



## Current Affairs of the Day

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## Amid pandemic, traditional art of 'talamaddale' goes digital

- The traditional art of 'talamaddale', a variant of Yakshagana theatre, too has gone virtual in times of COVID-19. A performance was streamed live on social media on June 13 and more such are in store.

### About Talamaddale:

- Unlike the Yakshagana performance, in the conventional 'talamaddale,' the artists sit across in a place without any costumes and engage in testing their oratory skills based on the episode chosen.
- If music is common for both Yakshagana performance and 'talamaddale', the latter has only spoken word without any dance or costumes.
- Hence it is an art form minus dance, costumes and stage conventions.

### Value Added Information

#### About Yakshagana:

- Yakshagana is a **traditional theatre** form of **Karnataka**.
- It is a **temple art** form that depicts **mythological stories** and **Puranas**.
- It is performed with massive headgears, elaborate facial make-up and vibrant costumes and ornaments.
- Usually recited in **Kannada**, it is also performed in Malayalam as well as Tulu (the dialect of south Karnataka).
- It is performed with **percussion instruments** like chenda, maddalam, jagatta or chengila (cymbals) and chakratala or elathalam (small cymbals).





## 'There will be no conflict if Indian Army doesn't enter our actual line of control'

PM Jawaharlal Nehru with Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai in 1954.

### Key Points:

- The Chinese have literally stuck to their guns since the 1962 border conflict when it comes to approaching a border settlement with India and reaching a common position on who sits where along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).
- A slice of history from the archives reveals that Beijing would be unyielding if India tried to disturb the post-1962 status quo, something that could shine a light on current border incidents with China.
- In December 1963, a year after the November 1962 border conflict with India, Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai told Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser that there would be “no conflict between the two sides if the Indian army does not again enter our actual line of control.”



### Chinese assessment:

- Given the recent impasse along the LAC and fisticuffs between Indian and Chinese soldiers, Mr. Zhou's dictum holds good — all would be well as long as the Indian side did not assert itself.
- A record of the Zhou-Nasser conversation, available on the Wilson Center Digital Archive, showed the Chinese assessment of New Delhi's position: “India's attitude is: for the eastern border, we must accept the McMahon line; for the western border, India wants it where it has never been, an area where Chinese have been living for several hundred years and made their own.” Mr. Zhou claimed that he visited India three times – in 1954, 1956 and 1957 – but the Indian side never put forth any proposals.
- In July 1962, Foreign Minister Marshal Chen Yi and Defence Minister Krishna Menon met in Geneva in a “situation where both sides were prepared



to settle through discussion in maintaining the border status quo [both the eastern and western border were more to India's advantage at that time than at present] and hold talks without conditions to resolve the issue”.

### No agreement:

- “At the time we assumed that the Indian side could accept a negotiated agreement reached with us on the basis of maintaining the border status quo. But unexpectedly, Menon wanted our side first to demarcate several areas to give to him, commit them in advance, and then hold talks again. Because of this, the two sides did not come to an agreement,” Mr. Zhou told Mr. Nasser.
- The Chinese side seems stuck on this even today – they have not agreed to share maps on their perception on the eastern and western sectors of LAC first at the Joint Working Group (JWG) mechanism at foreign secretary-level agreed upon during Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's path-breaking visit to Beijing in December 1988. Maps in the less contentious middle sector were shared at a JWG meeting in 2001.
- In a major step-up, the two countries agreed to set up a dedicated mechanism at the level of Special Representatives (SRs) to resolve the border dispute during Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's China trip in June 2003. This superseded the JWG.
- Though the SR mechanism led to a “guiding principles” agreement in 2005, the two countries are still to exchange maps on where each side is in the eastern and western sectors. “Advance demarcation” still appears to be a problem for the Chinese side, although the contours of a possible settlement referred to by Mr. Zhou is no longer Beijing's official position.

### A pressing issue:

- Over the years, India and China have agreed on a number of mechanisms to enhance confidence at the military level, but their inability to agree to a border settlement have led to consistent problems – troops coming into conflict with each other – and continues to be a pressing issue.
- Mercifully, there have been no fatalities on either side for the past 45 years – since the two countries restored full diplomatic relations in 1976.



## 'India, China nuclear arsenals grow'

### International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Yearbook 2020:

➤ All nations that have nuclear weapons continue to modernise their nuclear arsenals, while India and China increased their nuclear warheads in the last one year, according to a latest report by Swedish think tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).



- China is in the middle of a significant modernisation of its nuclear arsenal. It is developing a so-called nuclear triad for the first time, made up of new land and sea-based missiles and nuclear-capable aircraft. India and Pakistan are slowly increasing the size and diversity of their nuclear forces.
- China's nuclear arsenal had gone up from 290 warheads in 2019 to 320 in 2020, while India's went up from 130-140 in 2019 to 150 in 2020.
- Pakistan's arsenal was estimated to be between 150-160 in 2019 and has reached 160 in 2020. Both China and Pakistan continue to have larger nuclear arsenals than India.
- The nuclear arsenals of the nuclear-armed states other than the United States and Russia were considerably smaller but all these states were either developing or deploying new weapon systems or had announced their intention to do so.

### Low transparency:

- Together the nine nuclear-armed states — the U.S., Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea — possessed an estimated 13,400 nuclear weapons at the start of 2020, which marked a decrease from an estimated 13,865 nuclear weapons at the beginning of 2019.



- The decrease in the overall numbers was largely due to the dismantlement of old nuclear weapons by Russia and the U.S., which together possess over 90% of the global nuclear weapons.

### **New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START):**

- The U.S. and Russia have reduced their nuclear arsenals under the 2010 New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) but it will lapse in February 2021 unless both parties agree to prolong it.
- However, discussions to extend the New START or negotiate a new treaty made no progress with the U.S.'s insistence that China must join any future nuclear arms reduction talks, which China has categorically ruled out.
- The deadlock over the New START and the collapse of the 1987 Soviet–U.S. Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty) in 2019 suggest that the era of bilateral nuclear arms control agreements between Russia and the U.S. might be coming to an end.
- Russia and the U.S. have already announced extensive plans to replace and modernise their nuclear warheads and delivery systems.
- Both countries have also given new or expanded roles to nuclear weapons in their military plans and doctrines, which marks a significant reversal of the post-Cold War trend towards the gradual marginalisation of nuclear weapons.

### **Van Dhan Yojna helps tribals beat odds**

- A few years ago, tribal communities in Langleng, one of Nagaland's poorest districts, used to sell their unique hill broom grass for just ₹7 a kg.
- Today, by making the brooms themselves with support from the **Van Dhan Yojna**, they now earn ₹60 a broom, making four or five brooms from a kg of grass.

### **Hill broom project:**

- The hill broom project is one of the biggest success stories of the Van Dhan Yojna, launched nationwide on Independence Day 2019 to ensure that van dhan, or forest wealth, stays in the hands of forest dwellers, by providing local



platforms for processing, value addition, marketing and sale of minor forest produce.

- Ten months later, 1,205 tribal enterprises employing 3.6 lakh people through 18,000 self-help groups have been set up under the scheme. About ₹3.5 crore worth of sales have taken place through these platforms,
- The products range from hill brooms, wild honey, candles and ointments made of rock beeswax, bamboo bottles, aloe vera soaps and gooseberry wine in the north east, to hawan [incense] sticks, moha laddu and, amla murabba [preserved gooseberries] in Maharashtra and Rajasthan, and tamarind blocks, dried tendu leaves, processed mahua, lac bangles and eco-friendly leaf plates from Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh.

## Value Added Information

### About Van Dhan Yojana:

- The initiative **aims to promote MFPs-centric livelihood development of tribal gatherers and artisans.**
- It mainstreams the tribal community by **promoting primary level value addition to MFP at grassroots level.**
- **Significance:** Through this initiative, the share of tribals in the value chain of Non-Timber Forest Produce is expected to rise from the present 20% to around 60%.

### Implementation:

- The scheme will be **implemented through Ministry of Tribal Affairs as Nodal Department at the Central Level and TRIFED as Nodal Agency at the National Level.**
- At State level, the State Nodal Agency for MFPs and the District collectors are envisaged to play a pivot role in scheme **implementation at grassroot level.**



- Locally the **Kendras are proposed to be managed by a Managing Committee (an SHG)** consisting of representatives of Van Dhan SHGs in the cluster.
- **Composition:** As per the plan, TRIFED will facilitate establishment of MFP-led multi-purpose Van Dhan Vikas Kendras, a cluster of 10 SHGs comprising of 30 tribal MFP gatherers each, in the tribal areas.

### Significance of MFP:

- Minor Forest Produce (MFP) is a major source of livelihood for tribals living in forest areas. The importance of MFPs for this section of the society can be gauged from the fact that around 100 million forest dwellers depend on MFPs for food, shelter, medicines and cash income.
- It provides them critical subsistence during the lean seasons, particularly for primitive tribal groups such as hunter gatherers, and the landless. Tribals derive 20-40% of their annual income from MFP on which they spend major portion of their time.
- This activity has strong linkage to women's financial empowerment as most of the MFPs are collected and used/sold by women. MFP sector has the potential to create about 10 million workdays annually in the country.