

## Current Affairs of the Day

### India's newest Tiger Reserve, No. 4 in Chhattisgarh

1. The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) approved the Chhattisgarh government's proposal to declare the combined areas of the Guru Ghasidas National Park and Tamor Pingla Wildlife Sanctuary as a Tiger Reserve.
2. The new Reserve is located in the northern part of the state, bordering Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand. This will be the fourth Tiger Reserve in Chhattisgarh, after the Udanti-Sitanadi, Achanakmar, and Indravati Reserves.
3. Wildlife experts and activists in the state believe that turning Guru Ghasidas into a Tiger Reserve is important because it connects Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh and provides a corridor for tigers to move between the Bandhavgarh and Palamau Tiger Reserves.
4. Guru Ghasidas National Park was the last known habitat of the Asiatic cheetah in the country. Originally part of the Sanjay Dubri National Park, Guru Ghasidas Park was created as a separate entity in Chhattisgarh's Surguja region after the formation of the state in 2001.
5. Earlier the state government moved to obtain approval for the Boramdeo Wildlife Sanctuary in the centre of the state as a Tiger Reserve. Boramdeo, on the other hand, connects the Indravati Tiger Reserve in Chhattisgarh with the Kanha Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh.

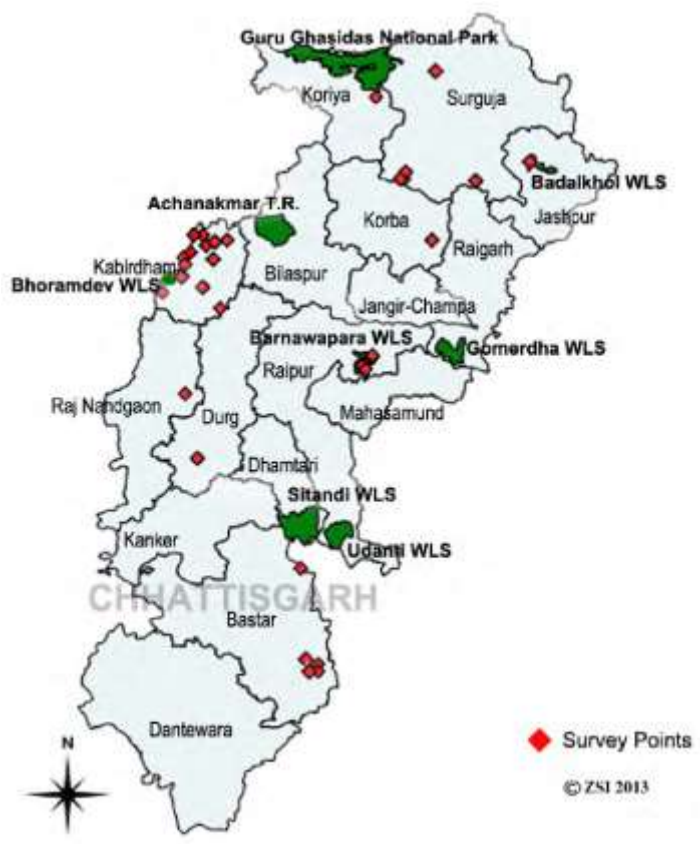


FIGURE 1. Map of Chhattisgarh showing the study area.



07.10.2021

Thursday



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## The WHO recommends the first anti-malarial vaccine

In a historic move, the World Health Organization (WHO) endorsed the first anti-malarial vaccine, as mankind enters a key turning point in a battle waged relentlessly over decades between man and mosquito, the vector.

### RTS, S: Mosquirix

1. The WHO said that it was recommending the use of the RTS, S/AS01 (RTS, S) malaria vaccine among children in sub-Saharan Africa and in other regions with moderate to high *P. falciparum* malaria transmission.
2. Developed by GlaxoSmithKline, the vaccine, known as RTS, S/AS01, has already been administered to nearly 8 lakh children in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi as part of a pilot programme since 2019.
3. The WHO endorsement paves the way for the use of this vaccine outside the pilot programme, in all areas where malaria is known to be widely prevalent. But the RTS.S/AS01 vaccine, known by its brand name of Mosquirix, is considered only the first step towards effective immunisation of the global population against malaria.
4. This vaccine is able to prevent severe cases of malaria in only 30 percent of the cases, and the quest for more effective vaccines is still underway.
5. The development comes at a time when the WHO and its partners have reported stagnation in the progress against the disease that kills more than 2,60,000 African children under the age of five annually.

### WHO recommends first anti-malarial vaccine

The WHO's recommendation was based on the results from an ongoing pilot programme in Ghana, Kenya and Malawi.

The development comes at a time when the WHO and its partners have reported a stagnation in the progress against the disease that kills more than 2,60,000 African children under the age of five annually. Malaria remains a primary cause of childhood illness and death in sub-Saharan Africa, according to the WHO.

"For centuries, malaria has stalked sub-Saharan Africa, causing immense personal suffering," said WHO Regional Director for Africa Dr. Matididiso Mosele. "We have long hoped for an effective malaria vaccine and now for the first time ever, we have such a vaccine recommended for widespread use. Today's recommendation offers a glimmer of hope for the continent



The vaccine was used in a pilot programme Ghana, Kenya and Malawi.

which should bear the heaviest burden of the disease and we expect many more African children to be protected from malaria and grow into healthy adults."

The vaccine does significantly reduce life-threatening severe malaria, Dr. Tedros said, but added that, "It's not the only tool. Vaccination against malaria does not replace or reduce the need for other measures, including bed nets (against mosquitoes)."

### Reasons for lack of vaccine for malaria

1. Scientists cite a variety of reasons for the failure to develop a malaria vaccine, the foremost being the complexity of the life-cycle of the malaria-causing parasite, a part of which is spent in the human host.
2. The difficulty in developing effective malaria vaccines stems largely from the complexity of the malaria-causing parasites' life cycle, which includes mosquitoes, the human liver, and human blood stages, and subsequent antigenic variations of the parasite.
3. These parasites are also able to hide inside human cells to avoid being recognised by the immune system, creating further challenges.



07.10.2021 Thursday



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4. Another challenge faced in malaria vaccine development is that the common human malaria-causing parasite, *P. falciparum*, is not a rodent pathogen leading to difficulty in R&D.
5. The lack of funding and interest in developing a malaria vaccine. Because malaria disproportionately affects LMIC (low and middle-income countries) lacking the robust health infrastructure, the vaccine manufacturers have little incentive for malaria vaccines.
6. Other scientists have also mentioned that research for malaria vaccines never received the same kind of attention as, say, HIV/AIDS.

## No word on parliamentary panels

Nearly a month after the tenure of the parliamentary standing committees ended on September 12, there is no word on the reconstitution of these panels, with sources pointing it to bureaucratic delays. Opposition leaders stated that the delay was yet another way to subvert an important parliamentary instrument.

## No word on parliamentary panels

'Delay yet another way to subvert an important parliamentary instrument'

**SORABANA K. PARIK**  
NEW DELHI

Nearly a month after the tenure of the parliamentary standing committees ended on September 12, there is no word on reconstitution of these panels, with sources pointing it to bureaucratic delays. Opposition leaders stated that the delay was yet another way to subvert an important parliamentary instrument.

The government has a tally record in the constitution of the panels. In 2019, the committees were constituted in October, nearly five months late. In 2014, the panels were notified on September 1, less than three months after the process was started. In 2009, during

the UPA days, it was notified on August 31. And in 2004, it was constituted by August 5. Even though the composition of the committees largely remains the same, yet every year, more than a month is spent in reconstituting the panels.

### Submission of lists

The sources said political parties took a long while in submitting their list of nominees and the BJP was the last to submit the list. Derek O'Brien, floor leader of the Trinamool Congress in the Rajya Sabha, pointed out that the number of Bills scrutinised by the parliamentary panels had declined under the present regime. In the 14th and the 15th Lok Sabha,

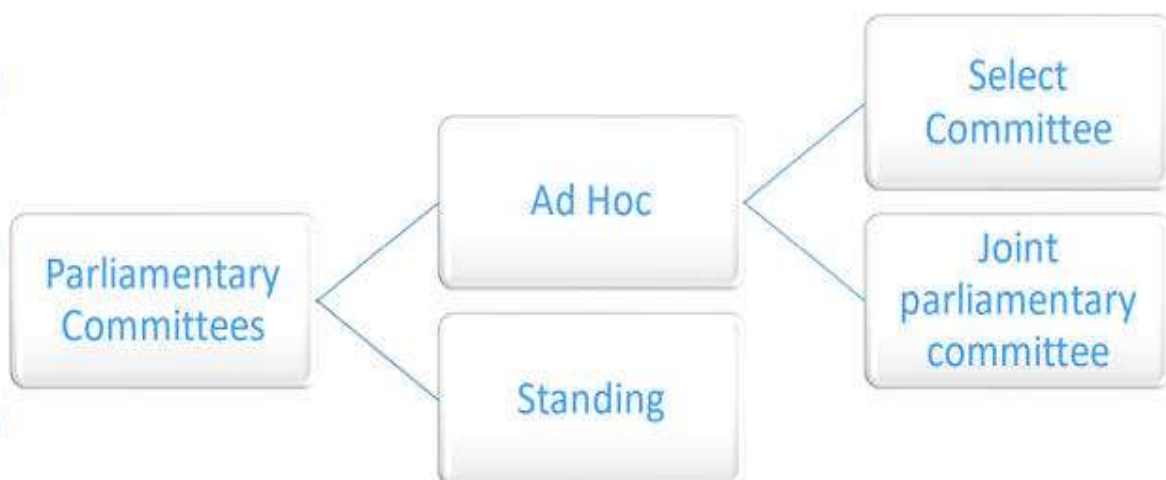
during the UPA years, 90% and 71% of the Bills, respectively, were vetted by the standing committees. In comparison to this, the figures for the 16th Lok Sabha was 25% and the current one a dismal 1%. "With these figures do you think Modi-Shah's BJP cares too much about the standing committees," he asked.

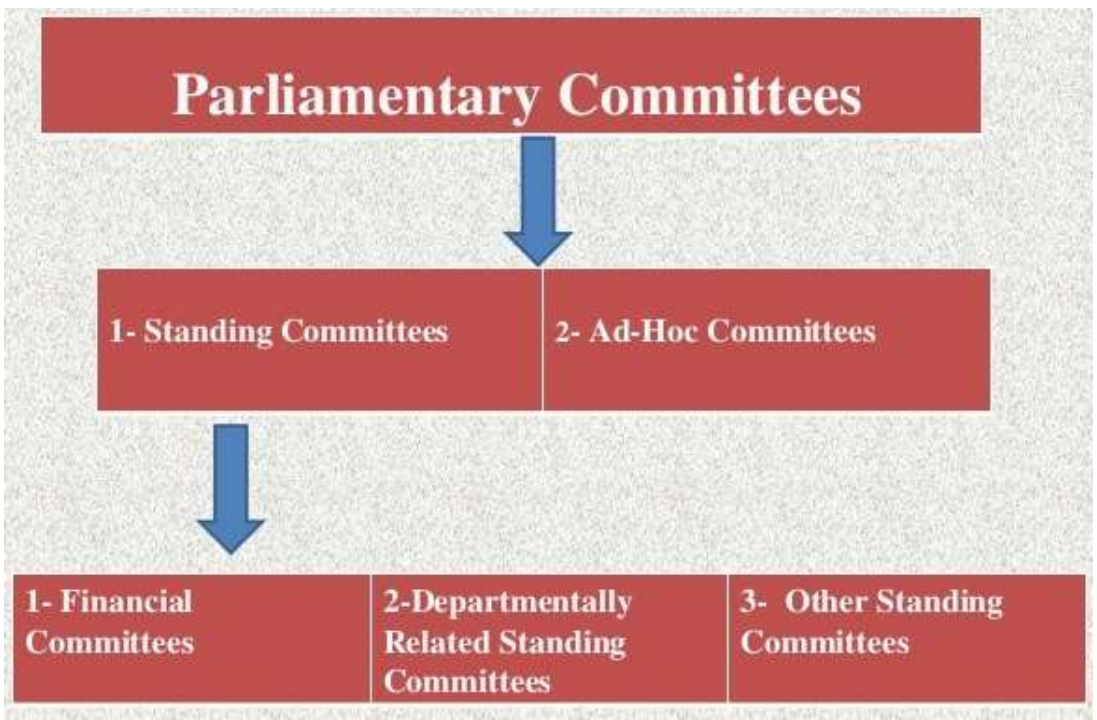
BJP MP Manoj K. Jha observed that the delay was a textbook example of the government's approach towards Parliament and the instruments attached to it.

Congress Lok Sabha member Manish Tewari alleged that the government had broken several conventions, including the one on leaving the committees on External

Affairs and Finance for the Opposition to lead. "This convention has been in place keeping in view the parliamentary practice of providing checks and balances to the everyday functioning of the government through legislative oversight." The practice of circulating verbatim minutes of the meeting had also been dispensed with, he noted.

Accepting that the delay imposed unnecessary pause on the functioning of the parliamentary panels, BJP MP Bhanu Prakash Malik questioned the limited and indifferent participation in the panel meetings. "How many members actually take part in these deliberations," he asked.





## Parliamentary committees

- Why are Parliamentary Committees needed?
  - Increases efficiency and expertise of Parliament.
  - Review proposed laws , oversee activities of the executive branch and scrutinize government expenditure.
  - Forum to build consensus across party lines.
  - Help develop expertise in subjects.
  - Enables consultation with independent experts and stakeholders.



07.10.2021

Thursday



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## **The parliamentary standing committees**

1. The government has a tardy record in the constitution of the panels. In 2019, the committees were constituted in October, nearly five-month late.
2. The sources said political parties took a long while in submitting their list of nominees and the BJP was the last to submit the list.
3. The number of Bills scrutinised by the parliamentary panels had declined under the present regime. In the 14th and the 15th Lok Sabha, during the UPA years, 60% and 71% of the Bills, respectively, were vetted by the standing committees.
4. In comparison to this, the figures for the 16th Lok Sabha was 25% and the current one a dismal 11%.
5. Congress alleged that the government had broken several conventions, including the one on leaving the committees on External Affairs and Finance for the Opposition to lead.
6. This convention has been in place keeping in view the parliamentary practice of providing checks and balances to the everyday functioning of the government through legislative oversight.

## **U.P. tops list of States emitting fine particulate matter: study**

1. Uttar Pradesh is the largest emitter of PM<sub>2.5</sub>, the class of particulate matter considered most harmful to health, according to an analysis by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW).
2. The high emissions from U.P. were largely due to a significant share of PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions from solid-fuel use in households and, by virtue of being India's most populous state, it had a higher proportion of households relying on this form of fuel.
3. Maharashtra, Gujarat, Odisha, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, and Rajasthan too feature in the list of top polluters but are differently ranked by the five sources. Only Uttar Pradesh is at the top of the list from all sources.

### **Data sources**

The five data sources used are

1. Emissions Database for Global Atmospheric Research (EDGAR), maintained by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre;



07.10.2021 Thursday



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- Evaluating the Climate and Air Quality Impacts of Shortlived Pollutants (ECLIPSE), maintained by the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA);
- Regional Emission Inventory in Asia (REAS), maintained by the National Institute for Environmental Studies, Japan (NIES);
- Speciated Multipolluter Generator (SMoG), maintained by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT Bombay); and
- Spatially resolved pollution emission inventory for India, maintained by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI).

**Top polluters** | Depending on the data source, U.P.'s PM2.5 emissions ranged from 588 to 976 kilo-tonnes (kt) per year whereas Maharashtra's ranged from 415 kt to 549 kt. A look at data sourced from various organisations on emissions

Figures in kt

State	EDGAR	ECLIPSE	REAS	SMoG	TERI
U.P.	661	887	588	816	976
Maharashtra	549	549	415	592	429
M.P.	450	471	403	584	-
Odisha	369	-	-	-	525
Rajasthan	-	-	311	452	-
W.B.	572	438	-	-	-



### Common pollutants

There are differences in the periods over which these sources track the emissions as well as the pollutants, but most track the important ones: PM2.5, PM10, NO<sub>x</sub> (nitrous oxides), SO<sub>2</sub> (sulphur dioxide), CO (carbon monoxide), NH<sub>3</sub> (ammonia), and NMVOC (non-methane volatile organic compounds).

### NCAP

- India has a National Clean Air Campaign (NCAP) that aims to reduce pollution in 122 of the most polluted cities by 2024.
- To meet the NCAP target of 20-30% reduction in particulate concentration by 2024, we need to estimate emission reductions needed across sectors.
- Estimating these reductions will only be possible when we have an official, representative emission inventory for India.

**REVISED AFTER 16 YEARS**  
WHO | Then & Now

Pollutant*	Average	2005*	2021*
PM2.5	Annual mean	10	5
	24-hour mean	25	15
PM10	Annual mean	20	15
	24-hour mean	50	45
O <sub>3</sub>	Peak season	NS**	60
	8-hour mean	100	100
NO <sub>x</sub>	Annual mean	40	10
	24-hour mean	NS**	25
SO <sub>2</sub>	24-hour mean	20	40
CO	24-hour mean	NS**	4

**India's National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)**

Average

- Annual mean
- 24-hour mean

PM2.5: 40 | 60

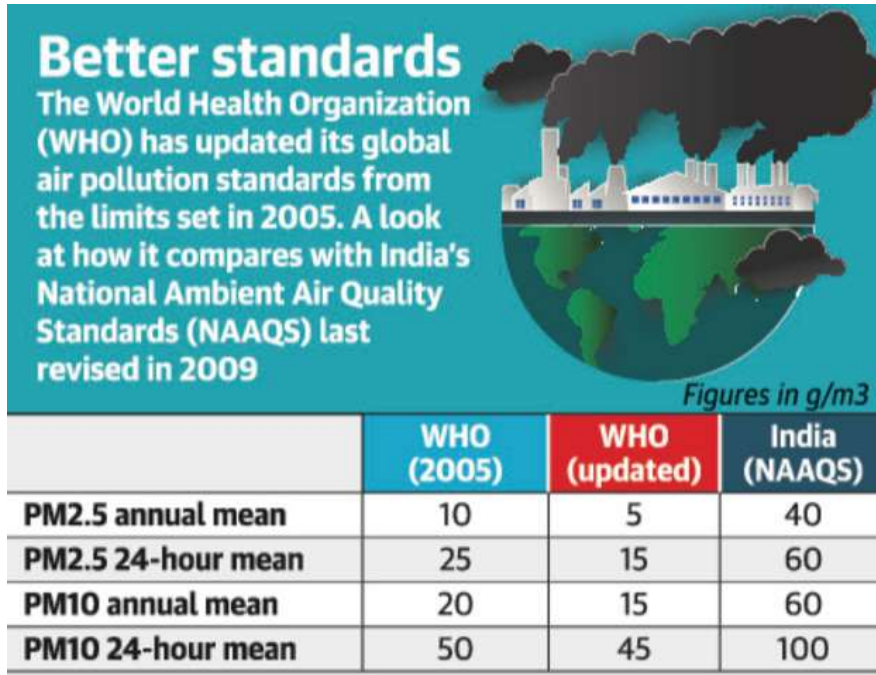
PM10: 60 | 100

NO<sub>x</sub>: 40 | 80

SO<sub>2</sub>: 50 | 80

Average (8-hour mean): O<sub>3</sub> | 100; CO | 2

\* micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m<sup>3</sup>); \*\*NS - Not Set; PM2.5 & PM10 - Particulate Matters; O<sub>3</sub> - Ozone; NO<sub>x</sub> - Nitrogen Dioxide; SO<sub>2</sub> - Sulfur Dioxide; CO - Carbon Monoxide



## SC asks firecracker makers why they stock barium despite the ban

Court says it may order the seizure of toxic chemicals from the manufacturers. Barium, which is used to produce green sparks in firecrackers, is a toxic chemical.

### Green coloured toxin:

1. The Supreme Court wondered why firecracker manufacturers continued to stock huge quantities of toxic barium chemicals even after the court had banned its use in fireworks.
2. The court was hearing a plea by petitioners, including Delhi-based student Arjun Gopal, about the continued violation of the 2018 Supreme Court ban on the use of barium and other chemicals in firecrackers.
3. The court said "noisy" celebrations are replete with "joint crackers" even though it was banned.

## SC asks firecracker makers why they stock barium despite ban

Court says it may order seizure of toxic chemicals from the manufacturers

### ENVIRONMENT

The Supreme Court on Wednesday wondered why firecracker manufacturers continued to stock huge quantities of toxic barium chemicals even after the court had banned its use in fireworks.

"Have you seen the reply by manufacturers? What they say is very disturbing. They say that the large quantity of barium purchased was to be kept in the godowns. It was not for manufacture of crackers. Why have they kept them in the godowns?" a Bench led by Justice B.R. Gowder said.

The court remarked that it might even order the seizure of the chemicals from the manufacturers.

The court was hearing a



Manufacturers favour barium, which is used to produce green sparks in firecrackers, is a toxic chemical, says court

plea by petitioners, including Delhi-based student Arjun Gopal, about the continued violation of the 2018 Supreme Court ban on the use of barium and other chemicals in firecrackers.

The court said "noisy" celebrations are replete with

crackers, which revealed rare past violation of the top court's ban on the use of toxic ingredients in the products. The court had ordered the joint Director of the CBI, in Chennai, to conduct a "stakeout" probe in order in March 2020.

The agency had filed a report in a sealed cover in the court. The court said the agency report had shown that chemical analysis on samples of finished and un-finished firecrackers and raw materials revealed barium content. The court had said that large quantities of barium were purchased from the market.

"We cannot continue in the cost of the lives of others," the court said. It ordered the case hearing on October 26.



07.10.2021 Thursday



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## Cabinet clears ₹4,445-cr. textile parks

### PM MITRA

1. The Union Cabinet approved the setting up of seven Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Parks at an outlay of ₹4,445 crore.
2. The mega parks scheme will include brownfield and greenfield projects, spread over five years. The parks would be developed by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) owned by the Central and State governments and would get two kinds of support. Development Capital Support, aimed at helping develop infrastructure, would fund 30% of the project cost with a cap of ₹500 crores for greenfield projects and ₹200 crores for brownfield projects. A separate Competitiveness Incentive Support would be limited to ₹300 crores per park. The parks are expected to generate 7 lakh direct jobs and provide indirect jobs to almost 14 lakh people.
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4. The parks are expected to generate 7 lakh direct jobs and provide indirect jobs to almost 14 lakh people.

## Cabinet clears ₹4,445-cr. textile parks

Plan entails establishing 7 Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel Parks over a 5-year period

**OFFICIAL COMMUNIQUE**  
New Delhi, October 6  
The Union Cabinet on Monday approved the setting up of seven Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Parks at an outlay of ₹4,445 crore.

The mega parks scheme will include brownfield and greenfield projects, spread over five years, said Union Minister Piyush Goyal.

The parks would be developed by a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) owned by the Central and State governments and would get two kinds of support. Develop-



**Stitching livelihoods.** The parks are expected to generate 7 lakh direct jobs and 14 lakh indirect jobs.

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Support would be limited to ₹300 crore per park.

**'TNS, Gujarat interested'**  
As many as 13 States including Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Gujarat had already shown interest, Textiles Secretary Upendra Prasad Singh told the Prime Minister during the cabinet meeting.

The parks would require a minimum 1,000 acres and facilities such as adequate electricity and water would be selected through a transparent challenge mode.

The SPV would select a Master Developer to set up and maintain the park for a specified period. Of the park's area, 40% would be earmarked for manufacturing activity, 20% for utilities, and 40% set aside for commercial development.

The parks are expected to generate 7 lakh direct jobs and provide indirect jobs to almost 14 lakh people.

Mr. Singh said industries in the parks would comprise four categories — units involving 500 crore or more, units involving 100-500 crore, units of less than

100 crore and instant units.

**CABINET DECISIONS**  
06 OCTOBER, 2021

### Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Parks (1/2)

- Cabinet approves setting up of 7 PM MITRA Parks
- Total outlay of Rs. 4,445 crore over 5 years
- Inspired by 5F vision of PM Modi - Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign
- To be developed by a Special Purpose Vehicle owned by State Government and Government of India in PPP mode
- MITRA parks will have
  - Core Infrastructure - Incubation Centre & Plug & Play facility, Developed Factory Sites, Roads, Power, Water and Waste Water system etc
  - Support Infrastructure - workers' hostels and housing, logistics park, warehousing, medical, training & skill development facilities

**CABINET DECISIONS**  
06 OCTOBER, 2021

### Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Parks (2/2)

#### Benefits

- World-class industrial infrastructure would attract cutting age technology/scale FDI/local investment in the sector
- Create an integrated Textiles Value Chain from spinning, weaving, processing/dyeing and printing to garment manufacturing all at one location
- Will reduce logistics cost
- Generate around 1 Lakh direct and 2 lakh indirect employment per park





THE HINDU

07.10.2021

Thursday



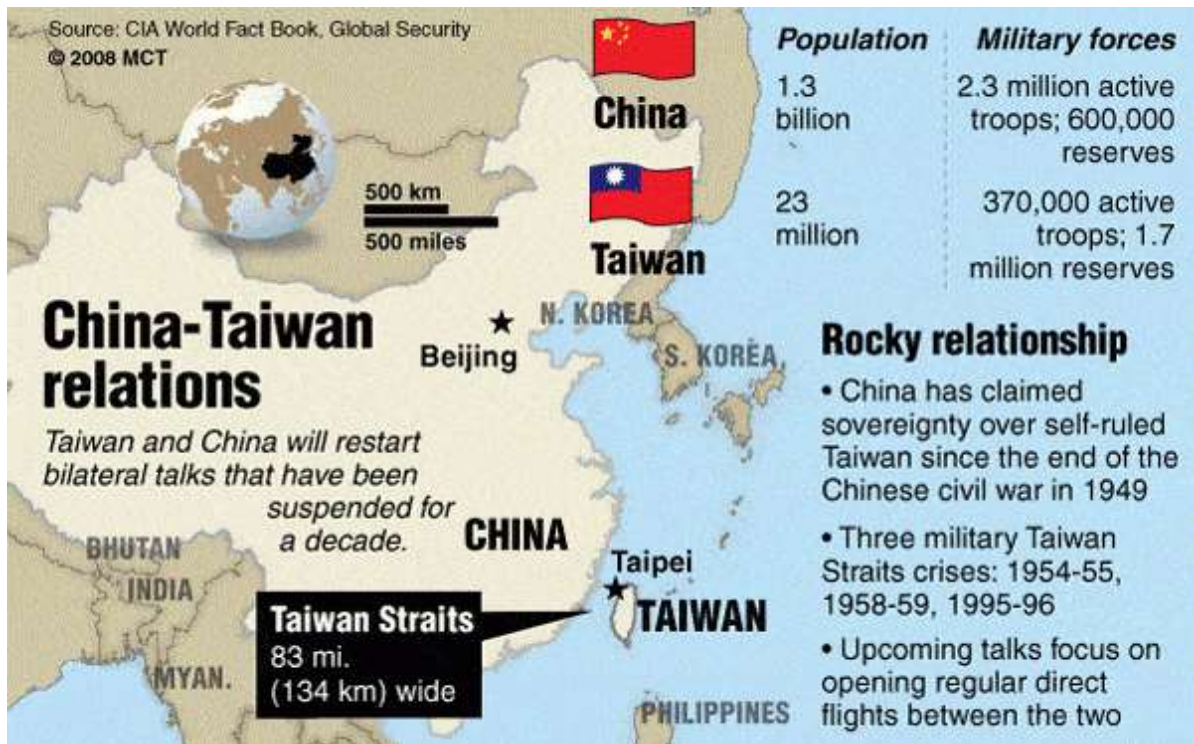
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## China tensions worst in 40 years: Taiwan

1. Days after China's air force sent a record 56 aircraft towards Taiwan, Taiwanese Defence Minister Chiu Kuo-cheng described relations across the Strait as the most strained in 40 years.



2. China had the ability to start a war but would weigh various outcomes, the costs and consequences, before launching one. Taiwan defence minister said Taiwan had to be able to defend itself rather than rely on others, referring to U.S. commitments to defend the island.





07.10.2021

Thursday



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<p><b>Practice MCQ</b></p>	<p>Q1. Which of the following is/are the roles of Parliamentary committees?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase efficiency and expertise of parliament</li> <li>2. Forum to build consensus across party lines</li> <li>3. Enable consultation with experts</li> <li>4. Review of proposed laws</li> </ol> <p>Select the correct answer from the codes given below</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 1 and 4 only</li> <li>b. 1, 2 and 3 only</li> <li>c. 2, 3 and 4 only</li> <li>d. 1, 2, 3 and 4</li> </ol> <p>Q2. Guru Ghasi Das National Park is situated in the state of</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Madhya Pradesh</li> <li>b. Chattisgarh</li> <li>c. Odisha</li> <li>d. Jharkhand</li> </ol>
<p><b>Mains DAWP</b></p>	<p>Q1. Discuss factors responsible for the current Coal crisis in India. Suggest reforms.</p> <p>Q2. Account for difficulty in vaccine discovery for Malaria.</p> <p>Q3. Critically discuss grave consequences of the diminishing importance of the parliamentary panels.</p>