



Current Affairs of the Day

BIMSTEC working on joint disaster relief plans

PANEX-21 is a disaster management exercise of the multilateral grouping Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC).

BIMSTEC

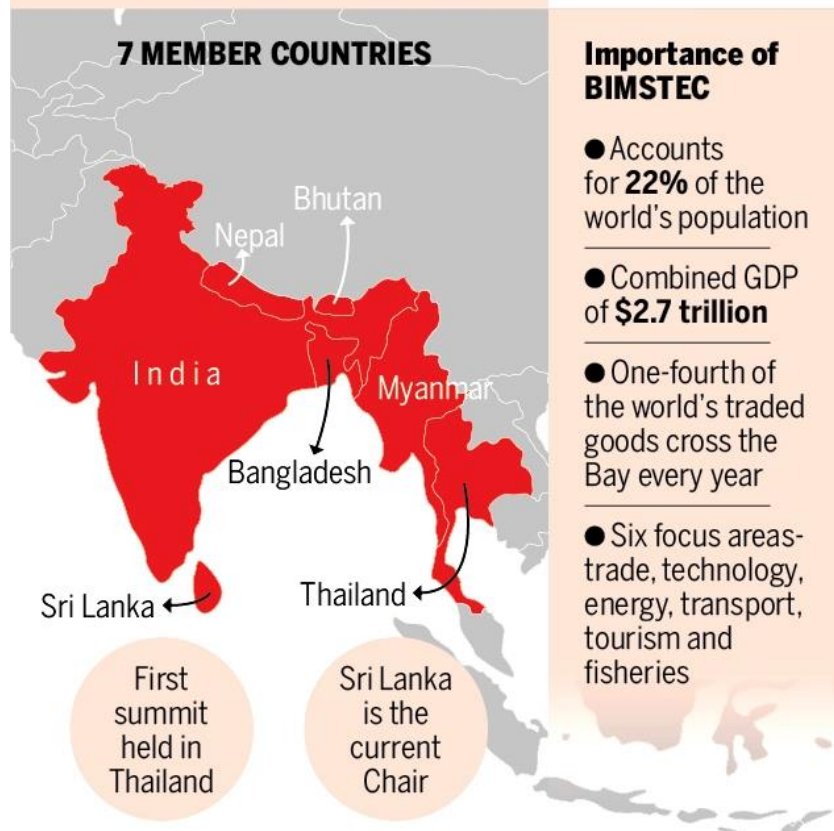
WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW



Stands for **The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation**

Founded in 1997 through **Bangkok Declaration**

7 MEMBER COUNTRIES



Importance of BIMSTEC

- Accounts for **22%** of the world's population
- Combined GDP of **\$2.7 trillion**
- One-fourth of the world's traded goods cross the Bay every year
- Six focus areas- trade, technology, energy, transport, tourism and fisheries

First summit held in Thailand

Sri Lanka is the current Chair

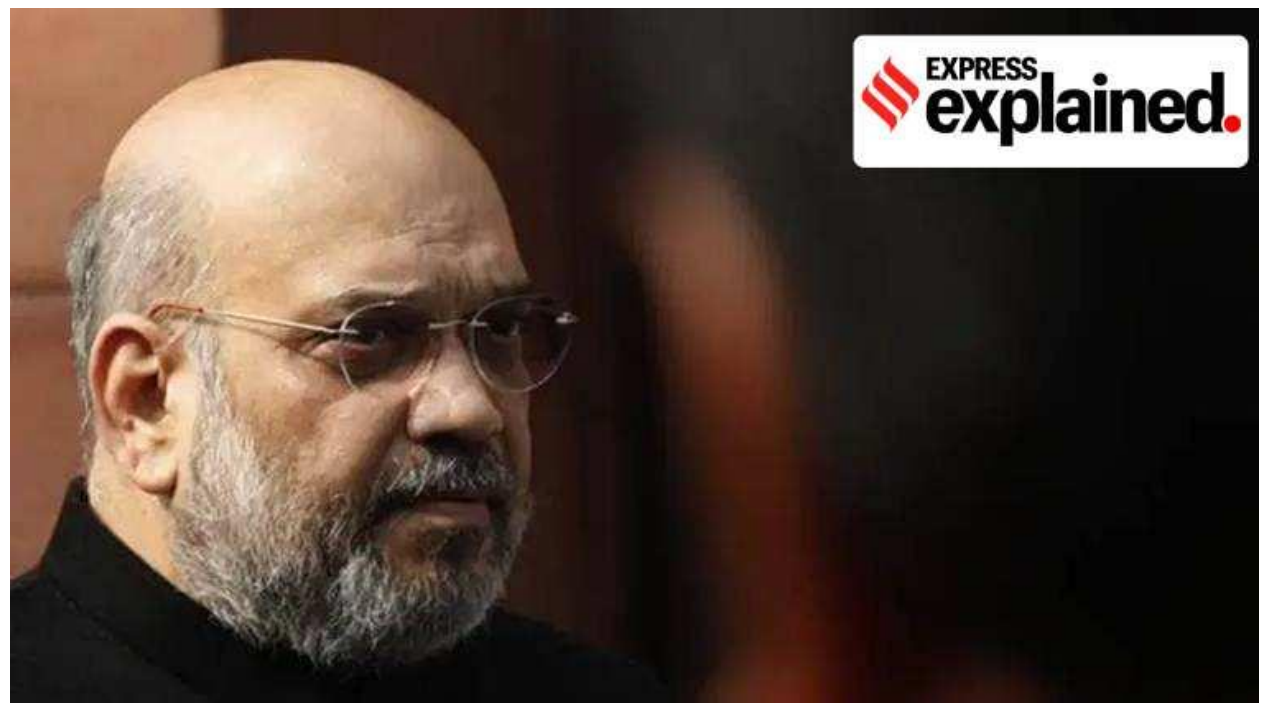


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Multistate cooperatives: how they function, why govt plans to amend the law



● The Centre has decided to amend the Multi State Cooperative Societies (MSCS) Act, 2002 to "plug the loopholes in the Act". What is the Act, and what are multistate cooperative societies?

What is the Act, and what are multistate cooperative societies?

1. Cooperatives are a state subject, but there are many societies such as those for sugar and milk, banks, milk unions etc whose members and areas of operation are spread across more than one state. The Act was passed to govern such cooperatives.
2. For example, most sugar mills along the districts on the Karnataka-Maharashtra border procure cane from both states.
3. They draw their membership from both states, and they are thus registered under the MSCS Act. Their board of directors has representation from all states they operate in.
4. Administrative and financial control of these societies is with the central registrar, with the law making it clear that no state government official can wield any control on them.



5. Since the law was enacted, 1,479 such societies have been registered, of which 9 have been deregistered since. Maharashtra has the highest number at 567, followed by Uttar Pradesh (147) and New Delhi (133).
6. Credit societies constitute the bulk of registered societies at 610, followed by agro-based ones (which include sugar mills, spinning mills etc) at 244. There are 96 multistate cooperative dairies and 66 multistate cooperative banks.

Why does the government plan to amend the Act?

1. Experts on cooperatives talk of loopholes in the Act. The exclusive control of the central registrar, who is also the Central Cooperative Commissioner, was meant to allow the smooth functioning of these societies.

2. The central Act cushions them from the interference of

state authorities so that these societies are able to function in multiple states. What was supposed to facilitate smooth functioning, however, has created obstacles.

3. While the system for state-registered societies includes checks and balances at multiple layers to ensure transparency in the process, these layers do not exist in the case of multistate societies.
4. Instead, the board of directors has control of all finances and administration. For expenditure above a certain level, the annual general body meeting of the society has to be called.

OBJECTIVES OF THE MSCS ACT, 2002

The Multi- State Co-operative Societies Act, 2002 ("MSCS Act, 2002") was enacted with the following objectives:

1. To facilitate the voluntary formation of Multi- State Co-operative Societies in the country ;
2. To expand the area of operation of societies in more than one state to serve the interest of members;
3. To ensure that societies carry on their activities on the principles of self-help and mutual aid and to promote social and economic upliftment/welfare of the members;
4. To provide for democratic functioning of societies, giving rights and opportunities to members to take part in the affairs of the society; and
5. To provide functional autonomy and management rights to the members.



5. The annual report of these societies has to be submitted either online or offline to the central registrar before September every year. This year, 1,458 reports have been submitted.

What are the other issues with the Act?

1. Many experts have noted there is an apparent lack of day-to-day government control on such societies. Unlike state cooperatives, which have to submit multiple reports to the state registrar, multistate cooperatives need not.
2. The central registrar can only allow inspection of the societies under special conditions — a written request has to be sent to the office of the registrar by not less than one-third of the members of the board, or not less than one-fifth of the number of members of the society.
3. Inspections can happen only after prior intimation to societies.
4. The on-ground infrastructure for the central registrar is thin — there are no officers or offices at the state level, with most work being carried out either online or through correspondence.
5. For members of the societies, the only office where they can seek justice is in Delhi, with state authorities expressing their inability to do anything more than forwarding their complaints to the central registrar.
6. There have been instances across the country when credit societies have launched Ponzi schemes taking advantage of these loopholes. Such schemes mostly target small and medium holders with the lure of high returns.
7. Fly-by-night operators get people to invest and, after a few instalments, wind up their operations. In Maharashtra, the state commissioner used to get multiple complaints of this nature but could not take any action, given the lack of ground staff necessary for verifying the antecedents of such societies.

What kind of amendments can be expected?

1. The Centre is holding extensive consultations with experts from various fields: bankers, sugar commissioners, cooperative commissioners, housing societies federations etc.
2. Senior central government officials said they will also increase their manpower, first in Delhi and then in the states, to ensure better governance of the societies.
3. Also, technology will be used to bring in transparency.



New Ministry of Cooperation:

Ministry of Co-operation- realizing the vision of **'Sahkar se Samriddhi'**

- To provide a separate administrative, legal and policy framework for **strengthening cooperative movement in the country**
- Will help deepen Co-operatives as a true people based movement
- Will work to streamline processes for 'Ease of doing business' for co-operatives
- Will work to enable development of **Multi-State Co-operatives**

Explained: India's missile capability, and where it stands in relation to its neighbours

● Defence Minister has urged DRDO scientists to work towards developing hypersonic missile technology. China had demonstrated its hypersonic missile capability with successful tests of a hypersonic glide vehicle (HGV) which, according to reports, circled the globe but missed its target by just a few kilometres.



What is the history of missile technology in India?

1. Before Independence, several kingdoms in India were using rockets as part of their warfare technologies. Mysore ruler Hyder Ali started inducting iron-cased rockets in his army in the mid-18th century.
2. By 1982, the Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL) was working on several missile technologies under the Integrated Guided Missiles Development Programme (IGMDP).

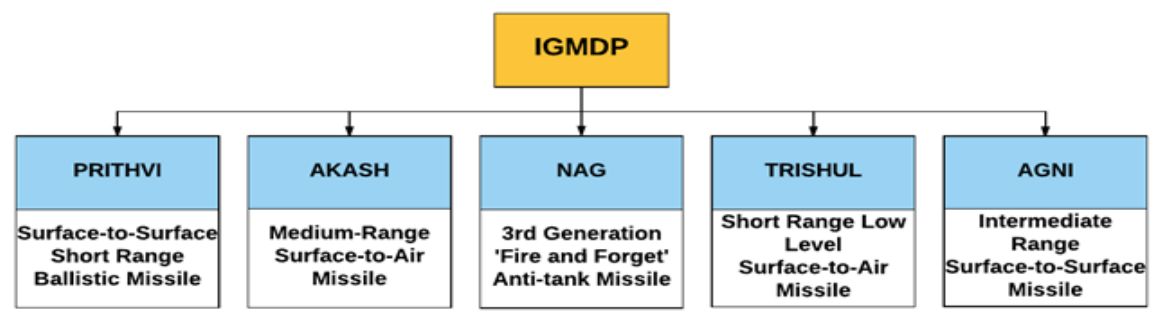


What kind of missiles does India have?

India is considered among the top few nations when it comes to designing and developing missiles indigenously, although it is way behind the US, China and Russia in terms of range.

Which of India's missile systems are most important?

1. The two most important are Agni and Prithvi, both being used by the Strategic Forces Command.
2. Agni (range around 5,000) is India's only contender for an inter-continental ballistic missile (ICBM), which is available in only a few countries.
3. Prithvi, although a short-range surface-to-surface missile with a 350 km range, has strategic uses.
4. India also tested an anti-satellite system.





What about hypersonic technology?

1. India has been working on this for a few years and is just behind the US, Russia and China. DRDO successfully tested a Hypersonic Technology Demonstrated Vehicle (HSTDV) in September 2020 and demonstrated its hypersonic air-breathing scramjet technology.
2. According to sources, India has developed its own cryogenic engine and demonstrated it in a 23-second flight. India will try to make a hypersonic cruise missile, using HSTDV.
3. Sources said only Russia has proven its hypersonic missile capability so far, while China has demonstrated its HGV capacity. India is expected to be able to have a hypersonic weapons system within four years, with medium- to long-range capabilities.

What makes India good at missile technology?

1. The Army's artillery's modernisation programme said missile technology is "one field in which India has made very, very positive and substantial progress".

INTEGRATED GUIDED MISSILE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OF INDIA

An Indian Ministry of defence program between the early 1980s and 2007 for the development of a comprehensive range of missiles

Agni missiles (surface to surface)

Agni-1 strategic type Nuclear, HE, FAE, penetration, sub munitions, 700-800, 2002

Agni-2 strategic Nuclear, HE, FAE, penetration, sub munitions 2000-3000, 1999

Agni-3 strategic type Nuclear, HE, FAE, penetration, sub munitions 3500-5000, tested

Agni-5 strategic Nuclear, HE, FAE, penetration, sub munitions 5000-6000,



2. Under the IGMP then headed by A P J Abdul Kalam, later India's President first came to Prithvi, then Agni. BrahMos, at 2.5-3 times the speed of sound, was among the fastest in the world when developed.
3. "After the nuclear blast in 1998, cryogenic etc were not given to us. Kalam and others, they made it a point that they developed it within the country."
4. The US is leading in missile technology, and China is building up". India is also "at a very advanced stage" among the top three or four nations.



5. With India's missiles today our basic opponent, area of interest is the northern border [China]. On the western border [Pakistan] we cover the whole area.
6. With Agni V ready India is working on Agni VI and Agni VII, which should have a much longer range.



Where do China and Pakistan stand compared to India?

1. According to a Pentagon report in 2020, China may have either achieved parity or even exceeded the US in land-based conventional ballistic and cruise missile capabilities.
2. China's missile development is "definitely a concern for us, but we will definitely evolve".
3. China has given Pakistan the technology, "but getting a technology and really using it, and thereafter evolving and adopting a policy is totally different".
4. He called hypersonic missiles "weapons of deterrence" but will not be used. He believes they "will continue to deter, but unlikely that China will ever use this. But if it does, India will not sit idle."
5. On nuclear capability, India does not call BrahMos nuclear, it can be used. India's only nuclear missiles are Prithvi and Agni, but beyond those, tactical nuclear weapons can be fired from some IAF fighter jets or from Army guns, which have a low range, around 50 km.



MAINS DAWP	<p>Q1. Discuss India's missile capability, and where it stands in relation to its neighbours.</p>
MCQs	<p>Q1. Consider the following statements</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Cooperatives are on the state list of schedule seven of the Indian constitution.2. There is no separate ministry for cooperatives at the Union level. <p>Which of the above statements is/are correct?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. 1 onlyb. 2 onlyc. Both 1 and 2d. Neither 1 nor 2