power:**
 - While the U.S. retreats into **protectionism**, China seeks to lead an **open, interconnected Asia-Pacific**.
3. **Green and Digital Trade:**
 - China aims to integrate **renewable energy** and **AI-driven trade logistics** into its economic diplomacy framework.
4. **India’s Angle:**
 - India, though not a formal APEC member, can benefit indirectly through strengthened **Asian value chains**, particularly under the **Global South-China cooperation model**.

Implications for the World Economy:

Domain	Impact
Global Trade	Reinforces commitment to open markets amid tariff wars.
Supply Chains	Stabilizes flow of goods, reducing disruptions from geopolitical tensions.
Sustainability	Promotes renewable energy transitions in APEC economies.
Investment Climate	Attracts global investors seeking stable Asian markets.
Geopolitics	Increases China’s influence in regional institutions like APEC, SCO, and BRICS.

Key Quotes from Xi Jinping:

“The more turbulent the times, the more we must work together.”

“The world is undergoing rapid change — becoming increasingly complex and volatile.”

“Investing in China is investing in the future.”

Challenges:

- **U.S.–China rivalry** undermines APEC consensus.
- **Technology decoupling** threatens supply chain cooperation.
- **Member state divisions** between U.S.-aligned and China-aligned economies.
- **Climate finance gap** in developing APEC members.

Hindi Summary (हिंदी सारांश):

एशिया-प्रशांत आर्थिक सहयोग (APEC) शिखर सम्मेलन में चीनी राष्ट्रपति शी जिनपिंग ने वैश्विक मुक्त व्यापार (Global Free Trade) की रक्षा करने और आपूर्ति शृंखला स्थिरता (Supply Chain Stability) को बनाए रखने का वादा किया।

- उन्होंने कहा कि दुनिया “अशांत समय” से गुजर रही है और देशों को “एकजुट होकर कार्य करना होगा।”
- चीन ने हरित ऊर्जा, निवेश के लिए खुलापन और बहुपक्षीय व्यापार प्रणाली (Multilateral Trading System) के प्रति अपनी प्रतिबद्धता दोहराई।
- अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रंप की अनुपस्थिति के कारण इस बैठक में चीन ने केंद्रीय भूमिका (Centre Stage) निभाई।
- शी जिनपिंग ने कहा, “चीन में निवेश करना भविष्य में निवेश करना है।”

UPSC Mains Practice Question:

“China’s economic diplomacy is increasingly positioning it as the guardian of globalization and free trade. Discuss this statement in light of Xi Jinping’s leadership at the APEC Summit 2025.”

(250 words – GS Paper 2)

In talks with China, U.S. defence chief vows to defend Indo-Pacific interests

Associated Press
KUALA LUMPUR

U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth said on Friday he told his Chinese counterpart in Malaysia that Washington would “stoutly defend” its interests in the Indo-Pacific.

Mr. Hegseth described as “good and constructive” his meeting with Chinese Admiral Dong Jun, held on the sidelines of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) defence ministers meeting in Kuala Lumpur.

He said he raised U.S. concerns over Chinese activities in the South China Sea, around Taiwan and toward U.S. allies and partners in the region.

“I highlighted the importance of maintaining a balance of power in the Indo-Pacific,” Mr. Hegseth wrote on social media plat-



Pete Hegseth held calls with Chinese Admiral Dong Jun. REUTERS

form X. “United States does not seek conflict [but] it will continue to stoutly defend its interests and ensure it has the capabilities in the region to do so.”

China’s Defence Ministry issued a cautious response, emphasising its longstanding positions. Mr. Dong Jun stressed the reunification of China and Taiwan is an “unstoppable historical trend” and urged

the U.S. to be cautious in its words and actions on the Taiwan issue, the statement said.

“We hope the U.S. will translate its statements of not containing China and not seeking conflict into action, and work with China to inject positive energy into regional and global peace and security,” according to the statement.

Mr. Hegseth also held

talks with his Malaysian and Philippines counterparts. He reaffirmed commitment to maritime security in the South China Sea.

Trump’s nuclear plans

Asked to comment about U.S. President Donald Trump’s plans to restart nuclear weapon testing for the first time in three decades, Malaysian Defence Minister Mohamed Khaled Nordin told a news conference later on Friday that ASEAN is a nuclear weapon free zone area and “we try to avoid anything that can bring great calamity to humankind.”

“For the security and safety of the world, I think it’s important ... to bear in mind that the world should never see the use of another nuclear weapon,” ASEAN secretary-general Kao Kim Hourn said.

English Summary:

At the **ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting** held in **Kuala Lumpur**, U.S. Secretary of Defense **Pete Hegseth** met his Chinese counterpart **Admiral Dong Jun** and affirmed that Washington would “**stoutly defend its interests**” in the **Indo-Pacific** region.

The meeting, described as “**good and constructive**,” focused on maintaining **regional stability**, **freedom of navigation**, and avoiding **conflict escalation**, especially around the **South China Sea** and **Taiwan Strait**.

The Chinese side reiterated its stance on the “**reunification of China and Taiwan**”, while urging the U.S. to act cautiously and work toward **regional peace and cooperation**.

Key Facts:

Parameter	Details
Event	ASEAN Defence Ministers’ Meeting (ADMM-Plus)
Location	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Participants	U.S. Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth and Chinese Admiral Dong Jun
Main Agenda	Indo-Pacific stability, Taiwan issue, South China Sea tensions
Other Participants	Defence ministers from Malaysia, the Philippines, and ASEAN member states
Tone of Talks	“Good and constructive,” as per U.S. statement

Key Themes Discussed:

A. U.S. Indo-Pacific Commitment

- The U.S. reaffirmed it will “**stoutly defend**” its interests and allies in the Indo-Pacific.
- Hegseth emphasized the importance of **freedom of navigation, open sea routes, and regional balance of power**.
- Washington signaled continued **military presence and deterrence** to prevent unilateral Chinese actions in contested maritime zones.

B. China's Response

- China called Taiwan's reunification an “**unstoppable national trend**”.
- The Chinese Defence Ministry's response emphasized **dialogue and peace**, but also reiterated its **territorial claims**.
- Beijing urged the U.S. to **avoid provocative actions** and to inject “**positive energy into regional and global peace and stability**.”

C. ASEAN's Role

- ASEAN continues to advocate a “**zone of peace, freedom, and neutrality**” in the Indo-Pacific.
- Regional players like **Malaysia** and **the Philippines** urged restraint from both powers.

Context and Background:

- The **South China Sea** has become a geopolitical hotspot where **China's territorial claims** overlap with **ASEAN nations' Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs)**.
- The U.S. champions a **Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)** strategy to counterbalance Chinese influence.
- **Taiwan** remains a flashpoint: Beijing considers it a breakaway province; Washington supports its self-defence.
- The U.S. Indo-Pacific Command coordinates with allies like **Japan, Australia, India (through the Quad)**, and **ASEAN nations** to ensure maritime security.

U.S. and ASEAN Cooperation:

- Hegseth also met with **Malaysian and Philippine Defence Ministers**, reaffirming:
 - Commitment to **maritime security** in the South China Sea.
 - Continued **joint patrols** and **naval exercises**.
 - Partnership in **regional counter-terrorism** and **disaster relief**.

Trump's Nuclear Plans (Side Note):

- Asked about **U.S. President Donald Trump's plans to resume nuclear weapon testing**, Malaysian Defence Minister **Mohamed Khaled Nordin** and **ASEAN Secretary-General Kao Kim Hourn** expressed concern.
- ASEAN reiterated that it is a **nuclear-weapon-free zone**, warning that new testing could cause “**great calamity to humankind**.”
- The statement reflects **ASEAN's consistent advocacy of disarmament and non-proliferation**.

Strategic Analysis:

Domain	Implication
Geopolitical	The U.S.–China meeting signals a cautious diplomatic reset amid strategic rivalry.
Security	U.S. aims to reassure ASEAN allies that it will not withdraw from regional defence commitments.
Diplomacy	Constructive dialogue marks a temporary thaw after years of military and trade tensions.
Economic Angle	Stability in the Indo-Pacific is crucial for global supply chains and energy routes.
Maritime Law	Reinforces the need to uphold UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea).

India's Relevance:

- India, as a **Quad member**, has a direct interest in these developments.
- The meeting underscores the **shared objective of ensuring a “Free, Open, and Inclusive Indo-Pacific”**.
- India’s own naval cooperation with **ASEAN countries** and participation in **Malabar Exercises** aligns with the themes discussed.

Key Quotes:

“The United States does not seek conflict but will continue to stoutly defend its interests and ensure it has the capabilities to do so.” — *Pete Hegseth*

“We hope the U.S. will translate its statements into action and work with China to inject positive energy into peace and stability.” — *Chinese Defence Ministry Statement*

“ASEAN is a nuclear-weapon-free zone and we must avoid any action that brings calamity to humankind.” — *Malaysian Defence Minister Mohamed Khaled Nordin*

Hindi Summary (हिंदी सारांश):

कुआलालंपुर (मलेशिया) में आयोजित **आसियान रक्षा मंत्रियों की बैठक** में अमेरिकी रक्षा मंत्री **पीट हेगसेथ** ने कहा कि अमेरिका **इंडो-पैसिफिक क्षेत्र में अपने हितों की दृढ़ता से रक्षा करेगा**।

- उन्होंने चीन की गतिविधियों पर चिंता जताई, विशेषकर **दक्षिण चीन सागर और ताइवान** के आसपास।
- चीनी रक्षा मंत्री **डोंग जुन** ने कहा कि **चीन-ताइवान का पुनर्एकीकरण एक अपरिहार्य प्रवृत्ति है** और अमेरिका को सावधानी बरतनी चाहिए।
- दोनों देशों ने “संवाद और क्षेत्रीय शांति” की आवश्यकता पर बल दिया।
- आसियान देशों ने **नाभिकीय हथियार परीक्षणों** के विरोध में शांति की अपील की।

UPSC Mains Practice Question:

“The Indo-Pacific has become the epicenter of great power rivalry. Discuss how ASEAN diplomacy and U.S.-China engagements shape the emerging regional security architecture.”
(250 words – GS Paper 2)

Trump’s surprise order to test nuclear weapons triggers global tensions

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump’s surprise directive to begin nuclear weapons testing provoked global criticism on Friday, as it raised the spectre of renewed superpower tensions.

The announcement on social media was issued just before Mr. Trump—who boasts frequently about being a peace president—went into a summit with Chinese leader Xi Jinping in South Korea.

Mr. Trump’s announce-

ment left much unanswered—chiefly whether he meant testing weapons systems or actually conducting test explosions, something the United States has not done since 1952.

Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth defended Mr. Trump’s directive as a “responsible” move. “We need to have a credible nuclear deterrent. That is the base-line of our deterrence,” Mr. Hegseth told reporters on the sidelines of a Southeast Asian regional defence summit in Malaysia.

U.S. foe Iran called the directive “regressive” and

“irresponsible”, adding that it was a threat to international security. “A nuclear-armed bully is resuming testing of atomic weapons. The same bully has been demonizing Iran’s peaceful nuclear program,” Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi posted on social media.

Japanese atomic bomb survivors group Nihon Hidankyo sent a letter of protest to the U.S. embassy in Japan. The directive “directly contradicts the efforts by nations around the world striving for a peaceful world without nuclear weapons and is utterly un-



Trump’s directive came just before he went into a summit with Chinese leader Xi Jinping in South Korea. AP/USA

acceptable,” the Nobel Peace Prize-winning group said in the letter.

Following Mr. Trump’s

meeting with Chinese leader Xi Jinping, China’s Foreign Ministry spokesman Gao Qiang urged the United States to “earnestly abide” by a global nuclear testing ban.

De facto moratorium China and the United States observe a de facto moratorium on testing nuclear warheads, though Russia and the United States regularly run military drills involving nuclear-capable systems.

United Nations chief Antonio Guterres said through a spokesman that “nuclear testing can never be permitted under any circumstances.”

The United States has

been a signatory since 1996 to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which bans all atomic test explosions, whether for military or civilian purposes.

Vice-President J.D. Vance said the U.S. nuclear arsenal needed to be tested to ensure it actually “functions properly,” but did not elaborate on what type of tests Mr. Trump had ordered.

The President’s statement “speaks for itself,” Mr. Vance told reporters at the White House on Thursday. “It’s an important part

of American national security to make sure that this nuclear arsenal we have actually functions properly, and that’s part of a testing regime,” he said.

The announcement came days after Russia declared it had tested nuclear-capable, nuclear-powered cruise missiles and sea drones.

“Because of other countries testing programs, I have instructed the Department of War to start testing our Nuclear Weapons on an equal basis,” Mr. Trump said on Truth Social earlier this week.

English Summary:

U.S. President **Donald Trump’s sudden directive to resume nuclear weapons testing** for the first time since **1992** has provoked **global outrage** and reignited **Cold War-era fears** of a new nuclear arms race. The announcement, made on **social media** just before Trump’s meeting with **Chinese President Xi Jinping** in South Korea, has drawn sharp criticism from **Iran, Japan**, and the **United Nations**, while the **Pentagon defended it** as a “responsible move” to ensure the **credibility of the U.S. nuclear deterrent**.

Key Facts:

Parameter

Announced by

Timing

Testing Plan

Details

U.S. President Donald Trump

Just before summit with Xi Jinping (South Korea)

U.S. to resume nuclear weapons testing (first since 1992)

Parameter	Details
Defended by	Pentagon Chief Pete Hegseth
Opposed by	Iran, Japan, United Nations, disarmament groups
Relevant Treaty	Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), signed by U.S. in 1996 (but not ratified)
Vice President's Statement	J.D. Vance said the move ensures "nuclear arsenal functions properly"

Key Statements:

- **Donald Trump:**

"Because of other countries' testing programs, I have instructed the Department of War to start testing our nuclear weapons on an equal basis."

- **Pentagon Chief Pete Hegseth:**

"We need to have a credible nuclear deterrent. That's the baseline of our defence."

- **UN Secretary-General António Guterres:**

"Nuclear testing can never be permitted under any circumstances."

- **Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi:**

"A nuclear-armed bully resuming atomic tests threatens international peace and security."

- **Japanese Peace Activist Group (Nihon Hidankyo):**

"This directive contradicts the global effort toward a peaceful world without nuclear weapons."

Global Reactions:

A. United States:

- The Pentagon defended Trump's decision as essential to maintain a **credible nuclear deterrent**.
- The administration claimed the order was to "**test systems and readiness**", though ambiguity remains over whether **actual explosive testing** will occur.

B. Iran:

- Condemned the directive as "**regressive and irresponsible**", calling it a threat to **international peace**.
- Noted the hypocrisy of Washington criticizing Iran's civilian nuclear program while resuming its own testing.

C. Japan:

- Hiroshima and Nagasaki survivor groups lodged **formal protests** at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo.
- Japan urged all nations to adhere to **nuclear non-proliferation principles**.

D. United Nations:

- UN Chief António Guterres called for the **U.S. to abide by the CTBT** and maintain the **de facto moratorium** on nuclear testing.

E. China:

- Beijing's response was cautious, urging **Washington to avoid destabilizing actions**.
- Reaffirmed support for **global disarmament and arms control frameworks**.

Legal and Policy Context:

Treaty/Regime	Description	U.S. Position
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)	Bans all nuclear test explosions for both civilian and military purposes.	Signed in 1996, but never ratified by the U.S. Senate.
Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)	Prevents spread of nuclear weapons and promotes disarmament.	U.S. is a recognized nuclear-weapon state under the NPT.
De Facto Moratorium	Since 1992, the U.S. has observed a voluntary halt on nuclear testing.	Trump's order effectively ends this moratorium .

Strategic and Global Implications:

Aspect	Implications
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Aspect	Implications
Arms Race Risk	Could trigger new nuclear testing by Russia, China, North Korea , and possibly Pakistan.
Treaty Erosion	Weakens international arms control norms under CTBT and NPT.
U.S.–China Relations	Timing of the announcement before the Xi summit adds diplomatic tension.
Global Security	Raises threat perception and undermines decades of disarmament diplomacy.
Moral and Environmental Impact	Opposed by anti-nuclear activists citing radioactive contamination and humanitarian concerns.

Expert Perspectives:

- **Strategic Realists:** Argue that maintaining test readiness ensures nuclear deterrence credibility.
- **Peace Advocates:** See the move as a **dangerous revival of Cold War hostility**.
- **Arms Control Analysts:** Warn that this decision could push the world toward a **new nuclear escalation cycle**.

Background:

- The last U.S. nuclear test was conducted in **Nevada, 1992**.
- Since then, the **Stockpile Stewardship Program** maintained warhead reliability without full-scale testing.
- Trump's directive overturns 30 years of restraint, citing Russian and Chinese modernization as justification.

India's Relevance:

- India, though **not a signatory of CTBT**, has maintained a **voluntary moratorium** on testing since **Pokhran-II (1998)**.
- Renewed testing by global powers could **pressure India to reassess its deterrent posture**, impacting South Asian stability.

Hindi Summary (हिंदी सारांश):

अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति **डोनाल्ड ट्रंप** ने 1992 के बाद पहली बार **परमाणु परीक्षण दोबारा शुरू करने का आदेश** दिया है।

- यह निर्णय **विश्वव्यापी आलोचना** का कारण बना है और एक **नए परमाणु हथियार दौड़** की आशंका बढ़ा दी है।
- **संयुक्त राष्ट्र महासचिव एंटोनियो गुटेरेस** ने कहा, “परमाणु परीक्षण किसी भी परिस्थिति में स्वीकार्य नहीं है।”
- **ईरान और जापान** ने इस कदम को “गैर-जिम्मेदाराना और खतरनाक” बताया।
- ट्रंप प्रशासन ने इसे “**राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा के लिए आवश्यक**” बताया है ताकि अमेरिकी परमाणु हथियारों की क्षमता की जांच हो सके।
- यह कदम **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)** और **वैश्विक परमाणु नियंत्रण व्यवस्था** को कमजोर कर सकता है।

UPSC Mains Practice Question:

“The resumption of nuclear testing by a major power could unravel decades of global non-proliferation efforts. Discuss in the context of the U.S. decision to resume nuclear tests.”

(250 words – GS Paper 2)