

**The Hindu Important News Articles & Editorial For UPSC CSE**

**Saturday, 21 Sep, 2024**

**Edition: International | Table of Contents**

<p>Page 03 <b>Syllabus : GS 2 : Indian Polity</b></p>	<p><b>SC asks Revanth not to interfere in 2015 cash-for-votes case</b></p>
<p>Page 05 <b>Syllabus : GS 3 : Science and Technology</b></p>	<p><b>Indigenous heavy water reactor attains criticality</b></p>
<p>Page 11 <b>Syllabus : GS 2 – Governance</b></p>	<p><b>Closed doors at affluent gated communities dent official data</b></p>
<p>Page 13 <b>Syllabus : Prelims Fact</b></p>	<p><b>Exploding devices in Lebanon trigger a nation that has been on edge for years</b></p>
<p><b>Exercise In News</b></p>	<p><b>Exercise AIKYA</b></p>
<p>Page 06 : Editorial Analysis: <b>Syllabus : GS 2 : International Relations</b></p>	<p><b>India and Pakistan need to drop hard line stances on the Indus Waters Treaty</b></p>

Page 03 : GS 2 : Indian Polity – Judiciary

The Supreme Court has raised concerns over the government's delays in appointing judges, particularly ignoring names reiterated by the Collegium.

- ➔ It questioned the prolonged vacancies in High Courts, which affect judicial efficiency and independence.
- ➔ The Court emphasised the need for timely appointments to uphold constitutional processes.

**Concerns Raised by the Supreme Court:**

- ➔ **Delay in Appointments:** The Supreme Court expressed concern over the government's inaction on Collegium-recommended names, some pending for months or years.
- ➔ **Undermining Judicial Independence:** The court stressed that ignoring reiterated names undermines the independence of the judiciary as outlined in the Second Judges case.
- ➔ **Collegium Status:** The Supreme Court clarified that the Collegium cannot be treated as a mere "search committee" whose recommendations can be selectively accepted or ignored.
- ➔ **Pending High Court Vacancies:** Multiple High Courts are functioning under Acting Chief Justices, which the court noted is affecting the administration of justice.

**Potential Harms:**

- ➔ **Judicial Delays:** Prolonged vacancies in High Courts lead to delays in case hearings, burdening an already overloaded judiciary.
- ➔ **Erosion of Trust:** Continuous government inaction on appointments may erode public trust in the judicial appointment process and weaken judicial independence.
- ➔ **Administrative Inefficiency:** The absence of permanent Chief Justices hampers the efficient functioning of High Courts.
- ➔ **Impact on Justice Delivery:** Vacancies contribute to increasing case backlogs, slowing down justice delivery across courts.
- ➔ **Diminished Collegium Authority:** Ignoring reiterated names weakens the authority of the Collegium, a body mandated for judicial appointments.

**Way Forward:**

## SC asks Revanth not to interfere in 2015 cash-for-votes case

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday directed Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy not to interfere with the functioning of the prosecution in the 2015 cash-for-votes case. It also accepted an apology tendered by Mr. Revanth for his remarks on the court's order granting bail to Bharat Rashtra Samithi leader K. Kavitha in the Delhi ex-cise policy case.

The top court passed the order while hearing a plea filed by BRS MLA Jagadish Reddy, represented by senior advocate Aryama Sundaram and advocate Rohini Musa, seeking a transfer of the case against Mr. Revanth, represented by senior advocates Mukul Rohatgi, Siddharth Luthra and advocate Sravan Kumar, to a State outside Telangana.

Mr. Sundaram had on a previous occasion contended that Mr. Revanth was directly in charge of the Anti-Corruption Bureau investigating the cash-for-votes case. The situa-

tion was so anomalous that the investigating officers had to report to him. However, the court had reasoned that the officers would still report to the Chief Minister even if the case was transferred outside the State.

On Friday, the court, to allay apprehensions, said the Chief Minister should not intervene in the functioning of the prosecution in the case. "In the event, in future, if the petitioners find that there is an interference by the respondent number two (Revanth Reddy) and if there is any foundational basis for the same, the court can always consider granting such a prayer," it said.

In 2015, Mr. Revanth, then with the TDP, was apprehended by the ACB while allegedly paying a ₹50 lakh bribe to Elvis Stephenson, a nominated MLA, for supporting TDP nominee Vem Narendar Reddy in the legislative council elections. Apart from Mr. Revanth, the ACB had arrested some others. All of them were later granted bail.

## Daily News Analysis

- **Time-Bound Process:** The government should adhere to a time-bound process for clearing or responding to Collegium recommendations, ensuring timely judicial appointments.
- **Transparent Mechanism:** Establishing clear communication and transparency between the government and the Apex court can resolve the stalemate.
- **Deemed Acceptance:** If the government fails to act on a recommendation within a specified period (e.g., six weeks), the recommendation should be deemed accepted.
- **Permanent Chief Justices:** The government should prioritise filling vacancies in High Courts, particularly appointing permanent Chief Justices to ensure efficient judicial administration..



Page 05 : GS 3 : Science and Technology

Unit 7 of the Rajasthan Atomic Power Project (RAPP) at Rawatbhata, Rajasthan, achieved criticality, marking the transition from construction to operation.

- It is the third indigenous 700 MW pressurised heavy water reactor (PHWR) to reach this stage in India.

**Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR):**

- **Definition:** A Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR) uses heavy water (D<sub>2</sub>O) as both a coolant and a neutron moderator.
- **Fuel Type:** Typically utilises natural uranium as fuel, which allows for more efficient fission reactions without the need for enrichment.
- **Sustainability:** PHWRs can use a variety of fuels, including thorium, enhancing long-term fuel sustainability.
- **Operation Principle:** The reactor maintains high pressure to prevent heavy water from boiling, enabling effective heat transfer to the steam generators.
- **Efficiency:** PHWRs are known for their fuel efficiency and capability to operate for longer durations between refuelling.
- **Design Features:** They have a robust design that enhances safety, including multiple barriers to prevent the release of radioactive materials.

**What is the criticality of a nuclear reactor?**

- Criticality in a nuclear reactor refers to the state where a controlled fission chain reaction is sustained.
- It occurs when the number of neutrons produced from fission reactions equals the number of neutrons lost through absorption or leakage.
- At criticality, the reactor operates at a stable power level, allowing for efficient energy generation.
- Achieving criticality is a crucial milestone in the commissioning of a nuclear reactor.

**Indigenous heavy water reactor attains criticality**

The Hindu Bureau

Unit 7 of the Rajasthan Atomic Power Project at Rawatbhata in Chittorgarh district achieved criticality, or the start of controlled fission chain reaction, on Thursday night, according to the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd.

The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board had earlier cleared the reactor to make the first approach to criticality. The event was recorded at 10.42 p.m.

RAPP-7 is the third reactor to go critical in a series of 16 indigenous pressurised heavy water reactors (PHWRs) of 700 MW each the national nuclear establishment is setting up.

The first two PHWRs to become critical before RAPP-7 were Units 3 and 4 of the Kakrapar Atomic Power Station in Gujarat, in 2020 and 2023, respectively.

“Criticality for the first time on the project timeline marks the completion of construction phase and commencement of the operation phase,” NPCIL executive director (corporate communication & corporate planning) B.V.S. Sekhar said in a statement. “RAPP-7 is expected to start generation this year.”

## Daily News Analysis

Feature	Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR)	Light Water Reactor (LWR)	Boiling Water Reactor (BWR)
<b>Moderator</b>	Heavy water (D <sub>2</sub> O)	Light water (H <sub>2</sub> O)	Light water (H <sub>2</sub> O)
<b>Fuel Type</b>	Natural uranium	Enriched uranium	Enriched uranium
<b>Pressure System</b>	High pressure, preventing water from boiling	Low pressure, water boils in core	Low pressure, water boils directly in the core
<b>Cooling Method</b>	Separate steam generators	Direct cooling in core	Steam produced from the reactor core used for cooling
<b>Efficiency</b>	High fuel efficiency due to natural uranium use	Lower efficiency due to enrichment needs	Moderate efficiency with a simpler design
<b>Safety Features</b>	Robust safety design with multiple barriers	Requires active safety systems	Relies on passive safety systems

India's Statistics Ministry is addressing the growing refusal of affluent households to participate in official surveys, leading to a significant data gap.

- This non-response skews socio-economic representation and undermines effective policymaking, as accurate data is crucial for informed decisions.

# Closed doors at affluent gated communities dent official data

**Vikas Dhoot**

NEW DELHI

India's official data enumerators who survey households across the country to assess ground realities such as household spends, education and employment levels, have literally hit a wall – with the affluent classes living in gated communities and rarefied urban enclaves increasingly refusing to respond to surveys.

Concerned about this “big data gap” that is skewing the representation of socio-economic groups in



official survey samples, and creating a distorted view of the population and the economy while denting the quality and utility of data, the Statistics Ministry has kicked off parleys to get high-income groups to

open up for its surveys.

“When these groups choose not to respond, we are left guessing, and guessing does not exactly lead to a good policy,” Geeta Singh Rathore, director general of the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) said at an interaction with urban resident welfare associations (RWAs) on Friday.

Pointing to an alarming spike in non-response rates from affluent households to NSS surveys in recent years, Deputy Director General of the National Statistical Office's Survey De-

sign and Research Division, Amitava Saha said many people blatantly refuse to share information or allow enumerators' entry into their complexes.

Tamil Nadu Real Estate Regulatory Authority (TNRERA) chairman Shiv Das Meena said it is a real challenge to elicit responses from the “so-called upper echelons of society”. He pointed to the irony that these sections were most critical about policies on social media, but were reluctant to share data to help frame policies, or even go out and vote.

## What is the issue?

- **Data Collection Challenges:** High-income groups in gated communities are increasingly refusing to participate in official surveys conducted by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO), leading to a significant data gap.
- **Representation Skew:** The non-response from affluent households skews the socio-economic representation in survey samples, distorting the overall understanding of the population and economy.
- **Impact on Policy:** Officials express concern that guessing the data of non-responders undermines effective policymaking, as accurate data is essential for informed decisions.
- **Rising Non-Response Rates:** There has been a noticeable increase in non-response rates among affluent households, with many openly declining to share information or allow enumerators entry into their residences.

## Daily News Analysis

- **Criticism and Irony:** Although these affluent groups often critique policies on social media, their reluctance to provide necessary data hampers the formation of effective policies, revealing a disconnect between public criticism and active participation in governance.

### Way Forward:

- **Awareness Campaigns:** Launch targeted awareness campaigns to educate affluent households about the importance of survey participation for effective policymaking and resource allocation.
- **Engagement with Resident Welfare Associations:** Collaborate with resident welfare associations to encourage participation and build trust within gated communities.
- **Simplifying Processes:** Streamline the survey process to make it less intrusive and more user-friendly, encouraging higher response rates.
- **Confidentiality Assurance:** Emphasise data confidentiality and privacy to alleviate concerns about sharing personal information.
- **Feedback Mechanism:** Establish a feedback mechanism where participants can see the impact of their contributions on policy decisions, fostering a sense of ownership.
- **Incentives for Participation:** Consider offering incentives or rewards for participation, for example – gift vouchers or access to public services.

Page 13 : Prelims Fact

- The recent pager blasts in Lebanon, linked to escalating tensions with Israel and Hezbollah, have reignited trauma from the 2020 Beirut port explosion.
- With significant casualties and public fear, these events highlight Lebanon's ongoing instability and the cumulative impact of past crises on the population's mental health and safety.



Key Issues In Lebanon Amid Ongoing Crisis:

- **Economic Collapse:** Lebanon is facing a severe economic crisis, exacerbated by the 2020 Beirut port blast and ongoing financial instability.
- **Political Paralysis:** The country has been without a functioning government or president for over two years, leading to governance challenges.
- **Security Threats:** Continuous hostilities between Israel and Hezbollah, including recent attacks targeting civilian areas, increase fear and uncertainty.
- **Mental Health Crisis:** The population suffers from psychological trauma due to past explosions and ongoing violence, with many experiencing heightened anxiety and paranoia.
- **Public Safety Concerns:** Recent explosions from devices have led to widespread fear, prompting parents to keep children away from schools and communities to take safety precautions.
- **Healthcare Strain:** The healthcare system is overwhelmed and unprepared for a potential large-scale conflict, complicating emergency responses.



**Exercise In News : Exercise AIKYA**

Recently, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), in collaboration with the Southern Command of the Indian Army organised a two-day national symposium, 'Exercise AIKYA', on disaster management in Chennai.

**About Exercise AIKYA:**



- ▶ Aikya, meaning "Oneness" in Tamil, reflects the exercise's aim to integrate India's Disaster Management community.
- ▶ It brought together key stakeholders from across Peninsular India to enhance disaster preparedness and response capabilities.
- ▶ The exercise witnessed participation from six southern states/UTs: Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, and Puducherry
- ▶ Key organizations involved : India Meteorological Department (IMD), National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), Central Water Commission (CWC), and Forest Survey of India (FSI); Geographical Survey of India (GSI) and the Department of Telecommunications (DoT).

## Daily News Analysis

- ▶ It simulated emergency situations to test roles and responsibilities, fostered discussions on technologies and trends in disaster relief, and reviewed lessons from recent operations.
- ▶ It addressed issues including tsunamis, landslides, floods, cyclones, industrial incidents, and forest fires, with focus on recent events in Tamil Nadu, Wayanad, and Andhra Pradesh.



**GS Paper 02 : International Relations – Bilateral Relations**

**PYQ : (UPSC CSE (M) GS-1 2016) : Present an account of the Indus Water Treaty and examine its ecological, economic and political implications in the context of changing bilateral relations. (250 words/15m)**

**UPSC Mains Practice Question** Discuss Discuss the significance of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) in India-Pakistan relations. Analyse the challenges posed by recent disputes over water-sharing, particularly in light of climate change and geopolitical tensions. (250 w /15 m)

## Context :

- India has escalated its demand for renegotiating the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) with Pakistan, citing unresolved disputes and modern challenges like climate change.
- The treaty, once a symbol of cooperation, now faces uncertainty amidst deteriorating India-Pakistan relations.

## India Escalates Demand for Renegotiation of Indus Waters Treaty (IWT)

- India has issued its fourth notice to Pakistan since January 2023, demanding the renegotiation of the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty (IWT).
- India has called off all meetings of the Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) until Pakistan agrees to hold talks.

## Staunch the breach

India and Pakistan need to drop hard line stances on the Indus Waters Treaty

In its fourth notice to Pakistan since January 2023, India has escalated its demand for the renegotiation of the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), now calling off all meetings of the Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) until Pakistan agrees to sit at the table for talks. India's demand last year followed a logjam in the entire process, once held up internationally as a model template for water-sharing agreements. Even in the new millennium, the tenets of the treaty held firm, and India was able to win two major disputes by adhering to the processes laid out, including the Baglihar Dam project in 2007, and another dispute over allegations that India was interfering with Pakistan's Neelum project in 2013. The issue over how to proceed on dispute resolution for the Kishenganga and Ratle projects has snowballed since 2016, when Pakistan escalated the disputes – having a neutral expert look at them and demanding a Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA). In a moment of weakness, that it may come to regret, the World Bank – it is a co-signatory and guarantor of the IWT – decided to allow two parallel processes of the dispute mechanism to run at the same time. To make matters worse, Pakistan turned its back on the neutral expert's proceedings, while India has boycotted the PCA hearings at The Hague. Pakistan has been cold to India's notices on renegotiating the treaty and the decision by the Modi government to stop all PIC meetings has put the future of the process in peril. Unlike in past decades, when the IWT was considered off-limits for partisan politics, leaders on both sides are now not above using fiery rhetoric. Mr. Modi's statement after the 2016 Uri attack, that "blood and water" cannot flow together, is perhaps the most egregious example.

It is no coincidence that the spiral mirrors the unravelling of the India-Pakistan bilateral relationship in the same period. There is no political engagement or trade and the 2021 LoC ceasefire agreement is in danger after growing terror attacks and deaths of Indian Army personnel. It may be possible to re-open the treaty talks, but concluding any agreement will be that much more difficult. All eyes are now on New Delhi's response to Pakistan's invitation for the SCO Heads of Government meeting on October 15-16. Such an opening could present an opportunity for talks on the way forward. No doubt, new-age issues such as climate change and the need for renewable energy and hydropower options on the Indus necessitate a re-opening of the 64-year-old Treaty. How that is done, along with resolving current disputes, will decide whether the two countries can save the treaty, once referred to as the "one bright spot" in a "very depressing world picture" by U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

- This comes after years of stalemate, even though the IWT was once considered a model for water-sharing agreements.

### **IWT's Historical Importance**

- The treaty, signed in 1960, has been crucial for managing water resources between India and Pakistan.
- It held firm through many decades and disputes, including India winning two significant cases:
  - The Baglihar Dam project dispute in 2007.
  - Allegations of Indian interference in Pakistan's Neelum project in 2013.

### **Disputes Over Kishenganga and Ratle Projects**

- Disputes over the Kishenganga and Ratle projects have escalated since 2016.
- Pakistan sought both a neutral expert's opinion and arbitration via the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA).
- In an unprecedented move, the World Bank allowed both processes to run simultaneously, creating complications.
- Pakistan later walked away from the neutral expert's proceedings, while India boycotted the PCA hearings.

### **Tensions in Diplomatic Relations**

- India's 2022 notice to renegotiate the treaty followed Pakistan's lack of engagement, which has worsened under the Modi government.
- This standoff reflects a broader deterioration in India-Pakistan relations, including no political dialogue, ceased trade, and violations of the 2021 Line of Control (LoC) ceasefire agreement due to increased terror activities.
- Indian Prime Minister's 2016 statement after the Uri attack, saying "blood and water cannot flow together," has further fueled tensions.

### **Future of the Indus Waters Treaty**

- The future of the IWT is uncertain, with both countries hardening their stances.
- India's cancellation of PIC meetings has further strained the process.
- There is an opportunity for dialogue with the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Heads of Government meeting in October 2024, where both countries could potentially re-engage.

### **Modern Challenges Necessitate Treaty Revisions**

- New-age issues such as climate change and the need for renewable energy and hydropower make revisiting the 64-year-old treaty essential.
- Resolving current disputes and addressing modern challenges will determine whether India and Pakistan can preserve the IWT, once seen as a symbol of cooperation..