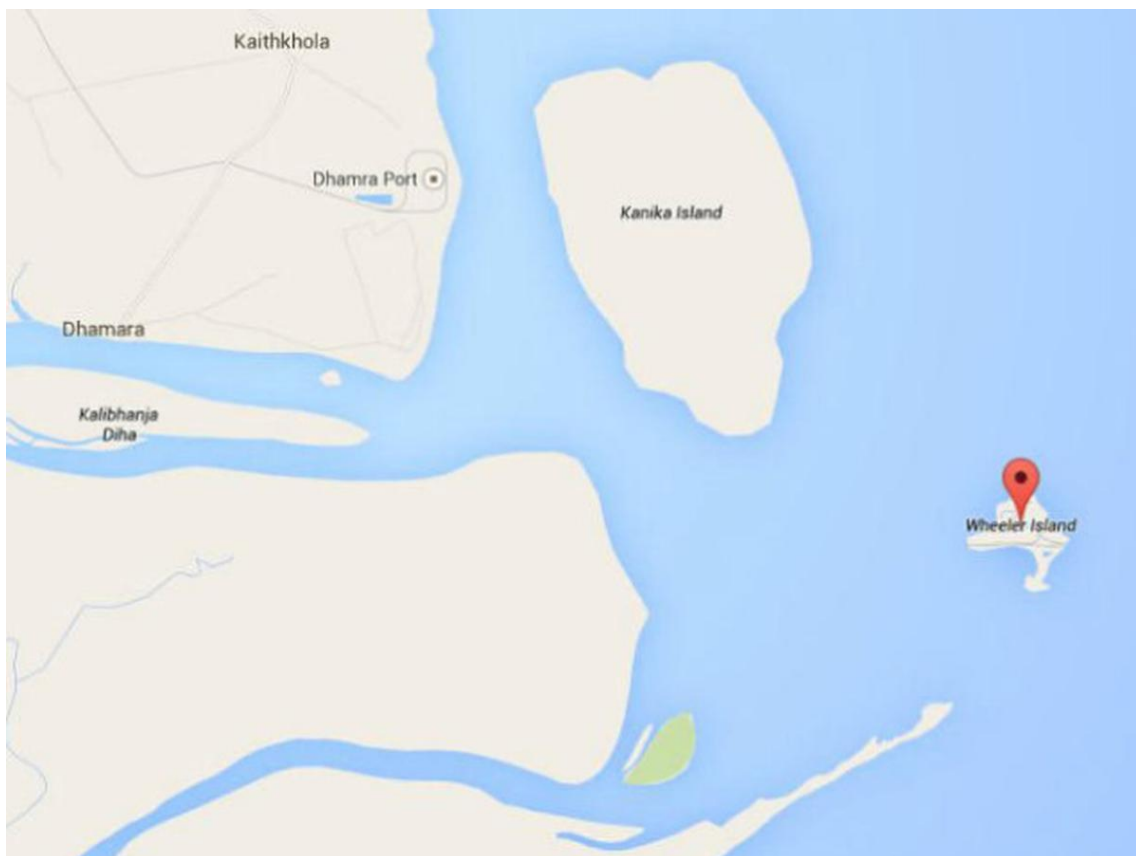


## UPSC CURRENT AFFAIRS NOTES 11-12-2023

### Wheeler Island

As per reports, India's premier agency for military R&D, the Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO), will pause missile testing at Wheeler Island off Odisha coast during the mass nesting season of Olive Ridley sea turtles.



#### About Wheeler Island:

Abdul Kalam Island, formerly known as Wheeler Island, is an island off the coast of Odisha.

The island was renamed to honour the late President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam and also to encourage the youth to pursue a scientific temperament.

It is the only place in India that has an integrated test range maintaining a missile testing facility, which is located on this island.



All indigenous missiles, like Akash missile, Agni missile, Prithvi Missile etc. are tested from here.

The island is 2 km long, having an area of 390 acres, and is basically a soil formation without rocks in the Bay of Bengal.

### **Key Facts about Defence Research Development Organisation (DRDO):**

It is the R&D wing of the Ministry of Defence, Govt of India, with a vision to empower India with cutting-edge defence technologies and a mission to achieve self-reliance in critical defence technologies and systems.

It is India's largest research organisation.

Formation: The organisation was formed in 1958 from the amalgamation of the then already functioning Technical Development Establishment (TDEs) of the Indian Army and the Directorate of Technical Development & Production (DTDP) with the Defence Science Organisation (DSO).

### **Headquarters: New Delhi.**

It has a network of laboratories engaged in developing defence technologies covering various fields, like aeronautics, armaments, electronics, land combat engineering, life sciences, materials, missiles, and naval systems.

## **PM Vishwakarma Scheme**

The PM Vishwakarma Scheme, launched by the Centre, has received over 21 lakh applications in two and a half months, data from the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) show.



### About PM Vishwakarma Scheme:

This is a central sector scheme launched by the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, which offers services like market linkage support, skill training, and incentives for digital transactions to artisans and craftspeople engaged in specified trades.

Time period: Five years (FY 2023-24 to FY 2027-28).

Aim:

To strengthen and nurture the Guru-Shishya parampara, or family-based practice of traditional skills by artisans and craftspeople working with their hands and tools.

The scheme also aims at improving the quality as well as the reach of the products and services of artisans and craftspeople and to ensure that the Vishwakarmas are integrated with the domestic and global value chains.

### Eligibility & coverage:

It is available for rural and urban artisans and craftsmen across India.

It covers 18 traditional crafts such as Boat Maker; Armourer; Blacksmith; Hammer and Tool Kit Maker; etc.

Five lakh families will be covered in the first year and 30 lakh families over five years.



## Benefits:

Under this scheme, the artisans and craftspeople will be provided recognition through a PM Vishwakarma certificate and ID card.

They will receive collateral-free credit support of up to ₹1 lakh (first tranche) and ₹2 lakh (second tranche) with a concessional interest rate of 5%.

The scheme will further provide craftsmen with methods of skill upgradation involving basic and advanced training, a toolkit incentive of ₹15,000 and incentives for digital transactions, and marketing support.

Under the scheme, there will be two types of skilling programmes -- Basic and Advanced and a stipend of Rs 500 per day will also be provided to beneficiaries while undergoing skills training.

## Ghaggar River

To spread awareness among the public against throwing waste into the Ghaggar River, trans Ghaggar residents carried out a cleanliness drive at Chatt Puja Ghat of the river recently.

### About Ghaggar River:

It is an intermittent river that flows only during the monsoon season.

### Course:

It rises from the Shivalik Range In northwestern Himachal Pradesh.

It flows about 200 miles (320 km) southwest through Haryana state, where it receives the Saraswati River.

It eventually dries up in the Thar Desert In Rajasthan.

This seasonal river feeds two irrigation canals that extend into Rajasthan. The Hakra, which flows in Pakistan, is the continuation of the Ghaggar River in India, and they are together called the Ghaggar - Hakra River.

### Historical Significance:

Several historians identify Ghaggar with the Vedic Saraswati River.

Along the banks of the Ghaggar River, many settlements of the Indus Valley Civilization have been excavated.

Hence it is believed that the ancient settlements on its banks are the creation of ingenious Vedic Aryans.

It is believed that the rivers Sutlej and Yamuna once flowed into the Ghaggar-Hakra river bed.

Tributaries: The main tributaries of the Ghaggar are the Kaushalya River, Markanda, Sarsuti, Tangri, and Chautang.

## Yellow Sea

A US F-16 fighter appears to have crashed into Yellow Sea waters off the coast of South Korea recently.



### About Yellow Sea:

It is a marginal sea in the western Pacific Ocean.

Location:

It is situated between mainland China to the west and north, the Korean Peninsula to the east, and the Shandong Peninsula and Liaodong Peninsula to the south.

It is positioned to the north of the East China Sea.



The sea was named for the yellowish sand particles originating from the Gobi Desert that descend on the surface of the sea, thereby giving it a golden yellow color.

**Size:** Also referred to in China as Huang Hai and in North and South Korea as the West Sea, the Yellow Sea is 870 kilometres long and 556 kilometres wide, covering an area of 380,000 sq km.

**Depth:** It is one of the largest shallow areas of the continental shelf in the world, with an average depth of 44 metres and a maximum depth of 152 metres.

**Inflow:** The main rivers that drain into the Yellow Sea include the Hai River, the Yalu River, the Han River, the Taedong River, and the Yellow River.

**Islands:** The Yellow Sea is dotted with numerous islands, the largest of which include Jeju Island (South Korea), Shandong Peninsula islands (China), and Ganghwa Island (South Korea).

**Climate:** The climate is characterized by very cold, dry winters and wet, warm summers.

### **Currents:**

The warm current of the Yellow Sea is a part of the Tsushima Current, which diverges near the western part of the Japanese island of Kyushu and flows at less than 0.5 mile (0.8 km) per hour northward into the middle of the sea.

Along the continental coasts, southward-flowing currents prevail, which strengthen markedly in the winter monsoon period, when the water is cold, turbid, and of low salinity.

## **ARTICLE 356**

The Supreme Court ruled that the actions of the President during a state emergency under Article 356 must have a "reasonable nexus" with the stated objectives.

The Supreme Court held that the declaration of a State emergency under Article 356 and the subsequent actions of the President should have a "reasonable nexus." This implies that there should be a logical connection or justification between the emergency declaration and the actions taken.



The court emphasized that the actions of the President during the state emergency are subject to judicial scrutiny. This means that the court can examine whether the President's exercise of power was in line with the constitutional provisions and had a reasonable connection to the stated objectives.

## **Article 356**

Article 356 of the Indian Constitution, commonly known as President's Rule or State Emergency, provides a mechanism for the Central government to assume control over a state's administration if there's a failure of constitutional machinery in that state.

The origin of Article 356 can be traced back to the Government of India Act 1935, which gave similar powers to the Governor-General to intervene in the affairs of the provinces.

The framers of the Constitution adopted this provision with some modifications, hoping that it would be used sparingly and only in extreme cases. However, over the years, Article 356 has been invoked more than a hundred times, often for political reasons rather than constitutional crises.

## **Provisions of Article 356**

### **Grounds for Imposition**

If the President, upon receiving a report or otherwise, is satisfied that the government of a state cannot be carried out in accordance with the Constitution, Article 356 can be invoked.

Also, if a state fails to comply with or give effect to the directions from the Centre, it can be seen as a failure of the constitutional machinery.

### **Parliamentary Approval and Duration**

A proclamation of President's Rule must be approved by both Houses of Parliament within two months.

If approved, it continues for six months initially and can be extended, with Parliamentary approval, up to three years in total.

However, post the 44th Amendment Act of 1978, the extension beyond one year requires specific conditions, such as the existence of a National Emergency and certification by the Election Commission for the inability to hold state elections.



The President can revoke the proclamation at any time without parliamentary approval.

### **Consequences of President's Rule**

The President takes over the state's functions, can declare that state legislature powers are vested in the Parliament, and suspend or dissolve the state legislative assembly.

During this period, the President or Parliament can make laws for the state, which continue even after the President's Rule unless altered by the state legislature.

### **Supreme Court Intervention**

In S. R. Bommai Case (1989), the Supreme Court clarified the limitations of Article 356.

It restricted the use of Article 356 to only instances of a breakdown in constitutional machinery or 'hung assembly.'

It emphasized that the provision cannot be invoked without giving the state government an opportunity to prove its majority or in the absence of a violent breakdown of the constitutional machinery.

The Supreme Court's intervention significantly curtailed the arbitrary use of Article 356, emphasizing the importance of following constitutional norms before imposing the President's Rule.

## **Conference on Disarmament**

Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra, UN discussed India's presidency of the Conference on Disarmament.

### **About**

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) is a multilateral disarmament forum.

It was established by the international community to negotiate arms control and disarmament agreements based at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.



## History

The Conference was first established in 1979 as the Committee on Disarmament as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community.

**It was renamed the Conference on Disarmament in 1984.**

## Agenda behind its Formation

The Conference was created with a permanent agenda, also known as the "Decalogue", which includes the following topics:



**Nuclear weapons in all aspects**

**Other weapons of mass destruction**

**Conventional weapons**

**Reduction of military budgets**

**Reduction of armed forces**

**Disarmament and development**

**Disarmament and international security**



Collateral measures; confidence building measures; effective verification methods concerning appropriate disarmament measures, acceptable to all parties

Comprehensive programme of disarmament leading to general and complete disarmament under effective international control

Additionally, all decisions of the body must be agreed upon by consensus according to the rules and procedures of the conference.

### **Meeting Sessions**

The Conference meets annually in three separate sessions in Geneva.

### **Relationship with the United Nations**

The Conference is formally independent from the United Nations.

However, while it is not formally a UN organization, it is linked to it in various ways.

First and foremost, the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva serves as the Secretary-General of the Conference.

Furthermore, while the Conference adopts its own rules of procedure and agenda, the United Nations General Assembly can pass resolutions recommending specific topics to the Conference.

Finally, the Conference submits a report of its activities to the General Assembly yearly, or more frequently, as appropriate.

The Conference on Disarmament Secretariat and Conference Support Branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, based in Geneva, provides organizational and substantive servicing to the Conference on Disarmament, the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community.

### **Work of the Conference**

Initially, the Conference and its predecessors were successful in meeting their mandate.

They were instrumental in drafting numerous arms control agreements: most importantly:



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**The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (1968),  
The Biological Weapons Convention (1972),  
The Chemical Weapons Convention (1993) and  
The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (1996).**