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Amid rising Statehood demands, Shah announces 5 new districts for Ladakh

Vijaita Singh

NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Monday that five new districts – Zaskar, Drass, Sham, Nubra and Changthang – would be created in the Union Territory of Ladakh for “bolstering governance in every nook and cranny”. Ladakh now has two districts – Leh and Kargil – with autonomous hill development councils.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said it was a step towards better governance and prosperity and the districts would “now receive more focused attention, bringing services and opportunities even closer to the people”.

The decision comes days before the September 1-October 2 padayatra to Delhi planned by the Leh Apex Body (LAB), an influential civil society group in the region.

The LAB, along with the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA), has been demanding Statehood since 2020.

‘Not giving up’

Cherring Dorjay Lakruk, co-chairman, LAB told *The Hindu*, “There is no giving up on our march to Delhi. Our struggle will continue. The decision to create the new districts does not change our demand for a Sixth Schedule status. While there were demands from Zaskar and Nubra to create new districts, there was no such demand from the other three districts.”

Echoing this, Sajjad Kargili of the KDA said, “Ladakh should be given an Assembly, the creation of seven districts validates the demand.”

“If there is no Assembly and if it is only being done for bureaucratic control, then it should not be a reason to divert our demand for Sixth Schedule and



Amit Shah

Statehood,” Mr. Kargili added.

The inclusion of Ladakh under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution (protection of tribal areas), job reservation for locals and two Lok Sabha and one Rajya Sabha seat for the region have also featured in their demands.

The Union Home Minister said the new districts would take the benefits meant for the people to their doorstep by bolstering governance in every nook and cranny.

People have hit the streets on several occasions demanding protection of their culture, identity, land and jobs from “outsiders”

Questioning intent

The Congress questioned the intention behind the move and asked whether the new districts would have elected councils on the lines of Leh and Kargil.

Jairam Ramesh, Congress general secretary (communications), said on social media platform X: “The elected Autonomous Hill Development Council for Leh was established in 1995. The elected Autonomous Hill Development Council for Kargil was set up in 2003. Now 5 new districts have been formed in Ladakh in addition to Leh and Kargil. Will there be elected Autonomous Hill Development Councils for each of the 5 new districts as well? ”

LADAKH DISTRICT MAP



The article you've uploaded discusses the Union Home Minister Amit Shah's announcement about the creation of five new districts in the Union Territory of Ladakh

. The new districts are Zaskar, Drass, Sham, Nubra, and Changthang.

This decision is aimed at improving governance and ensuring that government services reach every part of the region.

Key points from the article:

New Districts: Five new districts have been created in Ladakh to ensure better governance and access to services. Ladakh previously had only two districts: Leh and Kargil.

Political Reactions: The Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAB) and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) have been demanding statehood for Ladakh.

They have stated that while the creation of new districts is a step forward, it does not address their demand for Sixth Schedule status, which seeks to protect tribal areas, job reservations, and more significant local governance powers

Public Sentiment:

People in Ladakh have expressed concerns over the protection of their culture, identity, land, and jobs from "outsiders." There have been street protests demanding these protections.

Employees, pensioners in Punjab and Haryana dismiss UPS, call for implementation of OPS

Vikas Vasudeva

CHANDIGARH

Several State government employees and pensioners in Punjab and Haryana, who have been demanding restoration of the Old Pension Scheme (OPS), have dismissed the Union government's latest Unified Pension Scheme (UPS)

In Punjab, where the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government announced the restoration of the OPS in 2022, its implementation is yet to see the light of day.

As the delay in the release of standard operating procedures (SOPs) following the OPS notification continues, employees and pensioners under the banner of the Old Pension Scheme Restoration Sangharsh Committee have ex-



Government employees from across the country gathered at the Ramlila Maidan to demand the restoration of the OPS. FILE PHOTO

pressed their anguish on different occasions. With the Centre's UPS announcement, employees have only grown more anxious. Employees currently under the National Pension System (NPS) have asked the State government not to consider implementing

the UPS, and instead, implement the OPS in Punjab without further delay.

'Not in our interest'

"We are against the Centre's UPS as it is not in the interest of the employees or pensioners. We urge the AAP government

to not consider the UPS. In fact the Punjab government had in 2022 announced the restoration of the OPS, but we are still waiting for its implementation. The State government issued the OPS notification in 2022. Later, it constituted a committee to formulate the SOPs for implementing the OPS, but it's going to be close to two years now and yet the Punjab government has not come out with the SOPs or details about the scheme," Jasvir Singh Talwara, State convener of the joint employee-pensioners' front, told *The Hindu*.

"To step up our struggle, we will stage a march towards Punjab State Assembly on September 3, during the ongoing session of the Assembly. We want the AAP government to im-

mediately implement the OPS," Mr. Talwara said.

In neighbouring Haryana, where the Assembly election is due on October 1, the restoration of OPS for government employees has emerged as a key poll issue. Members of the Pension Bahali Sangharsh Samiti (Haryana) are travelling across the State in support of their demand to restore the OPS. They too have dismissed the latest UPS.

"We are against the UPS and it's only the OPS that we want to be restored. We are going across the State in a phased manner with our OPS Tiranga march and are urging people and political parties to extend support to our demand of restoring the OPS," Vijender Dhariwal, president of the front, said.

UNIFIED PENSION SCHEME VS OLD & NEW A COMPARISON



OPS

“Guaranteed 50% of Last Drawn Salary” and “Dearness Allowance Adjustments.”

- Gratuity
- No Contribution
- Fixed Pension



UPS

“50% of Average Basic Pay + Inflation Indexation” and “Guaranteed Pension, Family Benefits.”

- Assured Family Pension
- Inflation Protection
- Minimum Pension



NPS

“Market-Linked Returns” and “No Guaranteed Pension.”

- Tax Benefits
- Employee Contribution
- Flexible Withdrawals



	Old Pension Scheme (OPS)	National Pension Scheme (NPS)	Unified Pension Scheme (UPS)
Guaranteed pension	Yes	No	Yes
Pension amount	50% of last drawn basic pay + DA	Market-linked, depends on fund performance	50% of average basic pay over the last 12 months + DA
Government contribution	Not applicable	14% of basic pay + DA	18.5% of basic pay + DA
Employee contribution	Not applicable	10% of basic pay + DA	10% of basic pay + DA
Inflation protection	Yes	No	Yes
Lump sum payment	No	No	1/10th of the monthly pay (basic + DA) for every 6 months of service completed
Minimum pension*	₹9,000 + DA	No	₹10,000 + DA

Australia gives millions of workers 'right to disconnect'

Agence France-Presse
SYDNEY

Australia gave millions of workers the legal right to “disconnect” on Monday, allowing them to ignore unreasonable out-of-hours work calls and texts from their bosses.

People can now refuse to monitor, read, or respond to their employers' attempts to contact them outside work hours – unless that refusal is deemed “unreasonable”.

Unions welcomed the move, saying it gave workers a way to reclaim some work-life balance. “Today is a historic day for working people,” said Michele O’Neil, president of the Australian Council of Trade Unions.

“Australian unions have reclaimed the right to knock off after work,” she said.

In the streets of Sydney, people appeared to welcome the change.

“I have a very hard time disconnecting and even though I may not necessarily be logged on, my brain is constantly working overtime,” not-for-profit worker Karolina Joseski said.

But the reform got a cool welcome from Australia’s top industry body. “The ‘right to disconnect’ laws are rushed, poorly thought out and deeply confusing,” the Australian Industry Group said in a statement.

“At the very least, employers and employees will now be uncertain about whether they can take or make a call out of hours to offer an extra shift,” it said.

The law is similar to those of some European and Latin American countries.

HEMA COMMITTEE REPORT AFTERMATH Kerala police file first case, more senior actors accused of sexual misconduct

SHAJU PHILIP THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, AUGUST 26 ALLEGATIONS OF sexual misconduct that have gripped the Malayalam film industry...

PM: REITERATED SUPPORT FOR RETURN OF PEACE IN UKRAINE



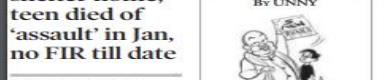
People take cover inside a metro station in Kyiv during a Russian missile and drone strike on Monday. Russia launched over 100 missiles and around 100 attack drones at Ukraine...

Modi and Biden discuss Ukraine, safety of Hindus in Bangladesh

India, US emphasised return of law & order in Dhaka: PMO SHUBHAJIT ROY NEW DELHI, AUGUST 26 DAYS AFTER returning from Kyiv, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to US President Joe Biden on Monday...

charge of the interim government in Dhaka, this was the first time that the issue was discussed between India and the US at the highest level.

At Delhi govt shelter home, teen died of 'assault' in Jan, no FIR till date



ANKITA UPADHYAY NEW DELHI, AUGUST 26 IN JANUARY this year, a 16-year-old living at Asha Kisan, a Delhi government-run shelter home for the mentally challenged, lost his life because of "blunt force injuries".

BUSINESS AS USUAL BY UNNNY



Junior Doctor's rape-murder case: What'sApp groups to raising funds: Doctors lead fight for justice

The West Bengal Junior Doctors' front, a general body of medics from across the state, has been spearheading the fight, holding daily meetings to discuss strategy...

As Kharge family trust gets plot in aerospace park, BJP says new scam

AKRAMM BHENGALE, AUGUST 26 A FRESH row has broken out over land allotment in Karnataka, with the BJP questioning the grant of a Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board (KIADB) site to a trust run by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's family...

up civic amenities at the aerospace park, to be allocated under the scheduled 200-acre quota. In a post on X, Kharge's other son, the Karnataka IJET and Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister, Prakash Kharge, denied the allegations.

OVER 70 KILLED AFTER ATTACKS IN PAK'S BALUCHISTAN

SHIVANI NAIK MUMBAI, AUGUST 26 RABINJARAYAN PATRI knows a thing or two about China as a badminton player. He is now a coach at the Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy (PPBA) in Bengaluru.

How India's U-15 winner trained in China, won local tournament at 6

at China's Chengdu. It was in China — a country known for its tough training and an assembly line of champion shuttlers — that Tanvi picked up the sport and trained in badminton for two-and-a-half years. Patri, who was born in Odisha's Balasore, is a software professional with Cognizant in Bengaluru. He had other options, he could have gone to the US, but on a whim, he opted for China's Jiangsu province.

starts there," he recalls. "Children don't usually smash when they should play at a nearby court. I smash at her body, so her defence improved quickly, and because children like to respond in kind, she started copying me."

Centre hits back at Bengal

OPP sides MP's comments 'gross insult'.

Global investor, analyst, author, is guest at Adda today

Global Investor, analyst, author and an expert who reveals the big picture on socio-economic and political issues weekly, Ruchir Sharma, will be the guest at the Express Adda in Mumbai on Tuesday.

BJP's first list cancelled, pruned to 16 names as old guard 'protests'

BASHARAT MASOOD, AUGUST 26 THE BJP's election campaign for Jammu and Kashmir got off to a less than happy start Monday when the party had to withdraw its first list of candidates within hours, reportedly after protests by old-timers over being ignored in favour of newcomers.

51 seats for NC, 32 for Cong, friendly fight in J&K polls

Filing of nominations for first phase of voting in 24 constituencies ends today

NAVEED IQBAL SRINAGAR, AUGUST 26 BARRING ONE seat in Kashmir province and four in Jammu, where they will be in a friendly fight, the National Conference and Congress sealed their deal on Monday for the coming Assembly elections in the Union territory.

After negotiations at NC president Farooq Abdullah's residence lasting through the day, culminating in the eve before the nomination deadline for the first phase of voting ends, the parties announced that of the 90 seats in

JK, the NC will contest 51 and the Congress 32, putting aside one constituency each for the CPDM and J&K Panthers Party.

US diplomats with NC leader Omar Abdullah at his residence in Srinagar on Monday



US diplomats with NC leader Omar Abdullah at his residence in Srinagar on Monday.

Not authorised to speak on policy issue: BJP raps Kanganra for farm remark

VIKAS PATHAK, ASAD REHMAN & RAASHI JAGGA NEW DELHI, LUDHIANA, AUGUST 26 WITH THE Haryana Assembly elections just over a month away, the BJP on Monday quickly distanced itself from its Lok Sabha MP Kanganra Ranaut's statement that "dead bodies were hanging and rapes were taking place" during the 2020-21 farmers' agitation against three farm laws that were subsequently repealed.

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Centre hits back at Bengal

Centre hits back at Bengal

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WHAT IS UKRAINE'S HOME-GROWN 'GAME-CHANGER' MISSILE?

PRESIDENT VOLODYMYR Zelenskyy, on Saturday, confirmed the existence of a new homegrown long-range weapon — a missile-drone hybrid — which can strike deep into Russia. The Palianytsia was used for the first time on Saturday to target a Russian military installation, officials said without providing further details.

Born out of necessity

The Palianytsia was born out of necessity, with its development starting some 18 months ago. Currently, the United States and other Western allies provide long-range weapons to Ukraine but restrict their usage deep into Russian territory out of fears of further escalation.

The Institute for the Study of War said that Russia was “leveraging sanctuary space in deep rear areas” for military infrastructure. At least 250 significant targets in Russia are within range of ATACMS mis-

siles, but current restrictions allow Ukraine to strike only 20 of them, ISW estimated.



Possibly, a game-changer

The Palianytsia with a 700-km range, comparable to the ATACMS, will allow Ukraine to bypass western restrictions.

Ukraine's technology minister, Mykhailo Fedorov, told *The AP* that “this will be a game changer” because Ukraine will be able to “strike where Russia doesn't expect it today”. He said: “It's impossible to produce enough air defense systems to protect such a large territory... [the Palianytsia] opens up the possibility of operating deep behind enemy lines.

The missile has a solid-fuel booster that accelerates it, followed by a jet engine, a specialist told *The AP*. Each missile costs less than \$1 million, and the military is turning to the private sector to bring down production costs further. **AP**

- The article discusses Ukraine's newly developed long-range weapon, the **Paliantysia** missile, which has been described as a potential "game-changer" in the ongoing conflict with Russia.
- **Development Out of Necessity:** The Paliantysia was developed over the past 18 months, largely out of necessity due to restrictions imposed by Ukraine's Western allies on using their supplied long-range weapons deep into Russian territory.

- 
- **Capabilities and Range:** The missile is reported to have a range of 700 km, comparable to the U.S.-supplied ATACMS. This range allows Ukraine to strike deep within Russian territory, targeting key military installations.
- 

- **Strategic Impact:** Ukraine's technology minister, Mykhailo Fedorov, suggested that this missile could be a "game-changer" because it allows Ukraine to bypass Western restrictions and strike at targets that Russia may not anticipate.
- The missile's development was in response to Russia's strategy of placing significant military infrastructure deep in rear areas, leveraging these "sanctuary spaces."

- **Technical Details:**

- The Paliantysia missile is said to be a missile-drone hybrid with a solid-fuel booster and a jet engine, making it capable of penetrating deep into enemy lines.
- It is also noted for its cost-effectiveness, with each missile costing less than \$1 million, and the production being driven by private sector involvement to further reduce costs.

Two new US-India agreements: a short history of growing defence ties

AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 26

INDIA AND the US have signed a Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA) and Memorandum of Agreement regarding the Assignment of Liaison Officers, the latest in a series of bilateral military agreements that have enhanced defence and security cooperation between the two countries over the past decade.

During Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's four-day official visit that concluded on Sunday, the partner nations agreed to advance priority co-production projects including jet engines, unmanned platforms, munitions, and ground mobility systems under the 2023 US-India Roadmap for Defence Industrial Cooperation.

Two new agreements

SOSA: Under SOSA, the US and India will provide reciprocal priority support to each other for goods and services that promote national defence. It will "enable both countries to acquire the industrial resources they

need from one another to resolve unanticipated supply chain disruptions to meet national security needs", the US Department of Defense (DoD) said in a statement.

India is the 18th SOSA partner of the US. While SOSA, according to the DoD, are an important mechanism to strengthen interoperability with US defence trade partners, it is legally non-binding. The DoD has been working to conclude another agreement with India, the Reciprocal Defence Procurement (RDP) Agreement, which will be binding.

RDP Agreements are intended to promote rationalisation, standardisation, interchangeability, and interoperability of conventional defence equipment with US allies and other friendly governments. The US has signed RDP Agreements with 28 countries so far.

MOU ON LIAISON OFFICERS: The Memorandum of Agreement regarding the Assignment of Liaison Officers is a progression on a decision taken earlier to increase information-sharing between India and the US, and to post Indian armed forces officers in key strategic US Commands. India will deploy the first Liaison Officer to the US Special Opera-

tions Command headquarters in Florida.

Cooperation milestones

The vision for bilateral defence cooperation was encapsulated in the September 2013 Joint US-India Declaration on Defence Cooperation and the 2015 Framework for the US-India Defence Relationship, in which the two countries committed themselves to increasing cooperation in the sector.

2023 ROADMAP: The roadmap for defence industrial cooperation released last year envisioned the conclusion of SOSA and the RDP Agreement.

The US endorsed the integration of the Indian defence industry into global supply chains, and extended support to India to develop naval and maritime infrastructure to create an Indo-Pacific regional hub for ship and aircraft repair and maintenance.

Priority areas of cooperation identified in the roadmap included Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR), Undersea Domain Awareness, Air Combat and Support, including Aero engines, mu-

nitions systems, and mobility.

iCET: In January 2023, the US-India initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET) was discussed to expand the strategic technology partnership and defence industrial cooperation. National Security Advisors Ajit Doval and Jake Sullivan discussed opportunities for greater cooperation in critical and emerging technologies, including co-development and co-production, and ways to

deepen connectivity across our innovation ecosystems.

INDUS-X: In June 2023, during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's official state visit to the US, the DoD and Ministry of Defence launched the India-US Defence Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X), which took forward the commitment to build a defence innovation bridge under iCET.

FOUNDATIONAL AGREEMENTS: In 2002, India and the US had signed the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) to facilitate sharing of military information. Between 2016 and 2020, the two sides signed four more agreements.

The Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) of 2016 established the basic terms, conditions, and procedures for reciprocal provision of logistic support, supplies, and services between the two militaries.

In 2018, the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA), an India-specific version of the Communications and Information Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA), was signed to secure military communication between the countries, facilitate access to advanced defence systems, and enable India to optimally utilise its existing US-origin platforms.

The Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) of 2020 aimed to facilitate the sharing of military information including maps, nautical charts, and other unclassified imagery and data.

Additionally, in 2019, the Industrial Security Annex (ISA) to the GSOMIA was signed to facilitate the exchange of classified information between the defence industries of the two countries.

Other deals and sales

■ In 2016, the US designated India as a Major Defence Partner. Commensurate with this designation, in 2018, India was elevated to Strategic Trade Authorisation tier 1 status, which gave it licence-free access to a range of military and dual-use technologies regulated by the US Department of Commerce.

■ Earlier in 2012, the Defence Trade and Technology Initiative (DTTI) agreement was signed to promote industrial cooperation and defence trade between the two countries.

■ There is also a Memorandum of Intent between the US Defence Innovation Unit (DIU) and the Indian Defence Innovation Organization-Innovation for Defence Excellence (DIO-iDEX).

■ Big-ticket Indian military procurements from the US include MH-60R Seahawk multirole helicopters, Sig Sauer Rifles, and M777 ultra light howitzers.

■ Negotiations are underway to manufacture GE F-414 jet engines in India for the LCA MK2 fighters, and to procure 31 MQ-9B High-Altitude Long-Endurance (HALE) UAVs. Deliveries of the GE-F404 engines for the LCA Tejas Mark-1A are underway.

EXPLAINED
STRATEGY

For 'frictionless credit', RBI to launch technology platform; to call it Unified Lending Interface: Das

HITESH VYAS

MUMBAI, AUGUST 26

RESERVE BANK of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das on Monday said the Unified Lending Interface (ULI), to enable frictionless credit, will soon be introduced. The pilot project for a public tech platform for frictionless credit was already announced in August last year.

Speaking at the Global Conference on Digital Public Infrastructure and Emerging Technologies, Das highlighted that ULI will play a similar role in transforming the lending space in the country, just as United Payment Interface (UPI) revolutionised the payment ecosystem.

"Continuing on the journey of digitalisation of banking services, last year we launched the pilot of a technology platform which enables frictionless credit. From now on, we propose to call it the Unified Lending Interface (ULI)," Das said.

While announcing the pilot project for frictionless credit in August last year, the RBI had said that for digital credit delivery, the data required for credit appraisal are available with different entities like Central and State governments, account aggregators, banks, credit information companies and digital identity authorities. However, they are in separate systems, creating hindrance in frictionless and timely delivery of rule-based lending, it has said.

Das noted that ULI facilitates seamless and consent-based flow of digital information, including even land records of various states, from multiple data service providers to lenders thereby cutting down the time taken for credit appraisal, especially for smaller and rural borrowers.

The ULI architecture has common and standardised APIs (Application Programming Interface), designed for a 'plug and play' approach to ensure digital access to information from diverse sources, which reduces the



Shaktikanta Das, Governor, Reserve Bank of India. *File*

complexity of multiple technical integrations. It will also enable borrowers to get the benefit of seamless delivery of credit, quicker turnaround time without requiring extensive documentation, he said.

"In sum, by digitising access to customer's financial and non-financial data that otherwise resided in disparate silos, ULI is expected to cater to large unmet

EXPLAINED E 'Plug and play' ULI

THE ULI architecture has common and standardised APIs (Application Programming Interface), designed for a 'plug and play' approach to ensure digital access to information from sources, which reduces the complexity of multiple integrations.

demand for credit across various sectors, particularly for agricultural and MSME borrowers," Das explained.

He further said that while the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) can make processes simpler and more efficient, lenders need to be mindful of adopting such new-age technologies in critical decision-making segments such as loan sanction-

ing.



"AI promises to make processes simpler and efficient. It can also emulate decision making to a great extent. However, when it comes to regulated financial institutions, there should be careful adoption of AI in critical decision-making segments, for example, in loan sanctioning," he said.


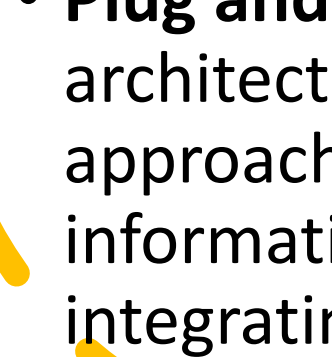
He said since AI is a data-driven science, the authenticity of data being used in training the models, the possibility of biases and concerns about data privacy need to be carefully examined.


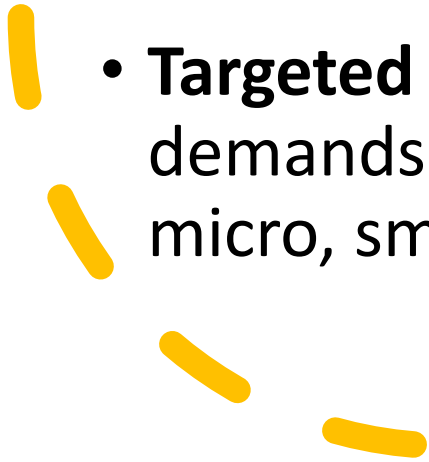
Going beyond understanding the risks posed by AI, financial institutions should clearly outline the liabilities and ensure a calibrated and responsible adoption.



"It is important to be proactive to leverage the capabilities of new technologies, but at the same time it is essential to be abundantly mindful of the associated risks and challenges," he said.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

- 
- **Introduction of ULI:** RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das announced that the ULI will be introduced to facilitate seamless and consent-based access to digital information for credit appraisal. The pilot project for this platform was announced last year.
 - **Comparison to UPI:** Das highlighted that ULI could transform the lending space in a manner similar to how the Unified Payment Interface (UPI) revolutionized the payments ecosystem in India.
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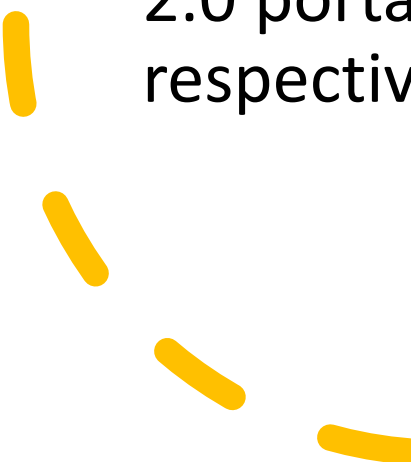
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- **Streamlined Credit Appraisal:** ULI aims to cut down the time required for credit appraisal by integrating data from various entities such as Central and State governments, banks, account aggregators, and digital identity authorities. Currently, these entities operate in silos, leading to delays in lending.
 - **Plug and Play Architecture:** The ULI platform will have a common architecture and standardized APIs designed for a "plug and play" approach. This will ensure easy and secure digital access to information from multiple sources, reducing the complexity of integrating different systems.
- 

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- **Focus on AI Integration:** The RBI Governor also discussed the potential of integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into the ULI platform. While AI can simplify processes, especially in loan sanctioning, Das emphasized the need for careful adoption, particularly in regulated financial institutions, due to concerns about data privacy and biases in decision-making.
 - **Targeted Sectors:** The platform is expected to cater to large unmet demands for credit, particularly in the agricultural sector and among micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
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- **Responsible Adoption of Technology:** Das stressed the importance of understanding and mitigating the risks associated with new technologies like AI while leveraging their capabilities for the benefit of the financial sector.
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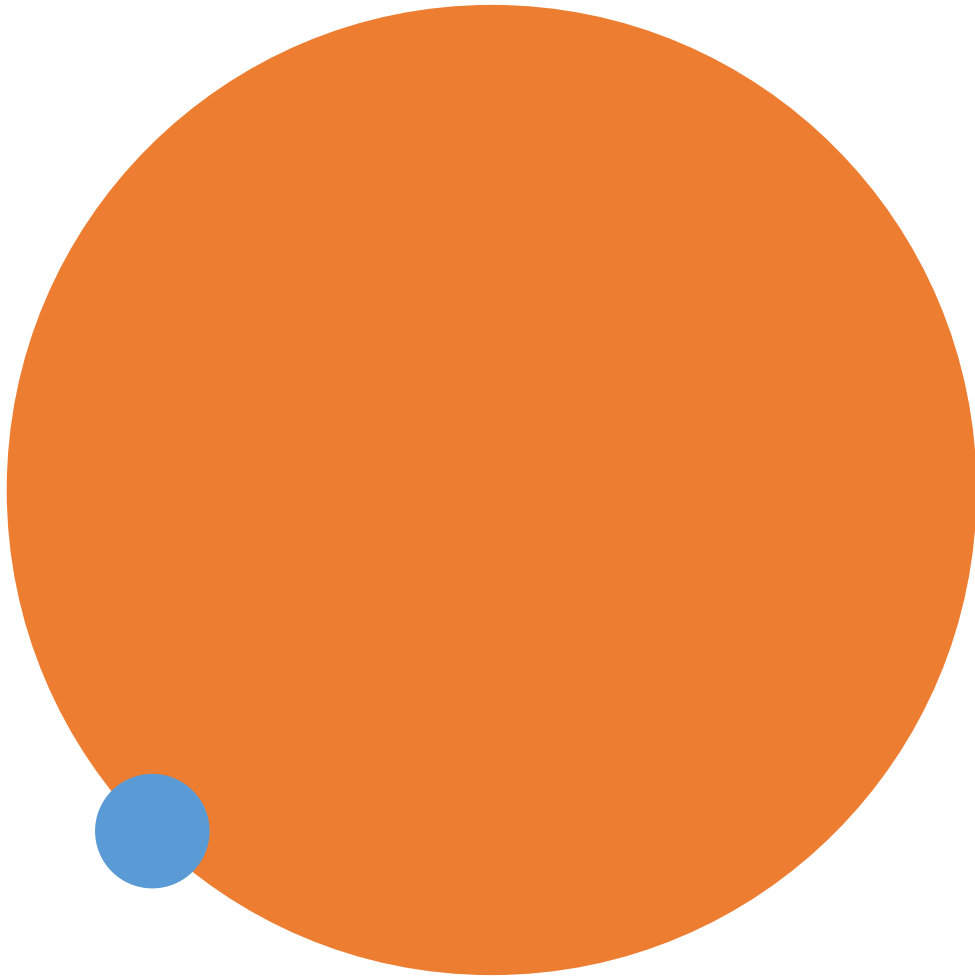
Registration of Exotic Animals

- 
- Recently, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) asked people, organisations, and zoos to register any exotic animals they have that are listed under Schedule IV of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 (Amendment Act, 2022).
 - The registration must be done electronically through the PARIVESH 2.0 portal and submitted to the Chief Wildlife Warden of the respective State.
- 


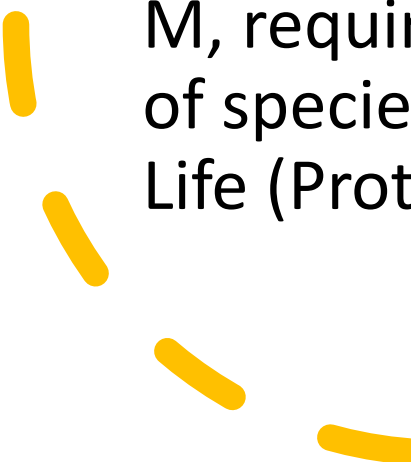
What are the Key Facts About the Exotic Species?






About Exotic Animals:

- **Exotic species** are animal or plant species **moved** from their **original range (location)** to a new one. These species are introduced to a **new location** most often by **people**.





- **Examples of Exotic Animals:**
 - **Ball python** (western Africa), **Iguana** (Central and South America), **Cockatiel** (Australia), **Red-eared slider turtle** (USA and Mexico), **African grey parrot** (Central Africa), **Amazonian parrot** (South and Central America) etc are examples of exotic animals in India.


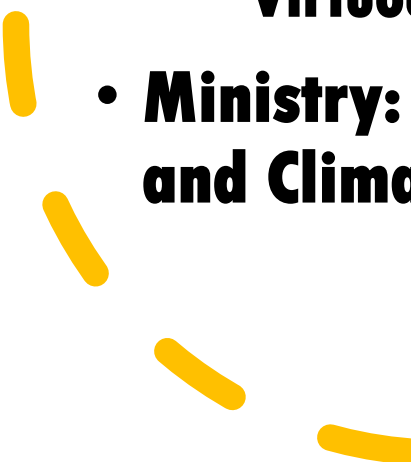
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- Legal Requirement:
 - As per the Living Animal Species (Reporting and Registration) Rules, 2024, any person possessing a species listed in Schedule IV of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, must report and register the species.
 - Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022 introduced Section 49 M, requiring the registration of possession, transfer, birth, and death of species listed in the CITES Appendices and Schedule IV of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.

- 
- Concerns with Exotic Species:
 - Non-Regulation: Exotic species are imported to India and bred in captivity without proper registration which may pose a threat of zoonotic diseases.
 - Impending Pandemic: The Covid-19 pandemic, a zoonotic disease, brought attention to the dangers of unregulated trade and ownership of exotic animals.
 - Smuggling of Exotic Animals: Activists have raised concerns about the increased smuggling of endangered exotic animals into India from Southeast Asia and other regions.
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What are the Key Facts About the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 (WPA)?

About WPA, 1972: It aims to protect **wild animals, birds, and plants**, and address related issues to ensure the ecological and **environmental sustainability** of the country.

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- **Schedules of WPA, 1972: The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 has four schedules after the Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022.**
Schedule I: For species that receive the highest level of protection. E.g., Tiger, Elephants, Rhino etc.
 - **Schedule II: For species that receive a lesser degree of protection. E.g., Kites, Eagle, Falcons prinias etc.**
 - **Schedule III: For plant species**
 - **Schedule IV: For species protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). E.g., Bear.**
- 

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- **What is the PARIVESH 2.0 Portal?**
 - **About: PARIVESH 2.0 is a web-based application for online submission and monitoring of Environmental, Forest, Wildlife, and Coastal Regulation Zone clearances.**
 - **PARIVESH is an acronym for Pro-Active and Responsive facilitation by Interactive, Virtuous, and Environmental Single Window Hub.**
 - **Ministry: It has been developed by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).**
- 

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

Constitutional Provisions for Wildlife

- **42nd Amendment Act, 1976:** Forests & Protection of Wild Animals and Birds (moved from State to Concurrent List)
- **Article 48 A:** State shall endeavor to protect & improve environment and safeguard forests and wildlife of country
- **Article 51 A (g):** Fundamental duty to protect & improve natural environment including forests and Wildlife

Legal Frameworks

- Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972
- Biological Diversity Act, 2002

Major Conservation Initiatives

- **Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (IDWH):**
 - ⌚ Financial assistance provided to State/UT Governments for protection and conservation of wildlife
 - ⌚ A Centrally Sponsored Scheme
- **National Wildlife Action Plan (2017-2031)**
- **Guidelines for Eco-tourism in Protected Areas**
- **Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation**
- **Wildlife Crime Control Bureau:** To combat wildlife-related crimes
- **Wildlife Division (MoEFCC):**
 - ⌚ Policy and law for conservation of biodiversity and Protected Area network
 - ⌚ Technical and financial support to the State/ UTs under IDHW, Central Zoo Authority and Wildlife Institute of India


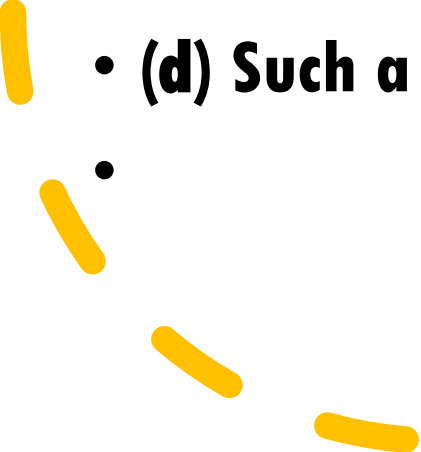
- **Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB):** Collection, collation of intelligence & its dissemination, establishment of centralized Wild Life crime databank, coordination etc.
- **Wildlife Crime Control:**
 - ⌚ Operation Save Kurma
 - ⌚ Operation Thunderbird


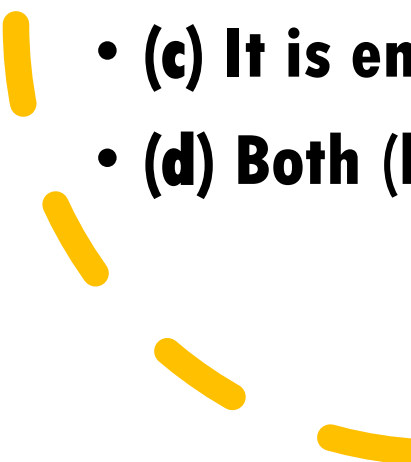
Species-Specific Initiatives

- Protection and conservation of Greater Adjutant in Gangetic riverine tract
- Dolphin Conservation in Non-Protected Area Segment of Ganga River
- Conservation Breeding Centre for Wild water buffalo (2020)
- Recovery programme for Snow leopard (2009)
- Recovery programme for Vultures (2006)
- Project Elephant (1992)
- Project Tiger/National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) (1973)

India's Collaboration with Global Wildlife Conservation Efforts



- ⌚ Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- ⌚ Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)
- ⌚ Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- ⌚ World Heritage Convention
- ⌚ Ramsar Convention
- ⌚ The Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network (TRAFFIC)
- ⌚ United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)
- ⌚ International Whaling Commission (IWC)
- ⌚ International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- ⌚ Global Tiger Forum (GTF)

- 
- **If a particular plant species is placed under Schedule VI of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, what is the implication? (2020)**
 - **(a) A licence is required to cultivate that plant.**
 - **(b) Such a plant cannot be cultivated under any circumstances.**
 - **(c) It is a Genetically Modified crop plant.**
 - **(d) Such a plant is invasive and harmful to the ecosystem.**
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- **In India, if a species of tortoise is declared protected under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, what does it imply? (2017)**
 - **(a) It enjoys the same level of protection as the tiger.**
 - **(b) It no longer exists in the wild, a few individuals are under captive protection; and now it is impossible to prevent its extinction.**
 - **(c) It is endemic to a particular region of India.**
 - **(d) Both (b) and (c) stated above are correct in this context.**
- 

Microplastics found in Human Brain Tissue



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- Studies reveal alarming levels of microplastics in human brain tissue, underscoring the urgent need to address plastic pollution.
 -
 - **About Microplastics:**
 - **Microplastics** are defined as **synthetic solid particles** sized ranging from **1 micrometre to 5 millimetres (mm)**, which are insoluble in water.
 - They are **particularly harmful** to the oceans as they **don't readily break down into harmless molecules and adversely affect the health of marine organisms**, which mistake plastic for food.
- 

Key findings:

Microplastics in Brain Tissue: Detected in brain samples at higher concentrations than other organs.

Health Risks: Linked to oxidative stress, cardiovascular issues, and potential cognitive impairments.

Environmental Ubiquity: Found in various human organs including lungs, placentas, and reproductive organs.

Regulatory Gaps: No current standards for microplastics in food or water in the US.

Rising Levels: The concentration of microplastics in the brain has increased over time.

Animal Studies: Show links to fertility issues, cancer, and endocrine disruption.

Initiatives Taken to tackle microplastics:

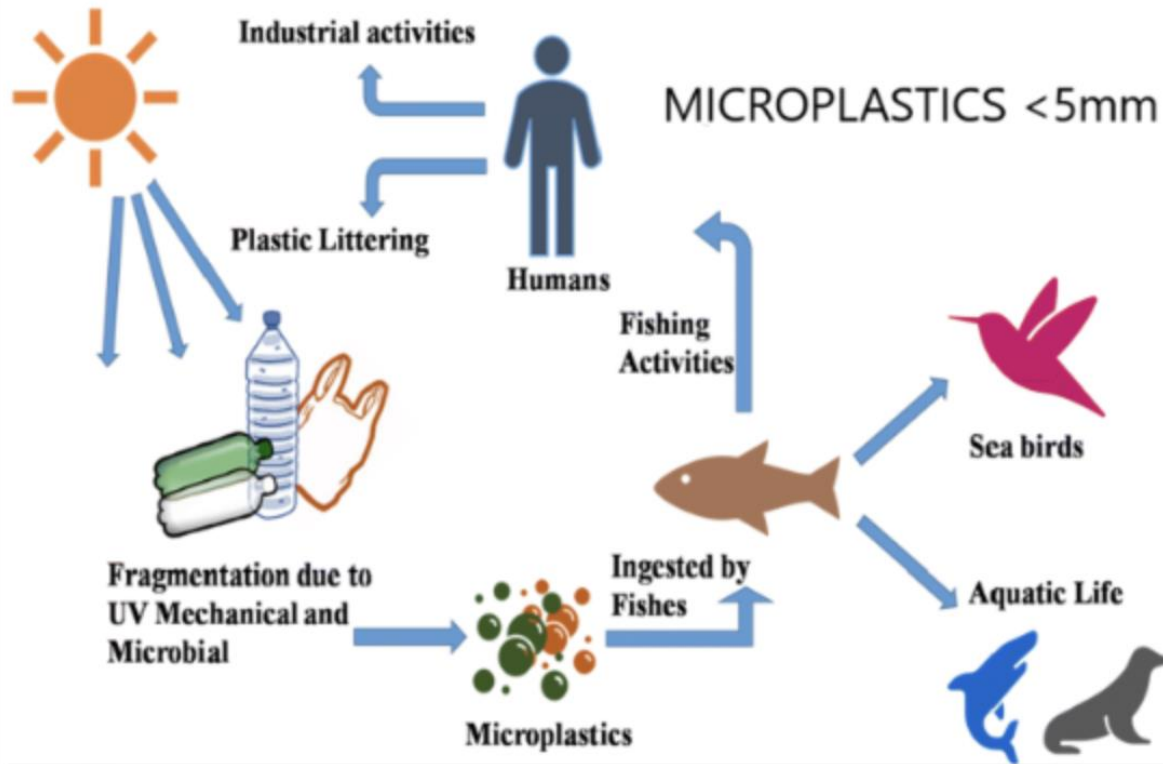
Global Initiatives:

- Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML)
- GloLitter Partnerships Project
- London Convention, 1972

India-Specific Initiatives:

- Elimination of single-use plastic
- Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016
- Un-Plastic Collective

As per the new study, with our every breath, we may be inhaling substantial quantities of microplastics that eventually flow into our blood and accumulate on our organs

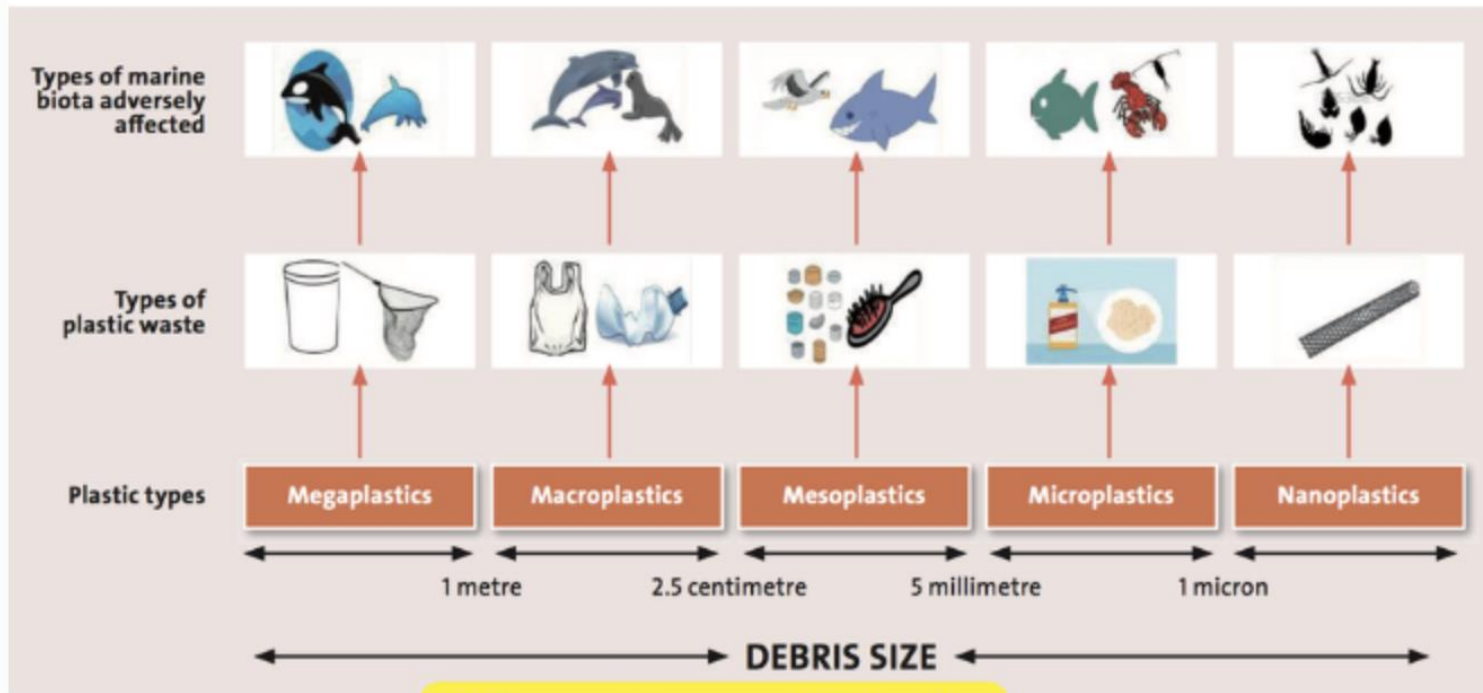


Impacts:

Health impact

- **On Humans:** The smallest particles can enter blood streams and collect in organs like the liver and brain
- **As per WHO,** the level of microplastics in drinking-water is not yet dangerous for humans but called for more research into potential future risk.
- **On Aquatic animals:** Microplastics damage aquatic creatures including turtles and birds. It blocks digestive tracts, and alters feeding behavior

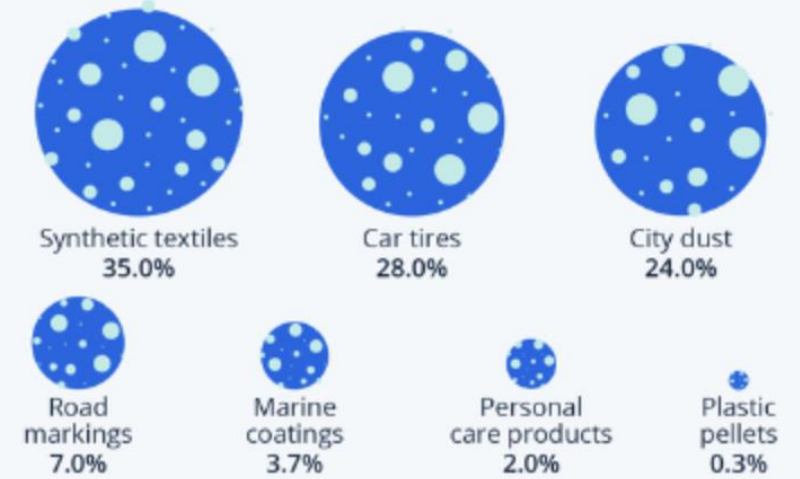
Environmental Impact: According to the IUCN, at least 8 million tonnes of plastic end up in the oceans every year and make up about 80% of all marine debris



Different types of Plastics

Where the Ocean's Microplastics Come From

Estimated share of total microplastics in the world's oceans, by source



Source: International Union for Conservation of Nature

Sources of Plastics



Lung cancer vaccine

The world's first mRNA lung cancer vaccine, BNT116, has begun clinical trials across seven countries, including the UK, the US, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Spain, and Turkey.

This vaccine targets non-small cell lung cancer (NSCLC), the most common form of the disease, by instructing the body to attack cancer cells and prevent their recurrence.

The vaccine uses messenger RNA technology, similar to COVID-19 vaccines, to prompt the immune system to recognize and fight NSCLC cells.



CURRENT AFFAIRS COURSE

- ✓ UPDATED CURRENT AFFAIRS (2023+2024)|
- ✓ COMPLETE NOTES(PDF)

COMPLETE GK/GS COURSE

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- ✓ HISTORY
- ✓ POLITY
- ✓ GEOGRAPHY
- ✓ ECONOMICS

USE CODE


B60

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• LIVE DOUBT SESSION



A group of people are clapping in a dimly lit room. The focus is on the hands and forearms of several individuals, some wearing suits. The background is blurred, showing more people and a window. The overall mood is celebratory and professional.

Thank you
guys.
