DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 14-08-2025

GS-1

1. **Dhirio-Bull Fighting**

GS-2

2. **Overseas Citizen of India (OCI)**

GS-3

3. **Cess in India**
4. **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)**
5. **Satellite Internet**

Dhirio-Bull Fighting

Syllabus: GS-1; Art & Culture

Context

- Recently, legislators in the Goa Assembly demanded the legalization of **Dhirio**, a traditional bull-fighting sport, citing its cultural significance.
- However, the practice remains banned under a 1997 High Court order prohibiting all forms of animal fights.

About Dhirio-Bull Fighting

- **Cultural Significance**: Dhirio is deeply rooted in Goa's heritage, often organized after the harvest season and during Church feasts.
- **How It Works**: Two bulls charge at each other, locking horns while trainers provoke them. Fights were traditionally held in paddy fields and football grounds.
- **Historical Context**: The practice dates back to the Portuguese era and was a popular rural sport.

Legal Status & Controversy

- **Ban Since 1997**: The Goa High Court banned Dhirio under the **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960**, deeming it inhumane.

- **Demands for Legalization**: Supporters argue it is a cultural tradition, while animal rights activists oppose it due to cruelty concerns.

Overseas Citizen of India (OCI)

Syllabus: GS-2; Polity- Citizenship

Context

- The Ministry of Home Affairs has announced new rules for overseas citizens of India that may impact their future registration or cancellation.

What is the OCI Scheme?

- The **Overseas Citizen of India (OCI)** status grants foreign nationals of Indian origin the right to live, work, and travel in India without visa restrictions.

- **Introduced in**: 2005
- **Governing Ministry**: Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)
- **Purpose**:
    - Strengthen ties with the Indian diaspora.
    - Provide long-term residency and economic benefits.

Key Benefits

- **Visa-free entry**: Lifelong, multiple-entry visa.
- **Economic rights**: Property ownership (except agricultural land), investment, and education.
- **Restrictions**: No voting rights or eligibility for constitutional posts.

Eligibility Criteria

- Former Indian citizens (after 26 Jan 1950) or their descendants.
- Excludes those with **Pakistani or Bangladeshi** citizenship (self or ancestors).

Recent Amendments: Stricter OCI Rules

The MHA has expanded grounds for **cancelling OCI registration**:

1. **Conviction**: If sentenced to **2+ years in jail** (any country, if the crime exists in India).
2. **Charge-sheeted**: If accused of an offence punishable by **7+ years** (even if trial is pending).

Other Existing Cancellation Clauses

- Fraud in OCI application.
- Involvement in anti-India activities (e.g., national security threats).

Why the Change?

- The amendment ensures OCIs comply with Indian laws, regardless of where the offence occurs. It tightens oversight on serious criminal conduct.

Cess in India

Syllabus: GS-3; Economy, GS-2; Governance

Context

- The **Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG)** found that the Central Government failed to transfer **₹3.69 lakh crore** of cess collections to the designated funds meant for specific purposes.

What is a Cess?

- A **cess** is a **tax on tax** imposed by the government for a **specific purpose** until sufficient funds are collected.
- Unlike regular taxes (e.g., income tax, excise duty), a cess is an **additional charge** on top of existing taxes.
- Example: **Swachh Bharat Cess** was introduced to fund cleanliness initiatives.

Key Differences Between Tax and Cess

Aspect	Tax	Cess
Purpose	General revenue for the government	Specific purpose (e.g., education, health, infrastructure)
Revenue Usage	Goes to **Consolidated Fund of India (CFI)**—can be used for any purpose	Must be used **only for the specified purpose** after parliamentary approval
Sharing with States	**Mandatory** (as per Finance Commission)	**Not mandatory** (may or may not be shared with states)

Why is Cess Imposed?

- To raise funds for **specific projects** (e.g., **Education Cess, Health Cess**).
- Ensures money is **earmarked** for a particular cause.
- **Temporary** in nature (theoretically, it should stop once the goal is achieved).

Controversy Over Cess

- **Misuse of Funds**: Despite being collected for specific purposes, cess revenue often remains **unallocated** (as seen in the CAG report).
- **Lack of Transparency**: Unlike regular taxes, cess funds are not always transferred to the intended schemes.
- **Additional Burden on Taxpayers**: Since it is a **tax on tax**, it increases the overall tax liability.

Conclusion

While cess is meant to fund critical projects, **accountability in its utilization remains a concern**. The recent CAG report highlights the need for better governance in ensuring cess collections reach their intended purposes.

India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)

Syllabus: GS-3; Science & Technology, GS-2; Government Policies & Intervention

Context

- The government approved **four new semiconductor manufacturing projects** in **Odisha, Punjab, and Andhra Pradesh**.
- These projects align with India's goal of reducing reliance on imports and strengthening the electronics supply chain.

About

- The **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)** is a key initiative by the Government of India to establish a robust semiconductor and display manufacturing ecosystem in the country.

About India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)

- **Establishment**: Launched in **2021** under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)**.
- **Structure**: Operates as an **independent Business Division** within **Digital India Corporation** with administrative and financial autonomy.
- **Objective**: To position India as a **global hub for semiconductor design, manufacturing, and packaging**.

Key Functions of ISM

- **Nodal Agency**: Oversees the implementation of the **Semicon India Programme**.
- **Advisory Board**: Comprises global semiconductor experts to guide policy and investments.
- **Financial Support**: Facilitates incentives for semiconductor fabs, display fabs, and chip design.
- **Promotion of R&D**: Encourages indigenous **Intellectual Property (IP)** and **Technology Transfer (ToT)**.

Semicon India Programme (₹76,000 Crore Outlay)

The programme includes **four key schemes**:

- **Scheme for Semiconductor Fabs**: Financial support for setting up semiconductor fabrication plants.
- **Scheme for Display Fabs**: Incentives for manufacturing display panels.
- **Scheme for Compound Semiconductors/Silicon Photonics/Sensors Fab & ATMP/OSAT**: Supports packaging and testing facilities.
- **Design Linked Incentive (DLI) Scheme**: Encourages domestic semiconductor design innovation.

Significance of ISM

- **Boosts Electronics Manufacturing**: Aims to reduce dependency on imports (currently 90% of chips are imported).
- **Attracts Global Players**: Companies like **Micron, Tata, and Foxconn** have shown interest.
- **Job Creation**: Expected to generate thousands of high-skilled jobs in semiconductor design and fabrication.

Challenges

- High capital investment requirements.
- Need for skilled workforce and advanced infrastructure.
- Competition from established players like **Taiwan (TSMC), South Korea (Samsung), and the USA (Intel)**.

Conclusion

The **India Semiconductor Mission** is a strategic step towards **self-reliance in semiconductor technology**, crucial for **defense, telecom, AI, and consumer electronics**. With continued government support and private sector participation, India aims to emerge as a major player in the global semiconductor industry.

Satellite Internet

Syllabus: GS-3: Science & Technology

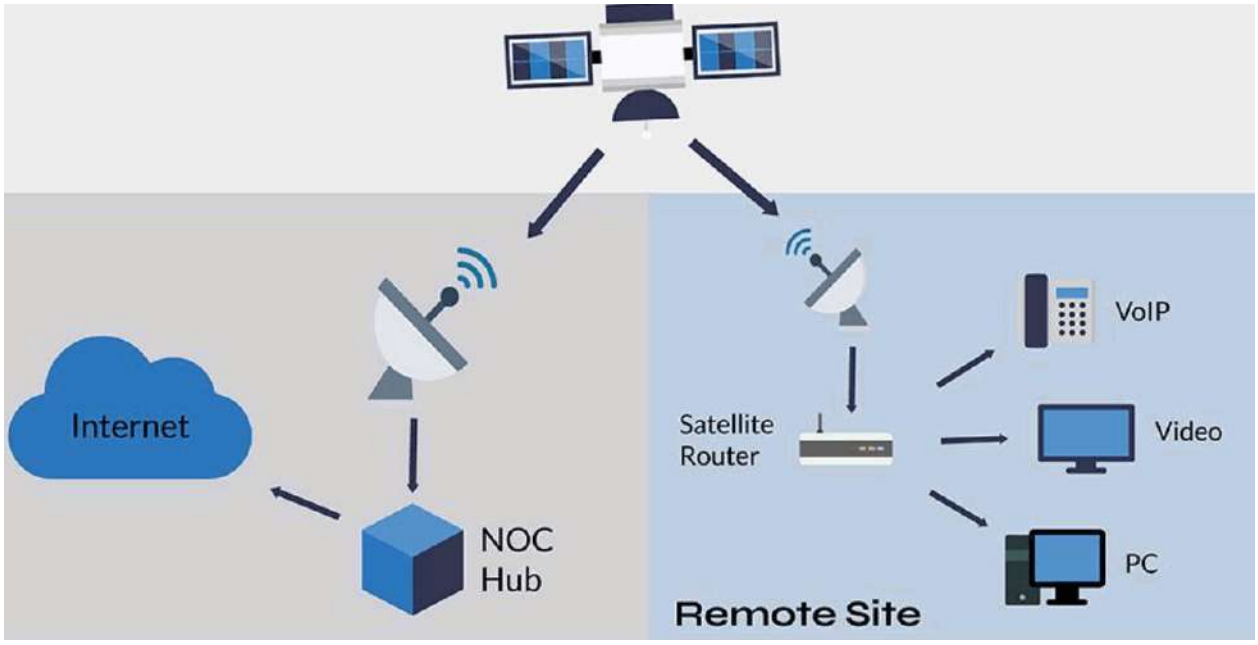
Context

- Elon Musk's **Starlink** (a satellite internet service) is set to launch in India, revolutionizing digital connectivity and strategic communication.

What is Satellite Internet?

A wireless technology providing internet access via **satellites in space**, bypassing traditional cables/fiber. Components:

- **Space Segment**: Satellites with communication payloads (antennas, transponders).
- **Ground Segment**: User terminals (dishes/modems) and gateway stations.
- **Data Flow**: Signals relayed between user devices ↔ satellites ↔ ground stations ↔ internet backbone.



Why is it Needed?

- Bridges the **digital divide** in remote/rural areas.
- Ensures **disaster resilience** (e.g., floods, earthquakes).
- Provides **on-the-move connectivity** (ships, aircraft, military).

- Enhances **strategic security** (e.g., high-altitude conflict zones like Siachen).
- Boosts **economic inclusion** (e-governance, telemedicine).

Key Features

- **Global coverage** (oceans, deserts, polar regions).
- **Dual-use** (civilian + military applications).
- **Rapid deployment** (hours vs. years for terrestrial networks).
- **Mega-constellations** (thousands of Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites for low latency).

How It Works?

- User sends a request (e.g., webpage) via terminal → satellite.
- Satellite relays signal to ground station → internet backbone.
- Response follows reverse path.
- **Seamless handover**: LEO satellites (moving fast) transfer connections automatically.

Types of Orbits

Orbit	Altitude	Pros	Cons	Example
GEO	~35,786 km	Wide coverage	High latency, no polar reach	Viasat
MEO	2,000–35,786 km	Balanced latency/coverage	Needs many satellites	O3b Network
LEO	<2,000 km	Low latency, cost-effective	Requires mega-constellations	**Starlink**

Applications

- **Civilian**: Rural broadband, smart farming, environmental monitoring.

- **Disaster Management**: Emergency communication during crises.
- **Defense**: Secure battlefield comms, drone ops.
- **Transport**: Aviation/shipping navigation, autonomous vehicles.
- **Healthcare**: Telemedicine in remote areas.

Challenges

- **Space debris** from mega-constellations.
- **Regulatory hurdles** (spectrum allocation, global coordination).
- **High initial costs** (satellite deployment, user terminals).

Conclusion

Satellite internet is a **strategic tool** for India's security, economic growth, and digital equity. Indigenous development (e.g., ISRO's initiatives) alongside global collaborations (e.g., Starlink) is essential for autonomy in this domain.