Kalasa Banduri project

- The water disputes in India stem from a lack of a similar cooperation.
- The conflict on the Mandovi / Mahadayi River flowing through Goa, Karnataka and Maharashtra is one such example.
- The Kalasa-Banduri Project undertaken by the Karnataka government proposes to divert Mandovi river water from Kalasa and Banduri canals into the Malaprabha River in the state to facilitate drinking water to 13 towns of Dharwad, Belagavi, Bagalkote, and Gadag.
- The entire project aims to construct a total of 11 dams on the river Mandovi.
- The diversion of water from Kalasa and Banduri nullahs, however, has been the point of contention between Karnataka and Goa, with the latter claiming it would strip the state of its flora and fauna.

The conflict

- The Mandovi originates from Karnataka's Belgaum district.
- The Mandovi river basin falls into the states of Goa, Karnataka, and Maharashtra.
- The river is 81 kilometers (km) in length; 35 km of which flows in Karnataka, 1 km in Maharashtra, and 45 km in Goa.
- The seeds of the conflict were sowed over 40 years ago: In 1985, Karnataka initially explored a 350 megawatt-hydro-electric project to divert 50 percent of the Mandovi river water in Karnataka for irrigation.
- The plan was also to allow a steady flow of water from the power project's storage dam after using the water for irrigation purposes in Karnataka.
- This would have served to drink water and irrigation purposes in Goa as well.

THE HINDU

Voice technology

- Voice Technology (VT), encompasses voice biometrics or voice/speech recognition technology.
- The global adoption of smartphones has led to a dramatic increase in biometrics for security.
- However, these methods are cumbersome, not entirely secure, and vulnerable to deep fakes.
- The technology creates a digital voiceprint and compares it to a caller's voice.
- Voice authentication can significantly improve security over

knowledge -based authentication methods, which fraudsters have exploited to scam people.

- Compared to other biometrics, voice use is the cheapest technology, and does not require a reader or special device.

- It is also non-invasive, portable, and affords remote identification.

- The police can leverage voice to improve investigation efficiency, identify criminals, track criminals, and better respond to and prevent crimes.

- Not surprisingly, voice is finding use in criminal background checks to airport security

- Voice has a much lower error rate and requires no eye contact.

- VT has the advantage of improving user experience, reducing call handle times and call center costs, besides ensuring high accuracy authentication in seconds.

- It also has the ability to resist playback attacks.

- The technology is sensitive enough to detect if someone is impersonating the user or playing a recording.

- It can identify even if the user has a cold or a sore throat.

- Voice could be an excellent tool for the Government to disburse money for various schemes and verify the

proof of life of pensioners from their homes.

- Voice biometrics tech is making waves in the world of fraud protection by providing an extra layer of protection for data.

THE HINDU

Karnataka -Maharashtra dispute

The story so far:

- The border town of Belagavi has been a part of Karnataka since boundaries were demarcated along linguistic lines under the State's Reorganisation Act, 1956.

- But the inter-State border dispute between Karnataka and Maharashtra erupts every now and then.

What are the claims of the two States?

- The raging boundary dispute between the two States dates back to the reorganization of States along linguistic lines.

- In 1957, unhappy with the demarcation of boundaries, Maharashtra demanded realignment of its border with Karnataka.

- It invoked Section 21 (2)(b) of the Act, submitting a memorandum to

the Union Ministry of Home Affairs stating its objection to Marathi-speaking areas being included in Karnataka.

- It filed a petition in the Supreme Court staking a claim over Belagavi.
- Karnataka has argued that the inclusion of Belagavi as part of its territory is beyond dispute.
- It has cited the demarcation done on linguistic lines as per the Act and the 1967 Mahajan Commission Report to substantiate its position.
- Karnataka has argued for the inclusion of areas in Kolhapur, Sholapur, and Sangli districts (falling under Maharashtra) in its territory.
- Since 2006, Karnataka started holding the winter session of the Legislature in Belagavi, building the massive Suvarna Vidhana Soudha in the district headquarters to reassert its claim.

What were the terms of the Mahajan Commission?

- In 1966, at Maharashtra's insistence, the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi established a one-man commission led by Mehr Chand Mahajan, which recommended that 264 villages be transferred to Maharashtra and that Belagavi (Belgaum) and 247 villages remain with Karnataka.

- Maharashtra rejected the report, while Karnataka welcomed it.

THE HINDU

BCAS

- The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security was initially set up as a Cell in the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) in January 1978 on the recommendation of the Pande Committee constituted in the wake of the hijacking of the Indian Airlines flight on 10th September 1976.
- The role of the Cell was to coordinate, monitor, inspect and train personnel in Civil Aviation Security matters.
- The BCAS was reorganized into an independent department on 1st April 1987 under the Ministry of Civil Aviation as a sequel to the Kanishka Tragedy in June 1985.
- The main responsibility of BCAS is to lay down standards and measures in respect of the security of civil flights at International and domestic airports in India.
- Laying down Aviation Security Standards in accordance with Annex 17 to the Chicago Convention of ICAO for airport operators, airline operators, and their security agencies responsible for implementing AVSEC measures.

- Monitoring the implementation of security rules and regulations and carrying out surveys of security needs.
- Ensure that the persons implementing security controls are appropriately trained and possess all competencies required to perform their duties.
- Planning and coordination of Aviation security matters.

Conducting

- Surprise/Dummy checks to test the professional efficiency and alertness of security staff.
- Mock exercise to test the efficacy of Contingency Plans and operational preparedness of the various agencies.

THE HINDU

RVM

- The Election Commission (EC) on Thursday announced the development of a prototype of a multi-constituency remote electronic voting machine (RVM) to enable remote voting by migrant voters.
- The Election Commission of India (ECI) has developed a prototype for the Remote Electronic Voting Machine (RVM) aimed to facilitate voting for domestic migrants across India.
- The ECI is undertaking this major move to increase voter participation.
- "After focusing on youth and urban apathy, remote voting will be a transformational initiative for strengthening participation in electoral democracy,"
- The multi-constituency remote EVM, developed by a public sector undertaking, can handle up to 72 constituencies from a single remote polling booth, the statement issued by the poll watchdog said.
- The ECI "has now explored the option of using a modified version of the time-tested model of M3 (Mark 3) EVMs to enable voting at remote polling stations polling stations outside the home constituency, for domestic migrants.
- The concept note also highlights the challenges of defining domestic migrants, enumerating remote voters, and implementing of the Model Code of Conduct at remote polling booths in other states.
- -Ensuring secrecy of voting, facility of polling agents for identification of voters, and process and method of remote voting and counting of votes, are among the other issues identified by the note.

- The Representation of the People Act, 1950 and 1951, The Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, and The Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, will need to be amended to introduce remote voting.

Why do we need RVM?

- Though there is no central database available for migration within the country, the analysis of available data in the public domain points to work, marriage, and education-related migration as important components of domestic migration.
- "Out-migration" is predominant among the rural population in overall domestic migration and around 85% of the internal migration is within states.

THE HINDU

Ethylene glycol

- The Uttar Pradesh Drug Control and the Central Drugs Standards Control Organisation (CDSCO) are investigating Marion Biotech after Uzbekistan linked the deaths of 18 children to a "contaminated" cough syrup made by the Noida-based firm.
- The ministry said that colorless tests of odorlessbatch of the medicine contained ethylene glycol, a toxic substance.

- What is ethylene glycol?
- Ethylene glycol is a colorless and odorless alcoholic compound that can be fatal if consumed.
- The sweet-tasting ethylene glycol is fibre supply or viscous liquid at room temperature,
- It is mostly used as an automotive antifreeze and as a raw material for manufacturing polyester fibres.
- It is also found in several products such as hydraulic brake fluids, stamp pad inks, ballpoint pens, solvents, paints, cosmetics, and plastics.
- Diethylene glycol and ethylene glycol are adulterants that are sometimes illegally used as solvents in liquid drugs.
- Diethylene glycol and ethylene glycol may be used by pharma companies as an alternative to non-toxic solvents such as glycerine or propylene glycol to cut costs.
- The ingestion of ethylene glycol can cause severe health effects.

THE HINDU