



**NAMAN SHARMA**  
IAS ACADEMY

# Daily

# **CURRENT AFFAIRS**

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 **Offline Centre Location:**  
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# 1. ISRO Calls for Proposals from Indian Scientists to Analyse Aditya-L1 Solar Mission Data

## Why in the News?

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has issued its first Announcement of Opportunity (AO) inviting proposals from Indian scientists to utilise data and observation time from Aditya-L1, India's first dedicated solar mission. The announcement coincides with the second anniversary of the spacecraft reaching the Sun–Earth L1 Lagrangian point on January 6, 2024. ISRO has already released over 23 terabytes (TB) of mission data into the public domain to support solar research.



## Background

- **Launch:** September 2, 2023
- **Arrival at L1 Point:** January 6, 2024 (after a 127-day journey)
- **Location:** Sun–Earth L1 Lagrangian point, around 1.5 million km from Earth
- **Mission Objective:** Continuous observation of the Sun's outer atmosphere, magnetic fields, and solar activities.

The L1 point provides a stable observation platform allowing uninterrupted monitoring of solar behaviour without eclipses or occultations. Since its deployment, Aditya-L1 has been providing continuous, high-resolution solar data, enabling insights into solar storms, coronal heating, and space weather dynamics.

## Features

- Open exclusively to Indian scientists and researchers working in India.

- Applicants must submit proposals as Principal Investigators (PIs).
- Proposals must include sound scientific and technical justification.
- Selected researchers will gain access to:
  - Mission data already released
  - Future observation time (subject to approval)
- Over 23 TB of mission data is already available in the public domain.
- Results from the mission have already appeared in international peer-reviewed journals.

The AO aims to maximise scientific output from the mission while strengthening India's indigenous solar physics research ecosystem.

## Features of the Mission

### Aditya-L1 carries seven payloads to study:

- Solar corona
- Chromosphere
- Photosphere
- Solar wind
- Magnetic fields
- Energetic particles

### The mission is critical to:

- Understand solar flares and coronal mass ejections (CMEs)
- Predict space weather
- Protect satellites, communication systems, and power infrastructure
- Deepen knowledge of stellar physics

### Challenges

- Requires high-precision data interpretation skills
- A limited number of trained solar physicists in India
- Need for enhanced computational capacity to process large-scale data
- Ensuring open science access while safeguarding data integrity
- Converting research into operational space-weather forecasting tools

### Way Forward

- Build collaborative research networks across universities and research institutes.
- Strengthen capacity-building in solar physics and data science
- Encourage student & early-career researcher participation
- Integrate mission outputs with real-time space weather services
- Promote global collaborations while retaining leadership in mission science

## Conclusion

The Announcement of Opportunity marks an important step in democratising access to India's first solar mission data and nurturing a vibrant solar research ecosystem. Aditya-L1 not only enhances India's scientific prestige but also contributes to global understanding of the Sun and its influence on space weather. With Indian scientists now invited to directly engage with mission data, the initiative promises to deepen domestic research capability and foster innovation in space science.

## 2. EC tells SC it has duty to weed out foreigners

### Why in the News?

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has defended its ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls before the Supreme Court of India, rejecting allegations that it is running a "parallel National Register of Citizens (NRC)." The EC argued that it has a constitutional duty to ensure that no foreign national is included in India's electoral rolls, even if the numbers are very small.

### Background

- Electoral rolls are prepared under Article 324 of the Constitution, which grants the EC superintendence and control over elections.
- Citizenship is a prerequisite for voting under Article 326 (adult suffrage).
- The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) began in Bihar and has now expanded to 12 States and Union Territories.
- Some petitioners alleged that the EC's verification resembles the controversial NRC exercise in Assam.

In response, the EC clarified that electoral roll verification is distinct from NRC, whose purpose was to list all citizens, not only eligible voters.

### Features

- Duty, not just power: The EC argued it has a constitutional duty to prevent foreigners from being registered as voters.

### Citizen-centric Constitution

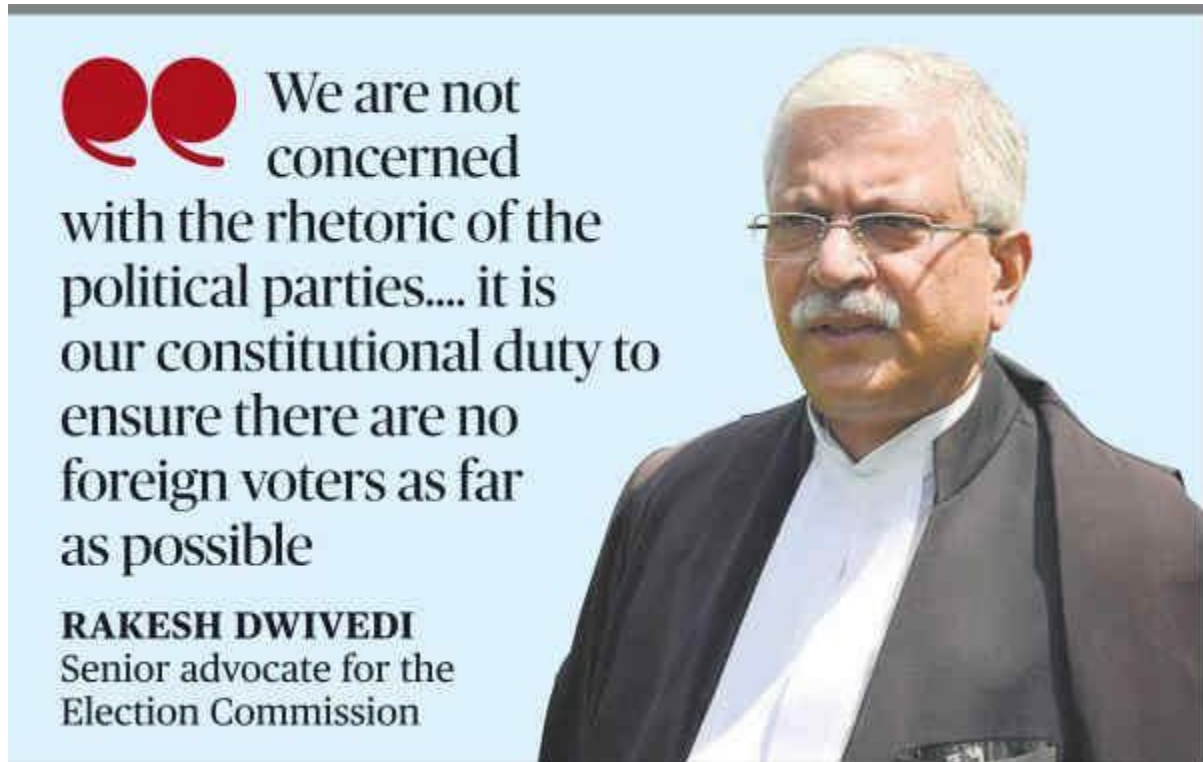
- Citizenship is central to:
  - voting rights
  - holding constitutional offices
  - participation in governance

### Difference between NRC & Electoral Roll Revision

- NRC: includes all citizens
- Electoral Roll: includes only citizens aged 18+ and excludes those of unsound mind. Hence, SIR cannot be labelled as NRC.

### Legal Basis Cited

- Article 324 – EC’s plenary power over elections
- Article 326 – voting rights restricted to citizens
- Article 327 – Parliament’s power is subject to Articles 324 & 326
- Citizenship Act, 1955 – particularly Section 9(2) regarding loss of citizenship due to acquiring foreign citizenship
- Data volume is irrelevant: The EC said even one foreigner on the voter list must be removed.



### **Issues Raised Before the Court**

- Whether verifying citizenship falls only under the Union government's jurisdiction
- Whether EC’s process risks exclusion or harassment
- Whether SIR resembles NRC-like screening

### **Challenges**

- Risk of arbitrary exclusion: verification standards must remain fair and evidence-based
- Administrative burden - large-scale verification across states
- Political controversy - allegations of bias or targeting
- Overlap of powers - Centre handles citizenship; EC handles electoral rolls
- Impact on vulnerable groups - migrant workers, poor citizens lacking documentation

### **Way Forward**

- Ensure clear procedural safeguards - minimise wrongful deletions
- Maintain transparency and accountability in verification

- Provide appeal and grievance redressal mechanisms
- Strengthen coordination between EC & Home Ministry
- Promote documentation awareness among citizens
- Balance electoral integrity with constitutional rights

## **Conclusion**

The Election Commission has asserted that ensuring only citizens vote is fundamental to India's democratic structure. While the EC stresses its constitutional responsibility, critics warn against replicating NRC-type verification pressures. The Supreme Court's evaluation of the SIR exercise will shape the future contours of voter verification, citizenship scrutiny, and electoral integrity in India.

## **3. Chief of Army Staff Highlights Changing Nature of Warfare During UAE Visit**

### **Why in the News?**

India's Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Upendra Dwivedi, addressed officers of the UAE National Defence College during his ongoing official visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE). In his remarks, he stressed the evolving nature of warfare and the growing role of technology in modern conflicts.

### **Background**

- General Upendra Dwivedi is on an official visit to the UAE, as part of India's broader effort to strengthen defence engagement with key partners in West Asia.
- His visit includes strategic-level interactions with senior UAE military leadership and Indian diplomatic representatives.
- Following the UAE visit, the COAS is scheduled to travel to Sri Lanka from January 7–8.

### **Features**

#### **Evolving security environment**

- Modern conflicts are increasingly shaped by technology, information warfare, cyber capabilities, drones, AI, space, and precision strike systems.

#### **Leadership responsibility**

- Senior military officers must play a critical leadership role amid rapid transformations in warfare.

#### **Cooperation & partnerships**

- Stressed bilateral and multilateral defence cooperation, especially between India and the UAE, to promote peace and stability.

#### **Symbiotic outcomes**

- Defence partnerships should enable shared capability building, training exchange, and mutual security benefits.

### **Defence Engagements During the Visit**

- Meeting with Major General Staff Yousef Maayouf Saeed Al Hallami, Commander of UAE Land Forces
- Focus:
  - positive military engagement
  - training convergence
  - defence cooperation enhancement



### **Meeting with India's Ambassador to the UAE, Deepak Mittal**

- Focus: strengthening military diplomacy and strategic relations

### **Upcoming Sri Lanka Visit**

- Guard of Honour by the Sri Lanka Army
- Tribute at the IPKF War Memorial to honour Indian soldiers who served in Sri Lanka.

### **Challenges**

- Rapid militarisation in West Asia

- Increasing technological disruption in warfare
- Need for interoperability and strategic alignment among partners
- Balancing diplomacy and defence outreach

## Way Forward

- Expand India–UAE defence training programmes
- Enhance joint exercises and operational coordination
- Build technology-sharing & capability development platforms
- Deepen regional security cooperation frameworks

## Conclusion

General Upendra Dwivedi's address underscores India's recognition that modern warfare is technology-driven and multidimensional. Strengthening defence partnerships, particularly with key regional actors like the UAE, forms a crucial pillar of India's broader strategy to maintain regional stability, security cooperation, and strategic influence.

## 4. Supreme Court Observes that Victims of Poor AQI Also Contribute to Air Pollution

### Why in the News?

The Supreme Court of India remarked that the very people suffering from poor Air Quality Index (AQI) in Delhi are themselves directly or indirectly contributing to the pollution crisis. The observation came during a hearing on air quality management in the National Capital Region (NCR).

### Background

- Delhi's air quality on Tuesday remained in the 'poor' category, with an average AQI of 293.
- Despite multiple reports, policies, and action plans over the years, air quality continues to deteriorate seasonally, especially during winter.
- The court was hearing submissions from the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) and the amicus curiae.

The Supreme Court expressed concern that years of interventions had yielded little improvement, and there still exists no consensus on the exact causes of pollution.

### Observations

#### Citizens are both victims and contributors

- Use of private vehicles
- Urban construction
- Energy consumption patterns

- Waste burning, etc.

### **Lack of clarity on source contribution**

- Differing estimates on pollution caused by heavy vehicles (20% vs 40%).

### **Conflicting narratives**

- Some blame stubble burning
- Others blame vehicular emissions

### **Impact of restrictive measures**

- Truck bans may disrupt supply chains
- Construction bans affect livelihoods and housing supply

The Court noted that identifying precise pollution contributors is critical before prescribing drastic remedies.



### **Supreme Court's Direction to CAQM**

- CAQM stated it needs two months to finalise a pollution-control plan.
- The Court said two months is too long, given the public health emergency.
- Suggested an issue-wise, time-bound approach with expert input.

### **Challenges in Pollution Management**

- Inadequate real-time source apportionment
- Policy overlap across agencies
- Economic & livelihood trade-offs
- Seasonal meteorological factors

- High dependence on private transport
- Poor enforcement & public awareness gaps

## Way Forward

- Strengthen scientific source apportionment and monitoring
- Promote public transport & EV transition
- Enforce construction dust controls
- Incentivise clean energy and waste management
- Reduce reliance on ad-hoc emergency measures
- Encourage citizen behavioural change
- Adopt city and sector-specific action plans

## Conclusion

The Supreme Court's remarks highlight a crucial truth: air pollution is not just a governance failure; it is also a societal responsibility issue. Addressing Delhi's chronic air crisis requires accurate scientific assessment, coordinated policy action, and active participation from citizens to bring about lasting improvement in air quality.

## 5. Data shows Venezuela's pivot from the U.S. to China

### Why in the news?

In January 2026, the United States under President Donald Trump executed a direct military operation against Venezuela, capturing President Nicolás Maduro and removing him from power — the first such major U.S. intervention in Latin America since Panama in 1989, with significant international backlash. U.S. officials have linked the operation to multiple stated goals: countering alleged narco-terrorism, restoring democracy, and gaining control of Venezuela's vast oil resources. Many analysts also connect this military move to geopolitical competition with China, given China's deep economic and energy ties with Venezuela.

### Background: Venezuela, the U.S., and China

Venezuela's pivot to China over the past two decades predates the 2026 crisis, driven largely by economic necessity and diplomatic strategy:

- Venezuela holds the world's largest proven oil reserves.
- As U.S. influence waned, Venezuela deepened ties with China for energy exports, loans, and investment; China became a major destination for Venezuelan oil and a significant investor in infrastructure.
- China also became a key arms partner and financier through oil-for-debt arrangements and other financial links, something Venezuela leveraged as Western and U.S. sanctions tightened in the 2010s.

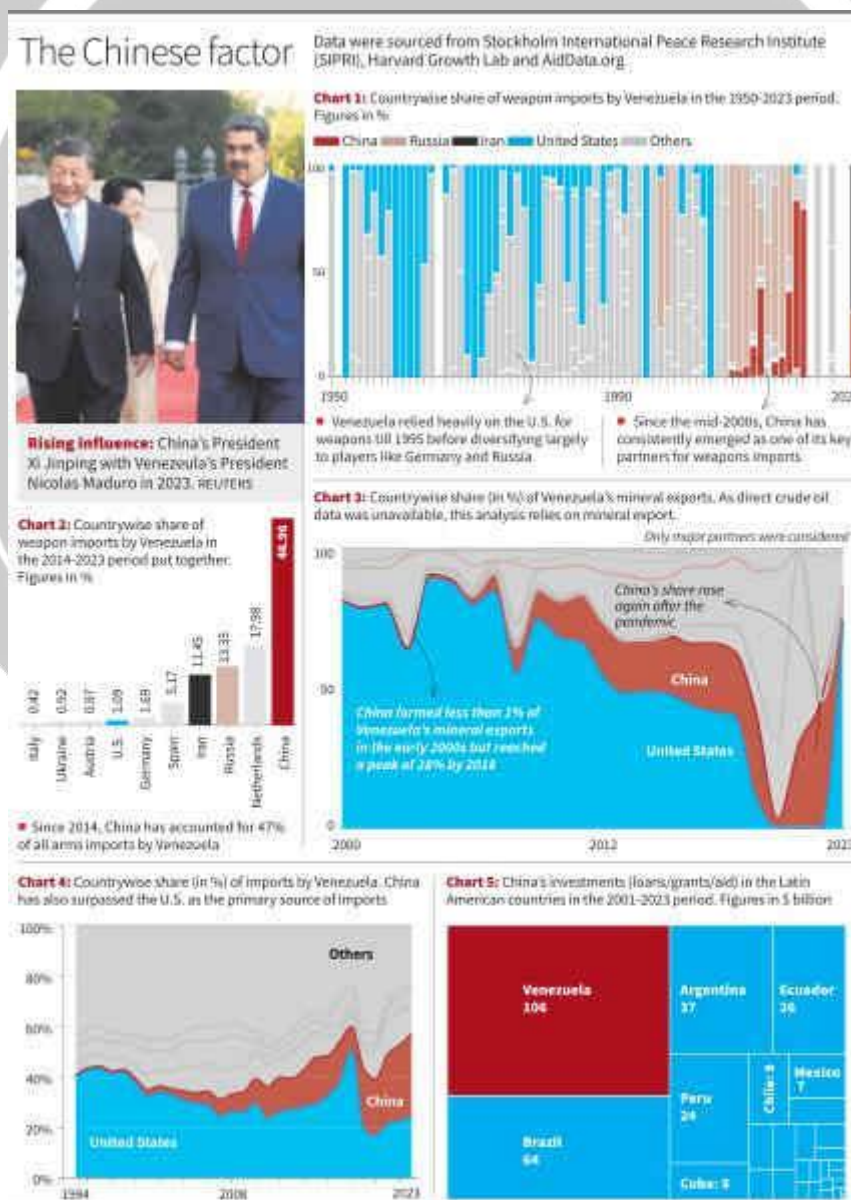
This shift was economic and strategic: Venezuela needed capital and export markets; China needed energy security and influence in the Western Hemisphere.

## Feature: Data on the China–Venezuela Shift

While specific SIPRI arms trade figures and trade charts from your example aren't publicly verified yet, independent reporting confirms broad trends:

- China has been a major buyer of Venezuelan oil, with Venezuelan crude exports to China amounting to hundreds of thousands of barrels per day as of 2025.
- China has extended billions in loans backed by oil to Venezuela in the past decade, embedding Chinese economic influence.
- Beijing's investments and credit made it the largest creditor and strategic partner for Venezuela in Latin America.

These economic data highlight how Venezuela reoriented trade and finance toward China over decades of political and economic crisis.



## Challenge: Was China the trigger for U.S. invasion?

There's no credible evidence that China's influence alone directly triggered the U.S. invasion. However, it is one of several geopolitical factors that may have influenced U.S. strategic calculations:

### Points arguing against a simple "China trigger"

- The publicly stated reasons for U.S. military action have centred on narco-terrorism accusations, sanctions enforcement, and political instability rather than directly on China.
- Official U.S. messaging does not explicitly frame the invasion as an attempt to contain China, at least not in formal statements.
- China's involvement, while economically significant, did not include a military alliance or direct defense commitment that would compel U.S. preemption.

### Points suggesting China did influence U.S. strategic thinking

- Analysts and media reports link Washington's concern with China's growing energy access and geopolitical foothold in Latin America as a backdrop to U.S. policy.
- China's economic and political support for Maduro's government may have contributed to U.S. perceptions that Caracas had aligned itself with a strategic rival- potentially affecting U.S. threat assessments.
- Some coverage suggests Trump has explicitly or implicitly framed his action as countering foreign influence, including from China.

In short: China's deep economic ties with Venezuela were likely one factor among many (including oil interests and geopolitical competition), but there's no direct evidence that China alone was the primary trigger for the U.S. invasion.

## Way forward

### For policymakers

- Rebalance diplomacy and security: U.S. and Latin American states should explore diplomatic channels to reduce escalation and clarify intentions regarding China's regional role.
- Energy and trade dialogues: Consider cooperative frameworks for energy security in Latin America that involve multiple partners, reducing zero-sum perceptions.

### For researchers and analysts

- Track evolving oil ties: Data on Venezuelan exports to China and the U.S. post-2026 will be key to understanding how the invasion reshapes energy geopolitics.
- Assess international law impacts: Explore how unilateral military actions affect norms and alliances in Latin America and beyond.

## Conclusion

China's growing influence in Venezuela, through oil exports, loans, and economic cooperation, is part of the broader geopolitical context of rising U.S.–China competition. This shift likely informed

U.S. strategic thinking, but available evidence does not support the claim that Chinese influence was the sole or direct trigger for the U.S. invasion. The 2026 intervention appears driven by a mixture of political, economic, security, and regional power considerations, with China being one variable among many in a complex geopolitical landscape.

## 6. India Turned to Trump Aide's Firm During Standoff with Pakistan

### Why in the News?

A U.S. Department of Justice filing under the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) has revealed that the Indian Embassy in Washington engaged the U.S.-based lobbying firm SHW LLC, linked to former Trump campaign official Jason Miller, during the India-Pakistan military standoff preceding the May 10, 2025, ceasefire after Operation Sindoor. The filings show four outreach requests on May 10, 2025, including approaches to senior White House officials and the U.S. Trade Representative to influence media coverage and diplomatic perception of the conflict. This development has triggered debate over India's use of U.S. political lobbyists and the extent of U.S. involvement in the ceasefire process.

## Private diplomacy

The filings under U.S. Foreign Agent Registration Act by lobby firm SHW LLC marks India as the only client

- Filings show 60 entries from April 24, 2025, detailing requests from the Indian Embassy
- Total four requests for calls made on day of the Indo-Pak. ceasefire
- Half of the entries related to lobbying work on India-U.S. trade discussions
- Filings show, for the first time, a lobby firm asking to schedule meetings for External Affairs Minister and other officials



**Close allies:** U.S. President Donald Trump with Jason Miller, Principal of SHW LLC.  
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

### Background

- India and Pakistan entered a tense military escalation following Operation Sindoor, leading to concerns of broader regional instability.
- On May 10, 2025, a ceasefire was announced.
- U.S. President Donald Trump publicly suggested that U.S. pressure contributed to the ceasefire and even hinted at trade leverage.
- The Indian government officially denied any U.S. mediation role.
- However, FARA filings by SHW LLC showed:
  - Contact with White House Chief of Staff Susie Wiles
  - U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer
  - NSC official Ricky Gill
  - White House Communications Director Steven Cheung
  
- Pakistan also reportedly spent millions lobbying the Trump administration during the standoff.

The Indian Embassy justified the lobbying as routine outreach, though diplomats acknowledge that direct engagement through Trump-aligned political operatives marks a significant shift in India's diplomatic practice.

## Features

### Use of Trump-Aligned Lobbying Network

- SHW LLC is linked to Jason Miller, a former Trump campaign spokesperson.
- The filings indicate lobbying efforts included arranging meetings for:
  - EAM S. Jaishankar
  - Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri
  - Deputy NSA Pavan Kapoor
  - Ambassador Vinay Kwatra
  - Including outreach to high-ranking officials such as VP J.D. Vance and CIA Director John Ratcliffe.

### Day-of-ceasefire engagement

- Outreach occurred on the same day the ceasefire was announced, reinforcing speculation of U.S. mediation.

### Pakistan also lobbied aggressively.

- U.S. media reports confirm parallel Pakistani outreach efforts, intensifying the narrative of Washington as a pressure hub.

### MEA Narrative vs U.S. Narrative Gap

- India maintains that the ceasefire was bilaterally negotiated.
- U.S. officials publicly highlighted their "role, creating diplomatic ambiguity.

### A 'First' for Indian Diplomacy

- Former officials say India traditionally relies on state-to-state channels, not political lobbyists.

- Use of partisan networks reflects adaptation to a transactional U.S. administration.

## **Challenges**

### **Perception of External Mediation**

- Risks undermining India's long-held bilateralism doctrine on Pakistan.

### **Politicisation of Diplomacy**

- Engagement through political operatives rather than institutional channels may:
  - Create dependency
  - Reduce transparency
  - Expose India to domestic U.S. political shifts

### **Strategic Signalling to Pakistan & China**

- Could be interpreted as a weakness or vulnerability to diplomatic pressure.

### **Legal & Ethical Scrutiny**

- FARA disclosures invite international and domestic scrutiny.

### **Possible Precedent Setting**

- Could normalise political lobbying over professional diplomacy, impacting future administrations.

## **Way Forward**

### **Strengthen Institutional Diplomatic Channels**

- Prioritise engagement through:
  - State Department
  - NSC mechanisms
  - Congressional institutions

### **Maintain Strategic Autonomy Narrative**

- Communicate clearly that bilateral issues remain bilateral.

### **Diversify Strategic Partnerships**

- Avoid over-reliance on any one U.S. political faction.

### **Transparency & Parliamentary Oversight**

- Periodic disclosures may build public trust without compromising security.

## Build Media Diplomacy Capacity

- Proactively shape narratives through:
  - Public diplomacy
  - Strategic communication teams
  - International outreach platforms

## Conclusion

The FARA filings revealing India's engagement with a Trump-aligned lobbying firm during the 2025 India-Pakistan standoff mark a notable evolution in India's diplomatic toolkit, reflecting the increasingly transactional nature of U.S. politics. While the government describes such outreach as routine, the timing and political alignment involved raise serious questions about dependence on partisan influence networks, the perception of U.S. mediation, and the future of India's strategic autonomy doctrine.

## 7. Education Minister releases 55 volumes of literary works.

### Why in the News?

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan released 55 volumes of classical literary works across major Indian classical languages, Kannada, Odia, Telugu, Malayalam, and Tamil - along with a sign-language series of the Tirukkural. This initiative aims to place India's linguistic heritage at the centre of education, research, and cultural identity.



## Background

- India has a rich legacy of classical languages and literary traditions
- The Centres of Excellence for Classical Languages under the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) and the Central Institute of Classical Tamil prepared these works.

## Out of the 55 works:

- 41 were produced by CIIL centres
- 14 (including the sign-language Tirukkural) were produced by the Central Institute of Classical Tamil
- The initiative aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which promotes learning in Indian languages and preserving cultural heritage.

## Features

- Multiple classical languages covered: Kannada, Odia, Telugu, Malayalam, and Tamil
- Sign-language inclusion: Tirukkural made accessible for hearing-impaired learners
- Translations included:
  - Malayalam translations of Sangam-era works like Purananooru, Pathitru Pathu, and Pathuppattu
  - Telugu translation of Silappathikaram
  - Odia literary works such as Charyapada and Madalapanji
- Multilingual reach: English and Hindi translations to expand accessibility
- Emphasis on linguistic unity and cultural pride
- Promotes Indian languages as national languages, moving away from colonial attitudes toward language hierarchies

## Significance

- Strengthens linguistic inclusivity and cultural continuity
- Encourages research and scholarship in classical traditions
- Revives and preserves ancient texts and epics
- Supports education in mother tongues, as envisaged in NEP 2020
- Enhances national integration through linguistic diversity

## Challenges

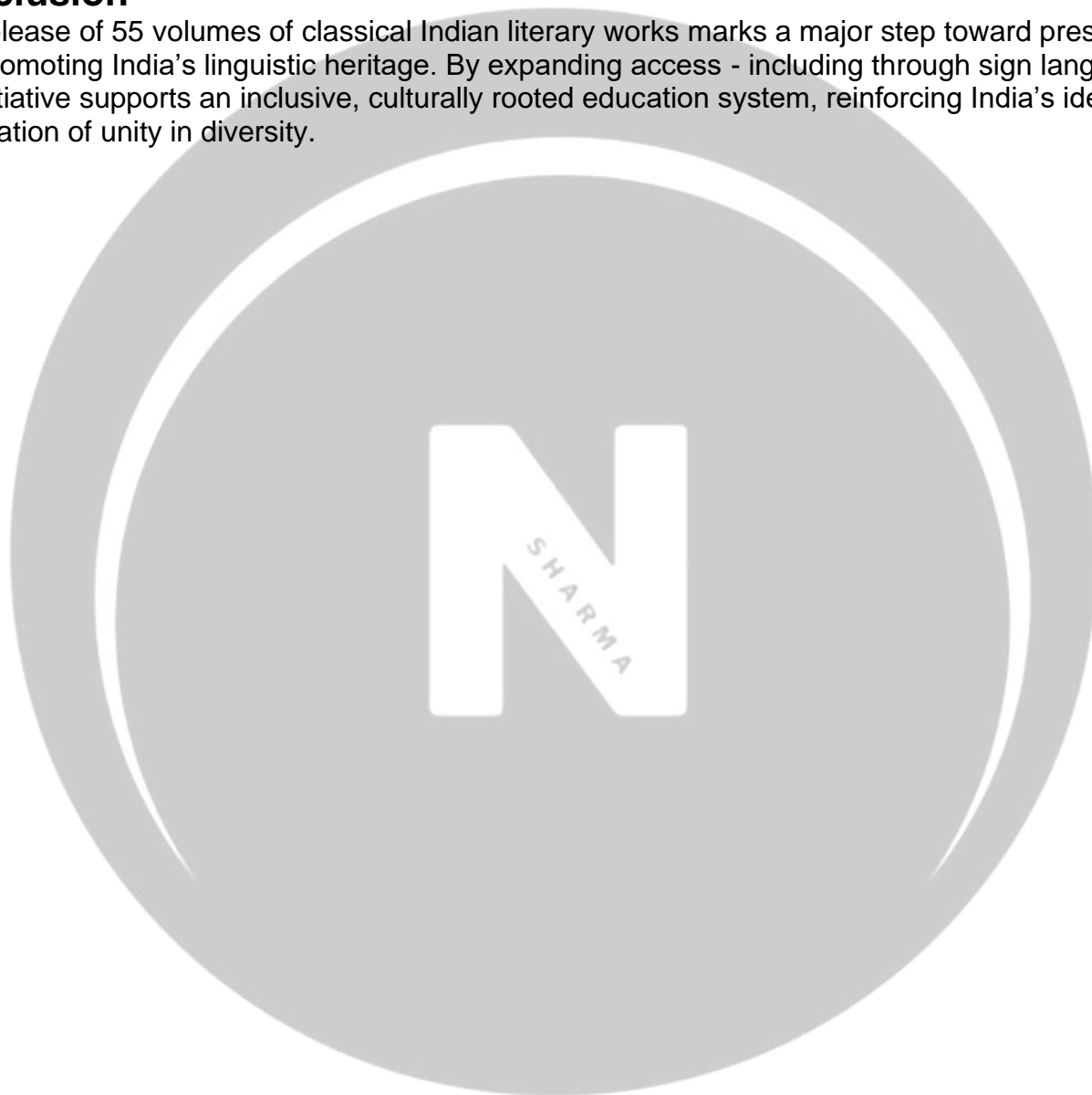
- Limited readership and awareness about classical literature among the youth
- Resource constraints in translation, preservation, and academic promotion
- Ensuring quality and authenticity in translations
- Digital preservation gaps for classical literature
- Lack of systematic integration into mainstream curricula

## Way Forward

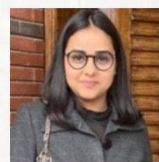
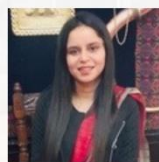
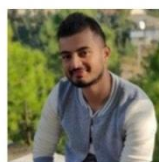
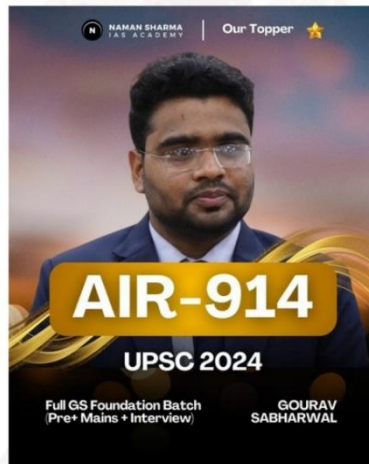
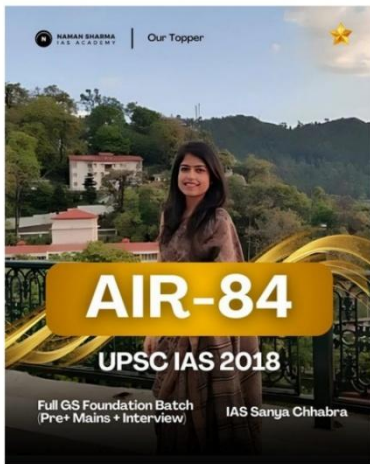
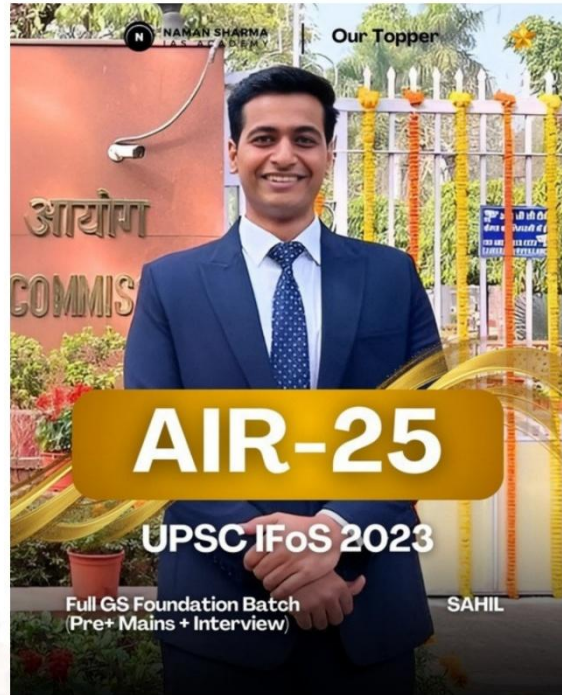
- Promote digital archives and open-access platforms for classical works
- Integrate classical texts into school and university curricula
- Encourage scholarships, research grants, and fellowships in classical languages
- Expand translation projects across more Indian and global languages
- Conduct outreach programmes, festivals, and public engagement initiatives
- Strengthen inclusivity tools such as sign language and Braille translations

## **Conclusion**

The release of 55 volumes of classical Indian literary works marks a major step toward preserving and promoting India's linguistic heritage. By expanding access - including through sign language- the initiative supports an inclusive, culturally rooted education system, reinforcing India's identity as a nation of unity in diversity.



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