



VAJIRAM & RAVI
Institute for IAS Examination

The Analyst

CURRENT AFFAIRS Handout

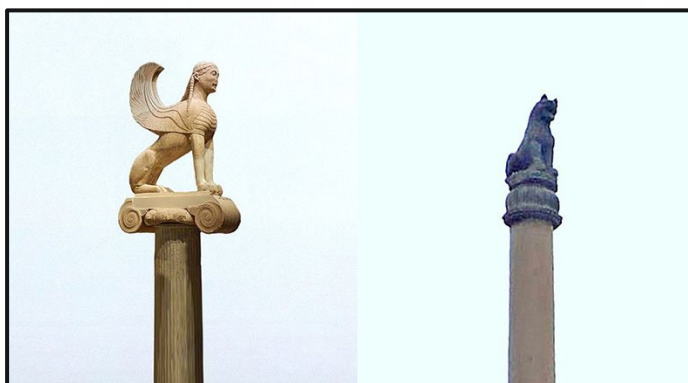
29th December 2025



CONTEXT: Article by Ambassador of Iran, commemorating 75 years of Diplomatic relations between two ancient civilisations.

India- Iran Relations : Historical Ties

- Divisions of Aryan Tribe
- Etymological Basis
- Rig Veda and Avesta commonality - Soma/homa; Varuna/Ahura Mazda; Manu
- Persian Invasion - Darius 516 BC , 20/28 , Xerxes deployed Indians against Greeks
- Cultural Influence - Kharosthi & Pillar Architecture
- Linguistic heritage - Persian - Mirza Abdul Qadir Bedil Dehlavi
- Shared Demography



Approximate Percentage of Muslim Population that is Shia	Approximate Percentage of World Shia Population
Guadeloupe	<1
Guam	<1
Guatemala	<1
Guinea	<1
Guinea Bissau	<1
Guyana	<1
Haiti	<1
Honduras	<1
Hong Kong	--
Hungary	<1
Iceland	<1
India	10 - 15
Indonesia	<1
Iran	90 - 95
Iraq	65 - 70
Ireland	<1



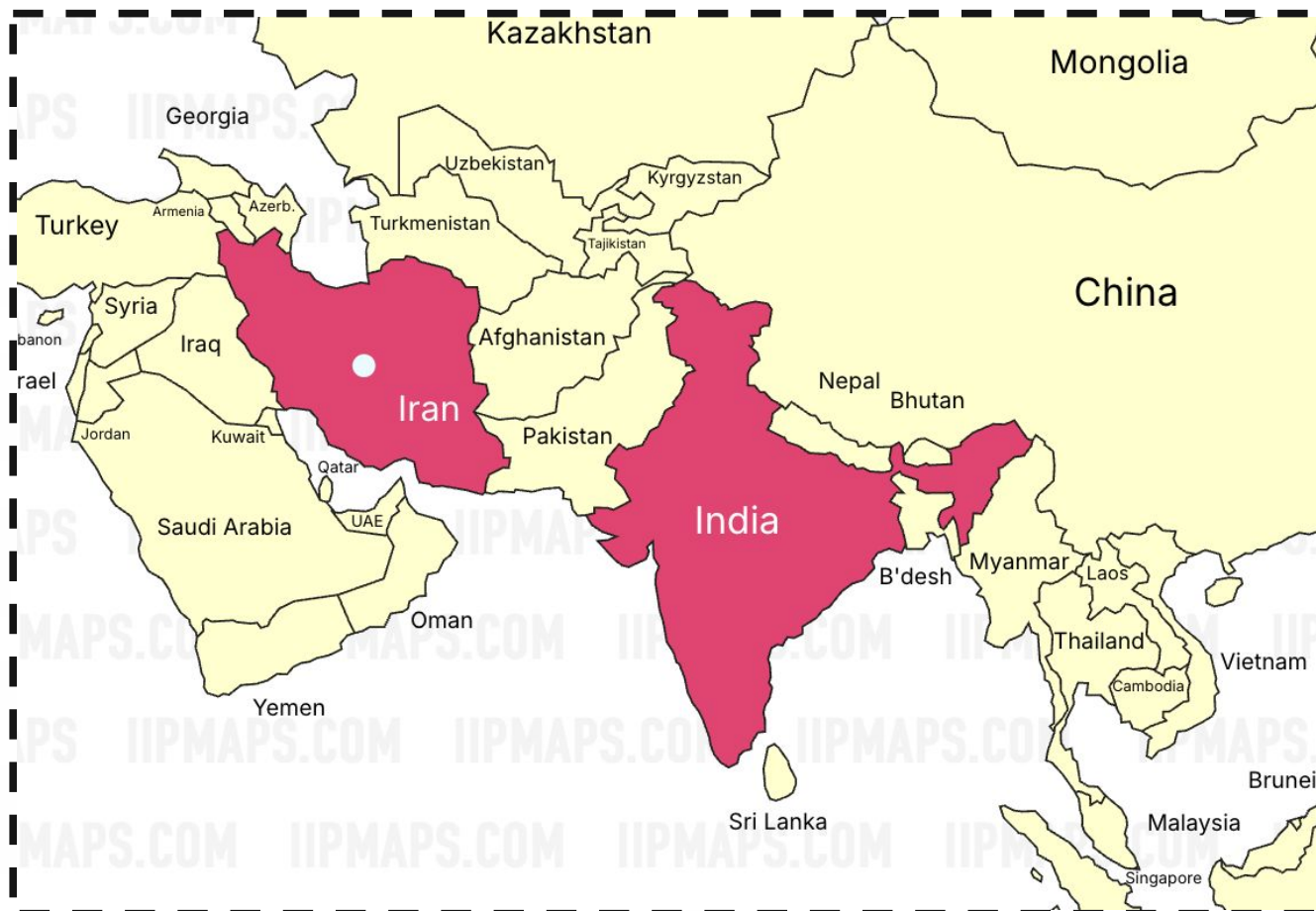
India - Iran Relations

CONTEXT: Article by Ambassador of Iran, commemorating 75 years of Diplomatic relations between two ancient civilisations.

Civilizational Connect, Contemporary Context : Significance

- **Political and Diplomatic Relations**
- **Reflection of India's Multi Alignment** strategy not Bloc Politics
- **Strategic Significance** - once 3rd largest crude oil supplier, South Pars gas field, Fertilizers
- **Economic Ties** : 2.33 bn\$ 2022-23; Rupee-Rial
- **Security Cooperation** - Northern Alliance, RATS, Drug Trafficking, Sunni Extremism (ISIS-K)
- **Multilateral Cooperation**

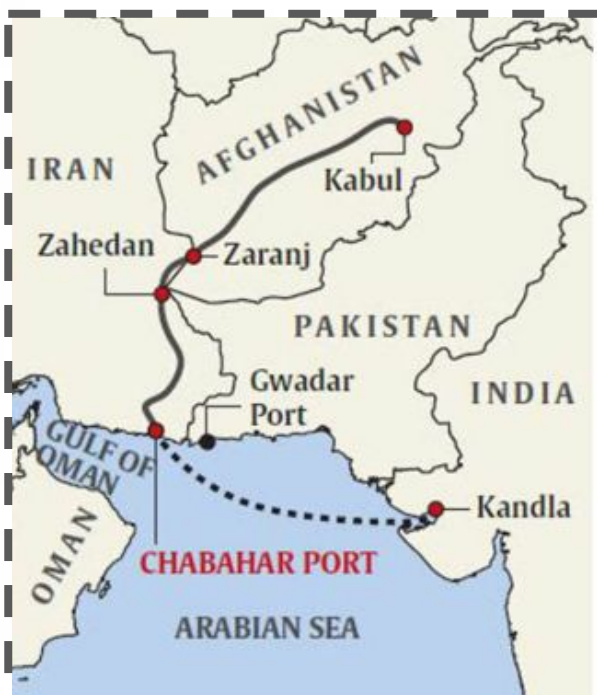
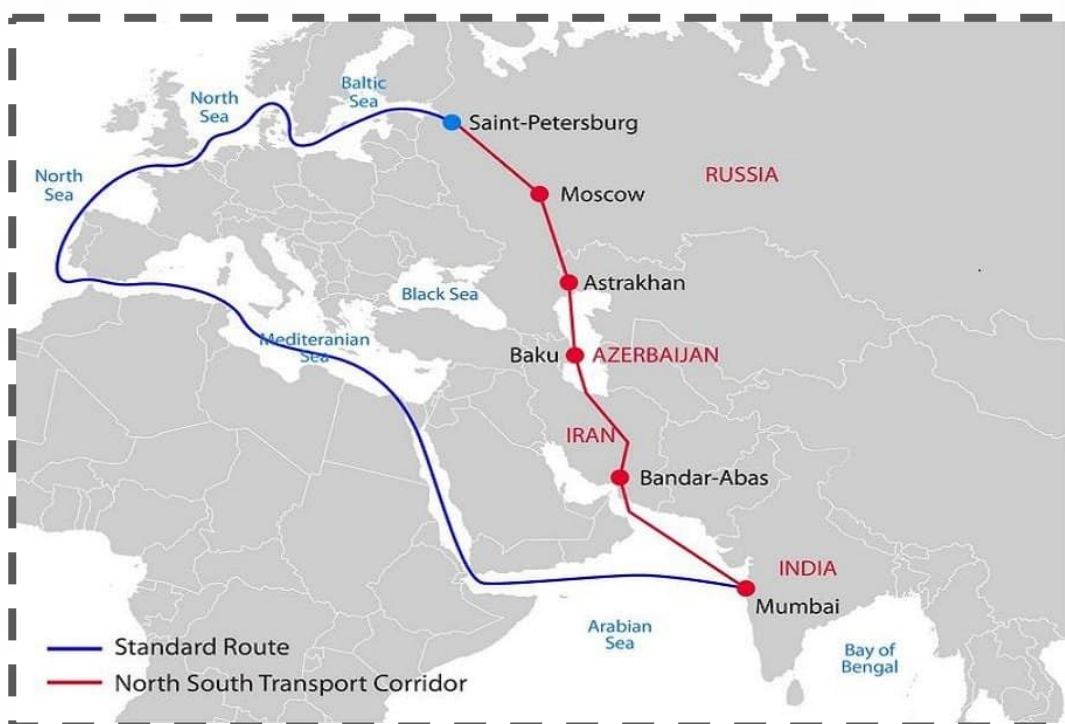
Despite this gradual broadening, more than 60% of the crude oil imported in 2011-12 came from seven West Asian nations: Saudi Arabia (About 17% of the overall basket), Iran (11.3%), Iraq (10.5%), Kuwait (7%), United Arab Emirates (9%), Oman (3.4%) and Qatar (3.3%).



CONTEXT: Article by Ambassador of Iran, commemorating 75 years of Diplomatic relations between two ancient civilisations.

Civilizational Connect, Contemporary Context : Significance

- **Connectivity Cooperation** - Mou 2015 - Shahid Beheshti Port at Chabahar
- **INSTC** - 40% shorter ,30% more cost efficient



India – Iran Relations

CONTEXT: Article by Ambassador of Iran, commemorating 75 years of Diplomatic relations between two ancient civilisations.

India- Iran Relations : Key challenges

- Strategic Balancing in a Polarised West Asian Geopolitical Environment vs GCC, Israel
- Growing Strategic Convergence between Iran, China, and Pakistan
- Erosion of the Energy-Centric Economic Foundation of Bilateral Ties
- Slow Progress in Chabahar Port Operationalisation and Connectivity
- Exit from the Chabahar–Zahedan Rail Corridor Financing Role
- Limited Trade Expansion
- Divergent Approaches to Afghanistan and Regional Security Architecture
- Diplomatic Sensitivities Arising from Domestic and Religious Issues



Subsequently, its share in India's crude basket dropped to 7.1% in fiscal year 2012-13, 5.8% in 2013-14, 5.7% 2014-15 and 6.2% in 2015-16. slashed its Iranian purchases by 91.8% in 2019-20.



India – Iran Relations



CONTEXT: Article by Ambassador of Iran, commemorating 75 years of Diplomatic relations between two ancient civilisations.

Trade figures in USD billion for the past few years are as follows-

Year	India's Exports to Iran	India's Imports from Iran	Total Trade	Growth Rate (%)
2019-20	3.38	1.39	4.77	
2020-21	1.77	0.33	2.10	-55.9
2021-22	1.45	0.46	1.91	-9
2022-23	1.66	0.67	2.33	21.6
April 2023- July 2023	0.45	0.21	0.66	-23.32

India– Iran Relations : Way forward

- Strengthen Flexible payment mechanism - managing external vulnerability
- Diversification of Ties - Technology based cooperation
- Adopt a “Sanctions-Aware but Not Sanctions-Driven” Policy - issue based Engagement.
- Prepare for a Post-Sanctions Energy Re-Engagement
- Transactional to Innovation Driven Relation
- Utilise role as Anchor of stability

Mains Practise Question

Question : Explain the historical significance of India–Iran relations and assess the nature of present-day cooperation between the two countries, while analysing the key challenges that limit the full realisation of this partnership.

(15 Marks, 250 words)



When Courts step in : Necessary Justice or Judicial Overreach?



CONTEXT: Delhi HC's recent intervention in matters of taxation on Air purifiers is veering closely on Legislative Domain.

Back to Basics : Judicial Review vs Judicial Activism vs Judicial Overreach

- **Judicial Review** : the power of courts to examine the **constitutionality of legislative and executive actions** and invalidate them if they violate constitutional provisions.
- **Judicial Activism** - judicial philosophy which motivates judges to depart from traditional precedents in favour of progressive and social policies.
- **Judicial overreach** occurs when courts **transgress into domains reserved for the legislature or executive**, particularly policy formulation and administration.

Article 13 in Constitution of India

13. Laws inconsistent with or in derogation of the fundamental rights

- (1) All laws in force in the territory of India immediately before the commencement of this Constitution, in so far as they are inconsistent with the provisions of this Part, shall, to the extent of such inconsistency, be void.

Judicial Review vs Judicial Activism

Aspect	Judicial Review	Judicial Activism
Nature	Reactive power to check constitutionality	Proactive judicial intervention
Scope	Limited to legality and constitutionality	Broader, can address policy, rights, and welfare
Initiation	Usually on petition by affected party	Can be suo motu or public interest litigation
Objective	Ensure laws and actions follow the Constitution	Protect rights, fill gaps, promote justice
Example	Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala (1973) – Supreme Court struck down constitutional amendments that violated the Basic Structure.	Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan (1997) – Supreme Court laid down guidelines to prevent sexual harassment at workplace through proactive intervention (PIL)



When Courts step in : Necessary Justice or Judicial Overreach?



CONTEXT: Delhi HC's recent intervention in matters of taxation on Air purifiers is veering closely on Legislative Domain.

Facts of the matter

- Air Pollution reduction by Plea on reducing gst on Air purifiers
- Power of taxation - 265
- GST Council : 279 A
- Periodic Erosion - Mohit Minerals Case - GST Council decision not Binding

Last week, intervening in a PIL seeking GST reduction on air purifiers from 18 per cent to 5 per cent, the Delhi High Court asked why “GST at 5 per cent cannot be provided” for air purifiers and HEPA filters by categorising them as “medical devices”. In fact, it went a step further, and reportedly urged the GST Council to meet at the earliest, perhaps virtually, to examine the issue. There can be no denying that the issue of air pollution is of urgent public importance, and that governments, at both the Centre and the states, need to be nudged to take action. But, as the Centre has also pointed out, by entertaining the petition, the court risks short circuiting the due legislative process. Decisions regarding the GST rates and slabs are taken by the GST Council — a constitutional body that comprises the Centre and states. The Council’s decisions require a three-fourth majority. So, for the GST rates on air purifiers to be lowered, neither the Centre alone, nor only the states — and certainly not the courts — can decide.

Article 265 in Constitution of India

265. Taxes not to be imposed save by authority of law

No tax shall be levied or collected except by authority of law.



CONTEXT: Delhi HC's recent intervention in matters of taxation on Air purifiers is veering closely on Legislative Domain.

Need of Judicial Activism

JUDICIAL ACTIVISM



Protection of
Fundamental Rights



Filling Legislative Gaps



Ensures Government
Accountability



Environmental
Protection and
Governance Reforms

- **Legislative Vacuum**
- **Conflict of interest**
- **Living document amidst Legislative hesitation**
- **Clogged Grievance Redressal Mechanism viz. Executive and Legislature**
- **Progressive Upholding of Individual Rights**
- **Innovation in democracy - Basic structure**

Examples of Judicial Activism:

- **Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala (1973):**
 - In this case, the **Supreme Court** held that the power of the government to amend the constitution was not unlimited and that there were certain "basic features" of the constitution that could not be amended. This decision established the concept of the "basic structure".
- **Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India (1978):** In this case, the Supreme Court held that the **right to personal liberty** guaranteed by the constitution included the right to travel abroad.
 - The court also held that the government could not restrict this right without following due process of law.
- **Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan (1997):** In this case, the Supreme Court issued guidelines for the prevention of sexual harassment at the workplace in the absence of any specific legislation on the issue.
- **National Legal Services Authority v. Union of India (2014):** In this case, the Supreme Court recognized the right to self-identify one's gender and held that **transgender persons** have the right to be treated as their self-identified gender rather than their assigned gender at birth.



When Courts step in : Necessary Justice or Judicial Overreach?



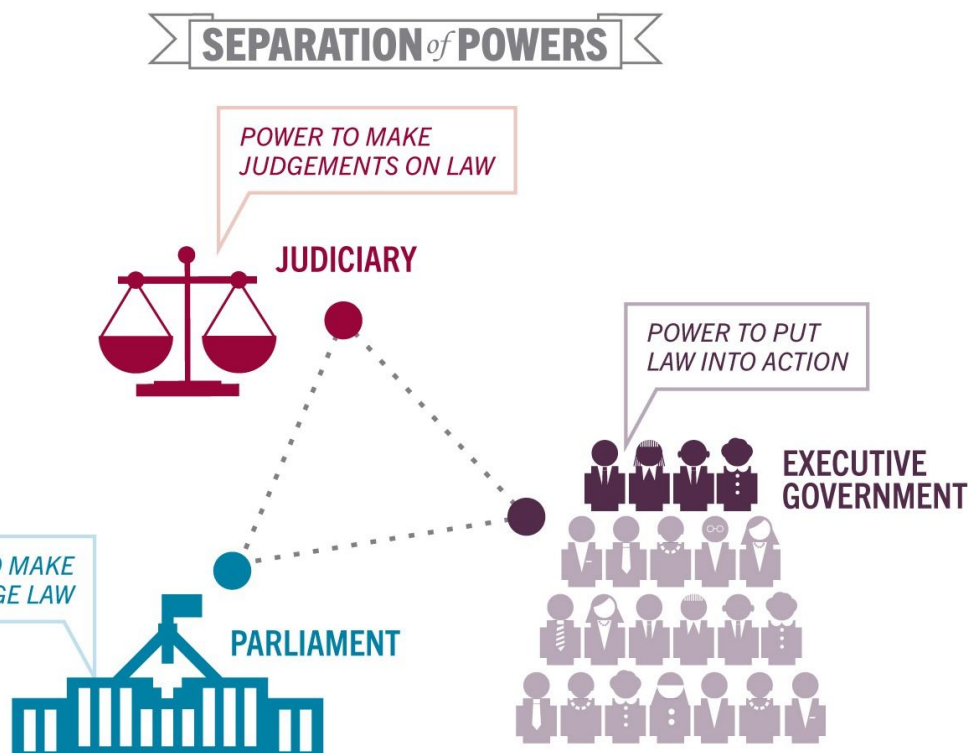
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Issues with judicial Overreach

- Violates Separation of Power doctrine - Montesquieu
- Polycentric issues leads to administrative confusions
- Tyranny Of the unelected
- Docket Explosion : Delays
- Policy Instability impacting EoDB
- Undoing Progressive changes
- Undoing Progressive changes
- Case study 12 Feb 2018 Circular of RBI

Article 50, Constitution of India 1950

The State shall take steps to separate the judiciary from the executive in the public services of the State.



When Courts step in : Necessary Justice or Judicial Overreach?



CONTEXT: Delhi HC's recent intervention in matters of taxation on Air purifiers is veering closely on Legislative Domain.

Examples of Judicial Overreach:

- **Shyam Narayan Chouksey v. Union of India (2016):** The Supreme Court, in this case, made it mandatory that all the cinema halls in India shall play before the feature film starts.
 - It was argued that this direction goes beyond the **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act 1971**, which says that no film, drama or show of any sort can have the National Anthem as part of the show.
- **Liquor ban (2017):** The Supreme Court, ruling on a **Public Interest Litigation(PIL)** which was about road safety in 2017 had **banned the sale of liquor** at retail outlets, as also in hotels, restaurants, and bars, that are within 500m of any national or state highway.
 - These orders were felt to be against the spirit of the separation of powers given by our constitution. It was argued that it was an administrative matter where the decision rested with state governments.
- **Arun Gopal v. Union of India (2017):** The Supreme Court had fixed **timings for setting off fireworks** during Diwali and had banned the use of fireworks that are not environmentally friendly, despite there being no legal basis for these restrictions.
- **M.C. Mehta v. Union of India (2018):** The court declared invalid Rule 115(21) of the Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989, by mandating that no BS-4 vehicles can be sold after March 30, 2020, and **only BS-6 vehicles** can be sold after that date.

Way Forward : Judicial Restraint

- **Respect separation of powers** by limiting judicial intervention to clear cases of constitutional violation, illegality, or arbitrariness- eg. In **D.M., Aravali Golf Club v. Chander Hass (2007)**
- **Apply the principle of institutional competence and Social Awareness** - EG. Supriyo Chakraborty Case 2023
- **Recalibrate Public Interest Litigation** to prevent frivolous cases and restore its focus on access to justice for the marginalized.



When Courts step in : Necessary Justice or Judicial Overreach?



CONTEXT: Delhi HC's recent intervention in matters of taxation on Air purifiers is veering closely on Legislative Domain.

- **Prefer broad constitutional guidance** over detailed operational directions to avoid judicial micro-management of governance.
- **Implement NCRWC Suggestion Strengthen judicial self-restraint** through adherence to precedent, consistency in judgments, and avoidance of judicial populism.

Mains Practise Question

Question :

Critically examine the need for judicial activism in India and discuss the challenges posed by judicial overreach in a constitutional democracy. (15 Marks, 250 words)



SYLLABUS : G.S. I: Distribution of natural Resources across World

Newspaper : The Hindu **Page No :** 7

While the state-run oil company Petroleos de Venezuela, S.A. (PDVSA) owns and operates five refineries in Venezuela, it also suffers from years of under investment, mismanagement, and a lack of technical expertise. Specifically, following a failed coup attempt in April 2002 and the subsequent general strike/oil lockout in December 2002-February 2003, the then President, Hugo Chavez, was forced to replace PDVSA's management. Critics say this led to a bureaucratisation of the company.

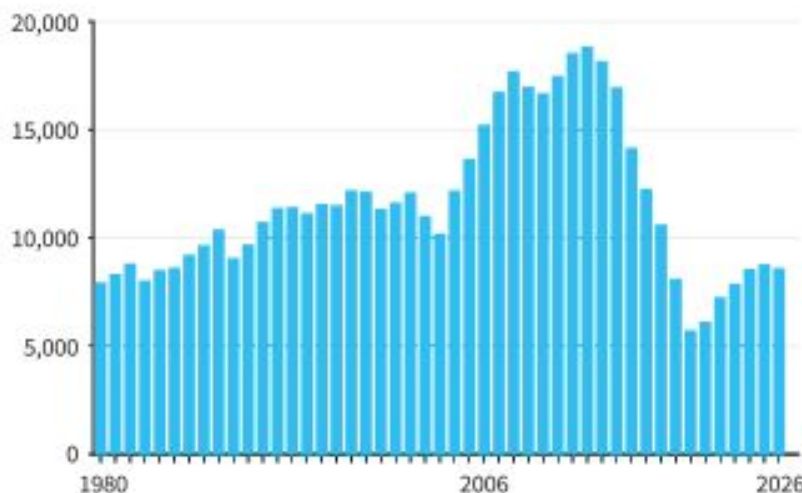
In 2024, the country produced 9,21,000 barrels of crude oil per day, at least 56% lower than its production in the 1980s. In the 1970s, Venezuela benefited when oil prices soared due to the Yom Kippur War, and its per capita income became the highest in Latin America. It was then a largely unequal country. However, the figure has only dwindled since 2014 following

- **Venezuela** has the **largest proven reserves of crude oil** in the world at 303 billion barrels (2023)
- **Yet, it ranks much lower in the production and refining of oil.**
- Most of its resources are **extra-heavy crude oil**, whose extraction and processing require specialised technology and refineries.

Chart 2:

Venezuela's GDP per capita since the 1980s. The figure is in PPP terms and current international \$

GDP per capita has now almost become similar to what it was three decades ago



SYLLABUS : G.S. 1: Distribution of natural Resources across World

Newspaper : The Hindu **Page No :** 7

Table 1: Venezuela's rank among crude oil reserves (2023), crude oil production (2024) and refinery throughput (2024). B/D: barrels/day

Rank	Country	Reserves (in billion barrels)
1	Venezuela	303
2	Saudi Arabia	267
3	Iran	209
Rank	Country	Production (1,000 B/D)
1	U.S.	13,208
2	Russia	9,193
3	Saudi Arabia	8,955
..		
16	Venezuela	921
Rank	Country	Refinery throughput (1,000 B/D)
1	U.S.	16,623
2	China	14,250
3	Russia	5,347
..		
35	Venezuela	335

Venezuela has the largest proven reserves of crude oil in the world. Yet it ranks much lower when it comes to production and refining

Shadow of Monroe Doctrine: Haunts US-Venezuela Ties, Trump is Angry

Published Date: 25-12-2025 | 1:45 pm



Gopal Misra

[About the Author »](#)



- The US National Security Strategy, released recently, described Trump's vision as one of "flexible realism" and argued that the U.S. should revive the 19th-century Monroe Doctrine, which declared the Western Hemisphere to be Washington's zone of influence.
- **The Monroe Doctrine**, articulated by U.S. President **James Monroe** in 1823, is a significant U.S. foreign policy statement aimed at preventing European intervention in the Americas.
- Primarily the work of Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, the Monroe Doctrine forbade European interference in the American hemisphere but also asserted U.S. neutrality in regard to future European conflicts



Venezuela's Resource Curse

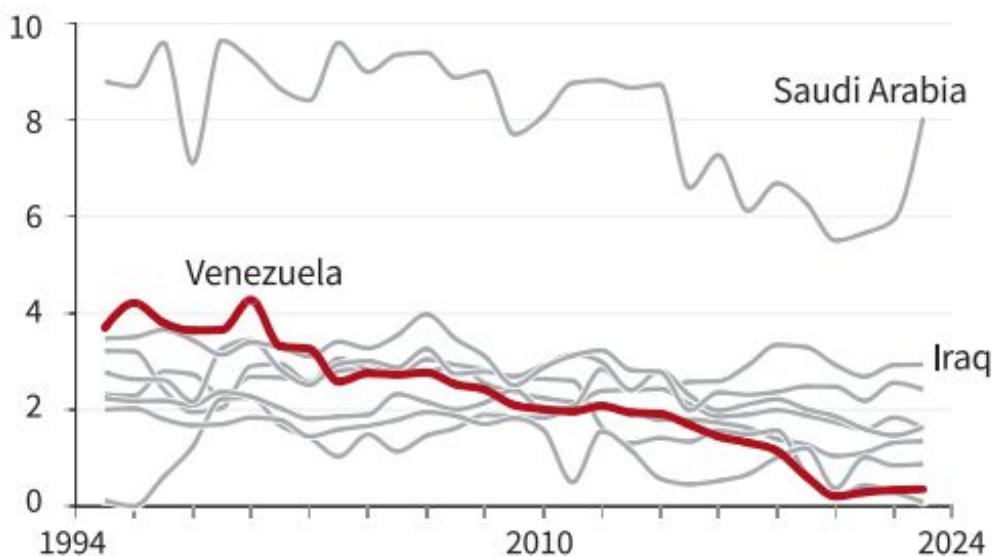


SYLLABUS : G.S. 1: Distribution of natural Resources across World

Newspaper : The Hindu **Page No :** 7

- **Issues of Capital** – Lack of global cooperation and **US Sanction**
- **Impact** – Venezuela's GDP per capita in recent years has become almost similar to what it was three decades ago. **No other country's GDP per capita has slid to this extent in this period.**
- **Declining share** – Venezuela formed over 4% of the global oil exports in the 1990s, second only to Saudi Arabia's share. However, this dwindled to around 0.35% in 2023
- **Other issues –**
 - a. **Highest General debt as percentage of GDP amongst all OPEC member.**
 - b. **Lack of diversification of Export**

Chart 5: Select OPEC countries' share in global exports of crude oil over time. Figures in %



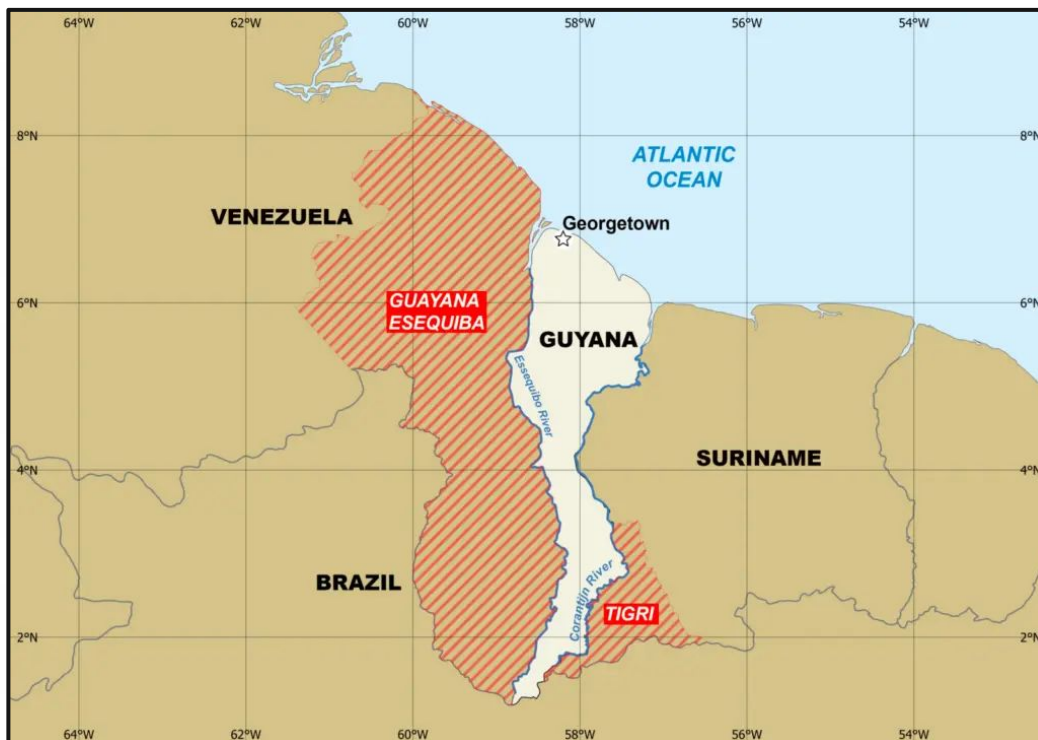
Venezuela's Resource Curse

SYLLABUS : G.S. I: Distribution of natural Resources across World

Newspaper : The Hindu **Page No :** 7

About Venezuela

- Location: It is located on the northern coast of **South America**.
- Bordering Countries: It is bounded by **Guyana** to the east, **Brazil** to the south, and **Colombia** to the southwest and west.
- Maritime boundaries: It shares a border with the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean to the north.
- Capital: **Caracas**
- **Venezuela - Guyana Conflict** The bone of contention lies in the densely forested **Essequibo region of Guyana**, which Venezuela claims as its territory.
- Venezuela's claim along the **Essequibo River** extends for 1,034 kilometers before reaching Brazilian territory.
- At stake is approximately 142,795 square kilometers that is currently administered by Guyana.



SYLLABUS : G.S. 3: Indigenisation of Technology

Newspaper : The Hindu **Page No :** 6

India stands at a pivotal moment in its economic and technological trajectory. With its vast human capital and a rapidly expanding economy, it harbours ambitions of becoming a global power. Yet, this grand vision is significantly hampered by a deep-seated and chronic insufficiency in research and development (R&D).

The scale in numbers

The scale of India's R&D deficit is best illustrated by a few stark numbers. Despite having 17.5% of the world's brains (since it is home to 17.5% of the world's population), India produces only a meagre 3% of the world's research output. This disparity highlights a fundamental failure in leveraging its massive demographic dividend to generate high-value research.

The situation is not much better on intellectual property creation. Recent reports from the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) suggest a mixed picture: dramatic growth from a very low base, but overall an unimpressive performance. In 2023, India was ranked sixth

India's Research Landscape

- India has **17.5% of the world's population** but produces only **~3% of global research output**.
- This reveals a **weak conversion of demographic advantage into high-value R&D**.
- India ranked **6th globally in patent filings (2023)** with **64,480 applications**.
- Patent filings grew by **15.7%**, among the fastest in the top 20 countries.
- Despite growth, India's **global patent share is only ~1.8%**.
- India ranks **47th in resident patent filings per million population**, indicating low innovation intensity.



SYLLABUS : G.S. 3: Indigenisation of Technology

Newspaper : The Hindu **Page No :** 6

Challenges in Research

- India's global ambitions are limited by **low investment in research and innovation - India 0.6% vs 5.4% Israel**
- Research funding is **government-dominated**, with weak private sector participation . **Huawei vs India - CNY 164.7 billion (approximately \$23.4 billion)**
- Poor linkage between **universities, research institutions, and industry**
- Research output often lacks **commercial and societal application**
- Quantity of graduates high, but **quality of research exposure remains limited**
- Brain drain reflects **better opportunities and infrastructure abroad**
- **WIPO's GII 2025: India Ranked 38th ; Switzerland Topped.**

Government Steps taken

- **National Research Foundation (NRF)**
Proposed outlay of **1 Lakh crore over 5 years** to strengthen university research, fund peer-reviewed projects, and deepen academia-industry collaboration.
- **Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)**
Establishes **Atal Tinkering Labs (10,000+ schools)** and **Atal Incubation Centres** to foster innovation culture from school to startup level.
- **Startup India & DPIIT Recognition**
Enables **tax exemptions, easier compliance, and access to government funding**, supporting **100,000+ recognised startups**, many in deep-tech domains.
- **Digital India & Data Governance Initiatives**
Builds **digital public infrastructure (DPI)**, open data platforms, and high-speed connectivity to support data-driven research and AI innovation.
- **Make in India (R&D Focus)**



DPDP Rules and Health care sector



SYLLABUS : GS 2: Government Interventions

Newspaper : The Indian Express **Page No :** 8

THE RECENTLY notified Digital Personal Data Protection Rules, 2025, have brought into effect parts of the DPDP Act, 2023, and have started the timer for the other provisions of the Act to kick in. This is, arguably, the most significant privacy reform since the IT Act, 2000. The DPDP Act, along with the Rules, aims to foster respect for individual rights and data accountability.

It will impact the healthcare sector in a big way. As with most ambitious reforms, the devil lurks in the details. The Act elevates every clinic, hospital, lab and telemedicine app to the category of “data fiduciary”. It does not differentiate between a large hospital, a small clinic, a large corporation, or a start-up. Any personal data in digital form, or in non-digital form and digitised later, is subject to the Act (unless it falls in the limited exceptions in Section 3(c) of the Act). Patients become “data principals” with rights to access, correct and even erase their medical information. On paper, this is empowering. In practice, Indian healthcare now finds itself navigating a maze where the law is clear about duties, but vague about the boundaries.

Anyone who has signed a hospital consent form knows that it is quite often an exercise in blind faith rather than informed choice. The DPDP Act forces transparency into such a system. Yet, consider the emergency ward. Patients don’t arrive seeking privacy statements — they arrive seeking survival. Thankfully, the Act acknowledges this reality by permitting processing without consent during medical emergencies and public health crises. But ambiguities exist — post-operative ICU care, chronic illnesses, follow-up regimens — remain untouched by the Act. Consent architecture may need to be redesigned to include these grey zones.

The Act, with the laudable objective of minimising data collection and retention, gives a wide berth to the individual to withdraw consent or to seek deletion of data. While this



DPDP Rules and Health care sector



SYLLABUS : GS 2: Government Interventions

Newspaper : The Indian Express **Page No :** 8

Impact of DPDP Rules on Healthcare:

- **Formally recognises health data as sensitive personal data**, making hospitals, labs, insurers, and digital health platforms legally responsible for protecting patient information.
- **collect health data only for clear and specific purposes**
- **Patient consent becomes central**, meaning hospitals and health apps must **clearly inform** individuals about how their data is used, stored, and shared.
- **Digital health systems** such as electronic health records, health IDs, telemedicine platforms, and insurance databases will face **stricter compliance and security requirements**.
- **Data breaches** in the healthcare sector can now attract **penalties**,
- **Increase compliance costs and** operational complexity for smaller hospitals and startups

DPDP Act 2023, Provisions:

Key Definitions

- *Personal Data*: Any data relating to an identifiable individual
- *Data Processing*: Automated or partly automated operations on digital personal data (collection, storage, use, sharing)

Core Provisions

- **Consent-based processing** with clear purpose limitation
- **Rights of Data Principal**: access information, seek correction/erasure, grievance redressal
- **Duties of Data Principal**: provide accurate data, avoid false complaints
- **Obligations of Data Fiduciary**: ensure reasonable safeguards, prevent data breaches



DPDP Rules and Health care sector



SYLLABUS : GS 2: Government Interventions

Newspaper : The Indian Express **Page No :** 8

Institutional Framework

- **Data Protection Board of India**
 - Monitors compliance and enforces penalties
 - Penalties up to ₹250 crore for data breaches
 - Powers to inquire, direct remedial action

Exemptions & Issues

- Exemptions for State in interests of security, public order, and sovereignty
- Allows ***non-consensual processing*** in certain cases
- **Concerns:** broad exemptions, weak checks on State, limited clarity on cross-border data transfer



SYLLABUS : GS 2: E Governance

Newspaper : The Indian express Page No : 05

TWO-DAY CHIEF SECRETARIES' CONFERENCE

Replicate PRAGATI in states, set up data strategy units: PM

Asks top state govt bureaucrats to set up deregulation cells in their offices

Damini Nath

New Delhi, December 28

UNDERLINING THE importance of technology in governance, Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked Chief Secretaries to replicate the Centre's PRAGATI platform, which helps in monitoring key infrastructure projects and schemes, at the state-level, it is learnt. The PM was addressing the fifth two-day Chief Secretaries Conference that concluded here on Sunday.

The Prime Minister also asked the Chief Secretaries to set up data strategy units and deregulation cells in their offices, it is learnt. The PM chaired the conference on Saturday and Sunday.

In a statement on Sunday, the Prime Minister's Office said the conference included discussions on "human capital for Viksit Bharat".

The Prime Minister said India had boarded the "reform express", primarily driven by



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the Fifth National Conference of Chief Secretaries in New Delhi on Sunday. ANI

the strength of the youth, and the government was focused on empowering the key demographic, it said. He said the "Made in India" label should become a symbol of excellence and global competitiveness. He said the Union and State governments should together identify 100 products for domestic manufacturing in order to reduce imports. He asked states to prioritise the soon-to-be-launched National Manufacturing Mission.

On Saturday, he said in a post on X that he had "insightful discussions on various issues relating to governance and reforms during the National Conference of Chief Secretaries being held in Delhi".

In his address to the Chief Secretaries on Sunday evening, it is learnt that he asked them to establish a PRAGATI-like system, referring to the platform that was launched in 2015 by the Union government, for the state governments. The portal, which stands for Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation, brings together data management, geo-spatial mapping and video-conferencing for the Prime Minister's Office, Union Ministries and State governments to monitor implementation of critical infrastructure projects.

The PM is also learnt to have asked the Chief Secretaries to set up data strategy units in their offices in order to better

utilise data for governance. He also asked them to set up deregulation cells in their offices to monitor the progress of deregulation efforts in states.

The PM noted that he has observed District Collectors spend a lot of time in work-related video-conferences and suggested that Chief Secretaries should streamline the process, restricting the time for "VCs" to two hours a week so that the collectors can spend more time in the field, a source said.

Ahead of the conference, the PMO had said in a statement last week that the agenda would include "intensive deliberations aimed at finalising a common development agenda".

"It will lay the ground for collaborative action to move beyond viewing India's population merely as a demographic dividend and instead position citizens as human capital by developing concrete strategies to strengthen education systems, advance skilling initiatives and generate future-ready employment opportunities across the country," it had said.

The conference included sessions on deregulation in states, technology in governance and Atmanirbhar Bharat or a self-reliant India. Senior officials from the PMO, Union government and NITI Aayog also attended the conference.

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SYLLABUS : GS 2: E Governance

Newspaper : The Indian express Page No : 05

Salient Features of PRAGATI:

Monitors and reviews key programmes and projects by the Government of India.

Addresses issues flagged by State Governments, ensuring their concerns are heard.

Enhances transparency and improves accountability in project implementation.

Built-in feature to maintain decisions for follow-up and continuous review.

Facilitates real-time collaboration and exchange among various stakeholders.

Enables the PMO's office to resolve implementation issues and expedite project completion.

Tackles bottlenecks in projects caused by interdependencies across government bodies.

Operates with a three-tier IT-based system involving the PMO, GoI Secretaries, and State Chief Secretaries.



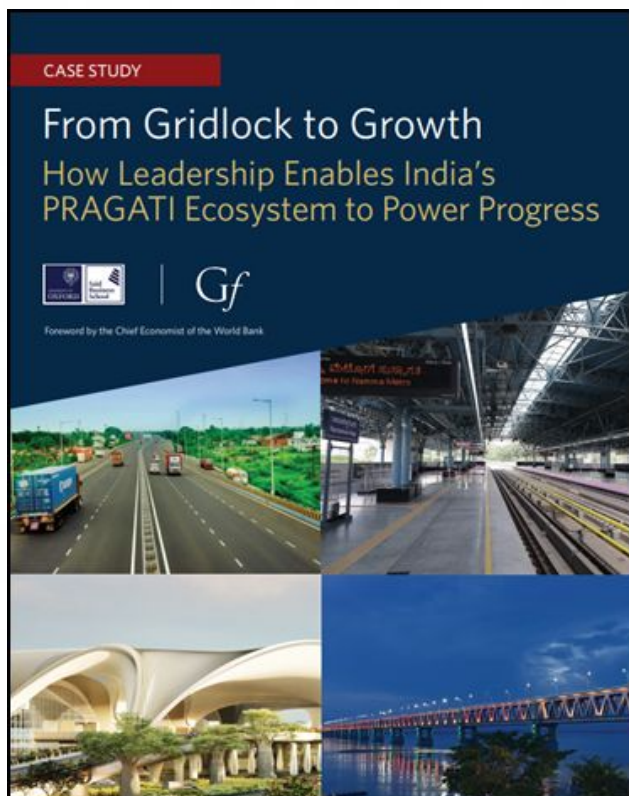
SYLLABUS : GS 2: E Governance

Newspaper : The Indian express Page No : 05

Impact Pragati : Oxford Study

- By June 2023, the platform had reviewed 340 projects valued at ₹17.05 lakh crore (\$205 billion), significantly expediting their implementation.
- Development of 50,000 kilometres of National Highways
- Doubling the country's airports, reflecting a decade of unparalleled progress.
- These 340 'wicked' projects, often considered the most daunting in terms of execution.
- By
 - a. directly reviewing progress,
 - b. setting deadlines, and
 - c. breaking bureaucratic bottlenecks, his leadership has revived numerous stalled initiatives and created a **culture of accountability**.

For instance, the **Pakri-Barwadih Coal Mine** in Jharkhand, delayed since 2006, saw swift progress after PM Modi's intervention in 2016, leading to its completion in 2019.



SYLLABUS : GS 3: Internal Security

Newspaper : The Indian express **Page No :** 6

President undertakes submarine sortie onboard *INS Vaghsheer*

Press Trust of India

New Delhi, December 28

PRESIDENT DROUPADI Murmu on Sunday undertook a sortie onboard Indian Navy's indigenously-built frontline submarine *INS Vaghsheer* on the Western seaboard.

Murmu is the second President to undertake a submarine sortie. In February 2006, APJ Abdul Kalam experienced a submarine sortie onboard *INS Sindhu Rakshak*.

Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi accompanied the President, who is also the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, during the sortie in the *Kalvari* class submarine from the Karwar naval base in Karnataka, officials said.

INS Vaghsheer, the sixth and final submarine of the P75 Scor-



President Murmu during the submarine sortie, Sunday. PTI

pene project, was commissioned into the Navy in January.

The President, donning a naval uniform, waved at naval personnel before entering the submarine. She also interacted with the crew of *INS Vaghsheer* and lauded their dedication, while describing the indigenous submarine as a shining example of the Indian Navy's

professional excellence and combat preparedness.

"President Droupadi Murmu undertook a dived sortie on the Western Seaboard onboard *INS Vaghsheer*," the President's Secretariat said. It said the President was briefed on the role of the submarine arm in India's maritime strategy, and the operational capabilities as well as contributions in safeguarding national maritime interests.

Murmu, while interacting with the crew of *INS Vaghsheer*, commended their dedication, commitment and spirit of selfless service, it added.

"She said that this indigenous submarine is a shining example of the Indian Navy's professional excellence, combat preparedness and unwavering commitment to national security," the secretariat said on social media.



SYLLABUS : GS 3: Internal Security

Newspaper : The Indian express **Page No :** 6

About INS Vagsheer :

- It is the **sixth submarine** of the first batch of six Kalvari-class submarines for the Indian Navy.
- Launched under **Project 75**
- It is named after the sand fish, a deadly deep-sea predator of the Indian Ocean.
- It was launched in April 2022 and underwent extensive trials, testing its endurance, stealth features, and combat efficiency.
- Other five submarines of Kalvari class are **Kalvari, Khanderi, Karanj, Vela, Vagir.**
- **Features:**
 - a. It boasts **advanced stealth technologies**, including reduced radiated noise levels and sophisticated **hydrodynamic design**, making it one of the quietest submarines in the world.
 - b. Its combat capabilities include the use of precision-guided weapons such as **torpedoes and tube-launched anti-ship missiles**, further solidifying its role in both offensive and defensive naval operations.
 - c. It is designed for a wide range of missions, from **anti-submarine warfare to intelligence gathering**, and is fully capable of operating in diverse maritime environments.
 - d. It consists of indigenously developed systems like the air-conditioning plant, internal communication network, and the Ku-Band SATCOM system.



Q 1. Which of the following countries shares their land border with Iran?

1. Armenia
2. Azerbaijan
3. Turkmenistan
4. Tajikistan
5. Pakistan

Select the correct answer using the codes given below.

- a) 1, 2, 3 and 5
- b) 1, 2, 4 and 5
- c) 2, 3, and 4
- d) 1, 3, 4 and 5

Answer: a

Q2. With reference to Venezuela, consider the following statements:

1. Venezuela is located on the northern coast of South America and borders the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean.
2. Venezuela shares land borders with Guyana, Brazil, and Argentina.
3. The territorial dispute between Venezuela and Guyana relates to the Essequibo region.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: b

Q3. With reference to the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2025, consider the following statements:

1. The GI is published by the United Nations Development Programme.
2. India secured the 38th position in the Global Innovation Index 2025.
3. Switzerland emerged as the top-ranked country in the Global Innovation Index 2025.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 1 and 2 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: c

Q4. With reference to the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, consider the following statements:

1. Personal data under the Act means any data relating to an identifiable individual.
2. The Act provides for consent-based processing of personal data with purpose limitation.
3. The Act completely prohibits the processing of personal data without the explicit consent of the Data Principal under all circumstances.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 1 and 3 only
- c) 2 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: a

Q5. With reference to INS Vagsheer, consider the following statements:

1. INS Vagsheer is the sixth submarine of the Kalvari-class under Project 75.
2. INS Vagsheer is named after a sand fish, a deep-sea predator of the Indian Ocean.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- a) 1 only
- b) 2 only
- c) Both 1 and 2
- d) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: c





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