



Current Affairs of the Day

India's 'space economy' valued at ₹36,794 crores

- A collaboration between two premier research and educational institutions in Thiruvananthapuram has shed light on India's "space economy", the contours of which have remained largely vague even as the country's space programme grew by leaps and bounds.

- In a first-of-its-kind attempt at measuring the size of India's space economy, researchers from the Centre for Development Studies (CDS) and the Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology (IIST) arrived at a figure of ₹36,794 crores (approximately \$5 billion) for the financial year 2020-21.



- The estimated size, as a percentage of the GDP, has slipped from 0.26% in 2011-12 to 0.19% in 2020-21, they found.

Space Economy:

1. The authors have examined the annual budget for the space programme and its constituents; space manufacturing, operations and application.
2. According to the paper, space applications accounted for the major chunk of this evolving economy, constituting 73.57% (₹27,061 crores) of it in 2020-21, followed by space operations (₹8,218.82 crores or 22.31%) and manufacturing (₹1,515.59 crores or 4.12%).
3. The budget outlay for space has a considerable influence on the dynamics of the space economy, according to the study. "India's space economy has



evolved considerably and now accounts, on an average, for about 0.23% of the GDP (over 2011-12 to 2020-21).

4. We have also noticed a decline in the budget for space-related activities, leading to a reduction in the size of the economy in the last two years.
5. The budget outlay in 2020-21 was ₹9,500 crore, shrinking from ₹13,033.2 crores in the previous fiscal. The estimated size of the space economy shrunk from ₹43,397 crores in 2018-19 to ₹39,802 crores in 2019-20 and ₹36,794 crores in 2020-21.
6. In relation to GDP, India's spending is more than that of China, Germany, Italy and Japan, but less than of the U.S. and Russia.

States Can Take A Decision On Minority Status For Hindus, Says Centre Affidavit

1. The Union government has put the onus on states and Union territories to grant minority status to Hindus where their numbers are less than those of other communities.

SOME MAJORITIES CORNER BENEFITS: PIL

> Centre tells SC that since the **subject of identification of minority communities is in Concurrent List**, both Centre and states have the power to legislate to confer minority status on certain religious or linguistic communities

> Centre gives example of **govt of Maharashtra that notified 'Jews' as a minority community** and Karnataka govt that notified Urdu, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Marathi,

Tulu, Lamani, Hindi, Konkani and Gujarati languages as minority languages

> **Centre's affidavit is in response to a PIL in SC.** The PIL says followers of Hinduism, Judaism and Bahaism are minorities in J&K, Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal, Lakshadweep, Manipur and Punjab. However, **majority communities in these states are treated as 'minorities' and they corner benefits**



2. The Union ministry of minority affairs

informed the Supreme Court that while the central government has notified six communities, namely Christians, Sikhs, Muslims, Buddhists, Parsis and Jains, as minorities at the national level, it is open for states and UTs to notify Hindus as a religious or linguistic minority where they are less in number.



3. The Centre's affidavit maintained that notification of any community-specific to a state as a minority comes under the purview of the state concerned.
4. The state governments can also declare a religious or linguistic community as a 'minority community' within the state, said the Union government.

The Centre filed its affidavit in response to a petition which has challenged the validity of Section 2(f) of the National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions Act, 2004 on grounds that it gives unbridled powers to the Centre to restrict minority benefits to the notified six religious communities.

WHO ARE THE MINORITIES IN INDIA?

Religious communities notified as minority communities under National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992

Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Zoroastrians, Jains (notified on Jan 2014)

Did you know? Minority communities in India are extended certain basic rights guaranteed under Articles 25 to 30. They also benefit in getting access to education and government jobs among other things.



In which states is the Hindu community a minority?

State	% of Hindus (2011 Census Data)
Lakshadweep	2.77%
Mizoram	2.75%
Nagaland	8.75%
Meghalaya	11.53%
Jammu & Kashmir	28.44%
Arunachal Pradesh	29.04%
Manipur	31.39%
Punjab	38.49%



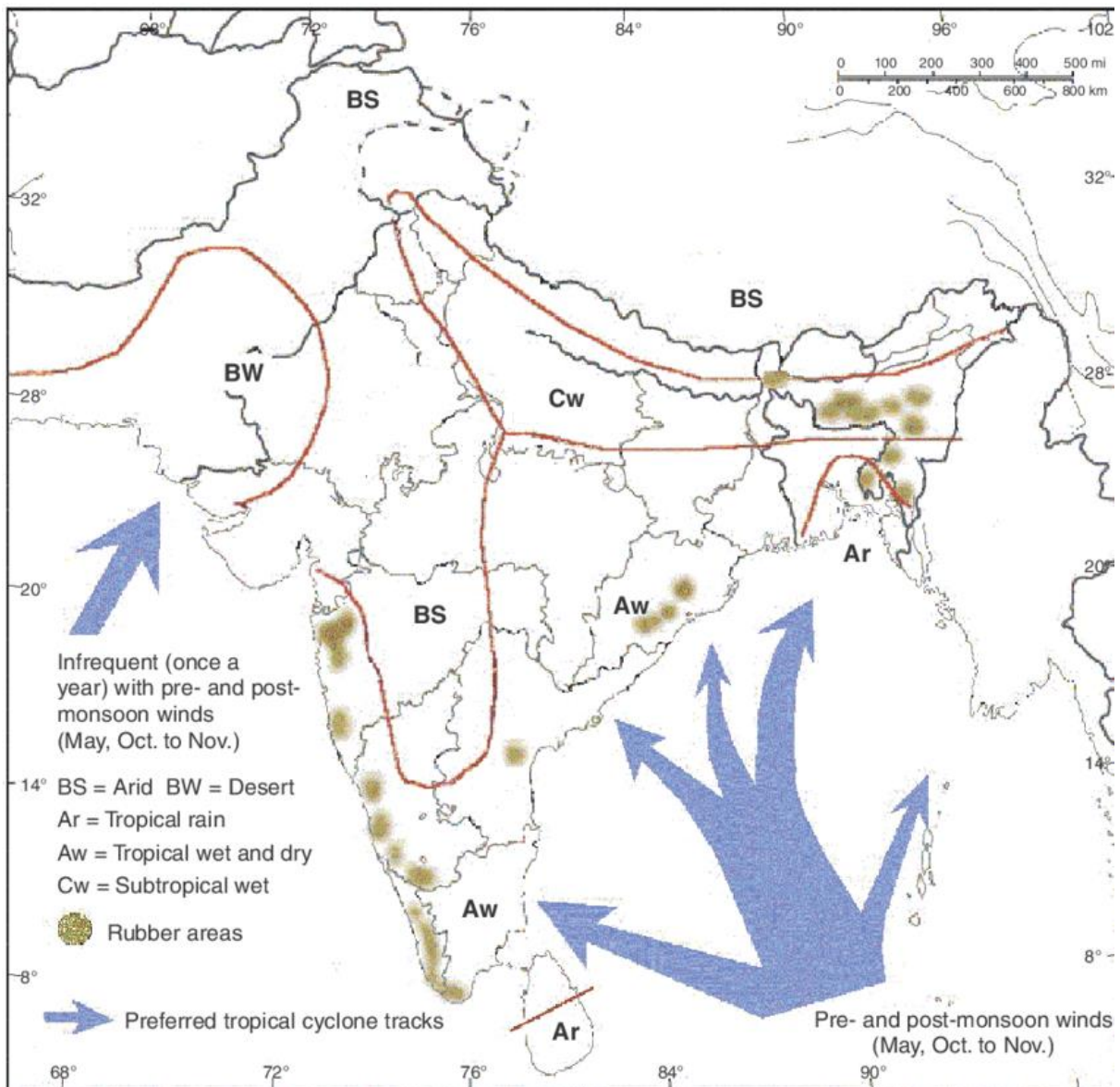
Note: In Feb'2020 Hon. Supreme Court had rejected a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) which sought 'minority' status to Hindus in the above eight states.

Kerala nurseries bounce back on Northeast rubber wave

1. Riding on a plantation wave that is sweeping Northeast India, the rubber nurseries in Kerala are getting the best out of their grow bags after a decade-long lull.
2. A plan by the Rubber Board to develop rubber plantations in an area of two lakh hectares across the seven northeastern states in a span of five years starting from 2021-22 has unleashed pent-up demand among the rubber nurseries in the State.



3. Besides bringing in a dramatic turnaround in sales, this expanding programme of plantation has also ensured a longer business season in the coming years as nurseries play catch-up.
4. According to officials with the Rubber Board, a whopping 51 lakh rubber saplings, sourced from the nurseries across Kerala, will soon be making their way to plantations across the Northeast and West Bengal in special trains.





MAINS DAWP	<p>Q1. Discuss the transformative role that the space economy can play in the overall socio-economic development of the country.</p>
MCQs	<p>Q1. Consider the following statements</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. It is an equatorial crop, but under special conditions, it is also grown in tropical and sub-tropical areas2. Kerala is the top producer of Rubber in India3. Natural rubber is a native of warm humid Amazon forests and is not naturally suited for the colder conditions in Northeast India4. Genetic modified (GM) rubber allows to tide over the severe cold conditions during winter in the northeast <p>Which of the above statements is/are <i>correct</i>?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. 1, 2 and 3b. 2, 3 and 4c. 1, 2 and 4d. 1, 2, 3 and 4