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Daily News Analysis

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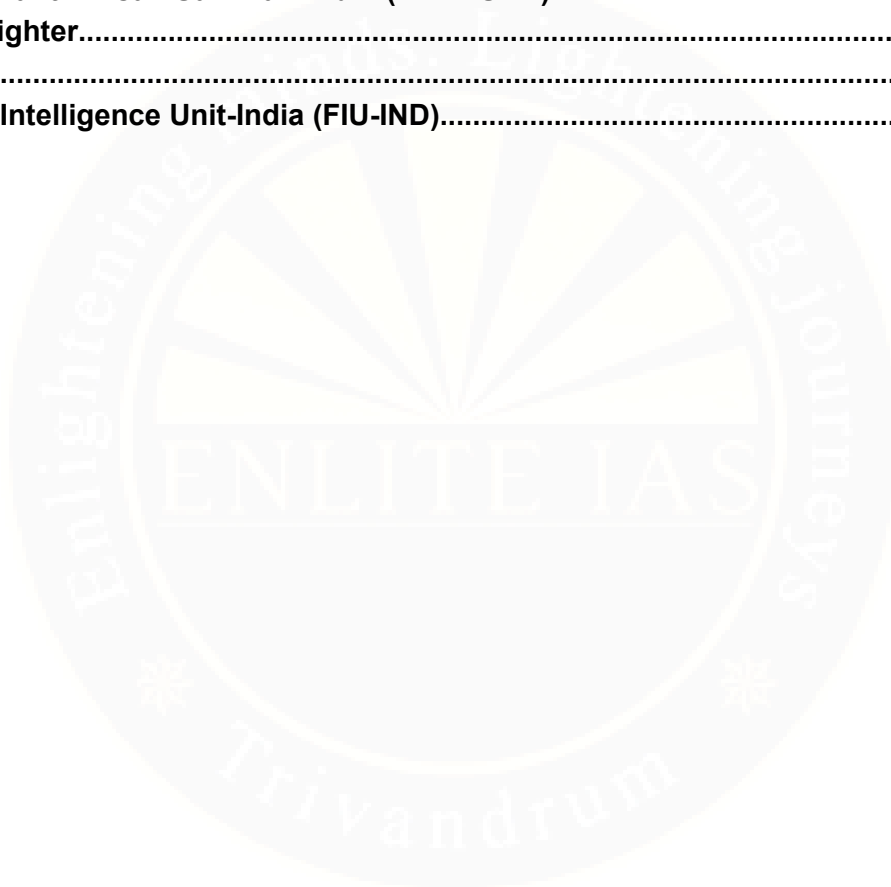
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1. Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA)

- Prelims - Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA)
- Mains - GS 2 - Polity

Why in the news?

- The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) cancelled the FCRA license of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk's organisation

Foreign Contribution Regulation Act

- *During the Emergency, the FCRA was passed in 1976* due to concerns that foreign governments were funding independent organizations to meddle in India's internal affairs.
- *The law aims to control foreign donations to organizations and people to ensure that they operate following the principles of a sovereign democratic republic.*
- *FCRA registrations are granted to individuals or associations with definite cultural, economic, educational, religious, and social programs.*
- Amendments
 - The FCRA was revised in 2010 to "consolidate the law" on the use of foreign funds and "to prohibit" their use for "any activities detrimental to the national interest,"
 - The 2020 amendment strengthened government oversight and control over how foreign donations to NGOs are received and used.
- The FCRA requires every person or NGO seeking to receive foreign donations to be:
 - Registered under the Act,
 - To open a bank account for the receipt of foreign funds in the State Bank of India, Delhi,
 - To utilize those funds only for the purpose for which they have been received and as stipulated in the Act.
- Exceptions
 - Under the FCRA, applicants must be genuine and cannot engage in forced or incentivized religious conversions.
 - They must not have been charged or convicted of inciting communal conflict.
 - The Act also prohibits political parties, public officials, journalists, media organizations, judges, government employees, and politically affiliated groups from accepting foreign donations.



2. Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC)

- **Prelims** - Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC)
- **Mains** - GS 2 - International National

Why in the news?

- The Ministry of External Affairs hosted a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) in New York.

Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC)

- **Formation**: FIPIC is a multilateral platform established by India in 2014 during the PM's visit to Fiji.
- **Aim**: It seeks to deepen ties with 14 Pacific Island Countries (PICs) under India's Act East Policy.
- **Objectives**
 - Strengthen diplomatic, economic, and cultural relations with PICs.
 - Address shared challenges: climate change, sustainable development, energy security, and capacity building.
 - Position India as a development partner in the Indo-Pacific.
- **Member Countries**: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.
- **Economy**: Focus on blue economy, fisheries, IT, health, renewable energy, and capacity building.
- **Indian Initiatives under FIPIC**
 - **Climate & Clean Energy**: Special USD 1 million fund for climate adaptation and renewable energy.
 - **Connectivity**: Pan-Pacific Islands e-network for digital links.
 - **Trade Facilitation**: Establishment of a trade office in India.
 - **Visa Reforms**: Visa on arrival for citizens of all 14 PICs.
 - **Capacity Building**: Training programs for diplomats and professionals.
 - **Space Cooperation**: Satellite applications for agriculture, weather, disaster management.



- **Significance**

- Enhances India's role in the Indo-Pacific strategic architecture.
- Strengthens cooperation with Small Island Developing States (SIDS).
- Provides India with diplomatic leverage in global climate change negotiations.
- Counters China's growing influence in the Pacific.



3. Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT)

- **Prelims** - Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT)
- **Mains** - GS 3 - Economy

Why in the news?

- The Union Finance Minister formally launched the Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT), marking a significant milestone in India's GST journey.

Goods and Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT)

- **What is it?**: GSTAT is a statutory body established under the Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017 to hear appeals against orders passed by the Appellate or Revisional Authorities.
- **Purpose**: To hear appeals against orders passed by the GST Appellate Authorities and to provide taxpayers with an independent forum for justice.
- **Benches**: It will function through a Principal Bench in New Delhi and 31 State Benches across 45 locations in India, ensuring accessibility and nationwide reach.
- **Structure**: Each Bench of the GSTAT will comprise two Judicial Members, one Technical Member (Centre), and one Technical Member (State).
- **Significance**: Structure reflects the spirit of cooperative federalism and is designed to deliver impartial and consistent decisions.



4. North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

- **Prelims** - North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)
- **Mains** - GS 2 - International Relations

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)



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Why in the news?

- India described as “factually incorrect and entirely baseless” the remarks by NATO Secretary on the impact of U.S. President's penalty tariff on India for its continued purchase of Russian crude oil.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

- **What is it?:** NATO is a military alliance established by the North Atlantic Treaty (also called the Washington Treaty) of April, 1949.
- **Initial Aim:** It was set up to provide collective security against the Soviet Union.
- **Headquarters:** Brussels, Belgium.
- **Objective:** NATO's essential and enduring purpose is to safeguard the freedom and security of all its members by political and military means and collective defence under **Article 5 of the treaty**.
- **Recent Developments:** Finland (31st member in 2023), Sweden (32nd member in 2024).



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5. Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA)

- Prelims - Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA)
- Mains - GS 3 - Internal Security

Why in the news?

- The Union Home Ministry extended the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act in parts of Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, and Nagaland for six months.

Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA)

- Origin

→ Rooted in colonial legislation: Armed Forces (Special Powers) Ordinance, 1942.

→ Enacted in 1958 (North-East), later extended to Jammu & Kashmir in 1990.

- What is it?: AFSPA is a law granting special powers to the armed forces in “disturbed areas” to maintain public order.

- Objectives

→ To assist civil administration in controlling insurgency, militancy, and separatist movements.

→ Restore peace, sovereignty, and rule of law in conflict-affected regions.

- Key Provisions

→ **Declaration of Disturbed Area**: Done by Governor of a state or Central Government under Section 3.

→ **Special Powers to Armed Forces (Section 4)**:

★ Use force, even to the extent of causing death, against persons violating law or carrying arms.

★ Arrest without warrant on mere suspicion.

★ Enter and search any premises without warrant.

→ **Immunity (Section 6)**: No prosecution of security personnel without prior sanction of Central Government.

- Judicial & Committee Views

→ Supreme Court in Naga People’s Movement of Human Rights v. Union of India (1997):

★ Upheld constitutionality of AFSPA.

★ Laid down guidelines for its implementation.

→ Jeevan Reddy Committee (2005): Recommended repeal, called it “highly



undesirable”.

→ Second ARC (2007): Suggested replacing AFSPA with a more humane law.

→ Justice Hegde Commission (2013): Found AFSPA widely abused in Manipur.

- **Criticisms**

→ Alleged human rights violations: custodial killings, torture, disappearances.

→ Excessive concentration of power → undermines democratic accountability.

→ Lack of judicial oversight due to requirement of Central sanction for prosecution.

→ Viewed as a colonial relic inconsistent with modern constitutional values.

- **Significance**

→ Security Perspective: Essential for counter-insurgency and maintaining sovereignty.

→ Democratic Perspective: Balancing national security with human rights and federalism remains a challenge.



6. Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)

- **Prelims** - Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)
- **Mains** - GS 3 - Economy

Why in the news?

- The centre released Rs 540 crore under the August-November instalment of the PM-KISAN scheme to beneficiaries in Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, and Uttarakhand, which were recently hit by floods.

Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)

- **Launched**: February 2019.
- **Nodal Ministry**: Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare.
- **Nature**: Centrally Sponsored Scheme fully funded by the Government of India.
- **Objective**: To provide income support to all landholding farmer families to supplement their financial needs for procurement of inputs related to agriculture and allied activities.
- **Features**
 - **Target Group**: All landholding farmer families in the country.
 - **Definition of Beneficiary**: A farmer family includes husband, wife, and minor children.
 - **Benefit**: Direct income support of ₹6,000 per year.
 - ★ Paid in 3 equal instalments of ₹2,000 each.
 - ★ Transferred directly into the beneficiary's Aadhaar-linked bank account through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).
- **Implementation**
 - State Governments identify eligible farmer families.
 - Central Government verifies beneficiaries and releases funds.



7. MiG-21 Fighter

- **Prelims** - MiG-21 Fighter
- **Mains** - GS 3 - Science and Technology

Why in the news?

- MiG-21 jets fly into history after 6 decades of service in Indian forces.

MiG-21 Fighter

- **What is it?:**
 - The Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-21 is a Soviet-origin supersonic jet fighter.
 - First inducted into the Indian Air Force (IAF) in 1963, it became the backbone of India's combat fleet for decades.
 - Nicknamed "Flying Coffin" or "Widow Maker" due to high accident rates in later years.
- **Features**
 - **Type:** Supersonic jet fighter and interceptor aircraft.
 - **Speed:** Capable of flying at Mach 2 (twice the speed of sound).
 - **Design:** Lightweight, delta-wing design with simple structure.
 - **Production in India:** Licensed production by HAL (Hindustan Aeronautics Limited).
 - **Variants in IAF:** MiG-21FL, MiG-21M, MiG-21Bis, MiG-21 Bison (last upgraded version).
- **Role in Indian Defence:** Part of 1965 and 1971 Indo - Pak war, Kargil War (1999) and Operation Sindoor.



8. Dugong

- Prelims - Dugong
- Mains - GS 3 - Environment

Why in the news?

- IUCN has adopted a motion recognising India's first Dugong Conservation Reserve in Palk Bay at IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025.

Dugong

- **What is it?**: Dugong (Dugong dugon) also called 'Sea Cow' is one of the four surviving species in the Order Sirenia and it is the only existing species of herbivorous mammal that lives exclusively in the sea including in India.
- **Distribution and Habitat**: They are found in over 30 countries and in India are seen in the Gulf of Mannar, Gulf of Kutch, Palk Bay, and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- **Conservation Status**
 - IUCN Red List status: Vulnerable
 - Wild (Life) Protection Act, 1972: Schedule I
 - CITES: Appendix I
- **Threats**
 - Habitat degradation (especially of seagrass beds)
 - Boat strikes
 - Entanglement in fishing nets
 - Pollution (oil spills, plastics)
 - Climate change and rising sea levels
 - Illegal hunting (though now rare in India)
- **Conservation Efforts**
 - **India's Effort**
 - ★ Dugong Conservation Reserve: India's first in Gulf of Mannar, Tamil Nadu (2022)
 - ★ Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM)
 - ★ Recovery Programme for Dugongs under National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP)
 - ★ Community participation through awareness and eco-development programs
 - **International Efforts**: Part of UNEP's Dugong Conservation Programme



9. Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND)

- **Prelims** - Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND)
- **Mains** - GS 3 - Internal Security

Why in the news?

- The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and the Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND) signed a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to prevent financial crimes.

Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND)

- **Set up**: 2004 by the Government of India.
- **Nature**: Central national agency for financial intelligence.
- **Reports to**: Economic Intelligence Council (EIC), chaired by the Finance Minister.
- **Objective**: To counter money laundering, terror financing, and suspicious financial activities.
- **Functions**
 - **Collection of Information**: Act as the central reception point for receiving Cash Transaction reports (CTRs), Non-Profit Organisation Transaction Reports (NTRs), Cross Border Wire Transfer Reports (CBWTRs), Reports on the Purchase or Sale of Immovable Property (IPRs), and Suspicious Transaction Reports (STRs) from various reporting entities.
 - **Analysis of Information**: Analyze received information to uncover patterns of transactions suggesting suspicion of money laundering and related crimes.
 - **Sharing of Information**: Share information with national intelligence/law enforcement agencies, national regulatory authorities, and foreign Financial Intelligence Units.
 - **Act as Central Repository**: Establish and maintain a national database based on reports received from reporting entities.
 - **Coordination**: Coordinate and strengthen the collection and sharing of financial intelligence through an effective national, regional, and global network to combat money laundering and related crimes.
 - **Research and Analysis**: Monitor and identify strategic key areas on money laundering trends, typologies, and developments.