

The Hindu Important News Articles & Editorial For UPSC CSE
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The idea of simultaneous elections (One Nation, One Election) has been widely debated in India. The Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill, 2024, aims to empower the Election Commission to conduct elections for both the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies at the same time.

- ➔ However, concerns have been raised over the discretionary powers given to the Election Commission, with former Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi pointing out several loopholes in the proposed law.

Ex-CJI cites loopholes in Bill on simultaneous polls

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Former Chief Justice of India and Rajya Sabha member Ranjan Gogoi, in a three-hour deliberation with Parliament's Joint Committee reviewing the Bill on simultaneous elections on Tuesday, said the legislation had loopholes, and cautioned that it would not be advisable to give the Election Commission unrestricted powers to decide the schedule, sources said.

The committee, headed by BJP MP P.P. Chaudhary, is reviewing the Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill, 2024, which was intro-



Ranjan Gogoi

duced in the Lok Sabha on December 17, 2024. The Bill seeks to empower the commission to conduct simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and the Assemblies.

Sources said P. Wilson, Rajya Sabha member of the DMK, said Section 82

A(5) of the new Bill stated that "if the Election Commission is of the opinion that the elections to any Legislative Assembly cannot be conducted along with the general election to the House of the People, it may make a recommendation to the President, to declare by an order, that the election to that Legislative Assembly may be conducted at a later date". By not specifying a deadline for the Election Commission, was not the legislation giving it "arbitrary and unregulated powers," he asked.

Accepting the view, Justice Gogoi said it would not be advisable to do so and the Section needed to be

suitably amended to plug the loophole. The EC, he said, could not be given unchecked powers to decide to prolong or curtail an Assembly's tenure.

Congress MP Manish Tewari gave the example of 1991 general elections, when the outgoing Prime Minister, Chandra Shekhar, citing the law and order situation in Punjab and withheld the polls in Punjab. Election to the Lok Sabha seats of Punjab was held along with those to the Assembly in 1992.

The commission, unlike the Union government, does not have machinery to help it take such decisions, Mr. Tewari said, ac-

ording to sources.

In the previous meeting, former Chief Justice of India U.U. Lalit had pointed out several infirmities with the Bill, and argued that it could not withstand a legal challenge.

The panel has decided to launch a website to get the views of the general public on the Bill. This move comes after the Opposition questioned the submission by the high-level committee headed by former President Ram Nath Kovind that 80% of response that it received on the Bill was in favour of simultaneous elections. The panel has asked the committee to submit all the responses.

Key Issues Highlighted in the Parliamentary Committee Meeting

➔ Unregulated Powers of the Election Commission

- Section 82A(5) of the Bill allows the Election Commission to decide whether a State Assembly election should be held later than the general elections, without specifying a deadline.
- This provision has raised concerns about unchecked discretion, which could impact federalism and the democratic process.

➔ Comparisons with Past Precedents

- Congress MP Manish Tewari cited the example of the 1991 elections, when the Union Government under Chandra Shekhar delayed elections in Punjab due to security concerns.

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Daily News Analysis

- Unlike the government, the Election Commission lacks administrative and intelligence mechanisms to make such decisions independently.

➔ Legal Vulnerabilities in the Bill

- Former Chief Justice of India U. U. Lalit had earlier pointed out multiple weaknesses in the Bill, suggesting that it might not withstand judicial scrutiny if challenged.
- Issues related to federalism, separation of powers, and parliamentary sovereignty arise if the Election Commission is granted broad discretionary powers without adequate checks.

Larger Debate on Simultaneous Elections

➔ Arguments in Favor

- Reduces election-related disruptions and expenditure.
- Prevents frequent elections, ensuring long-term governance focus.
- Reduces populist policies announced before elections.

➔ Arguments Against

- State governments may lose control over their electoral cycles, affecting federalism.
- The Basic Structure Doctrine ensures free and fair elections at regular intervals, which could be undermined.
- The logistics of organizing elections across all states and the center simultaneously are highly complex.

➔ Recent Developments

- The Parliamentary Committee reviewing the Bill has decided to launch a website to collect public opinions, following criticism from opposition members over claims that 80 percent of responses received by an earlier committee favored the proposal.
- This move indicates an attempt to ensure broader consultations and transparency.

Way Forward

- ➔ Define clear guidelines for the Election Commission's discretionary powers with specific timelines and criteria.
- ➔ Strengthen consultations with state governments to ensure their role in decision-making.
- ➔ Address constitutional concerns to ensure the law withstands judicial scrutiny.
- ➔ Conduct nationwide discussions to build political and public consensus.

Conclusion

- ➔ The debate over One Nation, One Election is a crucial constitutional and democratic issue. While it promises efficiency, it also raises concerns about the erosion of federalism and unchecked executive powers.

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- ➡ The loopholes in the Bill, highlighted by Justice Gogoi and other experts, suggest that a more balanced and legally sound approach is required before implementing such a major reform.

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Ques: The Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill, 2024, grants significant powers to the Election Commission in deciding the election schedule. Analyze the legal and constitutional challenges associated with these provisions. (250 words)



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India is set to host a high-profile intelligence conclave on March 16, chaired by National Security Adviser Ajit Doval.

Top intelligence chiefs will meet in India this weekend

NSA Ajit Doval will chair the conclave; likely to discuss ways to enhance intelligence sharing to combat terrorism; it will bring together heads and deputies of intelligence from some 20 nations

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The U.S. Director of National Intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard, Canadian spy chief Daniel Rogers and Britain's MI6 boss Richard Moore will be among top global intelligence czars converging in India this weekend to attend a security conclave, sources familiar with the matter said on Tuesday.

India's National Security Adviser Ajit Doval will chair the India-hosted conclave on March 16, which is expected to deliberate on ways to enhance intelligence sharing to combat terrorism and various transnational crimes.

Intelligence chiefs of Australia, Germany, New Zealand and several other friendly countries of India are expected to join the deliberations to be held in New Delhi.

Ms. Gabbard is visiting India as part of a multi-nation tour of Japan, Thailand and France.

It will be the first high-level visit to India by a top official of the Donald Trump administration.

Besides attending the in-



Global summit: Prime Minister Narendra Modi with U.S. Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard in Washington DC. FILE PHOTO

telligence chiefs' conclave, Ms. Gabbard is likely to address the Raisina Dialogue and hold a one-on-one meeting with Mr. Doval.

It is learnt that the U.S. Director of National Intelligence will arrive in India on March 15 after concluding her trip to Thailand. Last month, Ms. Gabbard met Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit to Washington DC.

The conclave of the security and intelligence chiefs is expected to bring together heads and deputy heads of the intelligence and security organisations of nearly 20 nations. In their deliberations, the in-

telligence chiefs are also expected to focus on various global challenges including the implications of the Russia-Ukraine war and the conflict in West Asia. The security and intelligence chiefs are also likely to discuss ways to deal with terror financing as well as crimes in the digital space, sources said.

India-Canada ties

The visit to India by Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) chief Rogers is taking place amid frosty ties between the two countries over the Hardeep Singh Nijjar case. The ties between India and Canada

came under severe strain following Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegations in September 2023 of the "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Nijjar on Canadian soil. New Delhi rejected Mr. Trudeau's charges as "absurd". The relations nosedived further in the second half of last year after Ottawa linked several Indian diplomats including High Commissioner Sanjay Verma to the murder of Nijjar.

Last October, Canada expelled Mr. Verma and five other diplomats. In retaliation, New Delhi expelled Canadian Charge d'Affaires Stewart Wheeler and five other diplomats. It is expected that the case may figure during Mr. Doval's conversation with Mr. Rogers.

On the sidelines of the conclave, Mr. Doval is expected to hold one-on-one meetings with his counterparts from several leading countries.

In meetings with her Indian interlocutors, Ms. Gabbard is expected to bring up the need for expanding cooperation between the two countries in the Indo-Pacific.

➔ This meeting will bring together intelligence chiefs and deputies from nearly 20 nations, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Germany, and New Zealand. The primary

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Daily News Analysis

focus of the conclave will be intelligence sharing, counterterrorism strategies, and transnational security threats.

- ➔ The event holds significance in the context of evolving global security challenges, including the Russia-Ukraine war, tensions in West Asia, cyber threats, and terror financing.
- ➔ Additionally, the participation of Canadian intelligence chief Daniel Rogers comes at a time when India-Canada relations remain strained over the Hardeep Singh Nijjar case.

Key Issues to be Discussed

➔ Counterterrorism and Intelligence Sharing

- Enhancing real-time intelligence exchange to prevent terror attacks.
- Strengthening cooperation in tracking terror financing networks.
- Addressing threats posed by radical organizations operating across borders.

➔ Geopolitical Security Challenges

- The impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on global security.
- Strategic concerns in the Indo-Pacific amid China's growing assertiveness.
- Security implications of ongoing conflicts in West Asia.

➔ Cybersecurity and Digital Crimes

- Tackling cyber warfare and digital espionage.
- Measures to counter cyber threats from state and non-state actors.
- Strengthening global norms for responsible behavior in cyberspace.

➔ Indo-Pacific Strategy and India-US Cooperation

- US Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard is expected to emphasize India-US cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.
- Ensuring maritime security and freedom of navigation in the region.
- Strengthening intelligence-sharing frameworks between QUAD nations (India, the US, Japan, Australia).

➔ India-Canada Relations and Possible Discussions

- The presence of Canadian intelligence chief Daniel Rogers at the event is significant given the ongoing diplomatic tensions between India and Canada.
- Canada's allegations regarding Indian involvement in the killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar led to mutual diplomatic expulsions in 2023.
- The meeting could serve as an opportunity to ease tensions and restore diplomatic dialogue, though security cooperation between the two nations remains uncertain.

Strategic Importance of the Conclave for India

➔ Strengthening India's Global Security Role

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- The meeting reinforces India's position as a key security player in global intelligence cooperation.
- India's growing leadership in counterterrorism efforts is highlighted.
- ➔ **Enhancing Bilateral and Multilateral Security Ties**
 - Provides a platform for India to engage in high-level security diplomacy.
 - Strengthens partnerships with QUAD, Five Eyes (US, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand), and European allies.
- ➔ **Geopolitical Balancing Act**
 - India will need to carefully navigate its ties with Russia, the US, and European allies amid ongoing geopolitical tensions.
 - Discussions on Indo-Pacific security are crucial given the increasing tensions with China.

Conclusion

- ➔ The intelligence conclave in India is a crucial step in global intelligence cooperation, particularly in tackling terrorism, cyber threats, and geopolitical security issues. The event also presents a strategic opportunity for India to strengthen its intelligence-sharing networks, bolster its global security role, and engage in critical diplomatic conversations, including the strained ties with Canada.
- ➔ This development is highly relevant for UPSC Mains under international relations and internal security, covering topics related to global security cooperation, counterterrorism, Indo-Pacific strategy, and diplomatic challenges.

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Ques : Intelligence-sharing plays a crucial role in global security cooperation. Discuss its significance in tackling transnational threats like terrorism, cybercrime, and geopolitical conflicts. (250 words)

A new electrochemical process has been developed to extract urea from urine and convert it into percarbamide, a nitrogen-rich crystalline solid. This innovation addresses two critical issues:

1. **Urban wastewater treatment** – reducing the environmental impact of untreated urine.
2. **Fertilizer production** – recycling human waste into a valuable agricultural resource.

➔ The research, published in *Nature Catalysis*, highlights how this approach can revolutionize waste management and contribute to sustainable farming.

New, greener electrochemical process turns urine into plant fuel

The process, described in *Nature Catalysis*, proposes to convert urea, a nitrogen-rich compound in urine, into a crystalline peroxide derivative called percarbamide. Thus, it strikes two targets at once: enabling the treatment of urine in urban wastewater and transforming it into a useful resource

Sanjukta Mondal

In the 17th century, a German alchemist named Hennig Brand was on a quest to find the "philosopher's stone," a mysterious object that could turn any ordinary metal into gold. When he realised the golden colour of urine, he believed it contained tiny particles of the precious metal. Brand then collected urine from himself, his family, and beer drinkers at his local pub and began distilling it in the hope of finding gold at the end. There was no gold, alas, but the silver lining was that Brand discovered the element phosphorus.

In fact, some call urine "liquid gold" because it is loaded with elements that plants desire. The waste product is packed with phosphorus, potassium, and nitrogen in the form of urea, the "Big Three" nutrients that fuel plant growth and form the backbone of commercial fertilizers.

Two birds, one stone
A new electrochemical technique published in the journal *Nature Catalysis* now proposes to separate urea from urine in its solid form via a greener, less energy-consuming process. This method converts urea, a nitrogen-rich compound in urine, into a crystalline peroxide derivative called percarbamide.

Thus, it strikes two targets at once: enabling the treatment of urine in urban wastewater and transforming it into a useful resource.

Humans obtain nitrogen from food, convert it into urea, and excrete it through urine. Since urea is rich in nitrogen, it has the potential to be a natural fertilizer. In theory, returning the nutrients to the soil could complete the nitrogen cycle, but scientists currently lack efficient methods to extract urea directly from urine, leaving a crucial gap in this cycle. Xinjian Shi, a researcher at Henan University, China, and the first author of the new study, said,

"Our team's research fills this gap."

Pee-cycling to close the loop

An adult produces around 450-680 litres of urine, researcher Björn Vinnerås estimated in a 2002 study. The substance is 95% water, yet the annual output also contains around 4 kg of nitrogen and 0.3 kg of phosphorus, enough to grow wheat for one loaf of bread every day for a whole year.

If it's so valuable, why flush it down the toilet? The answer is that urine is a complex system, and many of its components, especially salts, interfere



A farmer sprinkles urea on a crop of finger millet on the outskirts of Bengaluru. AFP

with processes that can extract urea alone from wastewater, Shi said. The team's study claims to have jumped this barrier.

Urea is made up of nitrogen, oxygen, and hydrogen and is prone to forming hydrogen bonds with other molecules, including urea itself. When these bonds form, the compound's physical and chemical properties tend to change. This tendency turned out to be a game-changer in the separation process.

For example, when urea forms hydrogen bonds with hydrogen peroxide, it forms percarbamide, a white, crystalline solid that can be precipitated out from urine with high purity.

Percarbamide is known for its ability to steadily release active oxygen, making it a valuable candidate for processes that need to supply oxygen for other chemical reactions. Another key trait of this substance is its ability to accelerate the recovery of urea from urine.

To take advantage of this property, the researchers developed an in-situ electrochemical technique that uses graphitic carbon-based catalysts to convert urea in urine into percarbamide. Achieving almost 100% purity, the team used this process to effectively extract percarbamide from both human and animal urine.

While the result was promising, the true focus of the researchers was something else.

A eureka moment

At first, the researchers focused on one problem: keeping hydrogen peroxide stable in liquid form at higher concentrations. They began exploring

Percarbamide is known for its ability to steadily release active oxygen, making it a valuable candidate for processes that need to supply oxygen for other chemical reactions. Another key trait of this substance is its ability to accelerate the recovery of urea from urine

whether it could be solidified directly within a solution with a compatible material. Urea seemed like a promising option – but commercially made urea is quite expensive.

"Then, we suddenly thought, if we could use it within the urine system, it would not only achieve the original goal but also address the issues of urine treatment and nitrogen cycling. Wouldn't that be a win-win?" Shi asked.

With this insight, the researchers designed an activated graphitic carbon catalyst. Graphite is a soft crystal made of carbon atoms. Activated graphitic carbon is a porous form of graphite subsequently modified to further increase its surface area, making it more reactive.

In this case, it was engineered to enhance two chemical reactions, or pathways, that produce solid percarbamide.

In pathway I, urea reacts directly with hydrogen peroxide in the presence of a catalyst that facilitates interactions between the two molecules. In pathway II, urea binds to a hydroperoxyl ($\cdot\text{OOH}$) intermediate, a highly reactive and short-lived molecule. Then it gains

hydrogen ions (H^+) and triggers a reaction to form percarbamide in the presence of a catalyst that enhances hydrogen bonding. The activated graphitic carbon catalyst was suitable for both pathways.

Waste is golden?

After several rounds of trial and error, the researchers found they could maximise percarbamide production by holding the concentration of urea between 15% and 38%. They also found that maintaining temperatures just above freezing at a slightly acidic pH of around 4 works best for the process.

According to the researchers, the pure percarbamide extracted from this new process combines the best of both worlds: the nitrogen-rich benefits of urea and the oxidative power of hydrogen peroxide, unlocking new possibilities for sustainable applications.

"When the solid product is collected and used as fertilizer, nitrogen is slowly released, while also promoting root respiration and facilitating crop growth," Shi said. "This process fully addresses the missing link in the nitrogen cycle that exists in human society."

The team has also expressed excitement about bringing together resource recovery and recycling with wastewater treatment in the future. They believe this innovative approach can change how we think about and use waste.

(Sanjukta Mondal is a chemist-turned-science-writer with experience in writing popular science articles and scripts for STEM YouTube channels. sanjuktamondal.sm@gmail.com)

THE GIST

Urine is known as "liquid gold." It is packed with phosphorus, potassium, and nitrogen in the form of urea, the "Big Three" nutrients that fuel plant growth and form the backbone of commercial fertilizers

An adult produces 450-680 litres of urine, which is 95% water, yet the annual output also contains around 4 kg of nitrogen and 0.3 kg of phosphorus, enough to grow wheat for one loaf of bread every day for a whole year

Researchers found they could maximise percarbamide production by holding the concentration of urea between 15% and 38%. "When the solid product is used as fertilizer, nitrogen is released slowly, it also promotes root respiration and crop growth"

Urine: A Potential Resource

- ➔ Urine is often called "liquid gold" because it contains key nutrients for plants:
- Nitrogen (as urea)

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- Phosphorus
- Potassium
- ➡ An adult produces 450-680 liters of urine annually, containing 4 kg of nitrogen and 0.3 kg of phosphorus—enough to grow wheat for one loaf of bread per day for a year.

Electrochemical Process: Converting Urea to Percarbamide

- ➡ Traditional methods struggle to extract pure urea due to interfering salts. The new method overcomes this by leveraging hydrogen bonding properties of urea. The process works as follows:
 1. Urea reacts with hydrogen peroxide, forming percarbamide (a white crystalline solid).
 2. Electrochemical conversion is performed using graphitic carbon-based catalysts to enhance reaction efficiency.
 3. The resulting percarbamide is nearly 100% pure, making it suitable for use as a slow-release fertilizer.

Advantages of the New Process

- ➡ **Sustainable waste management** – reduces nitrogen pollution in urban wastewater.
- ➡ **Eco-friendly fertilizer** – provides a slow and controlled release of nitrogen.
- ➡ **Supports circular economy** – closes the nitrogen cycle by returning nutrients to the soil.
- ➡ **Enhances agricultural productivity** – promotes root respiration and crop growth.

Future Prospects and Challenges

- ➡ **Scaling up production** – developing large-scale systems for widespread adoption.
- ➡ **Public acceptance** – overcoming social stigma related to using human waste in agriculture.
- ➡ **Integration with existing wastewater treatment plants** – ensuring efficient processing and cost-effectiveness.

Conclusion

- ➡ This research presents an innovative and sustainable approach to addressing waste and fertilizer needs simultaneously. By transforming human waste into plant fuel, the method not only conserves resources but also promotes environmentally friendly agricultural practices.
- ➡ This development aligns with India's Swachh Bharat and Sustainable Agriculture goals, making it relevant for UPSC Mains topics like environmental sustainability, waste management, and circular economy.

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Ques :How can electrochemical processes contribute to sustainable waste management? Discuss with reference to recent innovations in urine recycling. **(250 words)**

With Mark Carney set to take over as Canada's Prime Minister, a window of opportunity opens for India and Canada to reset their strained bilateral ties.

- ➔ The deterioration in relations stemmed from Canadian accusations against Indian government agents regarding the killing of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, leading to diplomatic expulsions and a freeze in high-level engagements.
- ➔ The change in leadership presents both countries with a chance to move past the crisis and refocus on shared interests, including trade, education, and investment.

Political Transition in Canada and Its Implications

- ➔ Mark Carney, an economist and former central bank governor, assumes office amid political uncertainty. He faces a confidence vote in Parliament on March 24 and could call for snap elections before the scheduled polls in October 2025.
- ➔ His leadership is expected to bring a shift in diplomatic engagement, particularly with India, as he seeks to differentiate himself from Justin Trudeau's controversial approach.
- ➔ The exit of Trudeau provides India with an opportunity to reconsider its diplomatic stance. India is reportedly looking to restore its High Commissioner to Ottawa, and Canada's participation in an intelligence summit in New Delhi signals a willingness to re-engage.

Key Areas for Cooperation

- ➔ **Trade and Investment :**
 - India and Canada had been negotiating a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), which stalled due to diplomatic tensions. A leadership change could revive talks and boost bilateral trade, which currently stands at approximately \$12 billion annually.

New opportunity

India and Canada can discuss a reset in ties after new Prime Minister takes over

The newly elected leader of Canada's ruling Liberal Party, Mark Carney, who is now Prime Minister-designate, has a tough task ahead in what is expected to be a short period of time. Mr. Carney, who is set to take over from Justin Trudeau when he formally steps down this week, will almost immediately face a confidence vote in Parliament, after it reconvenes on March 24. Federal elections in Canada are due in October 2025, but observers say Mr. Carney could call for snap polls first, hoping to ride a surge of unexpected popularity for the Liberal Party for standing up to threats made by the U.S. President Donald Trump since he took office. Mr. Trump has consistently targeted Mr. Trudeau, suggesting that Canada would be better off as the "U.S.'s 51st State", and has been threatening to impose a slew of tariffs, accusing Canada of unfair duties as well as allowing fentanyl drugs and immigrants across the border. Canada has threatened counter-tariffs, and is considering a 25% surcharge on electricity exports to the U.S., with Mr. Carney claiming that "in trade, as in hockey, Canada will win". Mr. Carney, who is unelected and not a traditional politician, will have to convince voters of his ability to ensure that, as he takes on his rival, Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre, who has been far ahead in the polls until recent weeks. To that end, Mr. Carney's non-political skills will come handy. He was an economist and a central bank Governor; that he was not a member of the Trudeau cabinet means that he is free of any taint from its actions.

The exit of Mr. Trudeau is cause for relief for India, and an opportunity to reset ties that have been on ice. His intemperate decision to name "Indian government agents" and then expel Indian diplomats, implicating them in a purported plot to kill Khalistani activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar, without proffering any proof, was a miscalculation and diplomatic blunder. The actions, seen in comparison to more discreet dealing by the U.S. in a linked case, sent India-Canada ties to their lowest ebb since the 1980s. It is significant that India is considering restoring a High Commissioner to Ottawa, while Canada is sending its intelligence chief to a conference in Delhi. Mr. Carney and Mr. Poilievre have made it clear that they would like to rework the relationship with India, and there will be opportunities to do so, particularly in education, investment and trade, all of which have taken a back seat after the violence and schisms within India's diaspora community, and its supporters in Canada's government. The interlude is also a fitting period for New Delhi to consider how it wishes to take ties forward. Regardless of the change in leadership, the Khalistan issue cannot be wished away, and requires sustained, considered diplomacy and respect for each other's concerns, while ensuring India's national security priorities.

Daily News Analysis

- Canadian pension funds and businesses have significant investments in India, and renewed engagement could strengthen economic ties.
- ➔ **Education:** Canada is a major destination for Indian students, with over 300,000 studying in Canadian institutions. Strengthening educational ties can be a priority in the reset process.
- ➔ **Diaspora and Cultural Relations:** The large Indian diaspora in Canada has been both a bridge and a point of friction, particularly regarding the Khalistan issue. Managing these sensitivities through sustained diplomatic engagement will be essential.

Challenges in Resetting Relations

- ➔ **Khalistan Issue:** The political leadership in Canada, irrespective of party, will have to balance domestic Sikh support while addressing India's concerns about extremism. India must also engage Canada diplomatically to ensure its security priorities are respected.
- ➔ **U.S.-Canada Relations:** With U.S. President Donald Trump's aggressive trade stance against Canada, Ottawa may have to navigate complex geopolitical equations, which could impact its foreign policy priorities, including relations with India.

Conclusion

- ➔ The transition in Canada's leadership provides a crucial moment for both countries to recalibrate ties. Moving forward, a pragmatic and sustained diplomatic effort is required to rebuild trust, focusing on areas of mutual interest while addressing political and security concerns with sensitivity.
- ➔ If approached strategically, this could mark a new chapter in India-Canada relations, prioritizing economic collaboration over political discord.

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Ques :Analyze the recent strain in India-Canada relations. How can the two nations rebuild diplomatic and economic ties in light of the new political leadership in Canada?(250 words)

India has emerged as the leading source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into Dubai, reflecting the increasing trend of Indian businesses and entrepreneurs shifting to the city.

India emerges as top source of foreign direct investment into Dubai

Lalatendu Mishra

MUMBAI

The relentless flight of Indian entrepreneurs, consultants, and businesses to Dubai over the last decade amid a favourable tax regime and business friendly environment is now showing its impact on the ground.

India has emerged as the key source country for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into Dubai as the desert city has retained its top position as Global FDI Des-

tinuation in 2024.

According to the Financial Times Ltd.'s 'fDi Markets' data, Dubai has been ranked the world's No.1 destination for Greenfield FDI projects for the fourth successive year.

For the year 2024, India has become the top source for FDI into Dubai, with its contribution accounting for 21.5%, followed by the U.S. (13.7%), France (11%), and the U.K. (10%), according to Dubai Department of Economy and Tourism's Dubai FDI Monitor.

- ▶ Dubai's pro-business policies, favorable tax regime, and strategic location have made it the top destination for Indian investors. This development also signifies broader economic trends, including capital outflows from India and the growing significance of the UAE as a global business hub.

Key Highlights

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- ▶ India accounted for 21.5% of total FDI inflows into Dubai in 2024, ahead of the US (13.7%), France (11%), and the UK (10%).
- ▶ Dubai has retained its position as the world's top destination for Greenfield FDI projects for the fourth consecutive year, according to Financial Times Ltd.'s 'fDi Markets' data.

Reasons for High Indian Investment in Dubai

- ▶ Business-friendly policies, including simplified regulations and free trade zones.
- ▶ Favorable tax structure with zero personal income tax and lower corporate taxes than India.
- ▶ Strategic location providing access to markets in the Middle East, Africa, and Europe.
- ▶ Efficient governance and ease of doing business, encouraging startups and established companies to expand.

Key Sectors Driving Investment

- ▶ Technology and fintech startups setting up operations in Dubai.
- ▶ Real estate investments by Indian businesses and individuals.
- ▶ Consulting and financial services expanding their reach in Dubai's financial sector.

Implications for India

- ▶ Capital outflow may result in a loss of tax revenue and reduced domestic investments.
- ▶ Strengthening economic ties between India and the UAE through increased trade and business collaborations.
- ▶ The need for policy reforms in India to improve its business environment and retain investment.

Conclusion

- ▶ India's growing FDI contribution to Dubai signals strong economic engagement but also highlights challenges for India's domestic investment climate. Addressing taxation and regulatory issues could help India retain businesses while continuing to build on its global economic partnerships.

UPSC Mains Practice Question

Ques:Analyze the reasons behind the increasing trend of Indian businesses investing in Dubai. What are its implications for the Indian economy?(250 words)

What's in a (disease's) name?

Toponymic diseases may derive their name from towns, rivers, islands, forests, mountains, valleys, countries, continents, and even trenches. Examples of such diseases include the Spanish flu, Delhi boil, Madura foot, and West Nile Virus.

These names often lead to considerable misinformation, stigma, and racial prejudice. They can harm science by politicising it and tarnish entire countries or regions and their populations for no fault of theirs, especially when the origin of these diseases is unclear. For example, the influenza pandemic of 1918-1920 is sometimes called the Spanish flu even though it did not originate in Spain. The story goes that Spain was one of the major European countries to remain neutral during World War I. Unlike the other countries involved in the war as part of the Allies or Central Powers, where censors suppressed news of the flu to avoid affecting morale, the Spanish media freely reported on it in detail. Thus, this pandemic, which affected 500 million people worldwide and resulted in more than 20 million deaths, was named due to misinformation.

Renaming diseases

Pushed by experts, and concerned about the above-mentioned issues, the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2015 mandated that this trend be avoided. It instead directed scientists to move towards providing names based on scientific characteristics rather than geography. This is why the next year, physicians sought to rename the fetal disease caused by the Zika virus to congenital Zika syndrome.

The name Zika virus comes from the Zika forest in Uganda, where scientists first isolated the virus from a rhesus monkey in 1947 while researching yellow fever; Zika is the name of the forest in the Luganda language. The name congenital Zika syndrome was proposed by the



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Naming diseases after places often leads to misinformation, stigma, and racial prejudice

WHO team which confirmed that the virus causes damage beyond microcephaly, the first fetal condition to be linked to it.

More recently, the WHO began using mpox as a synonym for monkey pox. This followed reports of racist and stigmatising language being used against certain communities and regions, both online and offline, because of the name monkey pox.

The latest issue

However, the trend of misleading and inappropriate naming still continues. In January, dermatologists from India and 13 other countries objected to the region-specific nomenclature given to a novel species of fungus – *Trichophyton (T.) indotineae* – that causes widespread and hard-to-treat skin infections and is resistant to most anti-fungal medicines. The term *indotineae* has pejorative connotations. It was Japanese dermatologists who had spotted the fungus in patients from India and Nepal and proposed in 2020 that this fungus should be considered a new species and named *Trichophyton indotineae*. It is important to note that the origin of the fungus is not clearly known even now and that the fungus has been reported from more than 40 countries.

The *Trichophyton indotineae* fungus causes a ubiquitous skin problem, commonly known as ring worm, and is resistant to the first-line oral drug terbinafine. The resistance gene was discovered by the Dermatology Department at Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital and simultaneously by the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh.

In an article published in the *Indian Journal of Dermatology, Venereology and Leprology* titled “‘Trichophyton indotineae’ is an inaccurate and pejorative term”, experts say that the name of the fungus is prejudicial and ignores the recommendations of the WHO and the American Society of Microbiology, among others.

The WHO notes that assigning names to new diseases and, on exception, to existing diseases is its responsibility under the International Classification of Diseases and the WHO Family of International Classifications through a consultative process which includes WHO member states. Considerations for the recommendations include rationale, scientific appropriateness, extent of current usage, pronounceability in different languages, absence of geographical or zoological references, and the ease of retrieval of historical scientific information. The current case of naming the fungus *indotineae* is a travesty of the WHO mandate and adds no value to either treating the disorder or finding a cause for the resistance.

The WHO also renames diseases or debunks researchers if they have disturbing legacies. The disease Reiter's Syndrome was named after the German physician, Hans Reiter, who was the first to describe the clinical triad of arthritis, urethritis, and conjunctivitis in 1916. However, problems arose after World War II, when the physician's association with Nazi ideology and his involvement in unethical medical experiments was discovered. The syndrome is now known as reactive arthritis.

The need of the hour

The need of the hour is for the WHO and scientists across the world to focus on finding the causes of diseases and pool together resources to find ways of preventing and curtailing them using precision in language and descriptions. If the outbreak of SARS-CoV-2 has taught us anything, it is that we are a global community whose actions and choices have consequences for others. We should strive for unity, be sensitive to others, and seek out opportunities where we can help and support one another. Microbes defy borders, but stereotypes only divide people.

GS Paper 03 Science and Technology

UPSC Mains Practice Question: Disease nomenclature should be based on scientific principles rather than geographical or cultural references. Critically analyze with examples.

Context :

- Disease nomenclature plays a crucial role in public health, scientific communication, and societal perception.
- However, historically, many diseases have been named after places, leading to misinformation, stigma, and racial prejudice. This article examines the impact of such nomenclature, global efforts to rename diseases, and the necessity for scientific accuracy in disease classification.

Toponymous Disease Naming and Its Implications

- Toponymous diseases are named after geographical locations, including countries, cities, and regions. Some well-known examples include:
 - Spanish Flu (1918-1920)
 - Delhi Boil
 - Madura Foot
 - West Nile Virus

Problems with Geographical Naming

- **Misinformation**– The Spanish flu did not originate in Spain. It was named so because Spain, being neutral during World War I, reported openly on the disease while other nations censored the news.
- **Stigma and Prejudice**– Naming diseases after places creates negative associations with those regions and their populations. The outbreak of COVID-19 saw instances of discrimination against people of Asian descent.
- **Politicization of Science**– Associating diseases with specific countries can lead to diplomatic tensions and global blame games.

WHO's Efforts to Standardize Disease Naming

- In 2015, the World Health Organization (WHO) mandated the avoidance of geographical names for diseases and encouraged the use of scientific characteristics instead.

Examples of Renaming Efforts

- **Zika Virus and Congenital Zika Syndrome** – The virus was named after the Zika forest in Uganda, where it was first identified. Scientists later renamed the fetal disease associated with it to "Congenital Zika Syndrome" to better reflect its clinical impact.

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Daily News Analysis

- ➡ **Monkeypox to Mpox (2022)** – The WHO changed the name to prevent racist and stigmatizing language.
- ➡ **Reiter's Syndrome to Reactive Arthritis** – Originally named after Hans Reiter, a Nazi-affiliated physician, it was renamed due to his unethical medical experiments.

Recent Controversy: Trichophyton Indotineae

- ➡ A recent issue in medical nomenclature is the naming of the fungal species Trichophyton indotineae, which causes widespread and drug-resistant skin infections.

Concerns Raised by Experts

- 1. Pejorative Connotations** – The name suggests an Indian origin, even though the fungus has been reported in over 40 countries. The origin of the fungus is still uncertain.
- 2. WHO Guidelines Violated** – WHO mandates disease names to avoid geographical, cultural, or ethnic references.
- 3. Scientific Inaccuracy** – The name does not contribute to understanding the disease or improving treatment.

Way Forward

- 1. Global cooperation in disease naming** – The WHO and other global health bodies must ensure uniform and non-discriminatory nomenclature.
- 2. Scientific accuracy over geography** – Disease names should be based on pathology, symptoms, or causative agents rather than locations.
- 3. Promoting sensitivity and unity** – As seen during the COVID-19 pandemic, misinformation and stigma exacerbate social divides. A unified and precise approach in medical language can enhance global health cooperation.

Conclusion

- ➡ The naming of diseases carries significant social, political, and scientific consequences. Avoiding geographical references in disease names is not just about political correctness but also about scientific accuracy, global unity, and effective disease management.
- ➡ The WHO's role in standardizing disease nomenclature must be strengthened to ensure neutral, precise, and non-stigmatizing terminology in the future.