

Polity & Governance

Chief Justice of India:

- Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna, who is set to retire on May 13, **recommended Justice B.R. Gavai** to government for appointment as the **52nd Chief Justice of India**.
- Justice Gavai was elevated as a judge of the Supreme Court on May 24, 2019. **He is due to retire on November 23, 2025**, leaving him with a tenure of little over six months.
- **Article 124 (2): Chief justice is appointed by the president after consultation** with such judges of Supreme Court and high courts as he deems necessary. **The other judges are appointed by president after consultation with the chief justice and such other judges** of Supreme Court and high courts as he deems necessary.
- **According to government's Memorandum of procedure** for the appointment of Supreme Court Judges, **Union Minister of Law, Justice and Company Affairs seeks the recommendation of outgoing Chief Justice of India** for the appointment of next CJI.
- After the collegium's recommendations are finalised and received from CJI, **Law Minister will put up the recommendation to the Prime Minister who will advise President on matter of appointment**.
- **From 1950 to 1973, practice has been to appoint seniormost judge of Supreme Court as chief justice of India. This established convention was violated in 1973** when A N Ray was appointed as Chief Justice of India by superseding three senior judges.
- **Again in 1977, M U Beg was appointed as the chief justice of India by superseding the then senior-most judge.**
- **This discretion of government was curtailed by Supreme Court in Second Judges Case (1993)**, in which Supreme Court ruled that seniormost judge of Supreme Court should alone be appointed to office of chief justice of India.
- **The President can appoint a judge of the Supreme Court as an acting Chief Justice of India** when:
 1. the office of Chief Justice of India is vacant; or
 2. the Chief Justice of India is temporarily absent; or
 3. the Chief Justice of India is unable to perform the duties of his office.

Economy

India-China Trade:

- **India's trade gap with China** in the financial year of 2024-25 was **\$99.2 billion**.
- In the last fiscal, India's exports to China contracted 14.5% to \$14.25 billion as against \$16.66 billion in 2023-24.
- **The U.S. remained India's largest trading partner for the fourth consecutive year in 2024-25.**

Ecology & Environment

Leptobrachium aryatium:

- A study spanning 21 years has yielded a new species of frog **named after an Assam college**.
- It was recorded in **Garbhanga Reserve Forest in southwestern part of Guwahati bordering Meghalaya**.
- The frog has been described by four zoologists, associated with **Arya Vidyapeeth College** either as alumni or faculty members.

- This frog has **fiery orange-and-black eyes**, a unique **reticulated throat pattern**, and gives a smooth, rhythmic call at dusk.

History, Art & Culture

Kailash Mansarovar Yatra:

- **India, China move to restart Kailash Mansarovar Yatra.**
- It was **suspended during the pandemic in 2019** and had remained so over border tensions.
- The annual Kailash Mansarovar Yatra **used to be held between June and September each year.**
- Pilgrims from India **pass through Lipu Lekh pass in Uttarakhand.**
- In previous years, Indian authorities would set up a computerised lottery system in the first week of May to choose the pilgrims.
- This Yatra is **organized with the support of the state governments of Uttarakhand, Delhi, and Sikkim; and the cooperation of Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP).**
- The Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam (KMVN), and Sikkim Tourism Development Corporation (STDC) and their associated organizations provide logistical support and facilities for each batch of Yatris in India.

Lake Manasarovar:

- It is also called **Mapam Yumtso**.
- It is a high altitude **freshwater lake near Mount Kailash in Tibet, China.**
- It is located at an elevation of 4,600 m, **near the western trijunction between China, India and Nepal.**
- It **overflows into the adjacent salt-water lake of Rakshastal via the Ganga Chhu channel.**
- The **sources of four rivers: Indus, Sutlej, Brahmaputra, and Karnali** lie in the vicinity of the region.

Geography/Places in the News

Silkyara Tunnel:

- Excavation of the **4.53 km Silkyara Tunnel in Uttarakhand** was completed.
- It would be **named after Baba Baukhnag**, a local deity.
- **A portion of the under-construction tunnel had collapsed on November 12, 2023, trapping 41 construction workers** inside. They were rescued after 17 days.
- The **double-lane tunnel** is a significant project on the **Char Dham Yatra route**.

Defence & Security

MacGregor medals:

- **Five military personnel were conferred MacGregor Memorial Medal by Chief of Defence Staff** for outstanding contributions in military reconnaissance, exploration and adventure for 2023 and 2024.
- **Instituted on July 03, 1888**, the MacGregor Memorial Medal commemorates **Maj Gen Sir Charles Metcalfe MacGregor, KCB, CSI, CIE** - founder of the **United Service Institution of India** established in 1870.
- **Originally intended to recognise the acts of military reconnaissance and exploratory journeys**, the medal's scope was **expanded in 1986, post-independence**, to include **military expeditions and adventure activities**.

- While military reconnaissance and exploration remain the foremost criteria, the medal is open to all ranks (serving and retired) of the Armed Forces, Territorial Army, Reserve Forces, Rashtriya Rifles and Assam Rifles.

DUSTLIK-VI:

- The 6th edition of India- Uzbekistan Joint Military Exercise DUSTLIK-VI commenced at Foreign Training Node, Aundh (Pune).

- Exercise is scheduled to be conducted from 16 to 28 Apr 2025.
- It is an annual training event conducted alternatively in India and Uzbekistan.
- Last edition was conducted in Termez District, Uzbekistan in April 2024.

PRACTICE MCQS

Q1. Consider the following statements:

- Constitution of India provides for senior most Supreme Court judge to be appointed as the Chief Justice of India.
- Since independence, Chief Justice of India has been a senior most judge of Supreme Court.
- The President can appoint a judge of the Supreme Court as an acting Chief Justice of India when the office of Chief Justice of India is vacant.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 2 only
- 3 only
- 1 and 3 only

Answer: C

Q2. Consider the following statements:

- DUSTLIK is an annual Joint Military Exercise between India and Kazakhstan.
- DUSTLIK-VI is held at Foreign Training Node, Aundh in Pune.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: B

Q3. With reference to the defence sector of India, consider the following statements about MacGregor Memorial Medal:

- It is given for the outstanding contributions in military reconnaissance, exploration and adventure.
- The medal is open to all ranks (serving and retired) of the Armed Forces only.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: A

Q4. Consider the following statements:

- Lake Manasarovar is a high-altitude freshwater lake near Mount Kailash in Tibet, China.
- It overflows into the adjacent salt-water lake of Rakshastal.
- Pilgrims to Kailash Manasarovar Yatra pass through Lipu Lekh pass in Uttarakhand.

Which of the above given statements are correct?

- 1 and 2 only
- 2 and 3 only
- 1 and 3 only
- 1, 2 and 3

Answer: D

Q5. Consider the following statements:

- India's trade deficit with China in the financial year of 2024-25 was about \$100 billion.
- China is India's largest trading partner for the fourth consecutive year in 2024-25.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: A