

20th September 2024

Pager, walkie-talkie attacks in Lebanon

- ❖ At least nine people died and nearly 3,000 were injured in Lebanon after thousands of Hezbollah's pagers, allegedly rigged with explosives by Israel's Mossad, exploded.



Key Points

- ❖ Hezbollah emerged during the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990), a conflict spurred in part by the presence of Palestinian refugees after Israel's establishment in 1948, which resulted in Israeli invasions of southern Lebanon in 1978 and 1982.
- ❖ Hezbollah was founded about this time, inspired by Iran's 1979 Islamic revolution, and has been funded and supported by Iran and its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC).
- ❖ **About Pagers**
- ❖ A pager is a small, portable device used to receive short messages or alerts.
- ❖ **Operates on:** It operates on a radio frequency network.

- ❖ **Working of Pagers:** Pagers work by receiving wireless signals transmitted over a radio frequency network.

About Lebanon

- ❖ Lebanon is a country in Western Asia.
- ❖ It is the second smallest country in continental Asia.
- ❖ It is located between Syria to the north and east and Israel to the south, while Cyprus lies to its west across the Mediterranean Sea.
- ❖ Its location is at the crossroads of the Mediterranean Basin and the Arabian hinterland.
- ❖ It is part of the Levant region of the Middle East.
- ❖ Beirut is the capital of Lebanon.

One Nation, One Election

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal for "One Nation One Election," which aims to conduct simultaneous elections for the Lok Sabha and state assemblies. The bill is expected to be introduced in the winter session of Parliament.



Key Points

- ❖ The government has constituted an eight-member high-level committee to examine One Nation, One Election. Former President Ram Nath Kovind has been appointed as Chairman of the committee.
- ❖ To ensure that simultaneous elections do not conflict with the Constitution, the Kovind committee has proposed amendments to Article 83, which governs the term of the Lok Sabha, and Article 172, which covers the tenure of state assemblies.

Background

- ❖ India started holding simultaneous elections immediately after its independence with the first election in 1952, in which voting was done for Lok Sabha and State Assemblies together.
- ❖ The practice was continued and followed for the elections held in 1957, 1962 and 1967.
- ❖ In 1970, the Lok Sabha was itself dissolved prematurely and fresh elections were held in 1971. Thus, till 1970, only the First, Second and Third Lok Sabha enjoyed full five-year terms.

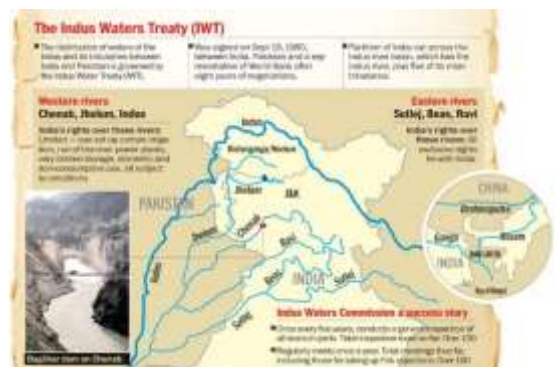
Simultaneous Elections Elsewhere:

- ❖ In South Africa, elections to national as well as provincial legislatures are held simultaneously for five years and municipal elections are held two years later.

- ❖ In Sweden, elections to the national legislature (Riksdag) and provincial legislature/county council (Landsting) and local bodies/municipal Assemblies (Kommunfullmaktige) are held on a fixed date i.e. second Sunday in September every fourth year.
- ❖ In Britain, the Fixed-term Parliaments Act, 2011 was passed to provide a sense of stability and predictability to the British Parliament and its tenure.
- ❖ It provided that the first elections would be held on the 7th of May, 2015 and on the first Thursday of May every fifth year thereafter.

Modification in Indus Water Treaty

- ❖ Recently, India has issued a notice to Pakistan seeking modification of the more than six-decade-old Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) that governs the sharing of waters of six rivers in the Indus system between the two countries.



Key Points

- ❖ The Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) is a water-sharing agreement signed in 1960 between India and Pakistan, mediated by the World Bank. It allocates the waters of the Indus River system between the two countries. Under the treaty:
- ❖ Pakistan receives the waters of the Western Rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab)
- ❖ India receives water from the Eastern Rivers (Ravi, Beas, Sutlej).
- ❖ India can also use the Western Rivers for restricted uses such as hydroelectric power generation, subject to specific constraints and a dispute resolution process supervised by a Permanent Indus Commission, which may include Neutral Experts and a Court of Arbitration if necessary.

Various Projects to be Inspected Under IWT:

- ❖ **Pakal Dul and Lower Kalnai:** Pakal Dul Hydro Electric Project built on river Marusudar, a tributary of the Chenab. Lower Kalnai is developed on the Chenab.
- ❖ **Kishanganga Hydroelectric Project:** It is a run-of-the-river project located in J&K.

- ❖ Pakistan objected to the project arguing that it would affect the flow of the Kishanganga River (called the Neelum River in Pakistan).
- ❖ In 2013, The Hague's Permanent Court of Arbitration (CoA) ruled that India could divert all the water with certain conditions.
- ❖ **Ratle Hydroelectric Project:** It is a run-of-the-river hydroelectric power station on the Chenab River, in J&K.

J&K CEO Launches Voters' Pledge Campaign

- ❖ In Jammu and Kashmir, the Office of Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) J&K, P. K. Pole has launched a Voters' Pledge campaign ahead of the J&K Assembly Election 2024, to increase the voter turnout in the union territory.
- ❖ **Key Points**
- ❖ The campaign was launched under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program, which is a flagship programme of the Election Commission of India to promote voter education and participation in elections which are commencing on 18 September 2024 across J&K.



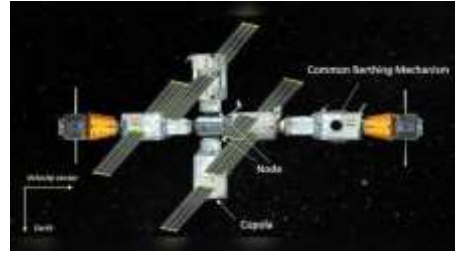
- ❖ The elections will occur in three phases: the first phase on September 18, the second on September 25, and the final phase on October 5.
- ❖ Over 23 lakh voters will cast their votes for 219 candidates, including 90 independents, across 24 Assembly constituencies.
- ❖ The first phase covers 24 constituencies in Chenab Valley districts (Doda, Kishtwar, Ramban) and South Kashmir districts (Anantnag, Pulwama, Kulgam, Shopian).
- ❖ The second phase will cover 26 seats, and the third phase will involve 40 seats.

Bhartiya Antriksh Station (BAS)

- ❖ The cabinet gave approval for the development of first module of Bharatiya Anthariksh Station (BAS-1) and undertake missions to demonstrate and validate various technologies for building and operating BAS.

Key Points

- ❖ Presently, there are two space stations in orbit namely, International Space Station and China's Tiangong Space Station.



- ❖ The Cabinet also gave its nod for other missions including sending an orbiter to Venus, the next phase of the Gaganyaan missions, the development of an Indian space station, and development of new generation of launch vehicles.
- ❖ The first module of BAS is expected to be launched by December 2028, with an operational space station by 2035.

Revised Gaganyaan Programme

- ❖ The Gaganyaan Programme, approved in 2018, envisions human spaceflight to Low Earth Orbit (LEO).
- ❖ It aims to develop and demonstrate crucial technologies for long-duration human spaceflight missions.
- ❖ Under the Revised Programme, ISRO would complete four missions under the existing Gaganyaan Programme by 2026, as well as the development of BAS-1 and four missions to demonstrate and validate various BAS technologies by December 2028.
- ❖ ISRO intends to build additional modules by 2035 to bring the space station up to full operational status.

Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV)

- ❖ The Next Generation Launch Vehicle (NGLV) is a reusable, low-cost launch vehicle developed by ISRO, designed to enhance India's space capabilities.



- ❖ NGLV will have three times the present payload capability and will be 1.5 times more cost-effective compared to LVM3.
- ❖ The vehicle will have a maximum payload capacity of 30 tonnes to Low Earth Orbit and is expected to significantly reduce the cost of access to space.
- ❖ NGLV's reusable first-stage and modular green propulsion systems will contribute to its cost efficiency and sustainability.
- ❖ The NGLV is integral to ISRO's mission to establish the Bharatiya Antariksh Station, a space station for scientific research, by 2035.

- ❖ The Venus Orbiter Mission (VOM), approved by the Union Cabinet is scheduled to launch in March 2028.
- ❖ The Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Bureau of India (PMBI) has signed a pact with Coal India Limited to set up Jan Aushadhi Kendras.
- ❖ Squadron Leader Mohana Singh has become the first female fighter pilot to join the Indian Air Force's LCA Tejas fighter fleet, specifically the 18 'Flying Bullets' squadron.
- ❖ Maharashtra leads with a 13.3% share of India's GDP, although its contribution has decreased from over 15%.
- ❖ Amazon India appointed Samir Kumar as the new country manager, effective October 1, 2024.
- ❖ Jordan's King Abdullah II has appointed Jafar Hassan as the new Prime Minister (PM) of Jordan replacing the outgoing PM Bisher Khasawneh, who has been serving as the PM of Jordan since October 2020.
- ❖ Moneyview becomes the 6th Indian startup to achieve unicorn status in 2024 after Krutrim, Perfios, Porter, Rapido, and Ather.

News Shorts

- ❖ Cabinet approved continuation of PM-AASHA scheme for farmers' support.

Important Daily Current Affairs Question

1. Which of the following is the capital of Lebanon?

- (a) Damascus
- (b) Beirut
- (c) Amman
- (d) Cairo

Answer – (d)

2. Who is the first female fighter pilot to join the LCA Tejas fleet and the elite 'Flying Bullets' squadron?

- (a) Sqn Ldr Bhawna Kanth
- (b) Mr Avni Chaturvedi
- (c) Sqn Ldr Anjali Gupta
- (d) Sqn Ldr Mohana Singh

Answer – (d)

