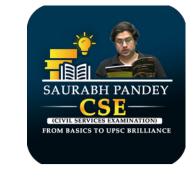


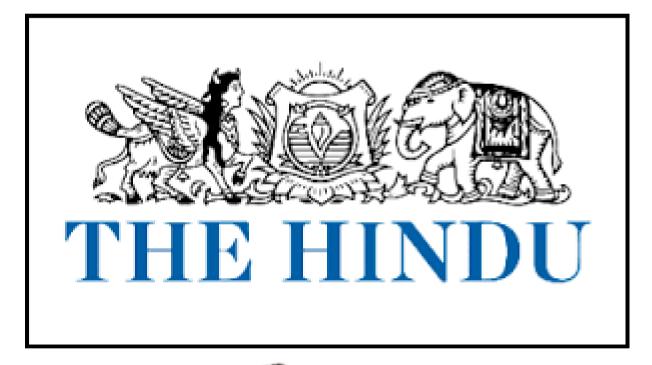
## Topics







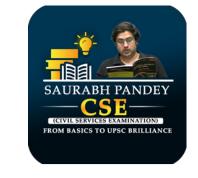
- Mount Ruang Eruption
- Liver and Gut Functions
- Lower Private Investment
- Mains







## Target Mains 2024/25



Q" Maritime dimension is an important pillar of india's Act east policy approach " Elaborate

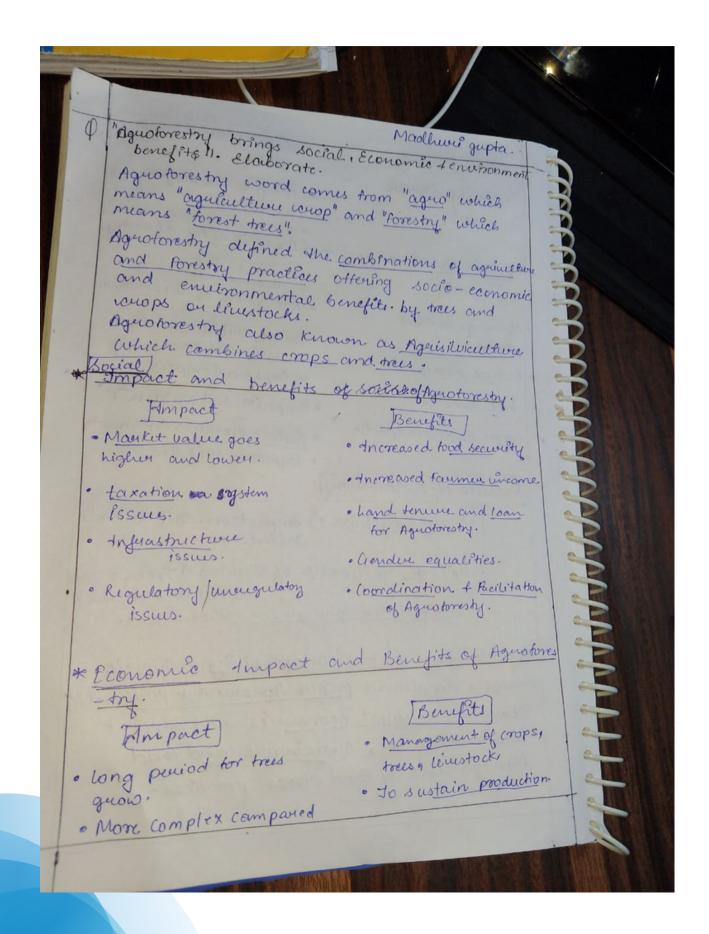
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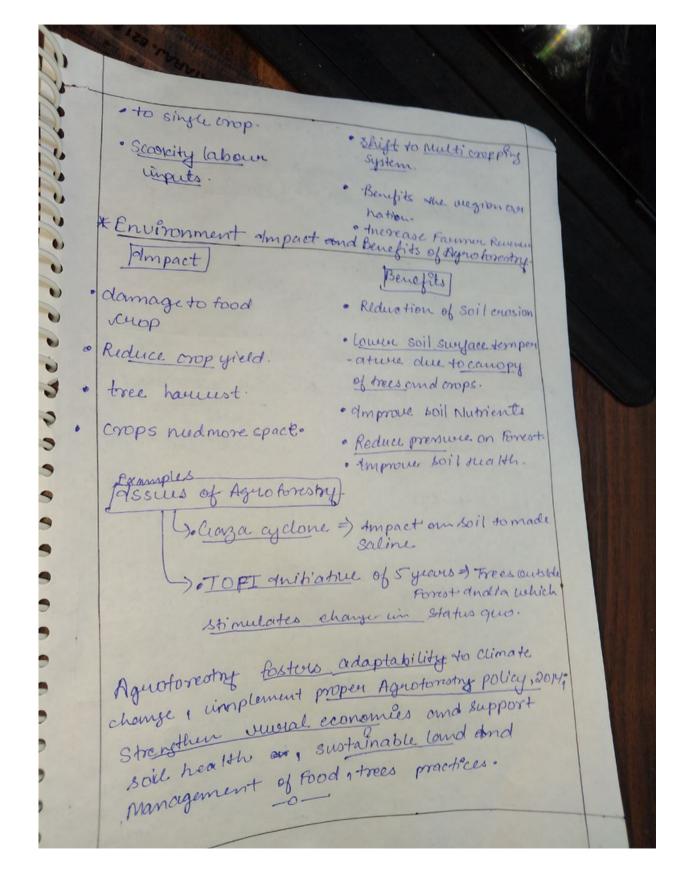
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## Answer review



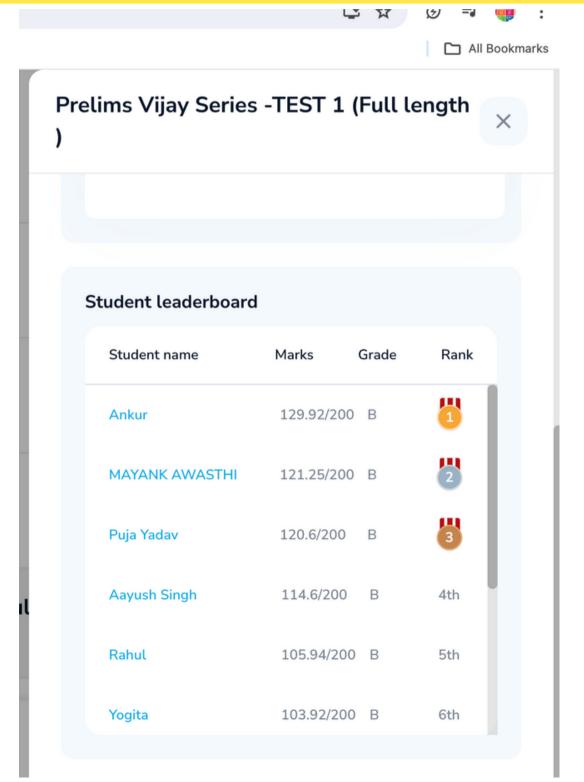






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### Scare in Indonesia



Lava and smoke erupt from Indonesia's Mount Ruang on Wednesday, forcing evacuation of thousands of people. AFP (REPORT ON PAGE 14)



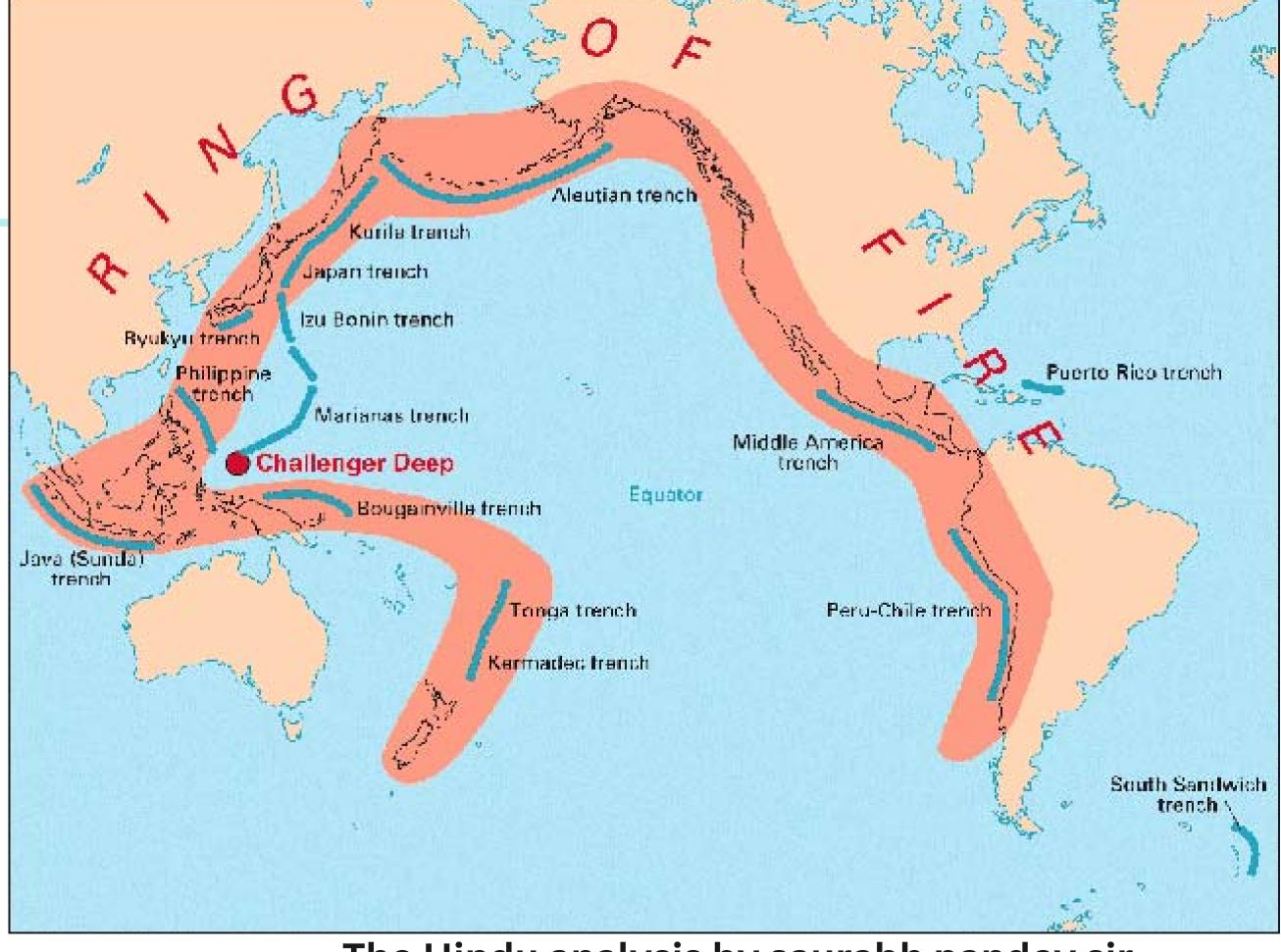




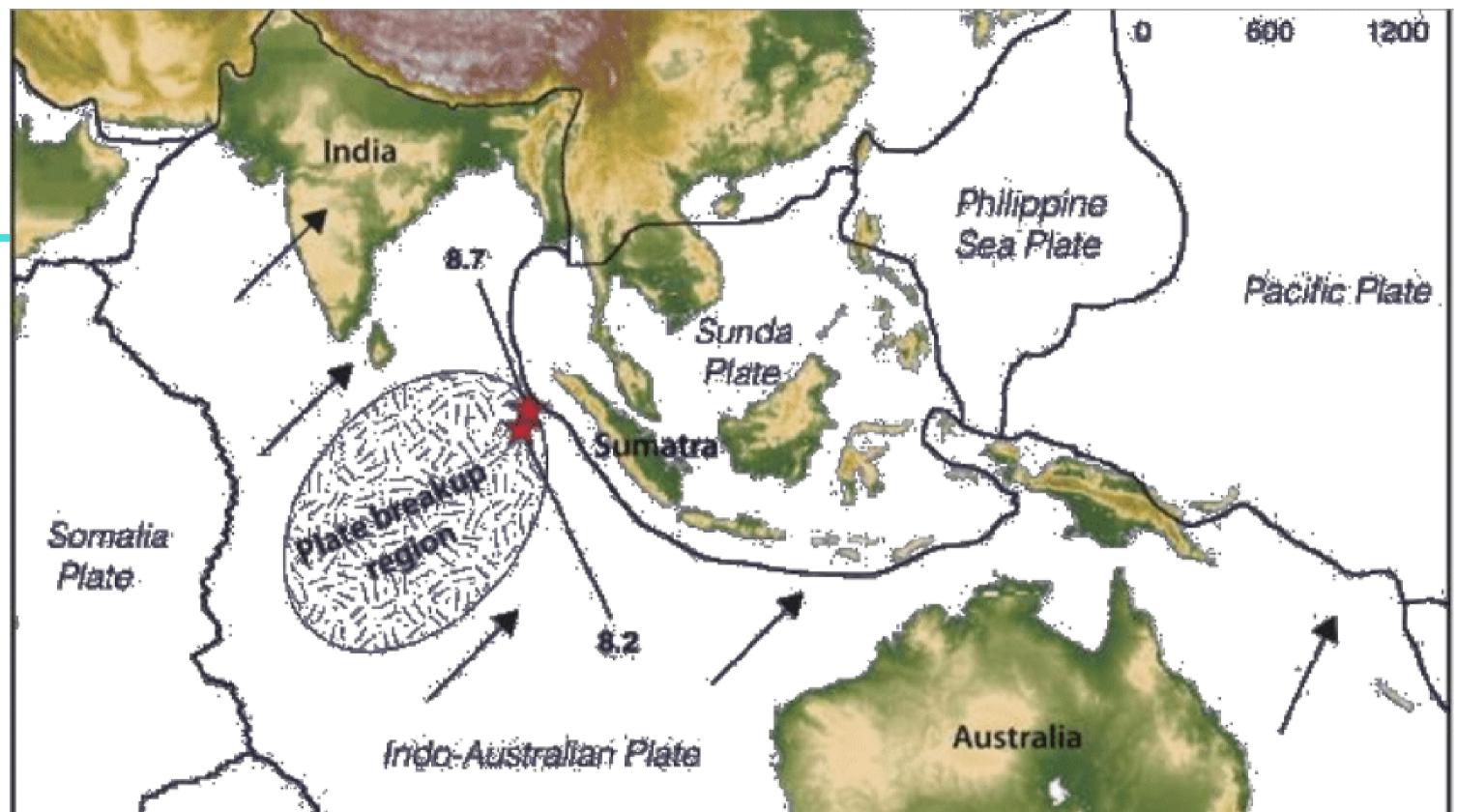
## Mount Ruang Eruption

- Ruang is the southernmost stratovolcano in the Sangihe Islands arc, North Sulawesi, Indonesia.
- It comprises an island 4 by 5 kilometres wide.
- The summit contains a partial lava dome and reaches some 725 metres in altitude.

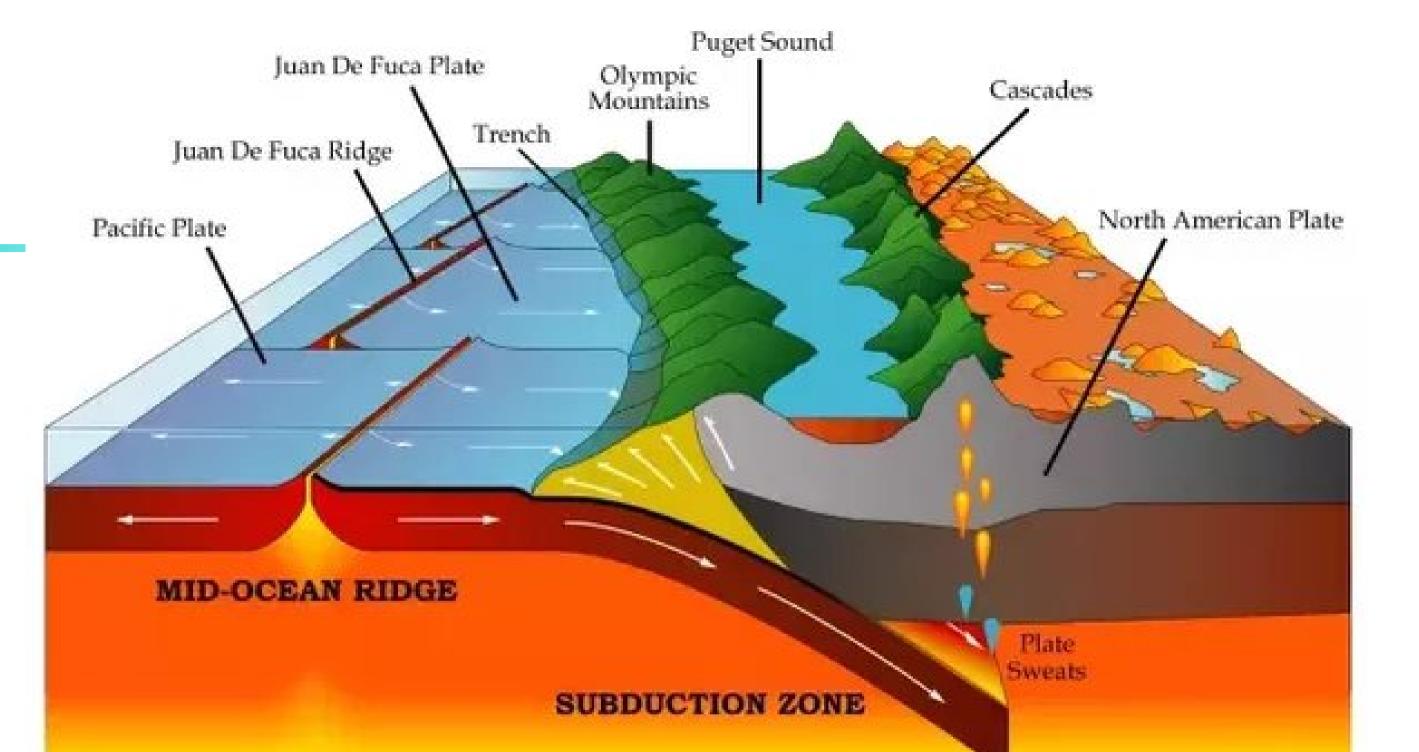


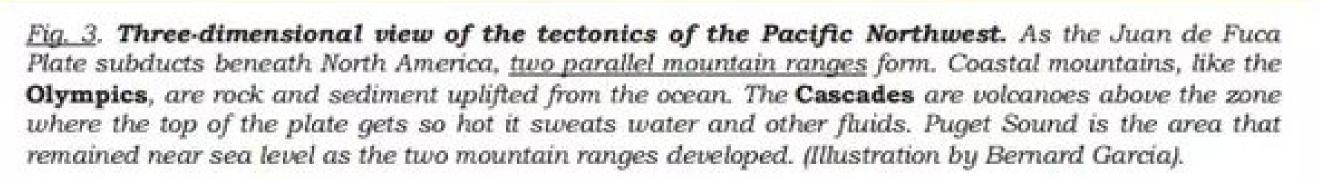


The Hindu analysis by saurabh pandey sir











### The dynamic duo: enhanced liver function and gut health

On World Liver Day, let's look at what needs to be done to support the liver and the gut to execute their functions. They have a symbiotic relationship. Nurturing one benefits the other. Introducing fiber-rich foods and avoiding processed and sugar-rich foods help the liver

n the intricate ecosystem of our bodies, two unsung heroes often overlooked are the liver and the gut. While the liver diligently detoxifies, metabolises, and stores nutrients, the gut orchestrates digestion and plays a pivotal role in our immune system. However, the connection between these two vital organs goes deeper than meets the eye. In this article, we delve into the symbiotic relationship between liver function and gut health, shedding light on how nurturing one benefits the other.

### The liver, often hailed as the body's

powerhouse, boasts a repertoire of functions crucial for our overall well-being. Primarily, it detoxifies harmful substances, be it environmental toxins or metabolic byproducts, ensuring our bloodstream remains clean. Additionally, the liver synthesises essential proteins, stores glycogen for energy, and metabolises fats, carbohydrates, and proteins, thereby regulating blood sugar levels and cholesterol. However, this multitasking marvel isn't invincible. Factors such as excessive alcohol consumption, poor dietary choices, viral infections, and certain medications can burden the liver, impairing its function. Over time, this strain may lead to liver diseases such as fatty liver disease, hepatitis, or even liver cirrhosis.

### The Gut: gateway to health

Traversing down the digestive tract, we encounter another protagonist: the gut. More than a mere passageway for food, the gut hosts trillions of microorganisms collectively known as the gut microbiota. This bustling community aids in breaking down food, synthesising vitamins, and, crucially, bolstering our immune system. Maintaining a diverse and balanced gut microbiome is pivotal for overall health. However, modern lifestyles, marked by processed foods, antibiotics, and chronic stress, often disrupt this delicate equilibrium, paving the way for gastrointestinal disorders like irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), and leaky gut

The Interplay: liver-gut axis
Now, let's unravel the intricate interplay between the liver and the gut, often referred to as the liver-gut axis. This bidirectional communication system involves various molecules, hormones, and immune cells shuttling between the two organs, influencing each other's function. One crucial link is the bile produced by the liver, which aids in fat



A sand sculpture to promote a 'Healthy Liver for Healthy Life' created by artist Sudarshan Pattnaik at Marina beach in Chennai. THE HINDU

digestion. Interestingly, bile acids also act as signaling molecules in the gut, modulating the composition of the gut microbiota. Conversely, metabolites produced by gut bacteria can influence Moreover, a healthy gut microbiome contributes to the integrity of the gut parrier, preventing harmful substances from leaking into the bloodstream and burdening the liver. Conversely, a compromised gut barrier, as seen in conditions like leaky gut syndrome, can trigger systemic inflammation and liver

Given their intertwined relationship, fostering gut health emerges as a promising avenue to bolster liver function. Here are some strategies to optimise both: Embrace a fiber-rich diet - fiber-rich foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes serve as prebiotics, nourishing beneficial gut bacteria. Moreover, soluble fiber binds to bile acids, aiding in their



A healthy gut microbiome contributes to the integrity of the gut barrier, preventing harmful substances from leaking into the bloodstream and burdening the liver

excretion and reducing cholesterol levels, thus alleviating the liver's workload. Incorporating probiotic-rich foods like yogurt, kefir, and kimchi introduces beneficial bacteria into the gut, fostering a diverse microbiome. These microbes can metabolise bile acids and modulate inflammation, indirectly benefiting liver

Limit sugar and processed foods: Excessive sugar and processed foods not only disrupt the gut microbiota but also contribute to fatty liver disease and insulin resistance. Opting for whole, unprocessed foods help maintain gut integrity and liver health. Stay hydrated: Adequate hydration supports liver function by aiding in the nation of toxins through urine and optimising bile production for digestion.

Manage stress: Chronic stress can wreak havoc on gut health by altering gut permeability and microbiota composition. like meditation, yoga, or deep breathing exercises can mitigate its adverse effects.

In the intricate tapestry of human physiology, the liver and gut stand as pillars of health, closely intertwined in their functions. By nurturing gut health through mindful dietary choices, stress management, and probiotic support, we can bolster liver function and pave the way for vibrant well-being. Let's embark on this journey towards enhanced liver function and gut health, celebrating the dynamic duo that fuels our vitality.

(Prof. Mohamed Rela is Chairman, Dr. Rela Institute & Medical Centre, Chennai.



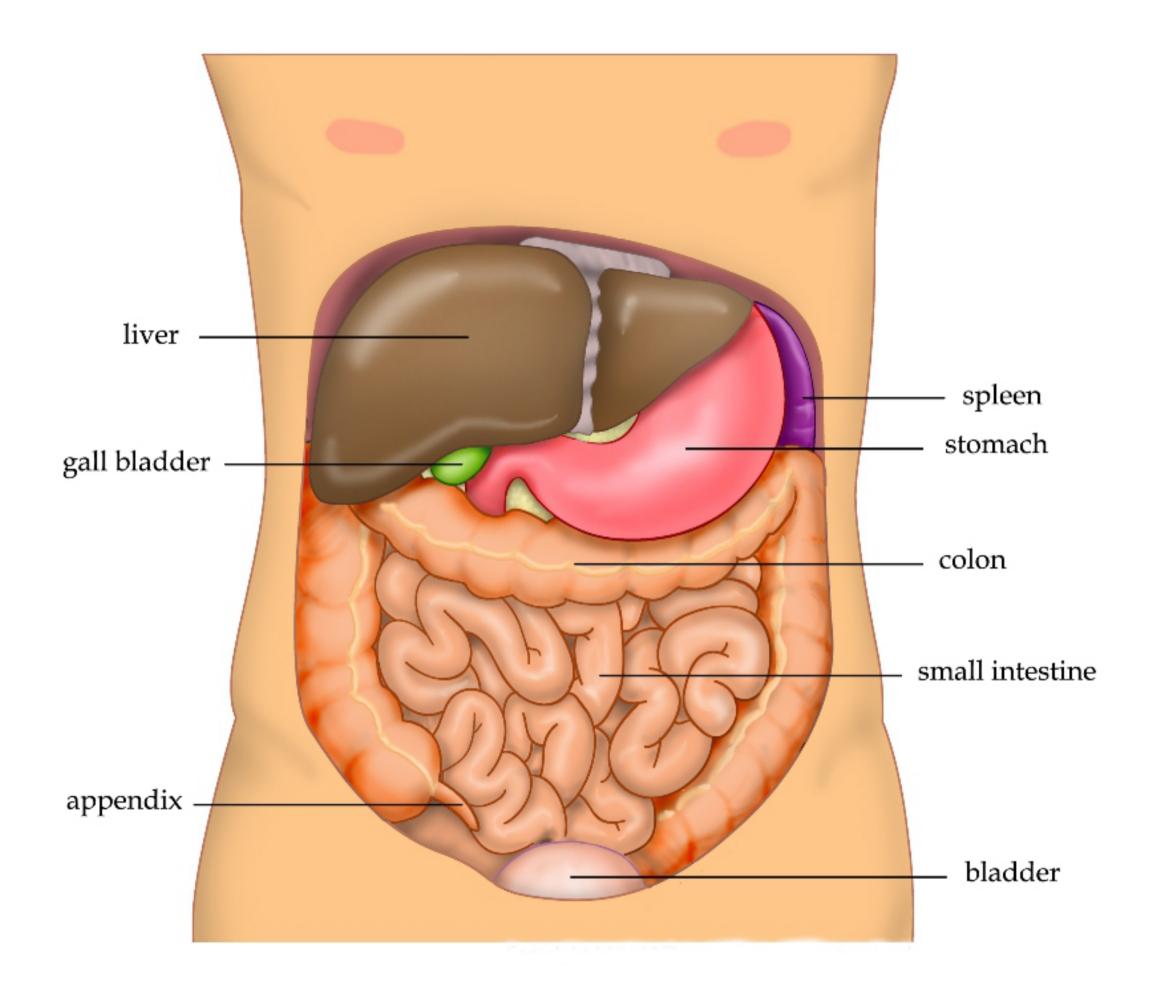




## Understanding liver function

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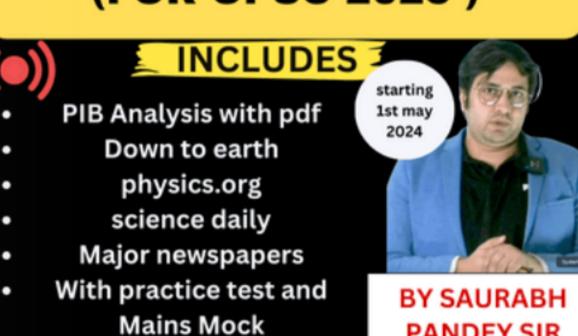
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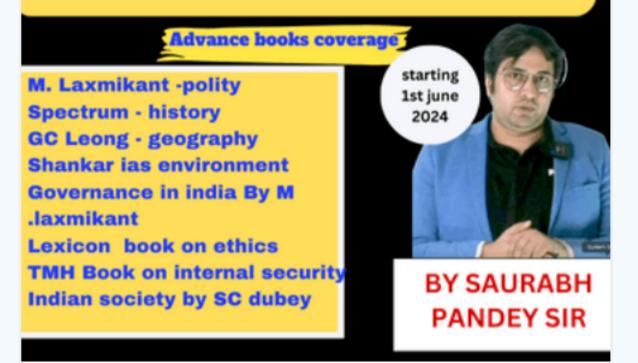
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### India's nuanced approach in the South China Sea

n March 2024, India's External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar, articulated, in a joint statement during his visit to Manila, India's full support for the Philippines in upholding its national sovereignty. Mr. Jaishankar's comment was made amid the ongoing South China or West Philippine Sea dispute between Manila and Beijing which witnessed, arguably, its most intense and volatile year in 2023, with frequent tensions at sea and diplomatic friction. A joint statement in 2023 between New Delhi and Manila had also called for China to adhere to the rules-based maritime order and acknowledge the International Court of Justice ruling of 2016 in favour of Manila. Both these statements are part of an evolving approach that signals a departure from India's earlier more cautionary and neutral position vis-à-vis the South China Sea. New Delhi's position on the South China Sea has changed significantly in recent years, mirroring its broader strategic and economic aspirations on the global stage through a more clearly articulated stance backing the provisions of international maritime law, sovereignty, and sovereign rights in the South China Sea.

### A policy evolution

New Delhi's engagement with the region was initially primarily economic, driven by its Look East Policy, which aimed to enhance economic integration with Southeast Asia and the imperative to secure energy resources to fuel its growing economy. The participation of Indian state-owned enterprises, such as the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation's overseas arm (ONGC Videsh), in oil and gas exploration projects in Vietnam's exclusive economic zones (EEZs) and other similar ventures not only signified India's economic stakes in the region but also its support for the principle of freedom of exploration and exploitation of maritime resources within the bounds of international law, specifically the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).



Harsh V. Pant

is Vice-President for Studies and Foreign Policy at the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), New Delhi



Pratnashree Basu

is an Associate Fellow, Indo-Pacific, at the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), Kolkata

New Delhi's strategic recalibration recognises the South China Sea's critical importance to regional security and the global maritime order

The transformation of India's policy orientation from Look East to Act East under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration has marked a shift towards a more strategic and active engagement with the Indo-Pacific region. This policy evolution reflects India's acknowledgment of the changing geopolitical landscape and the need for a more proactive and multifaceted foreign policy approach with the Act East Policy emphasising not only economic integration but also strategic partnerships and expanded security cooperation with countries in the Indo-Pacific including Vietnam, Malaysia, and Singapore, besides the Philippines. India has also simultaneously strengthened its own capacities through forward positioning, mission-based deployments, reinforced maritime domain awareness, and deep-water maritime facilities.

### India's complex ties with China

With geopolitical tensions in the South China Sea having steadily escalated, particularly due to China's assertive territorial claims and militarisation efforts, India's stance has become more nuanced while simultaneously becoming less cautious. The evolution of India's position on the South China Sea cannot be decoupled from its complex relationship with China. The two countries have a long history of border disputes which have intensified since the Galwan Valley incident of 2020, with Beijing's periodic incursions into India's territory and, most recently, even renaming Indian villages in Arunachal Pradesh.

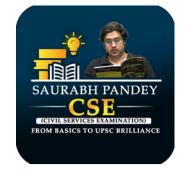
The Galwan Valley incident also saw India sending a frontline warship to the South China Sea in a demonstration of India's capability for asymmetric deterrence. China's assertive posture and territorial claims in the South China Sea and along India's land border have substantially disruptive implications for regional stability. India's strategic engagements, including regular naval exercises and the strengthening of military cooperation with Southeast Asian nations, serve

dual purposes: they underscore India's commitment to regional security and act as a counter to China's unlawful assertions.

### The ASEAN factor

New Delhi's strategic recalibration has been driven by a recognition of the South China Sea's critical importance to regional security and the global maritime order. The disputes in the South China Sea, primarily involving China and several Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, have implications for the freedom of navigation and overflight – principles that are vital for not only India's trade and energy transportation routes but also that of countries across the globe. As a responsible stakeholder in the Indo-Pacific, India can no longer shy away from taking unambiguous positions on matters of such critical importance. Its centrality in the Indo-Pacific theatre means that its periphery is no longer only the Indian Ocean but also the wider maritime domain where China's rise is challenging the status quo in ways not anticipated before. The ASEAN centrality in India's Indo-Pacific strategy also makes it imperative for India to buttress the ASEAN position, though differences within the regional grouping continue to pose a challenge to such endeavours.

New Delhi's advocacy for a rules-based international maritime order, especially its emphasis on UNCLOS, reflects a stance against unilateral actions that threaten regional stability. This stance, while rooted in India's principled foreign policy approach, also indirectly challenges China's expansive territorial claims and activities in the South China Sea and reflects India's positioning of itself as a responsible stakeholder committed to regional stability and security. India's nuanced approach in the South China Sea, therefore, is emblematic of its broader strategy aiming to safeguard its interests while contributing to a collective effort to maintain peace, stability, and respect for international law in the Indo-Pacific region.



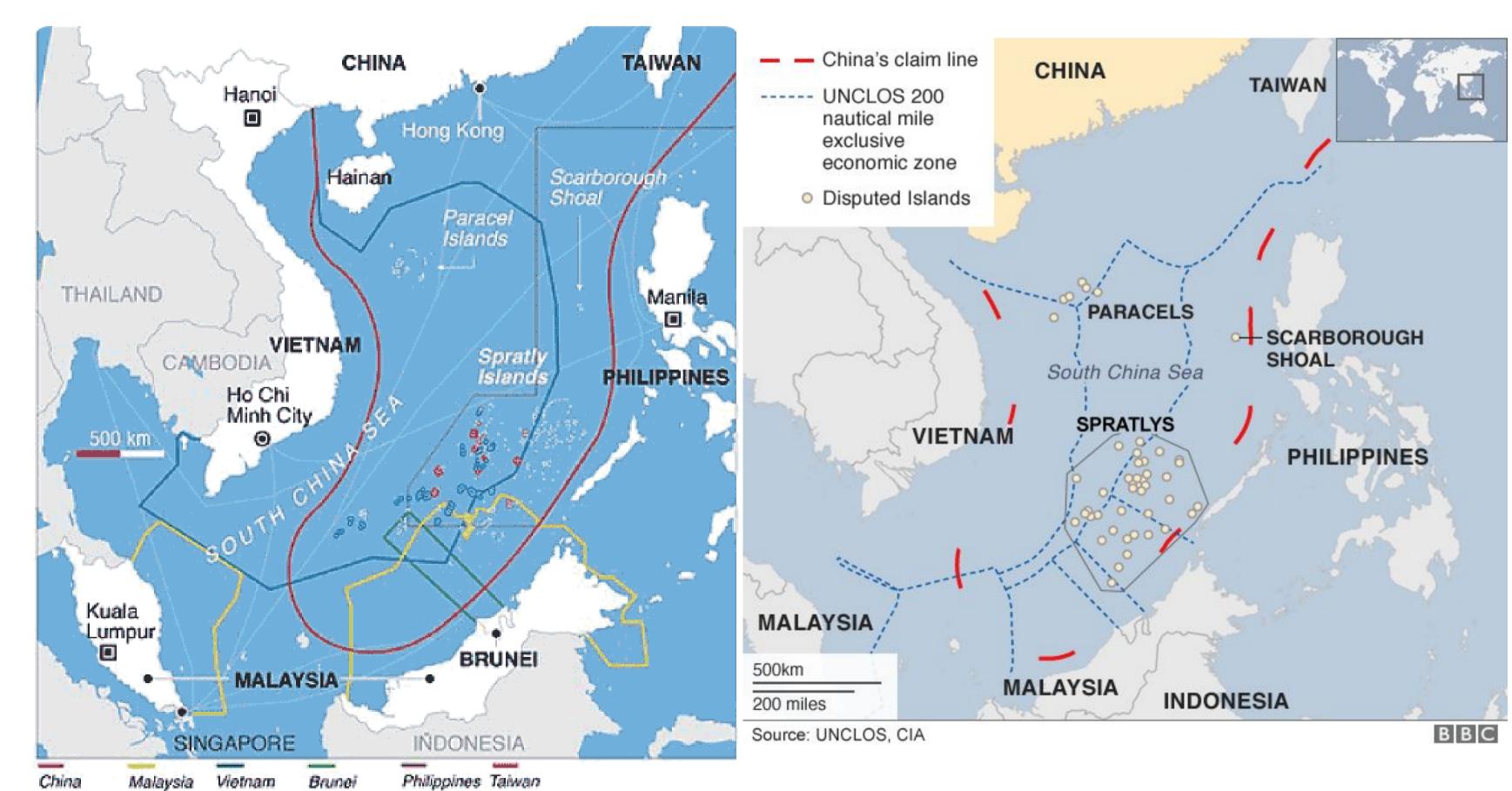


## India in South china

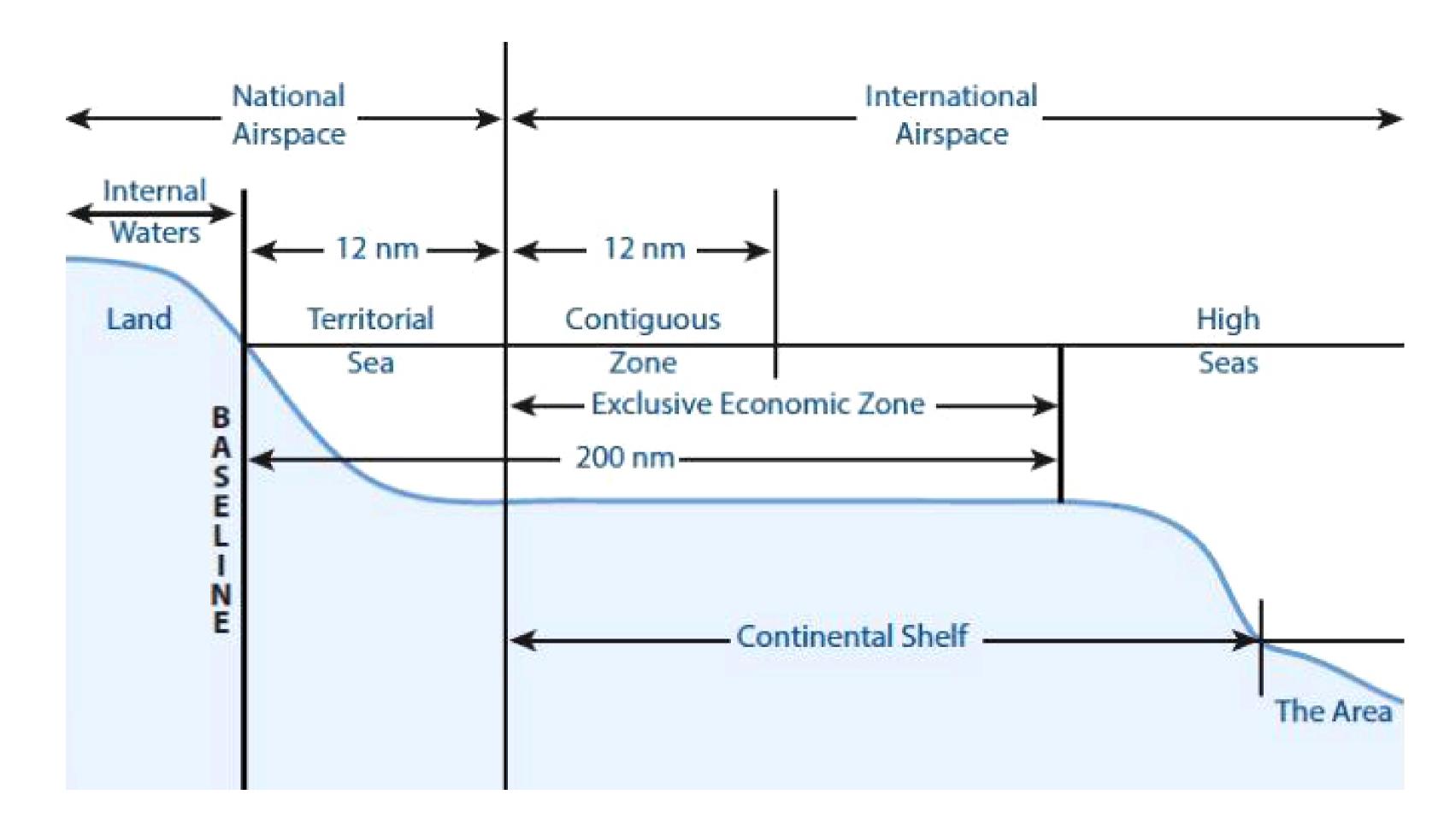


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### Why have private investments dropped?

What is private Gross Fixed Capital Formation? When did private investments pick up in India? Will strong consumption spending increase private sector confidence? How do government policies affect private capital formation?

EXPLAINER

### **Prashanth Perumal**

### The story so far:

he failure of private investment, as measured by private Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) at current prices, to pick up pace has been one of the major issues plaguing the Indian economy. Private investment witnessed a steady decline since 2011-12 and the government has been hoping that large Indian corporations would step in and ramp up investment. In fact, in 2019, the Centre slashed corporate taxes from 30% to 22% hoping that the move would encourage private investment.

### What is GFCF and why does it matter? GFCF refers to the growth in the size of

fixed capital in an economy. Fixed capital refers to things such as buildings and machinery, for instance, which require investment to be created. So private GFCF can serve as a rough indicator of how much the private sector in an economy is willing to invest. Overall GFCF also includes capital formation as a result of investment by the government.

GFCF matters because fixed capital, by helping workers produce a greater amount of goods and services each year, helps to boost economic growth and improve living standards. In other words, fixed capital is what largely determines the overall output of an economy and hence what consumers can actually purchase in the market. Developed economies such as the U.S. possess more fixed capital per capita than developing economies such as India.

### What is the trend seen in private investment in India?

In India, private investment began to pick up significantly mostly after the economic reforms of the late-1980s and the early-1990s that improved private sector



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confidence. From independence to economic liberalisation, private investment largely remained either slightly below or above 10% of the GDP. Public investment as a percentage of GDP, on the other hand, steadily rose over the decades from less than 3% of GDP in 1950-51 to overtake private investment as a percentage of GDP in the early 1980s. It, however, began to drop post-liberalisation with private investment taking on the leading role in fixed capital formation.

The growth in private investment lasted until the global financial crisis of 2007-08. It rose from around 10% of GDP in the 1980s to around 27% in 2007-08. From 2011-12 onwards, however, private investment began to drop and hit a low of 19.6% of the GDP in 2020-21.

Why has private investment fallen? Many economists in India have blamed low private consumption expenditure as the primary reason behind the failure of private investment to pick up over the last decade, and particularly since the onset of the pandemic. Their reasoning is that strong consumption spending is required to give businesses the confidence that there will be sufficient demand for their output once they decide to invest in building fixed capital. Hence these economists have advised that the government should put more money into the hands of the people to boost consumption expenditure, and thus help kick start private investment.

Historically, however, an increase in private consumption has not led to a rise in private investment in India. In fact, a drop in consumption spending has boosted private investment rather than dampening it. Private final consumption expenditure dropped steadily from nearly

90% of GDP in 1950-51 to hit a low of 54.7% of GDP in 2010-11, which was a year prior to when private investment hit a peak and began its long decline. And since 2011-12, private consumption has risen while private investment has witnessed a worrying fall as a percentage of GDP. The inverse relationship between consumption and investment is likely because the money that is allocated towards savings and investment, either by the government or by private businesses, comes at the cost of lower consumption expenditure. Other economists believe that structural problems may likely be the core reason behind the significant fall in private investment as a percentage of GDP over the last decade or so. They have cited unfavourable government policy and policy uncertainty as major issues affecting private investment. The rise in private investment in the 1990s and the 2000s correlated with the economic reforms programme started in 1991. The drop in private investment, on the other hand, correlated with the slowdown in the pace of reforms in the last two decades under both the UPA (second term) and NDA governments. Further, policy uncertainty can discourage private investment as investors expect stability to carry out risky long-term projects.

What about low private investment? The biggest cost of low private investment would be slower economic growth as a larger fixed capital base is crucial to boost economic output. The push by the government to increase government investment is also seen as a negative by some who believe that it crowds out

private investment.

Others, however, think that government investment compensates for the lack of private investment. It should be noted, however, that private investors are considered to be better allocators of capital than public officials, helping avoid wasteful spending. Further, taxes imposed to raise money for public spending can be a significant drag on the economy.

### THE GIST

-

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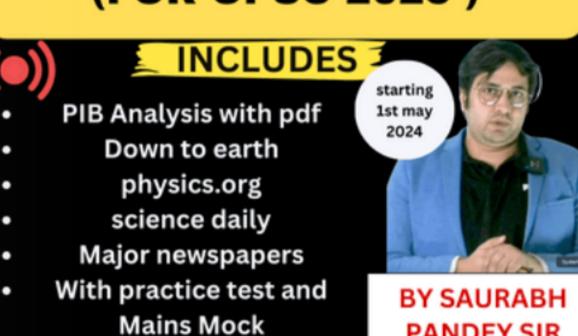
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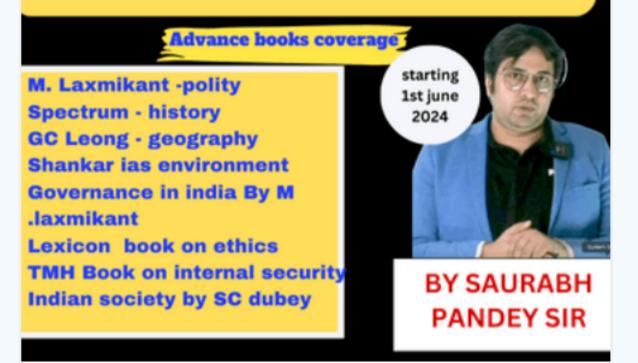
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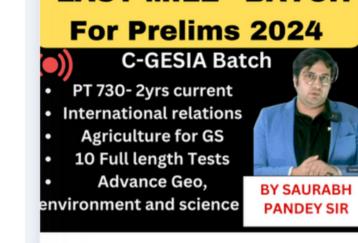


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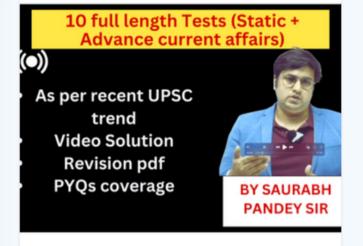
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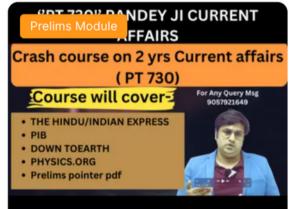
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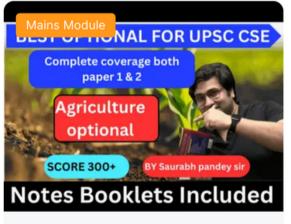
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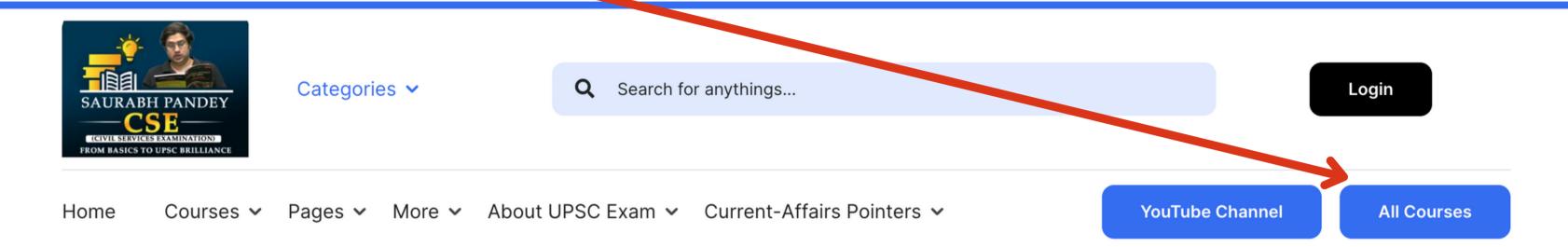








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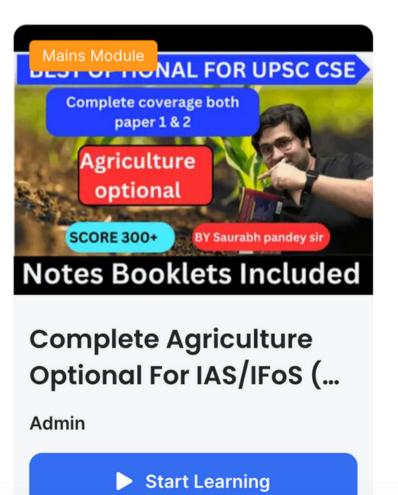
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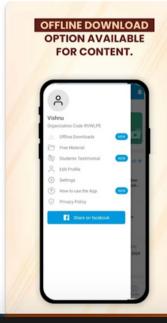
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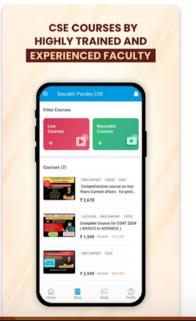
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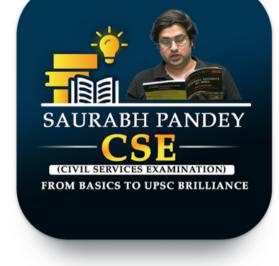
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## Target Mains 2024/25-



Q" Maritime dimension is an important pillar of india's Act east policy approach " Elaborate

प्रश्न" समुद्री आयाम भारत की एक्ट ईस्ट नीति दृष्टिकोण का एक महत्वपूर्ण स्तंभ है" विस्तार से बताएं

send your answer - Saurabh pandey upsc telegram channel

