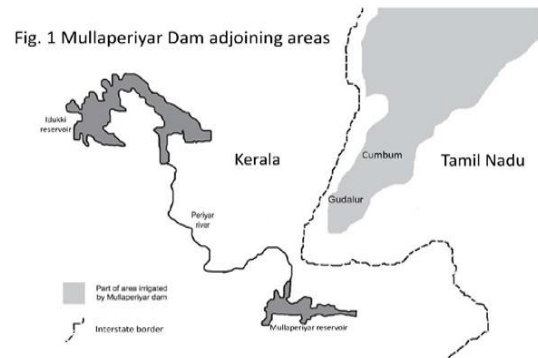


Mullaperiyar dam

- Amid widespread rain in the catchment areas, the water level in the Mullaperiyar reservoir touched 138 feet (maximum permissible level 142 feet).
- The Supreme Court on October 25 directed the Supervisory Committee to take an immediate and firm decision on the maximum water level that can be maintained at the Mullaperiyar dam, amid torrential rain in Kerala.
- Kerala said the water level should not go above 139 feet, the same as what the court had ordered on August 24, 2018, when the State was hit by floods.

About Mullaperiyar dam

- The Mullaperiyar dam is located on the confluence of the Mullayar and Periyar rivers in Kerala's Idukki district.
- It is operated and maintained by Tamil Nadu for meeting the drinking water and irrigation requirements of five of its southern districts.



- According to a 999-year lease agreement made during British rule the operational rights were handed over to Tamil Nadu.
- The tension between the two states over the issue has persisted since the 1960s, with Kerala citing concerns regarding the dam's safety and arguing for the reduction of the dam's water levels.
- But with the water from the dam being diverted to five districts in Tamil Nadu and its importance in the state's irrigation and power production practices, Tamil Nadu has consistently opposed this.

THE HINDU

Political Finance

- The nature of political finance is an important determinant of the structure of political competition
- . One, the degree of transparency of political funding informs the efficacy of institutional safeguards.
- Second, the extent to which political funding is centralized within a party determines whether power in the

party is drawn from organizational structures or exercised in a personalistic manner.

- Within two years of its introduction, electoral bonds were said to cover 52% of the total income of national parties and 53% of the total income of regional parties, according to an analysis by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR).
- There are two salient features of electoral bonds we must consider to gauge its impact on political competition.

THE HINDU

Moscow format

- The Moscow Format of Consultations on Afghanistan held in the Russian capital on Wednesday called for respect for all Afghan ethnic groups and minorities in a bid to create national reconciliation in the war-torn country.
- A joint statement issued after the meeting stressed upon ending all terrorist infrastructure in Afghanistan, and said placing of military infrastructure facilities of “third countries” in Afghanistan “and in adjacent states is unacceptable”
- . The representatives at the talks also called for “complete unfreezing” of Afghanistan’s assets by Washington.

- Participating countries in the talks included Russia, India, China, Pakistan, Iran, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan called upon the Taliban to “fulfill its commitments to eradicate terrorism and drug trafficking”

THE HINDU

Rhino horn

- In terms of weight, there has been an increase in the seizure of rhino horns after 2017, despite an overall reduction in poaching, says a global threat assessment report
- The report said six countries and territories have dominated the rhino horn trafficking routes from the source to the destination locations, though more than 50 countries and territories were implicated in the transnational crime.
- These countries were South Africa, Mozambique, Malaysia, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Vietnam, and China.
- “Prolific Vietnamese and Chinese criminal networks are driving the trafficking throughout the supply chain.
- Although Vietnam is known to be the primary destination for rhino horn.

THE HINDU

Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY)

- The free food grain scheme or the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) was introduced by the government during the first nationwide lockdown due to Covid-19 in March 2020.
- Under this scheme, the center provides 5kg of free food grains per month to the poor.
- This is in addition to the subsidized (Rs 2-3 per kg) ration provided under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) to families covered under the Public Distribution System (PDS).
- PMGKAY caters free food grain, either rice or wheat, to over 80 crore beneficiaries of NSFA.
- The scheme which can be availed through the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) plan was first introduced from April to June 2020 during the stringent lockdown in India and has been extended six times ever since.
- The latest extension was announced on 26 March and the scheme has been extended up to September 2022 at a cost of Rs 80,000 crore.
- The latest extension requires the center to allocate 24.4 million tonnes of wheat and rice for

PMGKAY in addition to the usual allocation for NFSA.

THE HINDU

EC

- An Election Commissioner can be proficient, competent, completely honest, and armed with an outstanding record of service, but he may have a definite political leaning which may end up displaying itself in office, a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court.
- Justice K.M. Joseph, leading a five-judge Bench, referred to how the 10th Chief Election Commissioner T.N. Seshan had managed to clean up the electoral system.
- Justice Joseph said that Mr. Seshan merely had put in place a set of rules which reduced human discretion to the minimum.
- In such a scenario, Election Commissioners hardly need to fear pressure from any political party or government.
- Further, the Election Commission, as an institution, would maintain functional independence and institutional integrity, whatever the political leaning or competence of individual Commissioners may be.
- “The Election Commission of India is the envy of the world.

THE HINDU

National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF)

- National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) is India's first infrastructure-specific investment fund or a sovereign wealth fund that was set up by the Government of India in February 2015.
- The objective behind creating this fund was to maximize economic impact mainly through infrastructure investment in commercially viable projects, both Greenfield and brownfield.
- In Union Budget 2015-16, India's Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley announced the creation of the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund
- It was proposed to be established as an Alternative Investment Fund to provide long-tenor capital for infrastructure projects with an inflow of ₹20,000 crores from the Government of India.
- NIIF was approved in August 2015 by the Department of Economic Affairs.
- NIIF manages three funds: Master Fund, Fund of Funds, and Strategic Fund.

- The funds were set up to make investments in India by raising capital from domestic and international institutional investors.

Master Fund

- The Master Fund is an infrastructure fund with the objective of primarily investing in operating assets in the core infrastructure sectors such as roads, ports, airports, power, etc.

Fund of Funds

- The Fund of Funds anchor and/or investment in funds are managed by fund managers who have good track records in infrastructure and associated sectors in India.
- Some of the sectors of focus include Green Infrastructure, Mid-Income & Affordable Housing, Infrastructure services and allied sectors.

Strategic Opportunities Fund

- Strategic Opportunities Fund is registered as an Alternative Investment Fund II under SEBI in India.
- The objective of National Investment and Infrastructure Fund II ("Strategic Opportunities Fund") is to invest largely in equity and equity-linked instruments.
- The Strategic Opportunities Fund has been established with the

objective to provide long-term capital to strategic and growth-oriented sectors in the country with the aim to build domestic leaders.

THE HINDU

STOP MOTION EFFECT

- Stop motion is an animated filmmaking technique in which objects are physically manipulated in small increments between individually photographed frames so that they will appear to exhibit independent motion or change when the series of frames is played back.
- Any kind of object can thus be animated, but puppets with movable joints (puppet animation) or plasticine figures (clay animation or Claymation) are most commonly used.
- Plasticine is a putty-like modelling material made from calcium salts, and petroleum jelly.
- Puppets, models, or clay figures built around an armature are used in model animation. Stop motion with live actors is often referred to as pixelation.
- Stop motion of flat materials such as paper, fabrics or photographs is usually called cutout animation.

THE HINDU
