

INTERNATIONAL RELATION

India-Greece Relations

In context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid an official visit to Greece, officially the Hellenic Republic.

Outcomes of the Summit

- ✓ Upgrade in Relations: Both the countries upgraded Greek-Indian bilateral ties to the level of a "Strategic Partnership" and agreed to work to further expand bilateral cooperation in political, security and economic spheres.
- ✓ Bilateral Trade: The leaders also directed that both sides shall work to double bilateral trade by 2030.
- ✓ MOU: They took note of the signing of the MOU on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture, including the establishment of a Hellenic-Indian Joint Sub-committee on Agriculture for facilitating sectoral cooperation for mutual benefit.
- ✓ Free Movement of Workforce: Both leaders agreed that an early finalization of a Mobility and Migration Partnership Agreement (MMPA) would be mutually beneficial, facilitating in particular the free movement of workforce between the two countries.

Tomb of Unknown Soldier

- ✓ The Prime Minister paid tributes at the 'Tomb of Unknown Soldier' in Athens.
- ✓ It is a war memorial located in Syntagma Square in Athens, in front of the Old Royal Palace. It is a cenotaph dedicated to the Greek soldiers killed during various wars.
- ✓ Thereafter, he was accorded a Ceremonial Guard of Honour.

Grand Cross of the Order of Honour

- ✓ The Prime Minister was conferred with the Grand Cross of the Order of Honour by the President of Greece.
- ✓ He is the first foreign Head of Government to receive this honour.
- ✓ The Grand Cross of the Order of Honour is conferred by the President of Greece to prime ministers and eminent personalities who by reason of their distinguished position, have contributed to enhancing the stature of Greece. The Order of Honour was established in 1975.

Overview of India and Greece Relations

- ✓ Diplomatic relations between Greece and India were established in 1950.
- ✓ Greece participated with India in the Six-National Delhi Declaration on Nuclear Disarmament in 1985.
- ✓ Both the countries pledged reciprocal support for election to the non-Permanent seat in UNSC. It supported India at the Nuclear Suppliers' Group in 2008, and 2016, MTCR, WASSENAAR arrangements, Australia Group.
- ✓ The country has also refrained from taking a diplomatic position on controversial issues in India's domestic politics.
- ✓ Institutional Mechanism: The two main forums for conducting bilateral talks are: Joint Economic Committee (JEC) and Foreign Office Consultations (FOC). It meets alternatively in Delhi and Athens.
- ✓ Greece has consistently been supportive of India's core foreign policy objectives and India concurs with Greece's emphasis on promoting international law and regional security.
- ✓ The economic and commercial relations between the two countries continue to grow. The bilateral trade stood at nearly \$2 billion in 2022-23.
- ✓ At the military level, India and Greece had signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Defence Cooperation in 1998, which was followed by joint programmes of the two militaries and periodic visits of Indian warships at the Souda Bay in Crete, the most important naval base in the Mediterranean Sea.
 - After 1998, military interactions have been visiting by our NDC teams (2002, 2003, 2008 and 2022), transits by IAF Mirage 2000 ferries in 2004 involving a landing in Greece and two port calls by 2 Indian Naval Ships in 2003 and visits of 4 Indian Naval ships in July 2006 and 2009.

Significance of India-Greece Cooperation

- ✓ Location and Position of Greece: Greece is a member of both North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the European Union (EU), and its location in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea makes it a country embedded in the Western security network.
 - It has emerged as a dynamic independent sea power in the Mediterranean, upgrading its military power, diplomatic network with its allies especially the United States (US) and France, and also with both Israel and the Arab states.
- ✓ A new international order uniting three major seas (Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea and Gulf) and three



- continents (Europe, Asia and Africa) is being witnessed.
- ✓ The addition of India as the major pole of this network shall create a powerful bloc, extending from Europe and the Mediterranean Sea to the Indian Ocean and the Himalayas.
 - ✓ Support on Mutual Interest: At the diplomatic level, India and Greece can support each other on issues of mutual interest.
 - ✓ Indo-Pacific Region: Greece is a seafaring nation and it currently hosts one of the greatest merchant fleets globally and thus its vital interests are structurally intertwined with freedom of movement in the seas. This is a common ground with India, a leading power in the Indo-Pacific region.
 - ✓ Joint Exercises: The presence of Indian naval forces in the Mediterranean in the framework of joint Indo-Greek aeronautical exercises would be a clear symbolic and practical message of power projection across the Eurasian landmass.
 - Strategic partnership with Greece, a NATO and EU member, would further strengthen the notion of India as a valuable partner of Europe in Asia.

Way Ahead

- A few decisive steps have already been undertaken to promote relations between the two countries, and some specific additional steps can further enhance and deepen the strategic cooperation between India and Greece.
- India is the core state of Asia and a global power, while Greece is an essential partner in the Mediterranean Sea and a member of both NATO and the EU. The two countries can deepen their cooperation in various fields by building on their military and diplomatic synergies.
- The strategic alignment of India and Greece in the new geopolitical environment would cater to the national interests of both countries.

GOVERNMENT POLICY

Nikah halala and Muta

In Context: The Law Commission has asked the All India Muslim Personal Law Board to unambiguously state its position on nikah halala and muta, two controversial forms of marriage.

About Nikah halala:

- ✓ Nikah halala is a law that requires a woman to marry and sleep with another man in order to return to her first husband.
- ✓ Nikah Halala is made up of two words:
 - nikah meaning marriage and
 - halala meaning making something permissible or halal.
- ✓ This is a practice followed by some Muslims where a woman, divorced by her husband by triple talaq, has to go through a certain procedure if she wants to remarry the same person she got divorced with.
- ✓ There have been instances where the husband regrets divorcing his wife through triple talaq and in the hope of reconciliation, hands over his divorced wife to another man for marriage, under the condition that the latter would divorce the woman the next day.
- ✓ In modern India, nikah halala has been manipulated and misused.
- ✓ **Constitutional Validity:** Using Nikah Halala as a way of remarriage is contended to be violative of some fundamental rights:
 - **Article 14: Right to Equality:**
 - The practice puts women under a disadvantageous position.
 - They are not treated as equals to the men.
 - **Article 15(1): Right against Discrimination:**
 - On the basis of sex that is a person being a woman, they are subjected to arbitrary decisions put forward by the husbands which they bear the consequences for.
 - **Article 21: Right to Life:**
 - Right to Life includes a right to leading a dignified life.
 - These practices are derogatory to the dignity of a woman.

About Muta:

- ✓ The meaning of 'Muta' is enjoyment.
- ✓ Muta Marriage is a marriage for a fixed period of time that is only for sexual pleasure.
- ✓ Muslim Law in a Shia sect recognises the concept of Muta Marriage.
- ✓ **Conditions and of Muta Marriage:**
 - The parties must have attained the age of puberty, which is above 15 years of age.
 - There is no restriction on the number of Muta wives.
 - There must be free consent by the parties.
 - The time period and Dower must be mentioned in the nikah nama.

- The cohabitation between the parties is lawful.
- The children born out of such marriage are legitimate and have the right to inherit the properties of both parents.
- The husband and wife don't have any mutual right of inheritance.
- Muta wife is not entitled to claim maintenance under personal law, but she can claim under The Code of Criminal Procedure.
- Divorce is not recognised under Muta Marriage.
- ✓ **Termination of Muta Marriage**
 - Expiry of the time period.
 - Death of either party.
 - Hiba I Muddat, that is, husband gifts the unexpired term of the marriage.

PRELIM FACTS

1. 7th GEF Assembly

In context: Environmental leaders from 185 countries gathered in Vancouver, Canada for the Seventh Assembly of the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

About: This meeting comes at a time of significant diplomatic momentum with the historic Global Biodiversity Framework deal reached at COP15 and the high seas treaty agreed on in New York City, New York, in March 2023.

Global Environment Facility (GEF)

- ✓ It is the global body that coordinates financing for international efforts to address climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and factors inhibiting land and ocean health.
- ✓ It was established on the eve of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit and meets every 4 years. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is a founding member of the GEF.
- ✓ The GEF Trust Fund was established to help tackle our planet's most pressing environmental problems. Funds are available to developing countries and countries with economies in transition to meet the objectives of the international environmental conventions and agreements.
- ✓ The GEF was selected to manage the new fund at the COP15 Convention on Biological Diversity summit in December 2022

Key Highlights of Meeting

- ✓ Establishment of Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF): The Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF) was finally ratified and launched.
 - The new Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF) has been designed to mobilize and accelerate investment in the conservation and sustainability of wild species and ecosystems, whose health is under threat from wildfires, flooding, extreme weather, and human activity including urban sprawl.
 - Governments, non-profits and the private sector can now contribute their funds here to ensure that the world meets the goals and targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) formulated by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) by 2030.
- ✓ Prioritizing LDCs: It will also prioritize support for Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries, which will receive more than a third of the fund's resources. This is the first time there would be funds channeled to non-state actors like the indigenous communities.
 - Under Target 19 of GBF, at least \$200 billion per year will need to be raised by 2030.

Need of such an initiative

- ✓ The launch of the GBFF has been particularly significant as it aims to address and assist the brunt of climate change borne by developing countries.
- ✓ By allocating a third of the funds resources to least developed states and 20% to indigenous communities, it aims to take concrete steps in conserving wild species and protecting biodiversity for future generations.

2. Chess World Cup

In context: 18-year-old chess prodigy R Praggnanandhaa has finished as runner-up in the FIDE Chess World Cup held at Baku, Azerbaijan. He lost the summit clash to Norway's world No.1 Magnus Carlsen.

About Chess World Cup

- ✓ It has been the major chess event since its inception in 2000.
- ✓ It is organised by the International Chess Federation(FIDE).
- ✓ Since 2005, it has been a 128-player single-elimination chess tournament.
- ✓ This event is held every two years.
- ✓ The FIDE World Cup 2023 (hereinafter referred to as World Cup) was organised in Baku from 29 July to 25 August 2023.

3. Tele-Law 2.0

In context: Recently, the Tele-Law 2.0 initiative was launched by the Department of Justice, Ministry of Law & Justice.

About Tele-Law 2.0:

- ✓ This version entails the fusion of Tele-Law Services with Nyaya Bandhu pro bono legal services, a merger to further enhance citizen accessibility to legal aid.
- ✓ The integration of legal guidance, support, and representation through a single registration process stands as a testament to the commitment to nurture a digitally literate and empowered populace.

What is Tele-Law programme?

- ✓ This was launched by the Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice in 2017.
- ✓ This is operating under the DISHA Scheme.
- ✓ The programme connects needy and marginalised people in need of legal aid with the Panel Lawyers via video conferencing/telephonic facilities available at Common Service Centres (CSCs) situated at the panchayat level.
- ✓ In addition, the service can also be accessed through the Tele-Law Mobile App.
- ✓ Eligibility: Legal advice is made available to everyone under the Tele-Law service. Advice is free of Cost to those who are eligible for free legal aid under Section 12 of the LSA Act, 1987.
- ✓ Legal matters in which advice can be taken through Tele-Law service include:
 - ✓ Dowry, family dispute, divorce, protection from domestic violence
 - ✓ Sexual harassment, sexual abuse, eve teasing at the workplace
 - ✓ Maintenance of women, children and senior citizens
 - ✓ Rights regarding property and land
 - ✓ Equal wages for males and females
 - ✓ Maternity benefits and prevention of foeticide

4. AUSINDEX-23

In context: Recently, the fifth edition of the biennial AUSINDEX maritime exercise between the Indian Navy and the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) was conducted from 22-25 August 23 in Sydney.

About AUSINDEX-23:

- ✓ It is a major biennial maritime exercise, being conducted since 2015.
- ✓ The exercise will provide an opportunity for both Navies to further bolster inter-operability, gain from best practices and develop a common understanding of procedures for Maritime Security Operations.
- ✓ This year's edition was held in Australia.
- ✓ INS Sahyadri and INS Kolkata participated in the exercise along with HMAS Choules and HMAS Brisbane from RAN.
- ✓ Besides ships and their integral helicopters, the exercise also witnessed the participation of fighter aircraft and maritime patrol aircraft.

5. Seethakali folk art

In Context: Seethakali folk art is being revived in Kerala.

About Seethakali:

- ✓ Seethakali is a centuries-old folk art form that is believed to have originated at Perinad in Kollam district, Kerala.
- ✓ This art form was first performed some 150 years back by the people of Vedar and Pulayar communities.
- ✓ Seethakali is based on certain episodes taken from the Indian epic Ramayana.
- ✓ It portrays the tale of Seetha's journey, from the time she accompanied Rama to the woods till her ascent to the heavens.
- ✓ In the early times, Seethakali was performed as part of the harvest festival Onam.
- ✓ From Atham star till the 28th day after Onam, the performers who belong to the subaltern communities go from one house to another performing this art.
- ✓ Because the art form depicts gods and goddesses, the people from the lower section of society got the opportunity to dress up vibrantly, which was prohibited otherwise then.
- ✓ The props and instruments used during performances are all made of natural materials like bamboo and palm leaves.
- ✓ The costumes and the make-up are loud and eye-catching.
- ✓ The characters of Rama and Laxmana appear in green since the colour is used to represent gods and goddesses in Kathakali.
- ✓ Performances are accompanied by folk songs that have been passed on orally from one generation to the next.
- ✓ Currently, in Kerala, there is only one registered Seethakali performing group – Perinad Seethakali Sangham.

ANSWER WRITING

Q. Discuss the factors that led to the declaration of internal emergency in India on 25th June, 1975. Also, evaluate its consequences.

Introduction: The Emergency in India was a 21-month period from 1975 to 1977 when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had a state of emergency declared across the country. Officially issued by President Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed under Article 352 of the Constitution because of the prevailing “internal disturbance”, the Emergency was in effect from 25 June 1975 until its withdrawal on 21 March 1977.

The factors that led to the declaration of internal emergency in India on 25th June, 1975:

- ✓ During the period of 1973-75, political unrest against the Indira Gandhi led government was at its peak. During this period many of the party leaders within congress, demanded a system which works more like a presidential one, where there would be directly elected executives in the party. Nav Nirman movement in Gujarat, between December 1973 and March 1974 was one of the first movements which began the strife in the nation. During this movement the central government was forced to dissolve the state legislature in Gujarat and chief minister Chimanbhai Patel had to resign, which resulted in President’s rule over Gujarat.
- ✓ There were other such activities and revolts against the government that were taking place during the period which included students, peasants, labor organizations, employees, unions and opposition parties.
- ✓ Indira Gandhi was found guilty by the Allahabad High Court on several accounts and was charged for malpractice during the previous campaigns during her Lok Sabha seat election. Even within the parliament the government was undergoing much criticism from the opposition parties.
- ✓ The government led by Indira Gandhi claimed that the recent war between India and Pakistan along with the oil crisis in 1973 has drastically affected the economy of the country that has resulted in price rise of consumer goods. Apart from these, there were challenges to fight with the effects of drought in the country and consequently there was a rise of internal threats from various parts of the country against the government due to elevation of starvation and debt issues.
- ✓ Unemployment and increasing laboring population generated fumes and outrage all over the nation. The government claimed that the regular strikes and protests by the citizens have paralyzed the government and its economy and there was an anomaly on streets as well as political opposition prevailing in many parts of the country.

Consequences of declaration of internal emergency in India on 25th June, 1975:

- ✓ This brought the agitation to an abrupt stop; strikes were banned; many opposition leaders were put in jail; the political situation became very quiet though tense. Deciding to use its special powers under emergency provisions, the government suspended the freedom of the Press. Newspapers were asked to get prior approval for all material to be published. This is known as press censorship.
- ✓ Apprehending social and communal disharmony, the government banned Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Jamaat-e-Islami. Protests and strikes and public agitations were also disallowed.
- ✓ Most importantly, under the provisions of emergency, the various Fundamental Rights of citizens stood suspended, including the right of citizens to move the Court for restoring their fundamental rights.
- ✓ The government made extensive use of preventive detention. Under this provision, people are arrested and detained not because they have committed any offence, but on the apprehension that they may commit an offence. Using preventive detention acts, the government made large scale arrests during the emergency.
- ✓ There were many acts of dissent and resistance to the Emergency. Many political workers who were not arrested in the first wave, went ‘underground’ and organised protests against the government. Newspapers like the Indian Express and the Statesman protested against censorship by leaving blank spaces where news items had been censored. Magazines like the Seminar and the Mainstream chose to close down rather than submit to censorship. Many journalists were arrested for writing against the Emergency.
- ✓ The Parliament also brought in many new changes to the Constitution. In the background of the ruling of the Allahabad High Court in the Indira Gandhi case, an amendment was made declaring that elections of Prime Minister, President and Vice-President could not be challenged in the Court.
- ✓ The forty-second amendment was also passed during the emergency. Among the various changes made by this amendment, one was that the duration of the legislatures in the country was extended from five to six years. This change was not only for the emergency period, but was intended to be of a permanent nature. Besides this, during an emergency, elections can be postponed by one year.

Conclusion: The Emergency and the period around it can be described as a period of constitutional crisis because it had its origins in the constitutional battle over the jurisdiction of the Parliament and the judiciary. On the other hand, it was also a period of political crisis. The party in power had an absolute majority and yet, its leadership decided to suspend the democratic process. The makers of India’s Constitution trusted that all political parties would basically abide by the democratic norm.

MCQs

1. Recently, the fifth edition of the biennial AUSINDEX maritime exercise, Considered the following statement.
 1. It is between the Indian Navy and the Royal Australian Navy (RAN)
 2. This year's edition was held in Australia.
 3. INS Sahyadri and INS Kolkata participated in the exercise along with HMAS Choules.
 How many of the above statement is/are correct?
 - a) Only 1
 - b) Only 2
 - c) **Only 3**
 - d) None
2. Considered the following statement regarding Tele-Law programme.
 1. This was launched by the Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice in 2023.
 2. This is operating under the DISHA Scheme
 Which of the following statement is/are correct?
 - a) Only 1
 - b) **Only 2**
 - c) Both 1 and 2
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2
3. With reference to Parboiled Rice, consider the following statements:
 1. It is partially precooked rice in its inedible husk before being processed for eating.
 2. Parboiling rice improves its texture and increases its shelf life.
 3. It is more nutritious than brown rice.
 How many of the statements given above are correct?
 - a) **Only one**
 - b) Only two
 - c) All three
 - d) None
4. Consider the following statements regarding Seethakali:
 1. It is an old famous folk art form of Kerala.
 2. It is based on certain episodes of the Indian epic Ramayana.
 Which of the statements given above is/are correct?
 - a) 1 only
 - b) 2 only
 - c) **Both 1 and 2**
 - d) Neither 1 nor 2
5. Which of the following statements are correct about G20?
 1. The G20 Summit is held annually with a rotating presidency, and in 2023, India holds the presidency.
 2. The group has a permanent secretariat at Paris, France.
 3. The G20 Summit is formally known as the "Summit on Financial Markets and the World Economy".
 Select the correct answer using the code given below:
 - a) 1 and 2 only
 - b) 2 and 3 only
 - c) **1 and 3 only**
 - d) 1, 2 and 3
6. The Nagarnar Steel Plant, famous for its production of Hot Rolled (HR) Coil, is located in which of the following Indian states?
 - a) Jharkhand
 - b) Odisha
 - c) **Chhattisgarh**
 - d) Karnataka
7. Recently The 'G. Padmanabhan Committee', is the news, is related to which of the following?
 - a) Uniform Civil Code
 - b) Defence Policy
 - c) Highway Projects in Himalayan Region
 - d) **Onshoring the Indian Innovation**
8. With reference to the State of India's Birds, 2023 report, consider the following statements:
 1. Peafowl is one of the most rapidly increasing species in the country.
 2. The number of Glossy Ibis and Black-headed Ibis has decreased.
 3. Ducks are rapidly increasing in India.
 4. White-rumped vultures have suffered the maximum long-term declines.
 How many of the statements given above are correct?
 - a) Only one
 - b) **Only two**
 - c) Only three
 - d) All four
9. The Gond Painting was recently in the news recently. Consider the following statements about Gond Paintings:
 1. It is created by dots and lines.
 2. Chhatisgarh has been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag for Gond paintings.
 3. Paintings have been a part of pictorial art on walls and floors of the Gond community.
 How many of the statements given above are correct?
 - a) Only one
 - b) **Only two**
 - c) All three
 - d) None
10. Recently, Nikah halala and Muta is in news which of the following statement is/are correct?
 1. Muta is a law that requires a woman to marry and sleep with another man in order to return to her first husband.
 2. Nikah halala Marriage is a marriage for a fixed period of time that is only for sexual pleasure.
 Which of the following statement is/are correct?
 - a) Only 1
 - b) Only 2
 - c) Both 1 and 2
 - d) **Neither 1 nor 2**