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THE HINDU ANALYSIS

10 JUNE 2026

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1 Congress's RS Nomination Rejected Amid Chaos in M.P. — The Rajya Sabha Election Explained

GS 2 · POLITY

THE HINDU, PG 1

WHY IN NEWS

A dramatic day in Bhopal ended with the nomination of **Meenakshi Natarajan**, the Congress candidate for one of **three Rajya Sabha seats** from Madhya Pradesh, being **rejected during scrutiny**. Top Congress leaders, led by general secretary **K.C. Venugopal**, staged a sit-in outside the **Election Commission of India** office in New Delhi; protests were also held outside the State Election Commission's office in Bhopal.

WHAT HAPPENED

- ◆ The rejection came when a batch of Congress MLAs was **en route to Bengaluru** amid fears of **cross-voting** in the poll.
- ◆ Ms. Natarajan accused the BJP of having moved “**from vote theft to seat theft**” — alleging it fielded a third candidate despite not having the adequate number of members.
- ◆ The nomination was rejected by **Assembly Secretary Arvind Sharma**, the **Returning Officer** for the election, based on an objection raised by the BJP candidate for the third seat, **Mahesh Kewat**, and State party general secretary Rahul Kothari — who alleged she had “**hidden**” **details of a case** against her in Hyderabad.

THE RAJYA SABHA — CORE CONCEPTS

- ◆ The Rajya Sabha (Upper House) is a **permanent legislative body** whose members are elected for a **six-year term**. Unlike the Lok Sabha, it **cannot be dissolved**.
- ◆ To maintain administrative continuity, a rolling system is used — **one-third of members retire every second year**, and vacancies are filled through **biennial elections**.
- ◆ **Indirect Electorate:** Rajya Sabha MPs are elected indirectly — by the **MLAs of the respective States**, not by direct public voting.
- ◆ **Voting System:** Proportional representation by means of a **single transferable vote**.
- ◆ **Open Ballot System:** To prevent cross-voting, horse-trading or invalidation, an MLA must **show the marked ballot to their party's authorised agent** before dropping it in the box. Failing to display the ballot to the agent renders the **vote invalid**.

★ FUNCTIONS & SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RAJYA SABHA

- **Passing non-Money Bills:** a critical stage in the legislative pipeline — a bill must be approved by the Upper House to become law.
- **Legislative scrutiny & debates:** when the ruling coalition holds a dominant presence in the Rajya Sabha, passage of non-money bills becomes smooth.
- **Bargaining power of regional parties:** because seats can be won by narrow margins and results altered by cross-voting, regional blocks gain significant **bargaining power** during tight legislative votes, altering the overall balance of parliamentary strength.

✦ PRELIMS POINTER

Remember: Rajya Sabha elections use **proportional representation by single transferable vote** with an **open ballot** (Article 80; elected by elected MLAs). The Rajya Sabha is a **permanent house** — one-third retires every 2 years; a member's term is **6 years**. The **Returning Officer** can reject a nomination during **scrutiny** on valid objections.

2

Securing India Against the Threat of a ‘Mythocalypse’

GS 3 · INTERNAL SECURITY / SCI-TECH

THE HINDU, PG 8

WHY IN NEWS

Anthropic’s new frontier AI model, **Claude Mythos**, can reportedly **outperform human experts at certain cybersecurity tasks**. With Mythos-class access expanding to more countries including India, the article asks: what happens if a **non-state bad actor** takes control of India’s financial systems, examination systems or power plants?

WHY MYTHOS-CLASS AI MATTERS

- ◆ The U.S. is about **six months ahead** of the rest of the world in AI; within the U.S., Silicon Valley is six months ahead of New York, and frontier AI companies six months ahead of everyone else.
- ◆ Such models can discover vulnerabilities that **cannot always be explained, understood, or even known to exist** by human operators — effectively **“zero-day” capability at scale**.
- ◆ These offensive capabilities were **not deliberately engineered**; they emerged as a byproduct of advanced reasoning, long-horizon planning and autonomous execution.

INDIA’S PREPAREDNESS GAP

- ◆ India has built a distinctive world-class digital front end through the **India Stack — UPI, Aadhaar and the Account Aggregator framework** — but critical back-end systems in public sector units and banks still run on **fragmented legacy technology**.
- ◆ India **lacks an AI Safety Institute**: while the U.K. and the U.S. have world-class institutions to evaluate frontier AI systems, India has **no dedicated body** to test such models against Indian threat scenarios.
- ◆ The **cybersecurity workforce gap** is estimated at more than **6,00,000 professionals**; patch cycles for public sector banks are measured in **months, not hours** — a dangerous mismatch when attackers can move at **machine speed**.

★ SUGGESTED WAY FORWARD

- Pursue a **defensive AI partnership** like an AUKUS Pillar 2 — a **“Defensive AI Quad”** with the U.S., U.K. and Japan — for structured access to Mythos-class capabilities to test and protect critical infrastructure.
- In return, India contributes its **threat-modelling expertise** and the uniquely varied attack surfaces of its **digital public infrastructure** stack.

3

New and Raw — Nepal and India Must Avoid Misspeaking on Border Issues

GS 2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

THE HINDU, PG 8 (EDITORIAL)

WHY IN NEWS

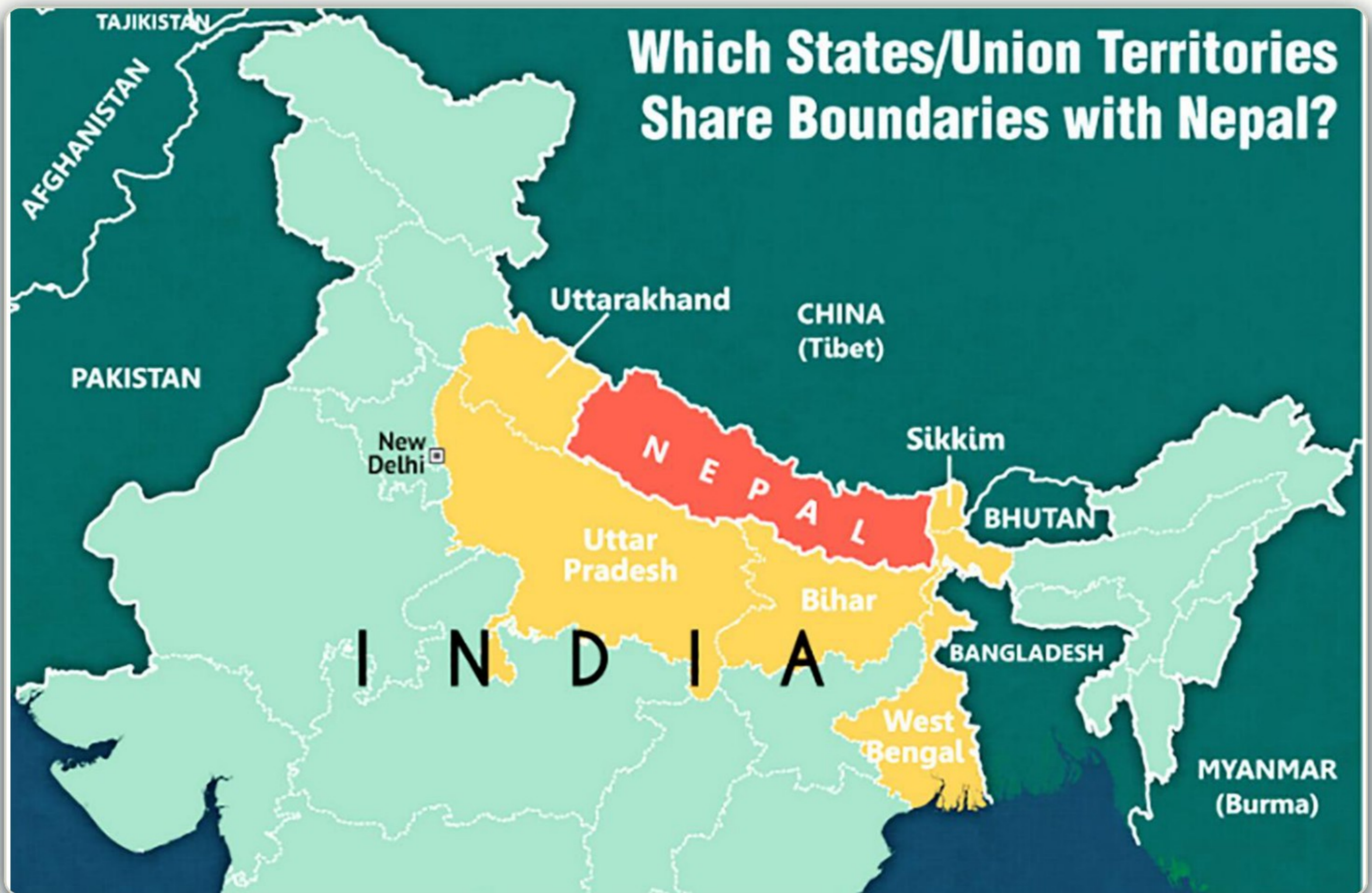
The visit of Nepal Foreign Minister **Shisir Khanal** to Delhi — following the visit of ruling party RSP's President **Rabi Lamichhane** and ahead of a proposed visit by Finance Minister **Swarnim Wagle** — signals an **intense outreach** between Delhi and Kathmandu's new leadership after PM **Balen Shah** took power following the **GenZ protests**.

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- ◆ The meetings came just after PM Shah's address to his Parliament where he **accused India of occupying parts of Nepal**, claimed Nepal controls parts of Indian territory, and — much to New Delhi's outrage — said Nepal was **in touch with the U.K. and China** on the issue.
- ◆ Mr. Khanal sought to **diffuse tensions**, saying the Nepal government was committed to turning a page in Nepali politics and casting aside **"old baggage"** with India; the MEA rejected any role for a **"third party"** — particularly China.
- ◆ Territorial issues over **Limpiyadhura and Lipulekh** will heat up again this summer as India sends more groups through border areas Kathmandu claims, for the **Kailash Mansarovar Yatra** to Tibet.

WHY BOTH SIDES MUST TREAD CAREFULLY

- ◆ The India–Nepal agenda is **too broad and too deep** to be derailed: border management, renegotiating **water-sharing agreements**, infrastructure, trade development projects and **energy sharing**.
- ◆ Any indication that Kathmandu is cavalier about India's position, or that Delhi seeks to interfere in the new government's working, could revive the **cycles of mistrust** seen since the **Nepal Constitution friction and trade blockade of 2015**.
- ◆ With youth protests dislodging entrenched power structures in the **Maldives, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal**, this is an opportunity for India to **rework its discourse and partnership framework** with smaller yet important neighbours in South Asia.



States/UTs sharing boundaries with Nepal — Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Sikkim.

★ PRELIMS POINTERS — INDIA-NEPAL BORDER

- **Five Indian States** border Nepal: **Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Sikkim.**
- **Limpiadhura–Lipulekh–Kalapani:** the disputed trijunction area in Uttarakhand near the India–Nepal–China (Tibet) border; the **Lipulekh Pass** is on the route of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra.
- The 2015 reference points: **Nepal Constitution friction** and the **trade blockade** — the low point that still shapes mutual mistrust.

4

India's Road Through Myanmar is One of Engagement

GS 2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

THE HINDU, PG 8

WHY IN NEWS

Myanmar's President **U Min Aung Hlaing** made his first visit to India (**May 30 – June 3, 2026**) in his capacity as President. Landing in **Bodh Gaya**, he visited the **Mahabodhi Temple** — one of Buddhism's holiest sites and a UNESCO World Heritage Site — before talks with PM Modi and President Murmu, underscoring **shared civilisational ties**.

WHY ENGAGEMENT, AND WHY NOW

- ◆ The world's democracies have largely turned away from Naypyidaw since the **February 2021 coup** that ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's elected government; Western nations imposed **sanctions** and sought to isolate the military regime.
- ◆ Foreign Secretary **Vikram Misri**: India's policy is "**not intended to be a commentary on the internal political arrangements**" in Myanmar — New Delhi believes **engagement is the best way forward**.
- ◆ This is **realpolitik disguised as pragmatism**: Myanmar is India's **gateway to Southeast Asia** and a cornerstone of its **Act East and Neighbourhood First** policies.
- ◆ Sharing a **1,643-km border with four northeastern States**, Myanmar's instability poses a direct threat to India's security interests.
- ◆ **The China factor**: Beijing has aggressively cultivated Naypyidaw since the coup — infrastructure financing, arms supplies, diplomatic cover. Ceding Myanmar's strategic space entirely to China would be a **self-inflicted wound** in India's own backyard.

THE INFRASTRUCTURE STAKES — TWO CORRIDORS

- ◆ **Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project**: connects **Kolkata to Sittwe by sea**, follows the **Kaladan River** inland to **Paletwa**, then links by road to **Zorinpui in Mizoram**. Sea and river components are operational (first cargo reached Sittwe in **May 2023**), but the critical **109-km Paletwa–Zorinpui road** through flood-prone Chin State remains incomplete; full operationalisation targeted for **2027**.
- ◆ **India–Myanmar–Thailand Trilateral Highway**: linking **Moreh (Manipur) to Mae Sot (Thailand)** over roughly **1,360 km**, with planned extensions to Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam — could transform India's landlocked northeast into a **gateway to Southeast Asia**. Was to be finished by 2019; it still is not.
- ◆ **Why the delay**: Myanmar's internal conflict — **armed groups control large stretches** along both corridors, making construction difficult and unpredictable.



Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project: Kolkata → Sittwe Port (539 km sea route) → Paletwa → Zorinpui → Lawngtlai → Aizawl.

BEYOND INFRASTRUCTURE — SUMMIT OUTCOMES

- ◆ **Trade:** bilateral trade stood at **\$1.95 billion in 2025-26**; both sides agreed to increase it through a **rupee-kyat settlement mechanism**, with discussions on **critical minerals and rare-earth cooperation**.
- ◆ **Security:** Mr. Aung Hlaing reiterated Myanmar’s assurance that its territory would **not be used against India’s interests** — significant given Indian insurgent groups and **cybercrime networks** in Myanmar’s border regions. More than **2,400 Indian nationals rescued from scam centres** through bilateral cooperation over the past 18 months.
- ◆ **Education:** India announced an increase in **Mekong-Ganga ICCR scholarships** for Myanmar students from **36 to 100 annually from 2026**.
- ◆ **The larger reckoning:** receiving Mr. Aung Hlaing signals acceptance of Myanmar’s evolving political reality — not endorsement of the military-backed government, but recognition that meaningful engagement requires **working with those currently in power**. The calculus is rooted in geography, security and the recognition that **disengagement rarely produces better outcomes**.

✦ MAINS QUESTION (15 MARKS, 250 WORDS)

Q. India–Myanmar relations are central to India’s Act East Policy and its strategic interests in the Indo-Pacific region. Examine the significance of Myanmar for India in terms of connectivity, security, and regional cooperation. Also discuss the challenges affecting bilateral relations and suggest measures to strengthen the partnership.

प्रश्न: भारत–म्यांमार संबंध भारत की ‘एक्ट ईस्ट नीति’ तथा हिंद-प्रशांत क्षेत्र में उसके रणनीतिक हितों के लिए अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण हैं। संपर्क (Connectivity), सुरक्षा तथा क्षेत्रीय सहयोग के संदर्भ में भारत के लिए म्यांमार के महत्व का परीक्षण कीजिए। साथ ही, द्विपक्षीय संबंधों को प्रभावित करने वाली चुनौतियों का विश्लेषण करते हुए संबंधों को सुदृढ़ बनाने के उपाय सुझाइए। (15 अंक, 250 शब्द)

5 One in Every 3 Faculty Posts Vacant in Top Technical Institutes

GS 2 · EDUCATION / GOVERNANCE

THE HINDU, PG 9 (DATA POINT)

WHY IN NEWS

While the Education Ministry said recruitments were happening across Centrally Funded Technical Institutes, **RTI data** obtained by *The Hindu* show **35.2% of sanctioned faculty posts remain vacant** — roughly **one in every three**.

KEY FINDINGS OF THE RTI DATA

- ◆ Over **15 lakh students** appeared for the JEE this year; roughly **80 students compete for every undergraduate seat** in the 23 IITs — raising questions on whether students who surmount such odds receive the quality of education they deserve.
- ◆ Only **79 of the 122 Centrally Funded Technical Institutes (CFTIs)** responded: 20 IITs, 19 NITs, 18 IIMs, 17 IIITs and 5 IISERs.
- ◆ **7,132 of the 20,279 sanctioned faculty positions** were vacant in these 79 institutions — **35.2%**. **Sixteen institutions** had more than **50%** of posts vacant; another **14** exceeded **40%**.
- ◆ Of the 20 IITs, **nine reported vacancies exceeding 35%**; **IIT Kharagpur** exceeded 50% — 824 of its sanctioned 1,600 teaching posts (the highest among IITs) were vacant.
- ◆ In 19 NITs, **27.9% of 5,432 posts** were unfilled; **NIT Andhra Pradesh** had the highest share (68%); vacancies exceeded 40% in NIT Srinagar, NIT Sikkim and NIT Tiruchirappalli.
- ◆ In 18 IIMs, **32.3% of 1,741 sanctioned posts** were vacant; **IIM Mumbai** had 59% of posts vacant. IIITs reported the **highest percentage** of vacancies — **53.5%** (665 of 1,225 posts in 17 IIITs).

★ GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

- MoE in Parliament: sanctioning of faculty posts for NITs and IITs is a **dynamic process**, subject to periodic review per institutional requirements and a faculty-to-student ratio of **1:12 for NITs and 1:10 for IITs**.
- MoE to Lok Sabha: “occurrence of vacancies and filling thereof is a **continuous process**”; all CHEIs were exhorted to fill vacancies (Sept 2022, Oct 2025) under a “**Mission Mode**” recruitment drive — **17,878 faculty positions filled** across all CHEIs as of January 24, 2026.

6

China's Role in the International Order

GS 2 · INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

THE HINDU, PG 8 (OPINION — CHINESE CONSUL GENERAL)

WHY IN NEWS

In the past six months (**December 2025 to May 2026**), the top leaders of **all the other permanent members of the UNSC** have visited China — Macron (Dec 2025), Starmer (Jan 2026), Trump (May 13-15) and Putin (May 19-20) — engagements described as “extremely rare” and underlining China’s emergence as a **hub of global diplomacy**.

KEY ARGUMENTS MADE (CHINA'S PERSPECTIVE)

- ◆ President Xi and President Trump have agreed on building a “**constructive relationship of strategic stability**” — positive stability with cooperation as the mainstay; healthy stability with competition within proper limits; constant stability with manageable differences; lasting stability with expectable peace.
- ◆ **On Taiwan:** the **One China principle** should be unequivocally supported; Xi called Taiwan **the most important issue in China–U.S. relations** — “Taiwan independence” and cross-Strait peace are “as irreconcilable as fire and water”.
- ◆ **On Russia:** 2026 marks the **30th anniversary** of the China-Russia strategic partnership of coordination and the **25th anniversary** of the Treaty of Good-Neighborliness — guided by **non-alliance, non-confrontation, and not targeting any third party**.
- ◆ **On the UN:** all five permanent members shoulder responsibility to maintain world peace, uphold the **post-WWII world order**, and make global governance more just and equitable.
- ◆ **On India:** worries that China would squeeze India’s room in the international arena are “ill-grounded” — both are large economies with **strategic autonomy** that should focus on national development, seek common understanding and shelve differences.

✦ ANALYTICAL NOTE FOR MAINS

This is an **official Chinese perspective** (by the Consul General of the PRC in Mumbai) — useful as a primary source on how Beijing frames its global role: **UN-centred multilateralism**, “**global partnership not bloc confrontation**”, and trade as an instrument of peace. For a balanced answer, contrast with India’s concerns — the border question, China-Pakistan ties, and trade asymmetry.

7

Zojila Tunnel — Final Breakthrough Achieved

PRELIMS · INFRASTRUCTURE / GEOGRAPHY

INDIAN EXPRESS EXPLAINED, PG 14

WHY IN NEWS

The **Zojila tunnel** connecting **Sonmarg (Kashmir)** to **Minamarg (Ladakh)** achieved its **final breakthrough on June 9, 2026**, completing more than 13 km of excavation. Union Minister **Nitin Gadkari** oversaw the final blasting from the Kargil side.

KEY FACTS

- ◆ Located at an elevation of **11,578 feet**, it provides **year-round, all-weather connectivity** across a challenging mountain pass; constructed at an estimated cost of over **₹6,800 crore**.
- ◆ Reduces travel time from **Ganderbal (J&K) to Kargil** from around **3 hours** to **slightly over 20 minutes**.
- ◆ Will be **India's longest road tunnel** and is expected to be **Asia's longest bi-directional tunnel** (single-tube, two-lane), about **14 km** long.
- ◆ Part of a wider project: **19 tunnels** at a cost of **₹25,000 crore**; the tunnel is expected to become **operational in 2028**.
- ◆ A connecting tunnel from **Z-Morh on NH1** will be built in the Zojila Ghats between Sonmarg and Kargil — the **18.475-km Z-Morh–Zojila highway** will have **two twin-tube tunnels, five bridges and two snow galleries**; the 33-km span is spread between **two UTs — J&K and Ladakh**.
- ◆ Built using the **New Austrian Tunnelling Method (NATM)** — sequential excavation, shotcrete and rock bolting, suitable for fragile Himalayan geology; lies in **Seismic Zone IV**.

ZOJILA TUNNEL
FINAL BREAKTHROUGH ACHIEVED
ALL-WEATHER CONNECTIVITY BETWEEN KASHMIR AND LADAKH

The strategically important Zojila Tunnel achieved its final breakthrough on June 9, 2026, with Union Minister Nitin Gadkari overseeing the final blasting from the Kargil side.

- Length: 13.14 km
- Altitude: 11,578 feet
- Cost: Over ₹6,800 crore
- Connects: Baltal (Kashmir) – Meenamarg/Drass (Ladakh)
- Travel time reduced: From 3 hours to 20 minutes
- Constructed by: Megha Engineering and Infrastructures Ltd
- Tunnel type: Single-tube, bi-directional, two-lane road tunnel
- Geological Zone: Seismic Zone IV

STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

- Ensures all-weather connectivity between Kashmir and Ladakh.
- Critical for movement of:
 - Troops
 - Defence equipment
 - Supplies to the Line of Actual Control (LAC)
- Reduces dependence on the snow-prone Zojila Pass.
- Enhances India's strategic preparedness in border regions.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Boosts tourism in Kargil, Drass and Sonmarg.
- Improves year-round transportation and trade.
- Enhances access to healthcare, education, and markets for local populations.
- Promotes regional economic integration of Ladakh with mainland India.

ENGINEERING FEATURES

Horseshoe-shaped tunnel

Height: 7.57 metres

Includes:

- 4 culverts
- 4 Nilgiri tunnels
- 8 cut-and-cover sections
- 220 m vertical ventilation shaft

CONSTRUCTION METHOD

The tunnel was constructed using the **New Austrian Tunnelling Method (NATM)**

KEY FEATURES OF NATM:

- Sequential excavation
- Immediate support using:
 - Shotcrete
 - Rock bolting
- Continuous geotechnical monitoring
- Suitable for fragile Himalayan geology

TRAVEL TIME REDUCED

3 HOURS VIA ZOJILA PASS → 20 MINUTES VIA ZOJILA TUNNEL

ZOJILA TUNNEL – BUILDING CONNECTIVITY, STRENGTHENING SECURITY, ENHANCING LIVES

STRATEGIC STRENGTH | ECONOMIC GROWTH | BETTER ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE | IMPROVED EDUCATION & OPPORTUNITIES | STRONGER REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Zojila Tunnel at a glance — strategic, economic and engineering significance. Source: Indian Express.

8

Philippines — Mapping & Physical Geography

PRELIMS · WORLD GEOGRAPHY

THE HINDU

WHY IN NEWS

A massive **magnitude 8.1 earthquake** struck off the coast of **Mindanao island** in the southern Philippines, leaving at least **17 people dead** and over 200 injured.



The Philippines in the Western Pacific — bounded by the South China Sea, Philippine Sea, Sulu Sea and Celebes Sea.

LOCATION & STRUCTURE

- ◆ A triangularly shaped **archipelago** in the Western Pacific Ocean, roughly **800 km off the coast of Vietnam**; capital **Manila** is on the largest northern island, **Luzon**.
- ◆ Bounded by four bodies of water: the **Philippine Sea, Celebes Sea, Sulu Sea and South China Sea**.
- ◆ Three major island groups: **Luzon (North), the Visayas (Centre), Mindanao (South)**.
- ◆ Lies on the **Pacific Ring of Fire** — highly prone to earthquakes and volcanic activity; about **50 volcanoes**, of which **10+ are active**.

★ PHYSICAL FEATURES — PRELIMS POINTERS

- **Mountains:** Luzon — the **Sierra Madre** (longest range) and **Cordillera Central** enclose the fertile **Cagayan Valley**; Mindanao — **Diuata Mountains**; **Mount Apo (2,954 m)** is the country's highest peak.
- **Rivers:** **Cagayan** drains northern Luzon; **Agno and Pampanga** irrigate the Central Plain; **Mindanao River** drains the Cotabato Valley.
- **Underground river:** the **Puerto Princesa Subterranean River** in Palawan is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** and flows directly into the sea.
- **Lakes:** **Laguna de Bay** — largest lake; **Taal Lake** — contains an active volcano within a crater lake; **Lake Lanao** — largest freshwater lake in Mindanao.
- **Typhoons:** in the western Pacific typhoon belt — about **25 tropical cyclones annually**, with Samar, Leyte and Luzon most affected.

✦ PRELIMS POINTER

Quick recall: **Luzon Strait** separates the Philippines from Taiwan; **Manila** is on Luzon; **Mount Apo** is the highest peak (on Mindanao); **Taal** = volcano within a crater lake; **Puerto Princesa** = UNESCO underground river (Palawan).

TEST YOURSELF

Prelims Practice — MCQs

1 With reference to elections to the Rajya Sabha, consider the following statements:

- 1. Members are elected by the elected members of State Legislative Assemblies through proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote.
- 2. Voting is by secret ballot to protect MLAs from party pressure.
- 3. One-third of the members of the Rajya Sabha retire every second year.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (b) Statement 2 is the trap — Rajya Sabha elections use an **open ballot**: an MLA must show the marked ballot to the party's authorised agent, failing which the vote is invalid.

2 Consider the following statements regarding the Zojila tunnel:

- 1. It connects Sonmarg in Kashmir with Minamarg in Ladakh.
- 2. On completion, it will be India's longest road tunnel and is expected to be Asia's longest bi-directional tunnel.
- 3. It has been constructed using the Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) method.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

Answer: (a) The tunnel was built using the **New Austrian Tunnelling Method (NATM)** — sequential excavation with shotcrete and rock bolting, suited to fragile Himalayan geology — not TBM.

3 The Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project connects which of the following?

- (a) Moreh (Manipur) to Mae Sot (Thailand) (b) Kolkata to Sittwe Port (Myanmar), and onward to Zorinpui (Mizoram)
(c) Guwahati to Mandalay via Tamu (d) Chennai to Yangon by sea

Answer: (b) Kolkata → Sittwe by sea (539 km) → Kaladan River to Paletwa → road to Zorinpui in Mizoram. Option (a) describes the **India–Myanmar–Thailand Trilateral Highway**.

4 With reference to the geography of the Philippines, consider the following pairs:

- 1. Mount Apo — highest peak, located on Luzon
- 2. Taal Lake — contains an active volcano within a crater lake
- 3. Puerto Princesa Subterranean River — UNESCO World Heritage Site in Palawan

How many of the above pairs are correctly matched?

- (a) Only one (b) Only two
(c) All three (d) None

Answer: (b) Mount Apo (2,954 m) is the highest peak but lies on **Mindanao**, not Luzon. Pairs 2 and 3 are correct.

5 Which of the following Indian States/UTs share a boundary with Nepal?

- 1. Uttarakhand 2. Uttar Pradesh 3. Sikkim 4. Himachal Pradesh 5. West Bengal
- (a) 1, 2, 3 and 5 only (b) 1, 2 and 4 only
(c) 2, 3, 4 and 5 only (d) 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Answer: (a) Five States border Nepal: Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Sikkim. **Himachal Pradesh does not** — a common trap.

6 As per RTI data reported by The Hindu (June 2026) on Centrally Funded Technical Institutes, consider the following statements:

- 1. Roughly one in every three sanctioned faculty posts is vacant across the responding institutions.
- 2. The prescribed faculty-to-student ratio is 1:10 for IITs and 1:12 for NITs.

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) 7,132 of 20,279 sanctioned posts (35.2%) were vacant in the 79 responding CFTIs; the MoE cited a ratio of **1:10 for IITs** and **1:12 for NITs**.