

VEDHIK

# DAJLY NEWS

# ANALYSIS

08 - FEBRUARY - 2022

## **FOREWORD**

We, at Team Vedhik is happy to introduce a new initiative - "Daily Current Affairs\_The Hindu" compilations to help you with UPSC Civil Services Examination preparation. We believe this initiative - "Daily Current Affairs\_The Hindu" would help students, especially beginners save time and streamline their preparations with regard to Current Affairs. A content page and an Appendix has been added segregating and mapping the content to the syllabus.

It is an appreciable efforts by Vedhik IAS Academy helping aspirants of UPSC Civil Services Examinations. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Babu Sebastian, former VC - MG University in extending all support to this endeavour. Finally I also extend my thanks to thank Ms. Shilpa Sasidharan and Mr. Shahul Hameed for their assistance in the preparing the compilations.

We welcome your valuable comments so that further improvement may be made in the forthcoming material. We look forward to feedback, comments and suggestions on how to improve and add value for students. Every care has been taken to avoid typing errors and if any reader comes across any such error, the authors shall feel obliged if they are informed at their Email ID.

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# Macron meets Putin over Ukraine row

French President hopeful of a 'start towards de-escalation', to meet Ukrainian counterpart later in Kiev

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
MOSCOW

French President Emmanuel Macron said on Monday he hoped to make a start towards a de-escalation of tensions over Ukraine, as he began talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow.

Mr. Macron flew into Moscow at the start of a week of intense Western diplomacy aimed at easing fears of a Russian invasion of its pro-Western neighbour.

Sitting across a long table from Mr. Putin at the Kremlin, Mr. Macron said he was in Moscow to address the "critical situation" in Europe.

"This discussion can make a start in the direction in which we need to go, which is towards a de-escalation," Mr. Macron said, calling for "an answer that is useful for both Russia and for all the rest of Europe".



**Pacification bid:** Vladimir Putin, left, listening to Emmanuel Macron at their meeting in the Kremlin on Monday. •AP

Welcoming Mr. Macron as "dear Emmanuel", Mr. Putin said Russia and France have "shared concerns regarding security in Europe" and hailed "how much effort the current French leadership is making" to resolve these concerns.

With tens of thousands of Russian troops camped near the Ukrainian border, Mr.

Macron was the first top Western leader to meet Mr. Putin since the crisis began.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz was due to meet on Monday with U.S. President Joe Biden in Washington, as Western leaders look to maintain a united front in their biggest showdown with Russia since the end of the Cold War.

Mr. Macron, who will go on to Kiev on Tuesday for talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, told reporters on his plane from Paris that he was "reasonably" optimistic going into the talks.

He did not expect a solution to the crisis in the "short term", he said, but he was ready to take Russia's security concerns seriously.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Monday's talks between Mr. Macron and Mr. Putin were "very important" but suggested no one should expect a major step forward.

"The situation is too complex to expect decisive breakthroughs in one meeting," Mr. Peskov told reporters.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba told reporters that Kiev would not budge on its "red lines" in the conflict by giving up any

territory or agreeing to direct talks with the separatists.

Mr. Biden has reacted to the Russian troop build-up by offering 3,000 American forces to bolster NATO's eastern flank, with a batch of the troops arriving in Poland on Sunday.

## Troop deployment

Britain said on Monday that 350 more British troops would be sent to the Polish border and Germany announced that another 350 of its soldiers would go to Lithuania.

While Scholz is in Washington, his Foreign Minister, Annalena Baerbock, was in Kiev along with her Czech, Slovak and Austrian counterparts for a two-day visit.

Mr. Kuleba told a joint press conference with Ms. Baerbock that Ukraine and its Western allies would never be divided.

# Home Ministry seeks more time to frame CAA rules

Consultation process is on, it tells parliamentary committee

**VIJAITA SINGH**  
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has asked the parliamentary committee for more time to frame the rules of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 (CAA), on the grounds that the consultation process is on.

*The Hindu* reported earlier that the Ministry had sought another extension on January 9 from the parliamentary committees on subordinate legislation in the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha to frame the rules of the CAA. Besides the consultation process, the Ministry said that the construction of the rules had been delayed



The construction of rules had also been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

due to the pandemic. Without the rules being framed, the Act cannot be implemented.

A senior government official said the Ministry stated two grounds for seeking a

three-month extension to notify the rules – consultation process and COVID-19. A Ministry spokesperson did not respond on the delay in framing the rules.

The BJP-led government in Assam had in 2020 requested the Ministry to impose a three-month time limit to apply under the CAA, beyond which no one could benefit under the Act, and not keep it “open ended”.

The Act has the provision to grant citizenship to members of six non-Muslim undocumented minority communities from Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh who entered India before December 31, 2014.

# One-third of ₹10,990 cr. in PM CARES fund spent: audit

₹100 crore promised for vaccine development not allotted; it had unspent balance of ₹7,044 crore as on March 31, 2021

**PRISCILLA JEBARAJ**  
NEW DELHI

The PM CARES Fund collected ₹10,990 crore since its inception in March 2020 until March 2021. It spent ₹3,976 crore during the 2020-21 financial year, according to the audited financial statement posted on its website. As on March 31, 2021, the Fund had an unspent balance of ₹7,044 crore.

The Fund was set up to deal with “any kind of emergency or distress situation, like posed by the COVID-19

pandemic, and to provide relief to the affected.” During the year, funds were disbursed for COVID vaccine purchase and testing, ventilators, hospitals, testing labs, oxygen generation plants and migrant welfare. Despite an earlier announcement that ₹100 crore would be spent on supporting vaccine development, no such disbursement seems to have been done.

The Fund was established on March 27, 2020 and collected ₹3,076 crore – includ-



The fund was set up to deal with any kind of emergency or distress situation.

ing an initial corpus, foreign and domestic contributions, and interest – within the first five days of its existence, be-

fore the end of the 2019-20 financial year. In the financial year 2020-21, it received voluntary contributions from domestic donors to the tune of ₹7,184 crore and foreign contributions amounting to ₹494 crore. Along with interest, and a ₹25 lakh refund of unspent balance from the National Disaster Management Authority, the Fund's total receipts for the year amounted to ₹7,193 crore.

On the expenditure side, the largest disbursement of ₹1,393 crore went to pur-

chase 6.6 crore doses of COVID-19 vaccines. Another ₹1,311 crore was used to buy 50,000 Made in India ventilators for use in Central and State government hospitals. As *The Hindu* has previously reported, doctors and hospitals in several States have raised concerns about the quality of some of these ventilators, with others lying idle due to technical issues.

Other measures to improve infrastructure included ₹201 crore spent on installing 162 Pressure Swing

Adsorption medical oxygen generation plants inside public health facilities, and ₹50 crore to establish two makeshift COVID hospitals in Muzaffarnagar and Patna with 500 beds each, and to set up 16 RT-PCR testing labs in nine States/UTs.

Over ₹20 crore was used to upgrade two autonomous institute laboratories under the Department of Biotechnology as Central Drug Laboratories to test and release batches of the COVID vaccine.

# A dose of science in the vaccination strategy

Vaccination and booster dose plans must have context in the backdrop and be informed by epidemiological evidence



CHANDRAKANT LAHARIYA

Six weeks after the Indian government announced 'precaution shots' or the 'third dose' of COVID-19 vaccines for select populations, there have been four relevant developments. First, two COVID-19 vaccines have received 'conditional market authorization'. Second, phase three clinical trials which include the booster dose of a nasal COVID-19 candidate vaccine have been approved. Third, the Omicron wave has largely swept through the country. Fourth, ₹5,000 crore has been allocated for COVID-19 vaccines in the Union Budget 2022-23.

What do these new developments mean for the COVID-19 vaccination and booster dose strategy in India? Do healthy adults need a booster and when? Is the budgetary allocation for COVID-19 vaccines enough? Let us discuss these.

## Market authorisation

The news of market authorisation of Covishield and Covaxin has generated a lot of interest. Many have thought that from now on, anyone who wishes to, can buy a COVID-19 vaccine and have it administered at their will or on a doctor's prescription. That is what 'market authorisation' usually means for most medical products. However, these two COVID-19 vaccines have received not the full but a 'conditional' market authorisation. Therefore, for the general public, nothing has changed. The Government will continue to regulate vaccine administration as earlier. The already eligible target groups (as per national guidelines) would continue to receive vaccines through authorised COVID-19 vaccination centres. The only effective change is for the vaccine manufacturers.

From submitting safety and efficacy data to the national drug regulator every fortnight, they can

now submit this data every six months.

## The nasal vaccine

Even though in the clinical trial stage, and none been authorised yet, nasal COVID-19 vaccines have always garnered a lot of interest for a variety of reasons. One, the ease of administration without a needle and syringe (and thus less biomedical waste). Two, given that COVID-19 vaccines currently in use in India have limited evidence about their role in reducing transmission, nasal vaccines, through mucosal antibodies, are likely to perform better in reducing transmission. Three, nasal vaccines might be useful for children, in whom the primary objective of COVID-19 vaccination is in reducing transmission rather than the individual benefit. Four, the world needs more vaccines to ensure wider availability and address vaccine inequity. Five, combination use of injectable and nasal vaccines might provide blended protection from severe disease and reduce the transmission. Such an approach could be useful in mitigating the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic as well as in the control of outbreaks in the post-pandemic period. However, a flip side of nasal vaccines and mucosal immunity is that protection is usually short lasting.

Epidemiological data and modelling estimates suggest that by the time the Omicron wave ends in any setting, 50% to 70% of the population could have been exposed. A study from South Africa found that the Omicron exposure in an individual with past infection or vaccination results in a 14-fold increase in antibodies, which offers protection from future Delta variant infection. The role of hybrid immunity acquired after natural infection in combination with two shots of COVID-19 vaccines provides better protection than vaccines alone. As an Omicron wave is sweeping through India, the country is at a stage which can be termed 'sandwich immunity' – hybrid immunity supplemented by another layer of natural infection.

In this backdrop, there is no



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reason for any urgency to administer COVID-19 booster doses to healthy adults in the age group 18 years-60 years. Similarly, children being at low risk of severe disease and having developed infections, and with further exposure of children in the ongoing Omicron surge, the vaccination of children younger than 15 years is also not an urgency, either.

This does not mean that no population sub-group in the 18-59 years band would ever need COVID-19 vaccine boosters. One, immunity, and thus protection against respiratory viruses (i.e., SARS-CoV-2), whether after vaccination or natural infection, declines over a period of time. Two, mutations are common in SARS-CoV-2 and the emergence of newer variants of concern with an ability to bypass immunity (provided by natural infection or vaccination) continues to remain a possibility. Therefore, it is likely that a larger proportion of the adult population might need a booster, though at a relatively longer interval. Furthermore, once there is evidence about the effectiveness of additional doses of COVID-19 vaccines (being used in India) in immunocompromised individuals, the third dose should be recommended for such adults, of any age group.

Funding of COVID-19 vaccines is a key operational issue. Soon after the Union Budget 2022-23, there were concerns that the allocation of ₹5,000 crore for COVID-19 vaccines could be insufficient. However, an objective assessment suggests that it could be enough. The Indian government, last year, had reportedly made an advance market commitment (AMC) with the manufacturers of Corbevax (Biological E Ltd.) for 30 crore shots and had made part-payment of

₹1,500 crore in advance. Therefore, the advance payment would be enough for 10 crore doses. The budgetary allocation for the next financial year could be sufficient to procure 20 crore to 33 crore doses, depending on the share of different COVID-19 vaccines ordered. In addition, there is likely to be a balance of stocks of COVID-19 vaccines already purchased in the current financial year. These doses are likely to be sufficient to vaccinate the remaining eligible population and administer boosters to (currently and in future) eligible population sub-groups.

## Use the time at hand

In a pandemic response, efforts are made to reduce and halt any transmission. However, a fresh wave has a silver lining as well. Any natural infection results in the development of immunity. Therefore, the ongoing third wave gives India some time to decide about rolling out boosters for additional population sub-groups. This time at hand should be used for some reflection and actions. First, in the pandemic, epidemics, outbreaks and in epidemiology, context or the local situation matters a lot. The context of India is very different from that in other countries because of the relatively low median population age, the use of different COVID-19 vaccines, and the vaccination of the majority of the population after natural infection in the second wave, to list a few. Therefore, the data used by the other countries in deciding on vaccine effectiveness and boosters cannot, and should not, be used for India. Such decisions need to be based on the local data and evidence. For example, Denmark, after analysing local evidence, decided not to administer COVID-19 vaccines to children in the 5 years-12 years age group. A few vaccines administered to children in India, i.e., BCG against tuberculosis or Japanese encephalitis (JE) vaccines are not part of immunisation programmes of many countries. These are some of the examples of the context and use of local data.

Second, the success of any vaccination programme is dependent

on citizen participation. It is time science determines the COVID-19 vaccination strategy. Let us, as citizens, not demand a booster for any adult age group. Let us not rush into the vaccination of children younger than 15 years of age. Let us not link vaccination to school attendance. Children need not to be vaccinated to attend school. The unscientific and misinformed public discourse has been an ongoing challenge in India's COVID-19 pandemic response. Therefore, governments at all levels need to step up transparent and timely science communication around vaccines and through trustworthy sources.

Third, there is a need to identify vaccine and vaccination-specific policy questions. Thereafter, analyse the COVID-19 disease and vaccine data and link them with clinical outcomes to assess the effectiveness against SARS-CoV-2 variants and answer as many policy questions as possible. This needs to be supplemented by conducting primary research, both clinical and epidemiological, for the policy questions that have not been answered by the available data.

India's COVID-19 vaccination drive has matured with commendable coverage: approximately 95% of eligible adults with one shot and 75% of eligible adults with both shots. However, the task is still unfinished. The sufficient COVID-19 vaccine supply or high vaccine coverage in adults is not reason enough to open booster doses for additional age groups. The COVID-19 vaccination and booster doses strategy should be determined by keeping context in the backdrop and being solely informed by emerging scientific and epidemiological evidence. Alongside, rather than being solely focused on COVID-19 vaccines and boosters – in the weeks and months – we, as a society, need to come to a consensus and prepare a road map to 'live with SARS-CoV-2'.

Dr. Chandrakant Lahariya, a physician-epidemiologist, is affiliated with the Foundation for People-centric Health Systems, based in New Delhi

# Notes for India as the digital trade juggernaut rolls on

Sitting out trade negotiations could result in the country losing out on opportunities to shape the rules



ARINDRAJIT BASU

Despite the cancellation of the Twelfth Ministerial Conference (MC12) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) late last year (scheduled date, November 30, 2021-December 3, 2021) due to COVID-19, digital trade negotiations continue their ambitious march forward. On December 14, Australia, Japan, and Singapore, co-convenors of the plurilateral Joint Statement Initiative (JSI) on e-commerce, welcomed the 'substantial progress' made at the talks over the past three years and stated that they expected a convergence on more issues by the end of 2022.

## Holding out

But therein lies the rub: even though JSI members account for over 90% of global trade, and the initiative welcomes newer entrants, over half of WTO members (largely from the developing world) continue to opt out of these negotiations. They fear being arm-twisted into accepting global rules that could etiolate domestic policymaking and economic growth. India and South Africa have led the resistance and been the JSI's most vocal critics. India has thus far resisted pressures from the developed world to jump onto the JSI bandwagon, largely through coherent legal argumentation against the JSI and a long-term developmental vision.

Yet, given the increasingly frag-

mented global trading landscape and the rising importance of the global digital economy, can India tailor its engagement with the WTO to better accommodate its economic and geopolitical interests?

## Global rules on digital trade

The WTO emerged in a largely analogue world in 1994. It was only at the Second Ministerial Conference (1998) that members agreed on core rules for e-commerce regulation. A temporary moratorium was imposed on customs duties relating to the electronic transmission of goods and services. This moratorium has been renewed continuously, to consistent opposition from India and South Africa. They argue that the moratorium imposes significant costs on developing countries as they are unable to benefit from the revenue customs duties would bring.

The members also agreed to set up a work programme on e-commerce across four issue areas at the General Council: goods, services, intellectual property, and development. Frustrated by a lack of progress in the two decades that followed, 70 members brokered the JSI in December 2017 to initiate exploratory work on the trade-related aspects of e-commerce. Several countries, including developing countries, signed up in 2019 despite holding contrary views to most JSI members on key issues. Surprise entrants, China and Indonesia, argued that they sought to shape the rules from within the initiative rather than sitting on the sidelines.

India and South Africa have rightly pointed out that the JSI contravenes the WTO's consensus-



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based framework, where every member has a voice and vote regardless of economic standing. Unlike the General Council Work Programme, which India and South Africa have attempted to revitalise in the past year, the JSI does not include all WTO members. For the process to be legally valid, the initiative must either build consensus or negotiate a plurilateral agreement outside the aegis of the WTO.

India and South Africa's positioning strikes a chord at the heart of the global trading regime: how to balance the sovereign right of states to shape domestic policy with international obligations that would enable them to reap the benefits of a global trading system.

## A contested regime

There are several issues upon which the developed and developing worlds disagree. One such issue concerns international rules relating to the free flow of data across borders. Several countries, both within and outside the JSI, have imposed data localisation mandates that compel corporations to store and process data within territorial borders. This is a key policy priority for India. Several payment card companies, including Mastercard and American Express, were prohibited from issuing new cards for failure to

comply with a 2018 financial data localisation directive from the Reserve Bank of India. The Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) on data protection has recommended stringent localisation measures for sensitive personal data and critical personal data in India's data protection legislation. However, for nations and industries in the developed world looking to access new digital markets, these restrictions impose unnecessary compliance costs, thus arguably hampering innovation and supposedly amounting to unfair protectionism.

There is a similar disagreement regarding domestic laws that mandate the disclosure of source codes. Developed countries believe that this hampers innovation, whereas developing countries believe it is essential for algorithmic transparency and fairness – which was another key recommendation of the JPC report in December 2021.

## India's choices

India's global position is reinforced through narrative building by political and industrial leaders alike. Data sovereignty is championed as a means of resisting 'data colonialism', the exploitative economic practices and intensive lobbying of Silicon Valley companies. Policymaking for India's digital economy is at a critical juncture. Surveillance reform, personal data protection, algorithmic governance, and non-personal data regulation must be galvanised through evidenced insights, and work for individuals, communities, and aspiring local businesses – not just established larger players.

Hastily signing trading obliga-

tions could reduce the space available to frame appropriate policy. But sitting out trade negotiations will mean that the digital trade juggernaut will continue unchecked, through mega-regional trading agreements such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). India could risk becoming an unwitting standard-taker in an already fragmented trading regime and lose out on opportunities to shape these rules instead.

Alternatives exist; negotiations need not mean compromise. For example, exceptions to digital trade rules, such as 'legitimate public policy objective' or 'essential security interests', could be negotiated to preserve policymaking where needed while still acquiescing to the larger agreement. Further, any outcome need not be an all-or-nothing arrangement. Taking a cue from the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA) between Singapore, Chile, and New Zealand, India can push for a framework where countries can pick and choose modules with which they wish to comply. These combinations can be amassed incrementally as emerging economies such as India work through domestic regulations.

Despite its failings, the WTO plays a critical role in global governance and is vital to India's strategic interests. Negotiating without surrendering domestic policymaking holds the key to India's digital future.

Arindrajit Basu is Research Lead at the Centre for Internet and Society, India. The views expressed are personal

# A self-reliant pharma industry

The production-linked incentive scheme needs to be modified in order to attract the industry



REJI JOSEPH & RAMAA ARUN KUMA

The pharmaceuticals industry is a key sector for the Atmanirbhar Bharat programme. The objective of the Phase-I Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme in this sector was to reduce import dependence on active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs), drug intermediates (DIs) and key starting materials (KSMs). This scheme was expected to attract a lot of interest as countries had begun to adopt measures to reduce their dependence on China for APIs. However, the response to this scheme did not meet expectations.

A total of 239 applications were received in two rounds from an industry of over 3,000 firms. Of these, 61 were selected. As 11 beneficiaries withdrew from the scheme, the number reduced to 50 as on December 9, 2021, against the maximum number of 136 beneficiaries as mentioned in the guidelines. No beneficiary was identified in five of the 41 products notified for the scheme.

## Creating confidence among investors

A recent study conducted by us on this scheme, published as a working paper of the Institute for Studies in Industrial Development (ISID), shows that India needs a strategy, not just a scheme, to realise the objective of reducing import dependence. There are three areas where this PLI scheme requires modifications. Other complementary measures also need to be put in place for India to become self-reliant in APIs, DIs and KSMs.

Firms will invest in production in India if they see a prospect of producing at prices cheaper than the cost of imports. As cheaper imports from China are critical for maintaining their global competence in the export of formulations, investors will face an investment uncertainty if the proposed measures do not ensure the price competitiveness of domestic production. More than half the turnover of this industry is from exports. Imports from China are reported to be cheaper by 35-40% compared to indigenously produced products. So, any strategy aimed at achieving self-reliance should focus on achieving price competency in production.

Technology plays a very crucial role in reducing import dependence as Indian producers have constraints in overcoming some of the advantages of Chinese producers such as scale of operations. Without appropriate technology, APIs/DIs/KSMs manufacturers

in India will not be in a position to beat their Chinese counterparts in pricing. This PLI scheme doesn't have a technology component.

Two, this scheme also insists on new manufacturing facilities, which doesn't make business sense for firms which have idle capacities. Many firms used to produce these products and have wound up production as cheaper imports began to flow from China. Permission to utilise existing but inoperational or underutilised facilities for production would have elicited a better response.

Three, the history of development of the indigenous pharmaceutical industry in India shows the significance of an industrial policy that is in tandem with trade and science and technology policies. This PLI scheme remains a standalone measure; it is not connected to other relevant policy measures.

Nearly three-fourth of the production of pharmaceuticals in India is by MSMEs. Historically, large private sector firms have been interested in formulations, not APIs. As APIs are sold with their chemical names and without branding, large firms have no interest in their production. The production of APIs by large firms, if at all, is largely for captive consumption. The focus of the PLI Phase-I scheme, however, is on large firms. The data we obtained for 13 of the beneficiary firms shows that all of them are large firms, if the definition of MSMEs that existed at the time of announcement of the scheme is used. If the new definition is used, all except one are large firms. It seems like policymakers are interested in taking advantage of efficiencies associated with the scale of operations by encouraging large firms. But it is equally important to include smaller firms which are into the KSMs/DIs/APIs business in a major way.

## Involving public sector enterprises

In spite of the two rounds of applications, no beneficiary was identified (or no application was received) in five products, which are all antibiotics. It appears from our interactions with the industry that four of the five products – Neomycin, Gentamicin, Tetracycline and Clindamycin base are APIs that are not used much by the industry. This may be one of the reasons for the lack of enthusiasm by the industry. However, we should note that such APIs may be of great significance for public health. In such cases, public sector enterprises (PSEs) should be tasked with the production of APIs and their KSMs and DIs. The lead role that PSEs had played in the development of an indigenous pharmaceutical industry in India can never be forgotten.

*Reji Joseph and Ramaa Arun Kuma are faculty members at ISID, New Delhi. Views are personal*

## EXPLAINER

# The BrahMos deal and India's defence exports

Has the domestic defence manufacturing industry grown? How is the Government making military export sales easier?

DINAKAR PERI

**The story so far:** On January 28, Philippines signed a \$374.96 million deal with BrahMos Aerospace Pvt. Ltd. for the supply of shore based anti-ship variant of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile. This is the first export order for the missile which is a joint product between India and Russia and also the biggest defence export contract of the country. This adds impetus to the efforts to boost defence exports and meet the ambitious target set by the Government to achieve a manufacturing turnover of \$25 billion or ₹1,75,000 crore including exports of ₹35,000 crore in aerospace and defence goods and services by 2025.

**What is the BrahMos missile system?** The Philippines contract includes delivery of three BrahMos missile batteries, training for operators and maintainers as well as the necessary Integrated Logistics Support (ILS) package. The coastal defence regiment of the Philippine Marines, which is under the Navy, will be the primary employer of the missile system.

BrahMos is a joint venture between India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Russia's NPO Mashinostroyeniya. The missile derives its name from the Brahmaputra and Moskva rivers.

Beginning with an anti-ship missile, several variants have since been developed and it is now capable of being launched from land, sea, sub-sea and air against surface and sea-based targets and has constantly been improved and upgraded. The missile has been long inducted by the Indian armed forces and the Army recently deployed BrahMos along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Arunachal Pradesh.

The range of the BrahMos was originally limited to 290 kms as per obligations of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) of which Russia was a signatory. Following India's entry into the club in June 2016, plans were announced to extend the range initially to 450 kms and subsequently to 600 kms. BrahMos with extended range upto 450 kms has been tested several times since.

**Which other countries are in discussion for the BrahMos missiles?** In addition to the deal signed last week by Philippines, there is another long pending deal under discussion for BrahMos missiles for the Philippines Army which could see progress in the near future, officials said. The procurement for Philippines Army (PA) is included in the Horizon 3 Modernisation programme of Philippines (Year 2023-2027), diplomatic sources had stated.



The BrahMos supersonic cruise missile with increased indigenous content test-fired from the Integrated Test Range, Odisha. **APPI**

While the first export order for BrahMos took a long time, the next order is likely to be concluded soon with negotiations with Indonesia and Thailand in advanced stages. There is reportedly interest for BrahMos from countries in West Asia as well.

Philippines is also looking at several other military procurements from India and South East Asia as the region has emerged as a major focus area for India's defence exports. For instance, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has received

interest from Philippines Coast Guard for procurement of seven Dhruv Advanced Light Helicopters and eight Dornier Do-228 aircraft under the \$100mn Line of Credit (LoC) extended by India. Progress on this has been delayed due to the pandemic situation, officials said.

Kanpur based company MKU has supplied Bullet Proof Jackets (BPJ) to Philippines in the past and is now in the race for bigger contracts for BPJs and helmets. In addition, maritime domain and ship building is another potential area for Indian companies in the Philippines.

### What is the status of defence exports?

From 2016-17 to 2018-19, the country's defence exports have increased from ₹1,521 crore to ₹10,745 crore, a staggering 700% growth. The value of exports of defence items including major items in Financial Year 2014-15 and 2020-21 was ₹1,940.64 crore and ₹8,434.84 crore respectively. As per data given by the Government, defence exports for 2020-21 stood at ₹8434.84 crore and the export target for financial year 2021-22 was ₹10,000 crore.

There have been a series of measures announced to incentivise and promote domestic defence manufacturing as well as efforts to boost exports which include simplified defence industrial licensing,

relaxation of export controls and grant of No Objection Certificates (NOC), extending Line of Credit (LoC) to foreign countries to import defence products and empowering Defence Attaches in Indian missions abroad to promote defence exports. The draft 'Defence Production & Export Promotion Policy (DPEPP) 2020' is expected to be finalised soon.

In December 2020, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) approved the export of indigenous Akash Surface to Air (SAM) missile systems which several countries in South East Asia and West Asia have expressed interest in.

To provide faster approvals for export of major defence platforms, a committee comprising of the Defence Minister, External Affairs Minister and National Security Advisor was set up. The Defence Ministry had said in December 2020, that "This Committee would authorise subsequent exports of major indigenous platforms to various countries. The Committee would also explore various available options including the Government-to-Government route."

In the last few years, India has put out a range of military hardware on sale which includes various missile systems, Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), helicopters, warship and patrol vessels, artillery guns, tanks, radars, military vehicles, electronic warfare systems in addition to other weapons systems.

## THE GIST

■ On January 28, Philippines signed a \$374.96 million deal with BrahMos Aerospace Pvt. Ltd. for the supply of shore based anti-ship variant of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile. This is the biggest defence export contract of the country.

■ BrahMos is a joint venture between India's DRDO and Russia's NPO Mashinostroyeniya. Beginning with an anti-ship missile, several variants have since been developed and it can now be launched from land, sea, sub-sea and air against surface and sea-based targets.

■ From 2016-17 to 2018-19, the country's defence exports have registered a staggering 700% growth. There have been a series of measures announced to promote domestic defence manufacturing as well as efforts to boost exports.

General Studies Paper I	
A	History of Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of art forms, literature and architecture from ancient to modern times;
B	Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present-significant events, personalities, issues;
C	Freedom struggle-its various stages and important contributors / contributions from different parts of the country;
D	Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country;
E	History of the world will include events from 18 <sup>th</sup> century such as industrial revolution, world wars, re-drawing of national boundaries, colonization, decolonization,
F	Political philosophies like communism, capitalism, socialism etc.-their forms and effect on the society
G	Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India;
H	Effects of globalization on Indian society;
I	Role of women and women's organization;
J	Social empowerment, communalism, regionalism & secularism
K	Salient features of world's physical geography;
L	Geographical features and their location- changes in critical geographical features (including water bodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes;
M	Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, cyclone etc.
N	Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian subcontinent);
O	Factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India);
P	Population and associated issues;
Q	Urbanization, their problems and their remedies
General Studies Paper II	
A	India and its neighbourhood- relations;
B	Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate;
C	Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests;
D	Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.
E	Indian Constitution, historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure;
F	Comparison of the Indian Constitutional scheme with other countries;
G	Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein; Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
H	Parliament and State Legislatures - structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these;
I	Structure, organization and functioning of the executive and the judiciary, Ministries and Departments;

J	Separation of powers between various organs dispute redressal mechanisms and institutions;
K	Appointment to various Constitutional posts, powers, functions and responsibilities of various Constitutional bodies;
L	Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies;
M	Mechanisms, laws, institutions and bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections;
N	Salient features of the Representation of People's Act;
O	Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance- applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential;
P	Citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures;
Q	Issues relating to poverty and hunger,
R	Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States, Performance of these schemes;
S	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to education and human resources;
T	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to health
General Studies Paper III	
A	Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment;
B	Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth;
C	Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
D	Infrastructure Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc. Government budgeting;
E	Land reforms in India
F	Major crops, cropping patterns in various parts of the country, different types of irrigation and irrigation systems;
G	Storage, transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints;
H	e-technology in the aid of farmers; Technology Missions; Economics of Animal-Rearing.
I	Issues of buffer stocks and food security, Public Distribution System- objectives, functioning, limitations, revamping;
J	Food processing and related industries in India – scope and significance, location, upstream and downstream requirements, supply chain management;
K	Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies and minimum support prices
L	Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology;
M	Indigenization of technology and developing new technology;
N	Developments and their applications and effects in everyday life;
O	Issues relating to intellectual property rights
P	Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment
Q	Disaster and disaster management
R	Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges, basics of cyber security;
S	Money-laundering and its prevention;

T	Various forces and their mandate;
U	Security challenges and their management in border areas;
V	Linkages of organized crime with terrorism;
W	Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security;
X	Linkages between development and spread of extremism.
<b>General Studies Paper IV</b>	
A	Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in human actions;
B	Dimensions of ethics;
C	Ethics in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators;
D	Role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.
E	Attitude: Content, structure, function; its influence and relation with thought and behaviour;
F	Moral and political attitudes;
G	Social influence and persuasion.
H	Aptitude and foundational values for Civil Service , integrity, impartiality and non-partisanship, objectivity, dedication to public service, empathy, tolerance and compassion towards the weaker sections.
I	Emotional intelligence-concepts, and their utilities and application in administration and governance.
J	Contributions of moral thinkers and philosophers from India and world.
K	Public/Civil service values and Ethics in Public administration: Status and problems;
L	Ethical concerns and dilemmas in government and private institutions;
M	Laws, rules, regulations and conscience as
N	sources of ethical guidance;
O	Accountability and ethical governance; strengthening of ethical and moral values in governance; ethical issues in international relations and funding;
P	Corporate governance.
Q	Probity in Governance: Concept of public service;
R	Philosophical basis of governance and probity;
S	Information sharing and transparency in government, Right to Information, Codes of Ethics, Codes of Conduct, Citizen's Charters, Work culture, Quality of service delivery, Utilization of public funds, challenges of corruption.
T	Case Studies on above issues.