

**DAILY
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ANALYSIS**



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01 NOVEMBER 2023

1 - Why does Afghanistan experience earthquakes so often:

GS I

Geography related issues

- **Context:**

- Just a few days ago, several earthquakes of a similar magnitude in western Afghanistan claimed the lives of at least a thousand people in the Herat province. The most recent earthquake had a magnitude of 6.3.

- **Important information:**

- Strong earthquakes have caused extensive damage in Afghanistan over the years.
- More than a thousand people lost their lives in June 2022 when an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.1 devastated the regions of Khost and Paktika.
- Over 200 people were murdered in Afghanistan and the bordering northern Pakistan in 2015 after a powerful earthquake rocked the country's northeast.
- In 2002, an earthquake of a magnitude of 6.1 struck northern Afghanistan, killing roughly 1,000 people.
- At least 4,500 people were murdered in northeastern Afghanistan in 1998 by a second earthquake and the tremors that followed.

- **How do seismic events happen?**

- Tectonic plates are the solid rock fragments that make up the earth.
- Fault lines are the discontinuities that these rock masses have moved along.
- The earth's lithosphere experiences stress due to tectonic forces, which causes the rocks to fracture and slip, resulting in these fractures.
- When lithosphere blocks unexpectedly slide past one another, energy is released and seismic waves are transmitted through the earth. This phenomenon is known as an earthquake.
- A fault plane is created at the location where the lithosphere fragments slip.
- The focus, also known as the hypocentre, is the location within the ground where the fault rupture begins and causes an earthquake.
- The epicentre is the location on Earth's surface that is directly above it.
- Tectonic plates move slowly but constantly because of the heat energy produced inside the earth.
- The majority of earthquakes occur along what are known as the plate boundaries, which are the margins of these plates made up of faults.

- **Why does Afghanistan experience earthquakes so frequently?**

- Afghanistan is situated in the area where the Eurasian and Indian tectonic plates converge, across several fault lines.
- There is a lot of tectonic activity as a result of these plates frequently colliding.
- The Eurasian plate contains Afghanistan.
- The Arabian plate subducts beneath Eurasia towards western Afghanistan, whereas the Indian plate does the same in eastern Afghanistan.
- The Arabian and Indian plates meet in southern Afghanistan, where they both subduct beneath the Eurasian plate towards the north.
- Tectonic plate collisions create geologically complicated areas such as the Pamir Knot and the Hindu Kush mountain range.
- The folding and faulting of the Earth's crust is caused by the collision and convergence of the Indian and Eurasian plates.
- The region experiences earthquakes in part because of this geological complexity.
- Compression from the Indian Plate's continuous northward advance towards the Eurasian Plate causes the Himalayas to rise and tectonic stress to spread throughout the region, including Afghanistan.
- Because of the compression, the crust deforms and develops faults and cracks that have the potential to slip and trigger earthquakes.
- Significant tectonic stresses are produced by these interactions at plate borders, which cause earthquakes.
- A number of active fault systems, including the Main Pamir Thrust and the Chaman Fault, are also crisscrossing Afghanistan.
- Numerous earthquakes in the area are caused by these faults.

- *Source → The Hindu*

2 - The first test of the Gaganyaan expedition:

GS III

Space related issues

- **Context:**

- In the near future, ISRO will conduct the first of several tests of its protocols and systems in order to eventually send an Indian astronaut into space, maybe as early as 2025.

- **About:**

- The Gaganyaan project's Crew Escape System will be tested on the Flight Test Vehicle Abort Mission-1 (TV-D1).
- In order to test the safety systems that will enable the Gaganyaan crew to evacuate the spaceship in an emergency, the flight will be the first of two abort missions.
- Prior to an abort signal being sent, which will cause the crew module to separate and splash down in the Bay of Bengal, the rocket will climb to a height of about 17 km during the test exercise.

- **What is that we'll test?**

- **The flight of TV-D1 will show:**

- Test Vehicle-Demonstration 1 (TV-D1) is the test's new designation because of the new test vehicle.
- A rudimentary form of the crew module, or the capsule where astronauts will sit during the Gaganyaan human space mission, will be demonstrated.
- The test will evaluate how well the mechanisms separate the crew module from the rocket in the event of an emergency mid-flight (a mission abort) and astronaut escape.

- **The Updated Test Vehicle:**

- In 2024, the crew module will conduct a full-fledged test trip into orbit and return on the human-rated LVM3 rocket.
- An improved GSLV Mk III heavy lift rocket is called the LVM3 rocket.
- ISRO will use a low-cost, basic rocket that it constructed especially for system testing for the TV-D1 mission.
- The L110 Vikas engine, which powers the LVM3 rocket's core second stage, is a throttleable and restartable engine that allows the test vehicle to regulate fuel consumption while still utilising current liquid propulsion technology.
- A GSLV Mk III rocket was utilised in the crew module's lone prior test flight, known as the Crew module Atmospheric Re-Entry Experiment, or CARE, in 2014.
- However, ISRO has created the less expensive Test Vehicle because each GSLV Mk III launch costs between Rs 300 and Rs 400 crore.
- The Test Vehicle will be used by ISRO for a number of technologies that are being developed, such as the technology for reusable space launch vehicles utilising Scramjet engines.

- **Source → The Hindu**

3 – Rafah Border:

GS II

International Relations

- **Context:**

- Amid the current Israel-Hamas conflict, Palestinians congregated on the Gaza side of the blocked Rafah border crossing with Egypt.

- **Rafah's significance to Gaza:**

- The living conditions of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip have deteriorated due to restrictions placed by both Egypt and Israel on the movement of people and products into and out of Gaza.
- Entry from Gaza is now subject to a permit that must be obtained from either Israel or Egypt.
- Typically, it passes via goods like construction supplies, cooking gas, and diesel. which opened for business in 2018.
- As per the United Nations, high commissioner for human rights, Israel's retaliatory airstrikes have caused damage to the bridge.

- *Source → The Hindu*

4 - Human shields and forced relocation:

GS II

International Relations

- **Context:**

- American President alleges that Hamas, a terrorist Palestinian organisation, uses defenceless Palestinians as human shields.

- **How do human shields work?**

- In international humanitarian law (IHL), the phrase "human shields" refers to civilians or other protected individuals whose presence or movement is intended to shield military targets from military actions.
- For someone to be considered a human shield, they do not really need to be utilised as a shield against, say, a shower of gunshots.
- Using human shields includes even making people stay close to military targets or situating military targets inside or close to buildings occupied by civilians.
- **In times of conflict, who are the protected persons besides civilians?**
- The ill
- injured
- shipwrecked people who abstain from fighting,
- inmates of conflict and
- other people in custody
- **International humanitarian law, or IHL, is what?**
- A body of regulations known as international humanitarian law (IHL) aims to lessen the humanitarian effects of armed conflict.
- It places restrictions on the tools and techniques of combat and safeguards those who are not, or are no longer, directly or actively engaged in hostilities.
- "The law of war" or "the law of armed conflict" are other names for IHL.
- **Among the sources of international law are:**
- worldwide pacts (such as the Geneva Conventions),
- international customary law,
- broad national principles, and
- legal cases.
- War crimes are defined as grave transgressions of international humanitarian law.
- **How are human shields viewed under IHL?**
- Human shielding is prohibited under IHL and is regarded as a war crime.
- Moreover, it is forbidden to attack or target human shields.
- A civilian's (or any protected person's) exemption from assault can only be revoked by actual involvement in hostilities.
- **Gaza situation:**
- The dense population of Gaza makes matters more difficult.

- There is just nowhere in the confined strip where Hamas fighters can live without endangering people.
- It would be illegal for Israel to bomb those targets, regardless of whether Hamas knowingly utilises civilian residences for military reasons or does so out of necessity.
- **Forced displacement: what is it?**
- According to the International Criminal Court's Statute, directing the eviction of civilians for conflict-related reasons does not constitute forced relocation unless it is necessary for the security of the affected people or for military objectives.
- **IHL and compelled migration:**
- The directive to forcefully relocate civilians was declared illegal by the Norwegian Refugee Council and the International Committee of the Red Cross.
- It is illegal to threaten individuals with death, even though it is legitimate and necessary to warn civilians and non-combatants of legitimate military activities that may imperil them to the greatest extent possible.
- The key word here is lack of any promises of safety or return.
- Civilians must only be temporarily relocated, solely for their benefit, and until the crisis is resolved.
- Whether an act would genuinely improve civilian security determined whether it qualified as an evacuation or a forcible transfer.
- *Source → The Hindu*

5 – Question Hours in Lok Sabha:

GS II

Parliament related issues

- **Context:**
- In response to accusations that she received "cash for query," a Member of Parliament stated that she would be happy to respond to inquiries from the Lok Sabha Ethics Committee and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).
- **Question Hour:**

- Question Hour usually kicks up Lok Sabha sessions.
- Members of Parliament have one hour to question ministers and hold them responsible for the operation of their ministries.
- The directions given by the Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Lok Sabha regulate how questions are raised.

- **What is the protocol for posing queries?**

- **Giving alert:**

- An MP must first send a notification to the Secretary-General of the lower house indicating their intention to pose a question.
- In the event that the MP files multiple notices of questions on the same day, the notice will typically include the question text, the formal designation of the Minister to whom the question is addressed, the day that the answer is requested, and the order of preference.
- A member may ask questions and get up to five responses, in writing or orally, in any given day.
- Generally, a question must be announced for at least 15 days.
- Members of Parliament have two options for submitting notifications of their questions:
- Initially, through an online "Member's Portal" that requires access via an ID and password.
- Secondly, by use the paper forms that are accessible at the Parliamentary Notice Office.

- **Review by the Speaker:**

- The Speaker of the Lok Sabha will then review the question notices in accordance with the established guidelines.
- The Speaker has the authority to determine whether a question or a portion of a question is admissible.

- **Requirements for questions to be accepted:**

- Typically, questions should not be longer than 150 words.
- Arguments, disparaging remarks, and references to the behaviour or character of any individual other than in their official or public role should not be found in them.
- Questions that raise more significant policy issues are not permitted since answers to questions can never fully articulate policies.
- If a question's subject is pending judgement in a court of law, tribunal, or other legally constituted body, or if it is being considered by a parliamentary committee, it cannot be admitted.
- Additionally, a query cannot look for information on subjects that could jeopardise the nation's integrity and unity.

- **Importance of asking questions:**

- An MP's unrestricted parliamentary right is to ask questions.
- The purpose of the exercise is to practise legislative control over executive activities using a parliamentary gadget.
- **It can be utilised to obtain data regarding:**
 - elements of governance and administration
 - critique the plans and programmes of the government
 - expose the shortcomings of the government
 - compel ministers to act in a meaningful way for the benefit of everybody.
- Conversely, these inquiries can be used by the government to determine how the general public feels about its policies and management.
- Sometimes a question results in the establishment of a legislative body, a parliamentary committee, or even a court of inquiry.
- *Source → The Hindu*



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