



INSIGHTSIAS

SIMPLIFYING IAS EXAM PREPARATION



**INSIGHTS
DAILY
CURRENT
AFFAIRS + PIB
SUMMARY**

25 APRIL 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GS Paper 2:

- World Trade Organisation 3

GS Paper 3:

- High Seas Treaty (BBNJ Treaty) 4
- Indian Inland Waterways 6

Content for Mains Enrichment (CME)

- Zero Measles-Rubella Elimination Campaign 7

Facts for Prelims (FFP):

- Chlorpyrifos Pesticide 8
- Cabinet Committee on Security 9
- Egg Mayonnaise 10
- 'Exercise Aakraman' & INS Surat 11
- Simla Agreement 1972 12

Mapping:

- Krishna River 13

WORLD TRADE ORGANISATION

Syllabus: Multilateral Organisation

Context: The relevance of the WTO is under debate as critics argue it has lost direction and needs major reforms, especially amid rising protectionist measures like reciprocal tariffs.

About World Trade Organisation:

- **Established:** 1 January 1995, replacing GATT (1947).
- **Headquarters:** Geneva, Switzerland.
- **Key Functions:**
 - Facilitate **global trade negotiations**.
 - Resolve **trade disputes** through a binding mechanism.
 - Monitor **trade policies** of member states (164 members as of 2025).
 - Uphold the **Most Favoured Nation (MFN)** and **National Treatment** principles.



WTO Losing Its Relevance:

- **Dispute Settlement Dysfunction:** The Appellate Body is paralyzed due to the U.S. blocking appointments since 2017.
- **Negotiation Paralysis:** The **Doha Round (2001)** failed to reach consensus on agriculture, subsidies, and trade facilitation.
- **Rise of FTAs:** Nations now prefer **bilateral/multilateral FTAs**, sidestepping WTO's MFN obligations.
- **Lack of Compliance Tools:** WTO cannot enforce transparency in trade barriers or subsidy disclosures (e.g., China's market practices).
- **Consensus Deadlock:** All decisions require unanimity, which stalls any reform (e.g., India and U.S. blocked voting reforms).

Yet, WTO Remains Relevant:

- **Global Forum for Dialogue:** It is still the **only universal trade platform** with binding rules and a common framework.
- **Fisheries Agreement (2022):** A modest success showing potential for consensus.
- **Rule-Based Order:** WTO remains a **bulwark against protectionism** (e.g., Smoot-Hawley era risks).
- **Monitoring Role:** Despite limitations, WTO offers transparency through **Trade Policy Reviews**.

Recent Failures of WTO:

- **Agriculture Talks Collapse:** Ongoing impasse on public stockholding, **AMS limits**, and domestic support.
- **Appellate Body Dysfunction:** No dispute can reach a final resolution due to a non-functional appellate system.
- **Inability to Regulate China:** WTO failed to predict or address **market access asymmetries** and **state-led excess capacities**.
- **US Tariff Wars:** Trump's Section 301 and 232 tariffs undermined the WTO's dispute mechanism and MFN principles.

Way Ahead:

- **Appellate Reform:** Rebuild trust by modifying the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) to address concerns of overreach.
- **Revisiting Consensus Rule:** Introduce a **weighted voting mechanism** to prevent unilateral blockages.
- **Digital Trade Rules:** WTO must urgently frame **rules on e-commerce, data flow, and digital goods**.
- **China Integration Review:** Reassess rules to address market distortions caused by **state-owned enterprises (SOEs)**.
- **Inclusive Agenda:** Acknowledge development needs of Global South while pushing for labour and environmental standards.

Conclusion:

The WTO, while facing a legitimacy crisis, remains central to a rule-based global trade order. Reforming its dispute resolution, consensus-based functioning, and digital trade agenda is essential. Without urgent reform, it risks fading into irrelevance amid growing protectionism.

PYQ:

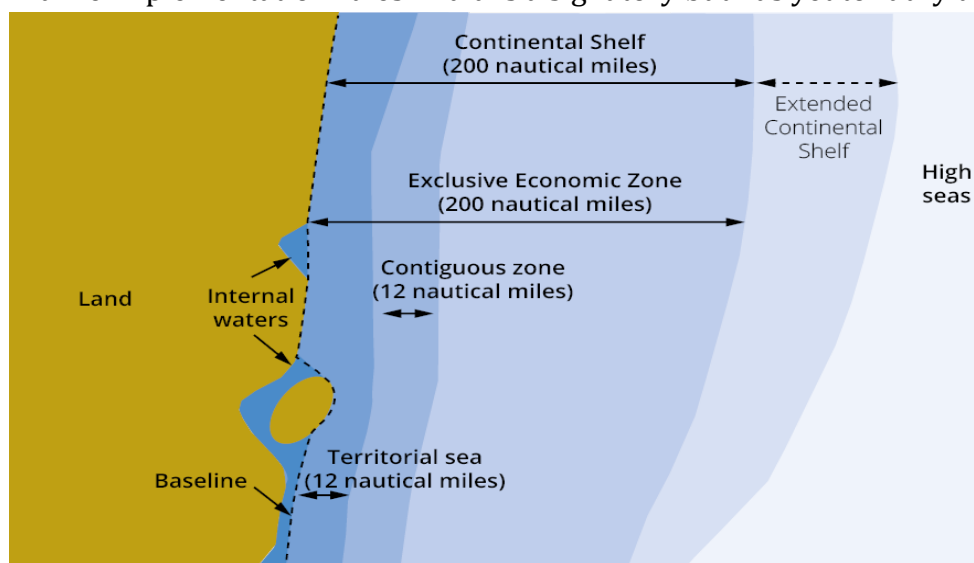
1. What are the key areas of reform if the WTO has to survive in the present context of Trade War', especially keeping in mind the interest of India? (UPSC-2018)

GS Paper 3:

HIGH SEAS TREATY (BBNJ TREATY)

Syllabus: Environment

Context: Delegates have gathered in New York for the first Preparatory Commission session of the BBNJ Treaty, aiming to finalize implementation rules. India is a signatory but has yet to ratify the agreement.



About the BBNJ Treaty (High Seas Treaty):

- **What It Is:** The **Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ)** Treaty is the third implementing agreement under the **UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)**.
- **Objective:**

1. **Protect marine biodiversity** in the high seas.
 2. Ensure **fair benefit-sharing** from marine genetic resources.
 3. Mandate **Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs)** for high-seas activities.
- **Coverage:** Applies to **areas beyond 200 nautical miles** from national EEZs, which make up 64% of global oceans.
 - **India's Status:** India has signed the treaty but **has not yet ratified it**.

Why the BBNJ Treaty Is Needed?

- **Marine Protection Gap:** Only **1.44% of high seas** are currently protected despite covering two-thirds of ocean space.
- **Unregulated Activities:** Deep-sea mining, overfishing, and pollution operate with **minimal international oversight**.
- **Marine Genetic Resources (MGR):** Rising commercial use of MGRs in pharmaceuticals and biotechnology necessitates a **regulatory framework**.
- **Equity in Ocean Use:** Aims to prevent dominance by developed nations and ensure **Global South access to ocean wealth**.

Challenges to the BBNJ Treaty:

- **Low Ratification:** As of April 2025, only 21 countries have ratified the treaty out of the required 60 for enforcement.
- **Geopolitical Tensions:** Disputes in the South China Sea and Bay of Bengal delay consensus on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).
- **Weak Enforcement:** Lack of enforcement mechanisms and opt-out options risk weakening compliance.
- **Overlap with Other Conventions:** Potential conflict with the Convention on Biological Diversity (**CBD**) over MGRs.
- **Financial Burden on Developing Nations:** Capacity-building and tech transfer provisions lack binding support commitments.
- **Implementation Gaps:** Treaty does not cover oil and gas exploration or pollution in EEZs, undermining ecological coherence.

Way Ahead:

- **Fast-Track Ratification:** Urgent diplomatic push needed to achieve 60 ratifications, especially by UNOC-3 in France.
- **Inclusive Decision-Making:** Scientific and technical bodies must have balanced regional representation and expertise.
- **Funding Mechanism:** Ensure operationalization of the special fund with tailored contributions from developed countries.
- **Integrated Ocean Governance:** Bridge governance between high seas and **EEZs** to address interconnected marine threats.
- **Monitoring & Transparency:** Develop digital tools and global dashboards for tracking MPAs and EIA compliance.

Conclusion:

The BBNJ Treaty is a transformative tool for global ocean conservation. But without **strong political will, institutional design, and equity-focused implementation**, its goals will remain aspirational. The oceans, already under stress, can no longer wait for half-measures.

PYQ:

1. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has predicted a global sea level rise of about one meter by AD 2100. What would be its impact in India and the other countries in the Indian Ocean region? (UPSC-2023)

INDIAN INLAND WATERWAYS

Syllabus: Infrastructure

Context: India recorded an all-time high of 145.5 MMT cargo movement through inland waterways in FY 2024–25, up from just 18.1 MMT in FY 2013–14. This marks a CAGR of 20.86%.

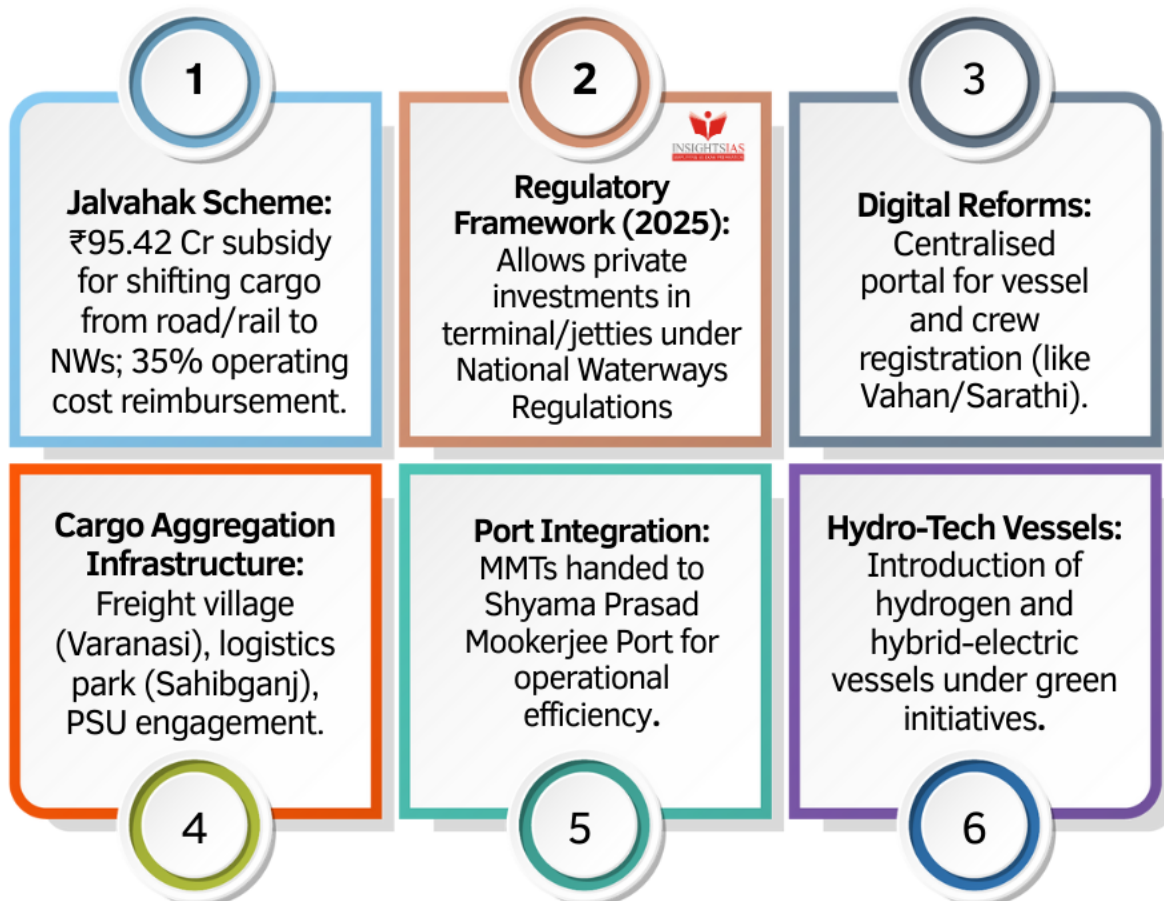
Key Statistics on Indian Inland Waterways:

- **Cargo Traffic:** Increased from 18.1 MMT (FY14) to 145.5 MMT (FY25).
- **National Waterways:** Expanded from 5 (2014) to 111 (2024) under the National Waterways Act, 2016.
- **Operational Length:** Increased from 2,716 km (2014–15) to 4,894 km (2023–24).
- **Passenger Movement:** Touched 1.61 crore in FY 2023–24.
- **Top Commodities:** Coal, iron ore, sand, fly ash — accounting for over 68% of cargo.

Achievements in Inland Waterways:

- **Digital Innovations:** LADIS, RIS, PANI, Car-D, MIRS improve navigational safety and efficiency.
- **Infrastructure Push:** 3 MMTs (Varanasi, Sahibganj, Haldia), 1 IMT (Kalughat), community jetties, green vessels introduced.
- **Policy Milestones:** Launch of Jalvahak Scheme, extension of Tonnage Tax to inland vessels.
- **Global Model:** IWT seen as cost-effective and sustainable alternative to rail/road.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES TO STRENGTHEN IWT:



Challenges to Inland Waterways:

- **Sparse Industrial Hubs:** Lack of major industries near waterways reduces freight volume, affecting viability of IWT corridors.
- **Multimodal Bottlenecks:** Poor connectivity with rail and road networks delays cargo movement and increases logistics costs.
- **Seasonal Depth Fluctuations:** Water levels in rivers drop during dry seasons, disrupting year-round navigability and consistency in services.
- **Environmental Concerns:** Large-scale dredging can harm aquatic ecosystems; sustainable development is crucial to preserve biodiversity.
- **Low Modal Share:** Only 2% of total cargo uses waterways despite potential; underutilization keeps freight costs higher than optimal.

Way Ahead:

- **Boost Private Sector Participation:** Encourage [PPP projects](#) for developing terminals, jetties, and cargo-handling facilities to enhance efficiency.
- **Capacity Building:** Train inland vessel crews, logistics staff, and port operators to improve operational readiness and safety.
- **Environmental Norms:** Implement green dredging technologies and eco-friendly port designs to minimize ecological footprint.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Highlight economic and environmental benefits of IWT to attract industries and shift cargo from road/rail.
- **Expand Multimodal Hubs:** Develop integrated logistics parks linking waterways with highways and rail to streamline end-to-end transport.

Conclusion:

India's inland water transport is witnessing a transformational shift, from policy inertia to proactive development. The future lies in maintaining this momentum through green technology, digital transparency, and industrial synergy. A well-oiled IWT sector can redefine India's logistics landscape for the 21st century.

Content for Mains Enrichment (CME)

ZERO MEASLES-RUBELLA ELIMINATION CAMPAIGN

Context: Union Health Minister launched the National 'Zero Measles-Rubella' Elimination Campaign 2025–26, reaffirming India's target to eliminate both diseases by 2026.



About Zero Measles-Rubella Elimination Campaign:

- A national immunization initiative to eliminate **measles and rubella**, two highly contagious viral diseases affecting children.
- **Launched By:** Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.
- **Aim:** Achieve **zero transmission** of measles and rubella by 2026 through **95%+ vaccination coverage** in all districts.
- **Key Features:**
 - Intensive **IEC outreach** in multilingual formats (posters, jingles, campaign films).
 - Data-based monitoring through **IDSP** and the **U-WIN digital platform**.
 - Focused vaccination drives in **high-risk pockets** (slums, remote areas, migrant clusters).
 - Recognition of progress: India received the **Measles and Rubella Champion Award (2024)**.

About 'ACT NOW' Approach:

- **What It Is:** A mobilization strategy to accelerate campaign outcomes via **community participation and rapid action**.
- **Key Features:**
 - Active surveillance via Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP).
 - Community mobilization by involving local panchayats, elected leaders, and media.
 - Targeted outreach in urban slums, migratory zones, and outbreak-prone areas.
 - **NOW:** Urgency-driven implementation with real-time response mechanisms.

Relevance in UPSC Exam Syllabus

- **GS Paper 2 – Governance & Social Justice:**
 - Topics: Health policies, immunization programs, cooperative federalism, last-mile service delivery.
- **GS Paper 4 – Ethics in Public Administration:**
 - Application of **compassion, commitment, and integrity** in delivering health services to vulnerable populations.
 - Emphasis on **duty consciousness** of frontline health workers and **ethical leadership** by administrators.

Facts for Prelims (FFP):

CHLORPYRIFOS PESTICIDE

Context: Ahead of the Basel, Rotterdam, and [Stockholm Conventions](#) (BRS COP) in Geneva, Indian civil society groups have urged the government to impose a complete ban on chlorpyrifos, a pesticide banned in over 40 countries but still used in India.

About Chlorpyrifos Pesticide:

- **What is Chlorpyrifos?**
 - Chlorpyrifos is an **organophosphate insecticide, acaricide, and miticide**.
- **Chemical Formula:** $C_9H_{11}Cl_3NO_3PS$.
 - Used to control **soil-borne and foliage-feeding insects** in crops like cotton, paddy, soy, wheat, and maize.
- **Neurotoxic Agent:** Disrupts the enzyme acetylcholinesterase, critical for nerve function.



- **Health Impacts:** Linked to reduced IQ, developmental delays, memory loss, and birth defects, especially in unborn children.
- **Acute Effects:** Can cause convulsions, respiratory failure, or death in extreme exposures.
- **Environmental Concerns:**
 - o **Bio accumulative** and persistent in nature.
 - o Can **travel thousands of miles**, contaminating remote ecosystems, including polar regions.
 - o Harms pollinators and aquatic life, threatening food chains and biodiversity.
- Chlorpyrifos is **not yet officially listed under either the Stockholm or Rotterdam Convention**, but global efforts are actively pushing for its inclusion.

About Rotterdam Convention (2004) - On Prior Informed Consent (PIC) for Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides

- **Objective:** Promotes shared responsibility in the international trade of hazardous chemicals to protect human health and the environment.
- **Key Mechanism: Prior Informed Consent (PIC)** — exporting countries must notify and obtain consent before shipping restricted chemicals.
- **Scope:** Covers pesticides, industrial chemicals, and Severely Hazardous Pesticide Formulations (SHPFs).
- **Annexures:**
 - o **Annex I:** Information requirements for notification.
 - o **Annex II:** Scientific criteria for listing.
 - o **Annex III:** List of chemicals (52 total – 35 pesticides, 16 industrial chemicals, 1 both).
 - o **Annex IV:** Criteria for listing SHPFs.
- **Recent Focus:** Push to include **chlorpyrifos** and **paraquat** under Annex III.

About Stockholm Convention (2004) - On Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs)

- **Objective:** Protects health and ecosystems from **POPs** – chemicals that persist, bioaccumulate, and are toxic.
- **Initial Focus:** “Dirty Dozen” – 12 highly toxic chemicals
- **Key Features:**
 - o **Annex A:** Chemicals to be **eliminated**.
 - o **Annex B:** Chemicals to be **restricted**.
 - o **Annex C:** Chemicals for **release reduction**.
- **Financial Mechanism:** Global Environment Facility (GEF).

CABINET COMMITTEE ON SECURITY

Context: In response to the Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 people, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) announced a series of extraordinary retaliatory measures against Pakistan.

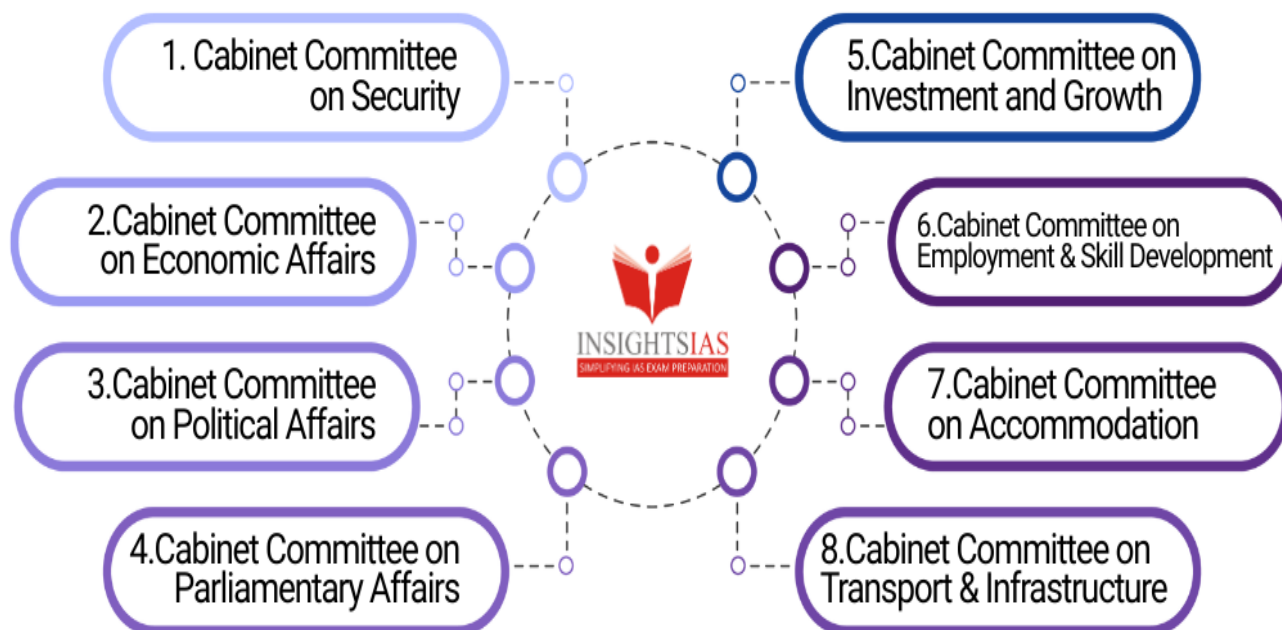
About Cabinet Committees:

What are Cabinet Committees?

- Cabinet Committees are small groups of ministers formed to reduce the Cabinet’s workload and enable focused decision-making.
- **Types:**
 1. **Standing Committees** – Permanent in nature.
 2. **Ad-hoc Committees** – Temporary, formed for specific purposes.

- **Formation:** Constituted by the **Prime Minister** based on emerging needs.
- **Function:** Examine complex issues in detail and recommend or take decisions which may be reviewed by the Cabinet.

CURRENT 8 CABINET COMMITTEES (2025):



About Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS):

- **Established:** Operational since post-Independence, formalized through executive orders.
- **Chaired by:** Prime Minister of India.
- **Members:** Home Minister, Defence Minister, Finance Minister, and External Affairs Minister.
- **Permanent Invitees:** [National Security Advisor](#), Cabinet Secretary, and key Secretaries of Defence, Home, and External Affairs.
- **Primary Role:**
 - o Formulate national security and defence policy.
 - o Decide on strategic military operations and crisis response.
 - o Supervise internal security matters including law & order.
 - o Authorize major defence procurement and nuclear policy.
 - o Coordinate intelligence and foreign security issues.

EGG MAYONNAISE

Context: The Tamil Nadu government banned the production and sale of mayonnaise made using raw eggs for one year under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, citing serious health risks linked to foodborne pathogens like *Salmonella* and [E. coli](#).

About Egg Mayonnaise:

- **What is Egg Mayonnaise?**
 - o Egg mayonnaise is a semi-solid emulsion made from **raw egg yolk, vegetable oil, and acid** (like vinegar or lemon juice), with seasoning.
 - o **Origin:** Believed to have originated in France or Spain, it is now a global staple in **fast food**—used in **sandwiches, burgers, wraps, and momos.**
- **How it Differs from Traditional Mayonnaise?**
 - o **Traditional Mayonnaise:** Uses raw or pasteurised egg yolk.
 - o **Eggless Variants:** Use emulsifiers like **soy proteins or milk solids** instead of eggs—more common in India due to dietary preferences and food safety concerns.
- **Health Impact of Raw Egg Mayonnaise:**
 - o **Pathogen Risk:** Raw eggs may harbor **Salmonella typhimurium, Salmonella enteritidis, E. coli, and Listeria monocytogenes.**
 - o **Public Health Concern:** High humidity and poor refrigeration in India raise the risk of contamination.
 - o **Vulnerable Groups:** Children, the elderly, and immunocompromised individuals are at greater risk.
 - o **Symptoms:** Can include **vomiting, diarrhea, fever, and intestinal infection.**



About Section 30 of the FSSAI Act, 2006:

- Section 30 of the FSSAI Act, 2006 empowers the **State Government** to appoint a **Commissioner of Food Safety** to ensure effective implementation of food safety laws.
- **Key powers include:**
 - **Prohibit manufacture, sale, or distribution** of unsafe food for up to one year in public interest.
 - **Survey food processing units** to check compliance with standards.
 - **Conduct training and awareness** programs on food safety.
 - **Ensure uniform and accountable enforcement** of food standards.
 - **Sanction prosecution** for offences involving imprisonment.
 - **Delegate powers** (excluding key appointments) to subordinates as needed.

‘EXERCISE AAKRAMAN’ & INS SURAT

Context: India escalated its military preparedness with the Indian Navy testing a surface-to-air missile from INS Surat and the Indian Air Force conducting ‘[Exercise Aakraman](#)’ featuring Rafale jets in a full-spectrum combat drill.

About INS Surat:

- **Type:** INS Surat is a **Visakhapatnam-class stealth-guided missile destroyer** under Project 15B.
- **Built in:** Developed indigenously by **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd., Mumbai.**
- **Objective:** To enhance India’s maritime strike capability and coastal defence preparedness.
- **Features of INS Surat:**



- o **Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missiles (MRSAM):** Capable of intercepting aerial threats up to ~70 km away.
- o **BrahMos Cruise Missiles:** Equipped with supersonic missiles for long-range precision strikes.
- o **Advanced Radar & Combat Systems:** Features modern multi-function radar for target tracking and engagement.
- o **Stealth Design:** Reduced radar cross-section to evade enemy surveillance and detection.
- **Functions of INS Surat:**
 - o **Sea-Skimming Target Interception:** Destroys low-flying hostile projectiles and drones over water.
 - o **Coastal Surveillance:** Conducts continuous maritime monitoring for security and threat detection.
 - o **Fleet Protection:** Provides layered defense for naval task forces against air and missile attacks.
 - o **Offensive Strike Operations:** Engages enemy naval assets and coastal installations with cruise missiles.

About Exercise Aakraman:

- **What it is:** A full-spectrum operational readiness drill by the [Indian Air Force](#) (IAF).
- **Held at:** Central sector, across diverse terrain including plains and mountains.
- **Conducted by:** Indian Air Force involving its **Rafale fighter squadrons** from Ambala and Hashimara bases.
- **Objective:** To test **precision strike capabilities**, evaluate **combat readiness**, and simulate high-intensity wartime operations with **advanced munitions** like Meteor, Rampage, and Rocks missiles.

SIMLA AGREEMENT 1972

Context: Pakistan suspended the 1972 Simla Agreement and closed the Wagah border, in retaliation to India's response to the Pahalgam terror attack and suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty.

About the [Simla Agreement 1972](#):

- **What is it?**
 - o A bilateral treaty signed between India and Pakistan on **July 2, 1972**, to formalize peace after the 1971 war.
 - o It laid down the **framework for peaceful bilateral relations** and resolution of disputes.
- **Signed Between:** Indira Gandhi (Prime Minister of India) and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (President of Pakistan).
 - o Held in **Shimla, Himachal Pradesh**.
- **Background:**
 - o Followed India's decisive victory in the [1971 India-Pakistan war](#) and the creation of **Bangladesh**.
 - o Over **93,000 Pakistani soldiers** were in Indian custody post-war.
- **Objective of the Agreement:**
 - o To establish **durable peace** and **normalise diplomatic relations**.
 - o Reinforce **bilateralism** as the guiding principle in resolving disputes, especially **Kashmir**.



- **Key Features**

- o **Bilateral Resolution of Disputes:** All issues, including Kashmir, to be resolved peacefully and bilaterally without third-party interference.
- o **Line of Control (LoC):** Redesignation of the **1971 ceasefire line in J&K** as LoC, which both sides agreed not to alter unilaterally.
- o **Respect for Sovereignty:** Mutual commitment to **non-interference** and **territorial integrity**.
- o **Diplomatic Normalisation:** Restoration of **trade, travel, and diplomatic ties** including POW release.

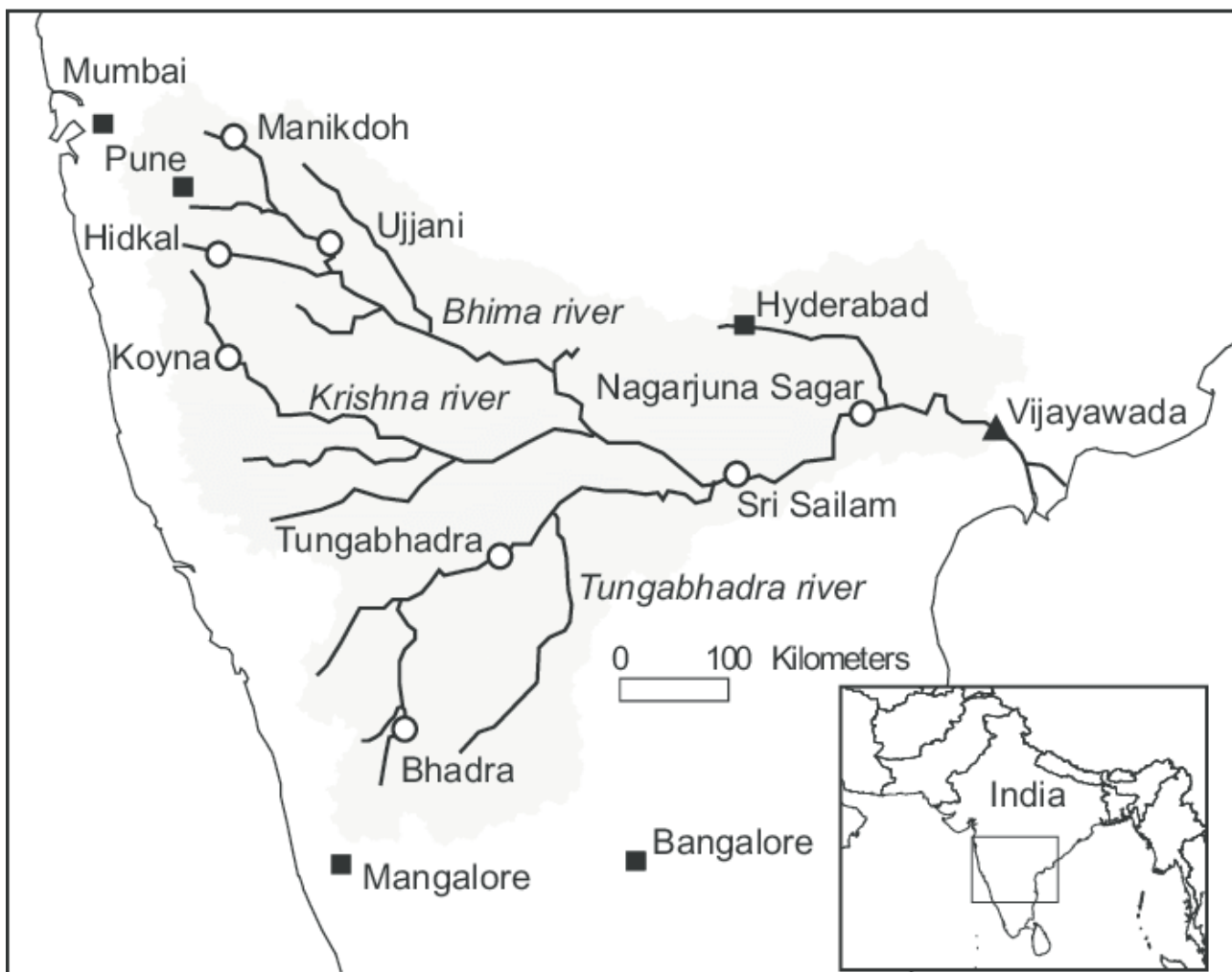
- **Is it Violated?**

- o Yes, multiple times its being violated.
 - **Kargil War (1999):** Pakistan’s intrusion across the LoC violated the agreement.
 - **Third-party lobbying** by Pakistan at UN forums goes against the bilateral clause.
- o India continues to **uphold bilateralism**, citing the Simla Agreement in global platforms.

Mapping:

KRISHNA RIVER

Context: Due to extreme heat, the Krishna River has dried up earlier than usual, severely affecting irrigation in Karnataka’s Bagalkot, Vijayapura, and Yadgir districts.



About [Krishna River](#):

- **Origin:** Rises near Mahabaleshwar in the Western Ghats, Satara district, Maharashtra.
- **States Flowing Through:** Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh.
- **Course and Length:** Flows ~1,400 km eastward and drains into the [Bay of Bengal](#) near Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh.
- **Tributaries:**
 - o **Right Bank:** Venna, Koyna, Panchganga, Dudhganga, Ghataprabha, Malaprabha, Tungabhadra.
 - o **Left Bank:** Bhima, Musi, Munneru.
- **Unique Features of Krishna River:**
 - o **Second Largest East-Flowing River** in Peninsular India (after [Godavari](#)).
 - o **Seasonal Dependence:** Largely rain-fed, resulting in highly variable water flow.
 - o **Hydroelectric Projects:** Major installations at Srisailem, Nagarjuna Sagar, and Tungabhadra.
- **Key Projects on Krishna River:**
 - o **Tungabhadra Project** (Karnataka): Irrigation and hydroelectricity.
 - o **Srisailem Dam** (AP): Hydropower and irrigation.
 - o **Nagarjuna Sagar Dam** (AP/Telangana): Key part of Green Revolution infrastructure.
 - o **Prakasam Barrage** (AP): Canal irrigation across Krishna delta.
 - o **Ghataprabha & Bhima Projects** (Maharashtra): Regional irrigation support.