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### **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 11-03-2025**

#### **GS-1**

1. Dnipro River
2. Koch-Rajbongshis

#### **GS-2**

3. Preventive Detention

#### **GS-3**

4. Astra MK-III Missile
5. Madhav National Park

## Dnipro River

**Syllabus: GS-1; Geography- Mapping**

### Context

- Russia launching 'suicide missions' across strategic Dnipro river as pause in US aid hampers defence.

### About

- The **Dnipro River** is one of the major rivers of **Eastern Europe** and plays a crucial role in the geography, economy, and geopolitics of the region.



### Basic Facts

- **Length:** 2,285 km (4th longest river in Europe)
- **Source:** Valdai Hills, Russia
- **Mouth:** Black Sea
- **Drainage Basin Area:** About 504,000 sq. km
- **Countries it Flows Through:** Russia, Belarus, Ukraine

## Geographical Significance

- The Dnipro River serves as a major waterway in **Ukraine**, playing a key role in **transportation, hydroelectric power generation, and irrigation**.
- It divides Ukraine into **western and eastern parts**, impacting its cultural and economic landscape.
- The river has several important **tributaries**, including the **Pripyat River** and **Desna River**.

## Economic Importance

- **Hydroelectric Power:** Several dams and hydroelectric plants are constructed along the river, contributing to Ukraine's electricity supply.
- **Agriculture:** The river supports extensive irrigation networks.
- **Navigation:** It serves as an important inland waterway for transporting goods.
- **Industrial Use:** Major industrial cities like **Kyiv, Dnipro, and Zaporizhzhia** are located along its banks.

## Environmental Concerns

- **Pollution:** Industrial waste, agricultural runoff, and urbanization have led to water pollution.
- **Chernobyl Disaster (1986):** The river was affected by radiation contamination from the **Chernobyl nuclear disaster**, as the Pripyat River, a tributary of the Dnipro, runs near the disaster site.
- **Drought and Climate Change:** Rising temperatures and reduced water levels are affecting agriculture and hydroelectric generation.

## Strategic & Political Importance

- **Ukraine-Russia War (2022-Present):** The river has been a major strategic barrier and frontline in the ongoing conflict.
- **Kakhovka Dam Breach (2023):** The destruction of the dam on the Dnipro River had significant humanitarian and environmental consequences.
- **Border & Security Issues:** The river's location makes it strategically significant for regional defense.

## **Koch-Rajbongshis**

**Syllabus: GS-1; Society**

### **Context**

Ahead of Home Minister Amit Shah's three-day visit to Assam on March 14, 2025, the Koch-Rajbongshis have refreshed their demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.



### **About**

- The **Koch-Rajbongshis** are an ethnic community primarily found in Assam, West Bengal, Meghalaya, and parts of Bihar, Jharkhand, Arunachal Pradesh, and Bangladesh.
- They have a significant socio-cultural and historical influence in the northeastern and eastern parts of India.

### **Historical Background**

- The Koch-Rajbongshis trace their lineage to the Koch dynasty, which ruled parts of present-day Assam, West Bengal, and Bangladesh during the medieval period.
- The **Kamtapur Kingdom**, founded by King Biswa Singha (1515–1540), was a major regional power. His son, **Naranarayan**, expanded the kingdom.
- Over time, many Koch people assimilated into different social groups, leading to the emergence of the Rajbongshis.

## Cultural Aspects

- The community follows a blend of **Hinduism, Animism, and Folk traditions**.
- They celebrate **Bisu**, which is similar to Bihu in Assam, as their traditional new year festival.
- The language spoken is **Rajbongshi**, which has similarities with Assamese and Bengali.

## Political and Socio-Economic Aspects

- The Koch-Rajbongshis have been demanding **Scheduled Tribe (ST) status** in Assam and West Bengal, arguing that they are indigenous people with a distinct socio-cultural identity.
- The **Kamtapur Liberation Organization (KLO)** was formed as a militant group seeking a separate state of **Kamtapur**, though its influence has diminished over time.
- The community is engaged in **agriculture, handicrafts, and small-scale industries**, with many also working in government and private sectors.

## Issues and Challenges

- **Demand for ST Status** – Ongoing political debates and movements for inclusion in the ST list.
- **Identity Crisis** – Assimilation into various social groups has led to a lack of uniform recognition.
- **Economic Backwardness** – Many Koch-Rajbongshis belong to economically weaker sections and lack access to quality education and healthcare.
- **Political Representation** – They have a significant vote bank in Assam and West Bengal but often struggle for strong political leadership.

## Preventive Detention

### Syllabus: GS-2; Polity

#### Context

- Preventive Detention Order To Be Quashed When Passed Without Considering Bail Granted By Magistrate : Supreme Court

## About

- Preventive Detention is a controversial but significant provision in Indian law that allows the government to detain individuals without formal charges or trial to prevent them from committing potential offenses.
- It is different from punitive detention, which occurs after a crime has been committed.

## 1. Constitutional Provisions

- **Article 22 (3) to (7)** of the Indian Constitution deals with Preventive Detention.
- It allows the government to detain individuals in cases where immediate action is necessary to prevent them from engaging in activities that may threaten public order or national security.

## Rights of a Preventive Detainee

While Article 22 provides protection against arbitrary detention, special provisions apply to preventive detention:

- **No Right to Legal Representation** – Unlike ordinary detainees, a preventive detainee does not have the right to be represented by a lawyer.
- **Detention Without Trial** – A person can be detained without trial for up to three months.
- **Advisory Board Review** – If detention exceeds three months, an Advisory Board headed by a High Court judge must review the case and decide on its validity.
- **Limited Right to Know Grounds of Detention** – The authority must inform the detainee of the reason for detention, except when it is against public interest.
- **Maximum Period of Detention** – The Parliament has the power to prescribe the maximum period of detention.

## 2. Major Preventive Detention Laws in India

### 1. National Security Act (NSA), 1980

- Used for preventing threats to national security and public order.
- Allows detention for up to twelve months.
- No strict obligation to inform the detainee of the grounds for detention.

### 2. Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities (COFEPOSA), 1974

- Designed to prevent smuggling and foreign exchange violations.

### 3. Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), 1967

- Aimed at curbing unlawful activities and terrorism.
- 4. **Prevention of Black Marketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act, 1980**
  - Targets black marketing and hoarding of essential goods.

### 3. Judicial Safeguards and Landmark Judgments

- **A K Gopalan v State of Madras 1950**
  - Upheld the validity of Preventive Detention under Article 22 but was later overturned in cases reinforcing fundamental rights.
- **Maneka Gandhi v Union of India 1978**
  - Strengthened Article 21 Right to Life and Personal Liberty by ensuring due process and procedural fairness in detention cases.
- **K S Puttaswamy v Union of India 2017**
  - Right to Privacy was recognized as a fundamental right, making arbitrary preventive detention more difficult.

### 4. Arguments For and Against Preventive Detention

#### Arguments in Favor

- Helps prevent potential terrorist activities.
- Maintains public order and national security.
- Essential in times of emergency or crisis situations.

#### Arguments Against

- Can be misused by governments to suppress political dissent.
- Violates fundamental rights, particularly Articles 19, 21, and 22.
- Lack of transparency and judicial oversight.

### 5. Way Forward and Recommendations

- **Strict Judicial Oversight** – Ensure every case is reviewed periodically by independent judicial authorities.
- **Transparency and Accountability** – Authorities should provide adequate justifications for detention.
- **Harmonization with Human Rights** – Ensure detention laws do not override fundamental rights unnecessarily.
- **Use as a Last Resort** – Should be used only in extreme cases of national security threats.

## Astra MK-III Missile

**Syllabus: GS-3; Science & Technology**

### **Context**

- India's latest and most advanced air-to-air missile, the Astra MK-III, has now been officially **renamed Gandiva**, after the legendary bow of **Arjuna from the Mahabharata**.

### **About**

- The Astra Mk-III is an advanced variant of India's indigenous **beyond-visual-range air-to-air missile (BVRAAM) series, developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)**.
- This missile incorporates a **Solid Fuel Ducted Ramjet (SFDR) propulsion system**, enabling sustained supersonic speeds and extended range capabilities.



### **Key Features:**

- **Propulsion:** The SFDR technology allows the Astra Mk-III to maintain high speeds over longer distances compared to traditional rocket-propelled missiles.

- **Range:** While specific figures are classified, the SFDR propulsion is designed to intercept aerial threats at significantly greater distances, enhancing the missile's beyond-visual-range engagement capabilities.
- **Speed:** The missile achieves supersonic speeds, crucial for quick target engagement and reduced reaction time for adversaries.

## Developmental Milestones:

- **2023 Flight Test:** According to the Ministry of Defence's Year End Review 2023, the Astra Mk-III underwent a successful flight test in 2023.
- The test validated the missile's SFDR propulsion, nozzle-less booster, thrust modulation system, and sustainer engine, confirming its capability to intercept distant aerial threats at supersonic speeds.

## Strategic Significance:

- **Enhanced Air Superiority:** The Astra Mk-III's extended range and high-speed capabilities provide the Indian Air Force with a significant advantage in air combat, allowing engagements beyond the visual range of adversaries.
- **Indigenous Development:** The successful development and testing of the Astra Mk-III underscore India's growing self-reliance in advanced missile technologies, reducing dependence on foreign weapon systems.

## **Madhav National Park**

### Syllabus: GS-3; Biodiversity

#### Context

- Madhav National Park in Madhya Pradesh becomes India's 58th Tiger Reserve

#### About

- Madhav National Park is a protected area located in **Shivpuri district, Madhya Pradesh, India**. It is significant for its rich biodiversity and historical importance.



### Key Facts:

- **Location:** Shivpuri, Madhya Pradesh
- **Established:** 1958
- **Area:** 375.22 sq. km
- **Geographical Features:** Located in the **Bundelkhand region**, it features a mix of **dry deciduous forests, grasslands, and lakes**.
- **Major Rivers & Water Bodies:** **Sakhya Sagar Lake** and **Madhav Sagar Lake** (important for biodiversity).

### Flora & Fauna:

#### Flora:

- **Dry deciduous forest type** with trees like **Teak, Salai, Kharpat, Dhawda, Tendu, and Palash**.
- **Grasslands** supporting herbivores and predators.

#### Fauna:

- **Mammals:** Tiger (reintroduced in 2023), Leopard, Wolf, Striped Hyena, Wild Dog, Chital (Spotted Deer), Nilgai, Sambar, Chinkara (Indian Gazelle), and Sloth Bear.

- **Birds:** Over 200 species, including the Painted Stork, White Ibis, Spoonbill, and Kingfisher.
- **Reptiles:** Crocodiles (found in Sakhya Sagar Lake), snakes, and turtles.

## **Historical & Cultural Significance:**

- **Named after Madho Rao Scindia**, a Maratha ruler.
- The park was originally the **hunting ground for the Mughal emperors** and later used by the **Scindia dynasty** of Gwalior.
- The **George Castle** was built by Maharaja Jiwaji Rao Scindia in the park for British King George V.

## **Conservation Efforts & Challenges:**

- **Tiger Reintroduction:** In 2023, a pair of tigers were relocated to Madhav National Park after decades of local extinction.
- **Poaching & Encroachment:** Human activities threaten wildlife populations.
- **Tourism & Infrastructure Development:** Needs to be regulated for sustainable conservation.