

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

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Page : 01 : GS 2 : International Relations – Bilateral Relations

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Ukraine, the first by an Indian leader since its independence, highlights India's balancing role in the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

- The visit focused on peace efforts, humanitarian cooperation, and strengthening bilateral relations, amidst concerns over India's trade with Russia and its global influence on the crisis.

# Not neutral, India on the side of peace, says Modi in Ukraine

PM Modi assures President Zelenskyy of India's commitment towards territorial integrity of countries; two leaders ink pacts on humanitarian aid by India for high-capacity development projects, agriculture, cultural cooperation and drug regulation

**Dinakar Peri**  
KYIV

The war in Ukraine was high on the agenda in the meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Friday with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar saying India was "willing to do whatever we can" to end the conflict "...because we do think that the continuation of this conflict is terrible, obviously for Ukraine itself and for the world as well".

The "landmark" visit, the first by an Indian Prime Minister since Ukraine became independent in 1991, saw the signing of four agreements.

In his talks with Mr. Zelenskyy, Mr. Modi said In-



**Pitch for peace:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv on Friday. ANI

dia is always ready to play an "active role" to restore peace in Ukraine. "We (India) are not neutral. From the very beginning, we have taken sides. And we have chosen the side of peace," Mr. Modi said. The Prime Minister underlined India's commitment towards respecting the sovereignty and territorial inte-

grity of countries.

"Today in Kyiv, PM Narendra Modi and I honored the memory of the children whose lives were taken by Russian aggression. Children in every country deserve to live in safety. We must make this possible," Mr. Zelenskyy said on X. He later spoke to the visiting Indian media and

flagged India's purchase of Russian oil as well as other goods that are getting "billions for them". He said India has a "huge influence on Russian economy".

**Open, constructive**

Mr. Jaishankar said the meeting "was a very detailed, very open and a very constructive discussion". "The Ukraine side wanted continued involvement of India in the peace summit," he said.

The four agreements include humanitarian assistance by India for high-capacity development projects, cooperation in agriculture and food industry, cultural cooperation and an agreement on drug quality and regulation.

Mr. Modi arrived in Kyiv from Warsaw in the morning on a special train and

was welcomed by the Indian community at the hotel. He attended a multimedia exhibition on children who lost their lives in the conflict and placed a toy as a tribute. The official talks were held at the Mariyinsky palace, the official residence of the Ukrainian President. The bilateral talks scheduled for 30 minutes went on for two and a half hours.

The Indian side reiterated its principled position and focus on peaceful resolution through dialogue and diplomacy, as a part of which, India has attended the Summit on Peace in Ukraine, held in Burgenstock, Switzerland, in June, a joint statement issued after the talks said.

**BIG INFLUENCE**  
» PAGE 3

- **Peace Efforts:** Prime Minister Modi emphasised India's commitment to supporting peace efforts, underlining India's stance on the need for dialogue and diplomacy to resolve the Russia-Ukraine conflict.
- **Humanitarian Focus:** Four key agreements were signed, focusing on:
  - Humanitarian assistance by India for high-capacity development projects.
  - Cooperation in agriculture and the food industry.
  - Cultural cooperation.
  - Agreement on drug quality and regulation.
- **Support for Sovereignty:** PM Modi reaffirmed India's respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of nations, stressing that India has chosen the "side of peace" from the start of the conflict.
- **Ukraine's Concerns:** Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy raised concerns about India's purchase of Russian oil, highlighting India's influence on Russia's economy.

**How can India mediate between Russia – Ukraine conflict?**

- **Ways for India to Mediate Between Russia and Ukraine**
  - **Diplomatic Engagement:** Leverage India's non-aligned stance and strong diplomatic relations with both Russia and Ukraine to facilitate dialogue and propose peace talks.

## Daily News Analysis

- **Humanitarian Assistance:** Increase humanitarian aid to affected regions, showing commitment to alleviating human suffering and building goodwill with both sides.
  - **International Forums:** Utilise platforms like the United Nations and BRICS to advocate for peaceful resolutions and support conflict de-escalation measures.
  - **Neutral Mediator:** Offer to host peace negotiations or act as a neutral intermediary to bridge gaps between the conflicting parties.
  - **Economic Leverage:** Use India's growing economic influence to encourage economic incentives or sanctions adjustments that might appeal to both sides.
- ➔ **Potential Implications for India**
- **Enhanced Global Standing:** Successfully mediating could bolster India's reputation as a responsible global actor and enhance its standing in international diplomacy.
  - **Strategic Partnerships:** Strengthening ties with both Russia and Ukraine could open up new avenues for trade, defence, and technology collaborations.
  - **Geopolitical Risks:** Engaging in mediation could lead to geopolitical risks, including potential backlash from global powers with vested interests in the conflict.
  - **Domestic Reactions:** Balancing relationships with both Russia and Ukraine may cause domestic political challenges and public scrutiny.
  - **Economic Impact:** Increased involvement might affect India's trade relationships or energy imports from Russia, necessitating careful management of economic impacts.

### UPSC Prelims PYQ : 2022

**Ques : With reference to the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, consider the following statements:**

1. Private and public hospitals must adopt it.
2. As it aims to achieve universal, health coverage, every citizen of India should be part of it ultimately.
3. It has seamless portability across the country.

**Which of the statements given above is/are correct?**

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

**Ans: (b)**

**Page 05 : GS 3 – Indian Economy and Science & Technology**

India's space sector contributed \$24 billion to the GDP and supported 96,000 jobs over the last decade, with a significant multiplier effect of \$2.54 on the economy.

- These findings were presented during National Space Day, based on a report commissioned by ISRO and conducted by econONE and Novaspac from 2014 to 2023.

# 'Space sector contributed ₹20,000 crore to India's GDP over the last decade'

**Jacob Koshy**  
NEW DELHI

India's space sector has directly contributed about \$24 billion (₹20,000 crore) to India's Gross Domestic Product over the last decade. It has directly supported 96,000 jobs in the public and private sector. For every dollar produced by the space sector, there was a multiplier effect of \$2.54 to the Indian economy and India's space force was 2.5 times "more productive" than the country's broader industrial workforce.

These "preliminary findings" were part of a presentation by Steve Bochsinger, Affiliate Executive Adviser, Novaspac, a European consultancy, at



President Droupadi Murmu, Minister Jitendra Singh and ISRO Chairman S. Somanath at the space exhibition in New Delhi. ANI

the National Space Day celebrations here on Friday.

The Space Day celebrations are to commemorate the first anniversary of the successful landing of Chandrayaan-3 on August 23 last year.

The report was "initiated" by the Indian Space Research Organisation (IS-

RO), Mr. Bochsinger said, to evaluate the socio-economic impact of the space sector from 2014 to 2023 and the study was conducted by Indian economics research firms econONE and Novaspac. They interviewed representatives from 56 organisations in public and private sectors.

## Key highlights of the report

### ➤ About the report

- The report was initiated by ISRO to evaluate the socio-economic impact of the space sector from 2014-2023.
- The study was conducted by Indian economics research firm econONE and Novaspac.

- It was presented during the National Space Day celebrations in New Delhi on August 23, 2024.
- The Space Day celebrations are to commemorate the first anniversary of the successful landing of the Chandrayaan-3 on August 23 last year.

### Key findings

#### ➤ Impact on Indian Economy

- India's space sector has directly contributed about \$24 billion (₹20,000 crore) to India's GDP over the last decade.
- It has directly supported 96,000 jobs in the public and private sector.
- For every dollar produced by the space sector, there was a multiplier effect of \$2.54 to the Indian economy.
- India's space force was 2.5 times more productive than the country's broader industrial workforce.
- 8th largest space economy (in terms of funding) in the world
- With \$13 billion invested in the last decade it is the 8th largest space economy (in terms of funding) in the world.
- Satellite communications contributed 54% to the space economy, followed by navigation (26%) and launches (11%).

#### ➤ Diversified space sector

- The Indian space sector was diversifying and now had 700 companies including 200 start-ups.
- It had seen revenues grow to \$6.3 billion in 2023, which was about 1.5% of the global space market.

### Way ahead

- India's space sector has significantly enhanced the nation's prestige, sovereignty, and global leadership, but its impact on the profitability and competitiveness of companies within the country has been limited.
- According to industry stakeholders, this is because the space program over the past decade has been primarily driven by political considerations.
- However, there is a shift occurring as commercial space is becoming a priority.
- Regulatory reforms have been introduced but have yet to fully take effect, and an under-developed venture capital ecosystem is hindering space technology start-ups from accessing necessary capital.

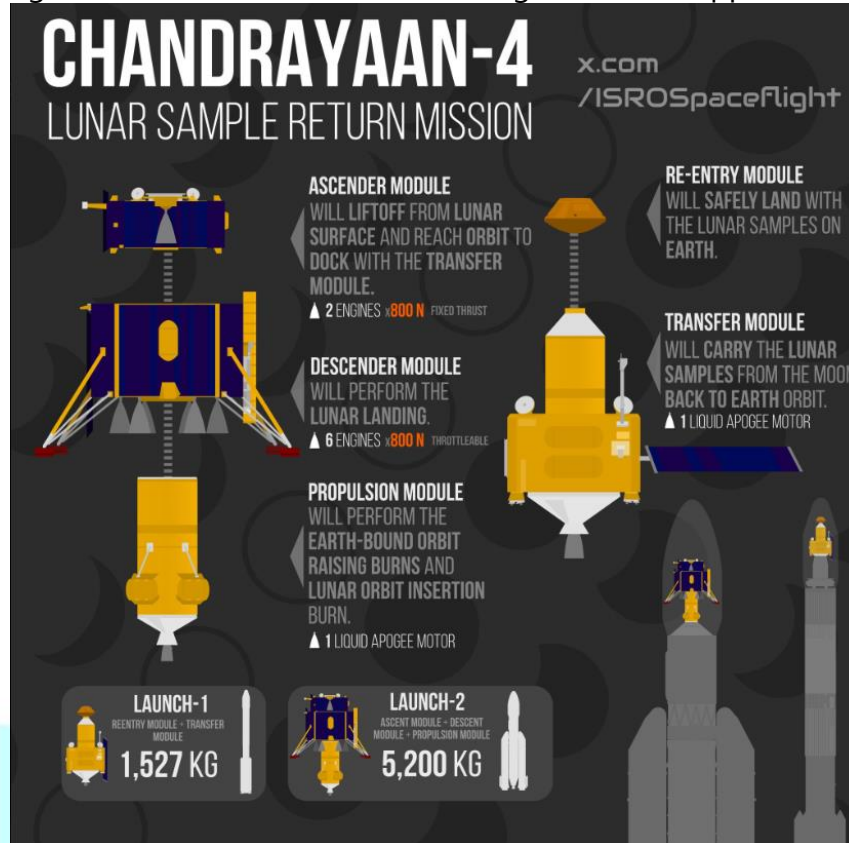
## UPSC Mains PYQ : 2019

**Ques : What is India's plan to have its own space station and how will it benefit our space programme?**

**GS 3 : Science & Tech**

Chandrayaan-4, India's upcoming Moon mission scheduled for 2027, aims to bring rock and soil samples back to Earth.

- The mission's designs have been finalized and await government approval.



**About the News:**

➤ **Mission Structure**

- **Modules:** The Chandrayaan-4 spacecraft will consist of five separate modules, unlike Chandrayaan-3, which had three. The mission involves complex stages, including landing, sample collection, and returning the samples to Earth.
- **Docking Operations:** The mission will require docking space modules twice—a new capability for ISRO that will be first demonstrated in the upcoming Spadex mission.

➤ **Technological Advancements**

- **Previous Demonstrations:** Key capabilities, such as lifting off from the lunar surface and bringing a spacecraft back from lunar orbit, were successfully demonstrated during Chandrayaan-3. This sets the foundation for the Chandrayaan-4 mission.

➤ **Scientific Importance**

- **Sample Return:** Bringing lunar samples back to Earth will enable more detailed analysis with advanced instruments, facilitating significant scientific discoveries. The samples will be distributed across various scientific laboratories in India.

### UPSC Prelims PYQ : 2016

**Ques :** Consider the following statements:

The Mangalyaan launched by ISRO

1. is also called the Mars Orbiter Mission
2. made India the second country to have a spacecraft orbit the Mars after USA
3. made India the only country to be successful in making its spacecraft orbit the Mars in its very first attempt

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Ans: (c)**

A 2,492-carat diamond, the second largest ever, was discovered in Botswana's Karowe Diamond Mine using X-ray technology by Lucara Diamond Corp.

- The massive stone, second only to the Cullinan Diamond, was presented to President Mokgweetsi Masisi, highlighting Botswana's significance as one of the top diamond producers globally.

#### About the news:

- A 2,492-carat diamond, the second largest in the world, was discovered in Botswana's Karowe Diamond Mine.
- The diamond was found using X-ray detection technology developed by Lucara Diamond Corp.
- It is second in size only to the 3,016-carat Cullinan Diamond found in South Africa in 1905.
- The diamond was presented to Botswana's President Mokgweetsi Masisi by Lucara's managing director.
- Botswana is a leading global producer of diamonds, and this discovery is the largest ever found in the country.

#### X-ray Detection Technology

- X-ray detection technology in diamond mining uses X-rays to identify diamonds based on their unique atomic structure.
- When exposed to X-rays, diamonds emit a distinctive light, which machines detect and separate from other materials.
- This method is highly efficient, preserving large, high-value diamonds during extraction and minimising damage compared to traditional methods, making it ideal for detecting valuable stones in mines.



**Worth a lot:** A 2,492-carat diamond, the largest diamond found in more than a century, in Gaborone, Botswana. AP

## Botswana discovers the world's second largest diamond

**Agence France-Presse**  
GABORONE

A massive 2,492-carat diamond – the second largest in the world – has been discovered in Botswana, the Canadian mining company that found the stone announced on Thursday.

The diamond was discovered in the Karowe Diamond Mine in northeastern Botswana using X-ray detection technology, Lucara Diamond Corp. said in a statement. Lucara did not provide an estimation of the value of the find. In terms of carats, the stone is second only to the 3,016-carat Cullinan Diamond discovered in South Africa in 1905.

"We are ecstatic about the recovery of this extraordinary 2,492-carat diamond," Lucara president William Lamb said in the statement.

This find was "one of the largest rough diamonds ever unearthed" and was detected using the company's Mega Diamond Recovery X-ray technology installed in 2017 to identify and preserve large, high-value diamonds, the statement said.

The managing director of Lucara Botswana, Naseem Lahri, presented the translucent stone, which is the size of a palm, to President Mokgweetsi Masisi at his office later on Thursday. "I'm told this is the largest diamond to be discovered in Botswana to date and the second in the world," Mr. Masisi said, congratulating the company on the find. "This is precious."

Botswana is one of the world's largest producers of diamonds.



**UPSC Prelims Practice Question**

**Ques :** With reference to the Lab Grown Diamonds, consider the following statements:

1. These are diamonds which are grown inside a lab using cutting-edge technology.
2. These diamonds are chemically, physically, and optically different from natural diamond.
3. These diamonds are used in computer chips and satellites.

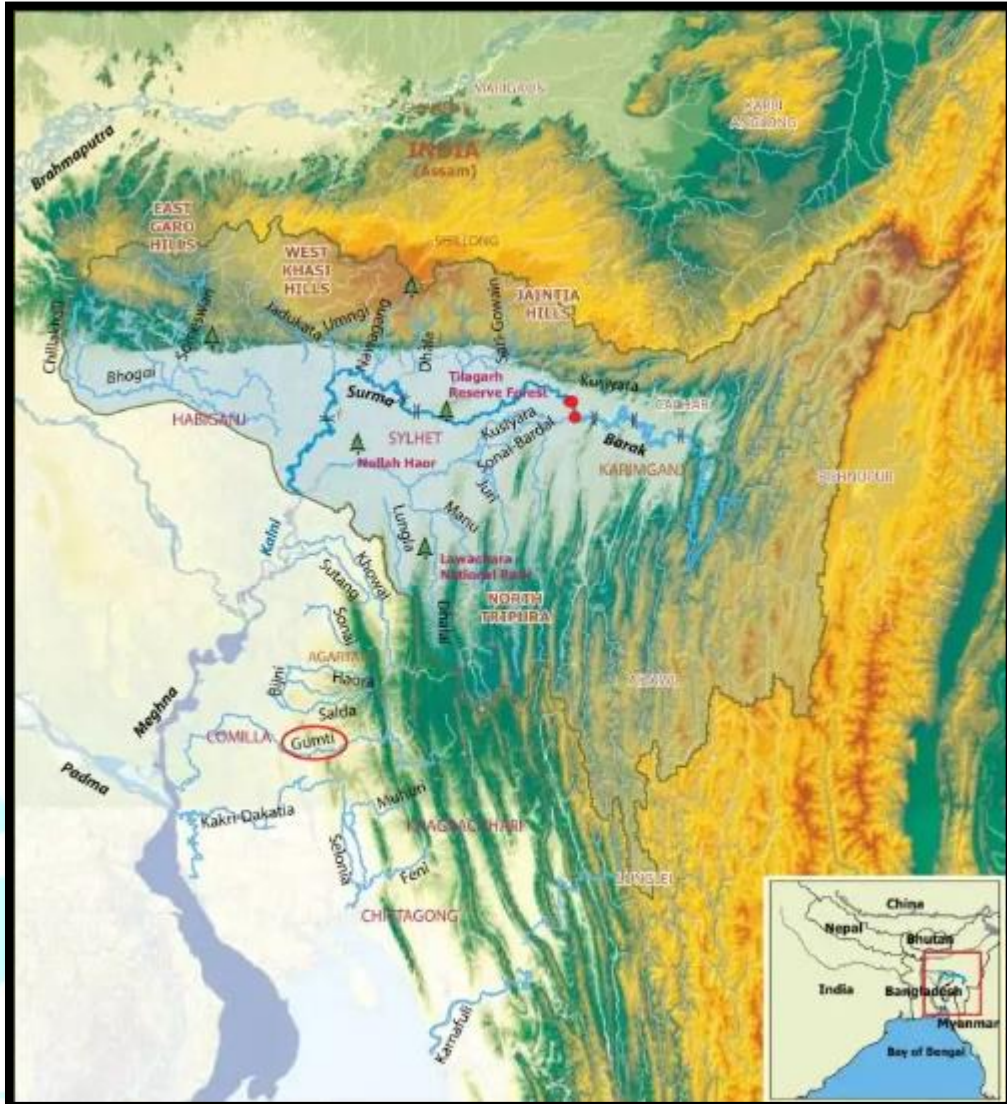
Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

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

**Ans: a)**

**River In News : Gumti River**

India has refuted allegations that the recent floods in eastern Bangladesh were caused by the opening of the Dumbur dam over Gumti River in Tripura.



**About Gumti River**

<b>Origin</b>	Dumbur Lake, Tripura, India
<b>Length</b>	Approximately 150 kilometers
<b>Course</b>	Flows southward through Tripura, India, and then into Bangladesh; Joins the Meghna River.
<b>Tributaries</b>	Left: Raima, Manu Right: Deo, Khowai

<b>Terrain</b>	<b>Hilly terrain in upper course, fertile plains in lower course</b>
<b>Biodiversity</b>	<b>Supports diverse flora and fauna</b>
<b>Projects Installed</b>	<b>Gumti Hydroelectric Project: Located near Dumbur; Generates hydroelectric power in Tripura; Bangladesh also receives 40 MW. Gumti Irrigation Project: Supports irrigation for agriculture in Tripura, India</b>

### UPSC Prelims PYQ : 2014

**Ques :** Consider the following rivers:

1. Barak
2. Lohit
3. Subansiri

Which of the above flows / flow through Arunachal Pradesh?

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

**Ans : b)**

**GS Paper 03 : Economy – Agriculture**

**(UPSC CSE (M) GS-3 2016):** Given the vulnerability of Indian agriculture to vagaries of nature, discuss the need for crop insurance and bring out the salient features of the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY). (200 words/12.5m)

**Mains Practice Question :** Discuss the key challenges and government initiatives aimed at transforming Indian agriculture to achieve the goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047. (250 Words)

**Context :**

- ▶ India's goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047 hinges on transforming its agricultural sector through sustainable practices, technological innovations, and strategic government initiatives.
- ▶ Addressing challenges like climate change and food demand, the government is prioritising agricultural innovation, infrastructure, and credit to ensure inclusive, long-term growth.

**Road to sustainable agriculture**

- ▶ Transforming Indian agriculture depends on adopting sustainable practices that ensure long-term productivity and environmental health.
- ▶ Precision farming, genetically modified crops, and advanced irrigation techniques such as drip and sprinkler systems are leading this transformation.
- ▶ The Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY) has covered 78 lakh hectares, promoting water-use efficiency through micro-irrigation. The scheme's ₹93,068 crore allocation for 2021-26 underscores the government's commitment to sustainable water management.

**Challenges and Solutions to issues in Indian Agriculture**

- ▶ India's agricultural sector faces challenges, including climate change, land degradation, and market access issues.
- ▶ **The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY):** introduced in 2016, provides financial assistance for crop losses. With 49.5 crore farmers enrolled and claims totalling over ₹1.45 lakh crore, the scheme is a cornerstone of agricultural risk management.

- ➔ **The Electronic National Agriculture Market (eNAM):** launched in 2016, integrates existing markets through an electronic platform. By September 2023, 1,361 mandis had been integrated, benefiting 1.76 million farmers and recording trade worth ₹2.88 lakh crore. This initiative improves market access and ensures better price realisation for farmers.

### An imbalance in Indian Agriculture

- ➔ **Limited contribution in GDP:** Despite agriculture engaging nearly 46% of the workforce, agriculture's contribution to GDP is about 18%, highlighting a stark imbalance.
- ➔ **Agriculture GDP:** Agricultural GDP lags at 3.3%. Under the Narendra Modi administration, overall GDP growth was 5.9%, and agriculture grew at 3.6%. However, this is insufficient for a sector so critical to the nation's socioeconomic fabric.
- ➔ **Bleak Future of agriculture growth:** By 2047, agriculture's share in GDP might shrink to 7%-8%, yet, it could still employ over 30% of the workforce if significant structural changes are not implemented.
- ➔ **Unpredictability of monsoons:** The expected 7.6% overall GDP growth for 2023-24 is promising. However, the agri-GDP's anaemic growth of 0.7%, primarily due to unseasonal rains, is alarming.
- ➔ **Rising population and demands:** Further, according to United Nations projections, India's population is expected to reach 1.5 billion by 2030 and 1.59 billion by 2040. And meeting the food requirements of this burgeoning population will be imperative.
- ➔ **Food price and demands will be impacted:** With an estimated expenditure elasticity of food at 0.45, the demand for food is expected to grow by approximately 2.85% annually, considering the population growth rate of 0.85%.
- ➔ **India's real per capita income and expenditure dynamics:** Increased by 41% from 2011-12 to 2021-22 and is projected to accelerate further. However, the expenditure elasticity post-2023 is anticipated to be lower.

### Some initiatives to help agriculture progress

- ➔ Several initiatives have been rolled out to bolster farmer prosperity and sustainable agricultural growth.
- ➔ Rationalising food and fertilizer subsidies and redirecting savings towards agricultural research and development innovation and extension services are crucial.
- ➔ **The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN):** launched in 2019, disburses ₹6,000 annually to farmers in three instalments. This scheme has already benefited over 11.8 crore farmers, offering much-needed financial support.
- ➔ **The Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme:** aims to optimise soil nutrient use, thereby enhancing agricultural productivity. Over 23 crore SHCs have been distributed, providing farmers with crucial insights into soil health and nutrient management.
- ➔ **Millets support:** The government also championed the International Year of Millets in 2023, promoting nutritious coarse grains, both domestically and internationally.

- **The Agriculture Infrastructure Fund:** with a ₹1 lakh crore financing facility, supports the development and modernisation of post-harvest management infrastructure.
- **Employment opportunities:** These projects have created employment for more than 5.8 lakh individuals and improved farmer incomes by 20%-25% through better price realisation.
- **SVAMITVA initiative:** aims to ensure transparent property ownership in rural areas. As of September 2023, over 1.6 crore property cards have been generated, enhancing land security and facilitating credit access for farmers.

### Strategic planning to boost Agricultural Growth

- The government's strategic planning for agriculture, leading up to 2047, focuses on several key areas:
  - Anticipated future demand for agricultural products
  - Insights from past growth catalysts, existing challenges, and potential opportunities in the agricultural landscape.
  - Projections indicate that the total demand for food grains in 2047-48 will rise.

### Way Forward:

- **Investment in R&D:** To meet future demands sustainably, significant investments in agricultural research, infrastructure, and policy support are necessary.
- **Budget Allocation:** The Budget for 2024-25 includes ₹20 lakh crore for targeted agricultural credit and the launch of the Agriculture Accelerator Fund, highlighting a proactive approach to fostering agricultural innovation and growth.
- **Enhance Digital Infrastructure:** Support and expand digital platforms like eNAM to improve market access, provide real-time data, and facilitate better price realization for farmers.

### Goals of Indian Agriculture by Vision 2047:

- **Comprehensive Goal:** India's centennial year of independence requires a six-fold increase in per capita Gross National Income (GNI), emphasizing the need for comprehensive development, especially in agriculture.
- **Trade Goal:** India's agricultural and processed food exports have gone up to more than USD 50 billion in 2022-23.
  - The Vision 2047 aims to improve the availability of nutritious foods by enhancing the processing of fruits and vegetables, and augment the proportion of value-added products in India's export portfolio.
- **Sustainable Goal:** Transforming Indian agriculture will hinge on adopting sustainable practices such as precision farming, genetically modified crops, and advanced irrigation techniques (e.g., drip and sprinkler systems).

## Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC)

### About:

- The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is the second largest organization after the United Nations with a membership of 57 states spread over four continents.
- The Organization is the collective voice of the Muslim world. It endeavors to safeguard and protect the interests of the Muslim world in the spirit of promoting international peace and harmony among various people of the world.

### Background:

- The Organization was established upon a decision of the historical summit which took place in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco on 25th September, 1969 following the criminal arson of Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.
- In 1970, the inaugural Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM) resulted in establishment of a permanent secretariat in Jeddah, headed by organization's secretary general.

### Major Objectives:

- The OIC endeavours to establish solidarity among member states.
- To support restoration of complete sovereignty and territorial integrity of any member state under occupation.
- To protect, defend and combat defamation of Islam.
- To prevent growing dissension in Muslim societies and work to ensure that member states take a united stand at the U. N. General Assembly, Human Rights Council and other international fora.

### Charter:

- The organisation adheres to a charter that lays out its objectives, principles and operating mechanism.
- First adopted in 1972, the charter has been revised multiple times in line with emerging conditions in the developing world.
- The present charter was adopted in March 2008 at Dakar in Senegal.

- It enshrines that all members be guided and inspired by the noble Islamic teachings and values alongside committing themselves to the purposes and principles of the U. N. charter.

### **Membership:**

- **Permanent members:**

- The member states include Afghanistan, Algeria, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkey, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Uzbekistan, Yemen, and others.

- **Observer Members**

- **States:** Bosnia and Herzegovina, Central African Republic, Kingdom of Thailand, The Russian Federation, Turkish Cypriot State.
- **International Organisations:** United Nations (UN), Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), League of Arab States (LAS), African Union (AU), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO).