# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 03-09-2025

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# Koya Tribe

### Syllabus: GS-1; Tribes, GS-2; Polity-Reservation

### Context

- The **Supreme Court** has issued notice on a plea by **Koya tribe members** challenging the Telangana High Court's order upholding the **ST status of Lambadi, Sugali, and Banjara communities**. The Koyas argue this inclusion dilutes reservation benefits meant for more marginalized tribes.

### About Koya Tribe

### Distribution & Population

- Found in **Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha**, mostly around the **Godavari River region**.
- **2011 Census Population**: 7,38,629.
- Self-designation: **Koithur**.
- Believed to have migrated from **Bastar region (Chhattisgarh)**.

### Language

- Speak **Koya basha** (Dravidian family).
- Closely related to **Gondi**; heavily influenced by **Telugu**.
- Many are bilingual in **Telugu and Gondi**.

### Occupation

- Traditionally **pastoralists and shifting cultivators**.
- Now practice **settled cultivation** + animal husbandry + seasonal forest produce collection.
- Crops: **Jowar, Ragi, Bajra, Millets**.

### Society & Culture

- Organized into **5 gotrams (clans)** – clan membership is **hereditary and lifelong**.
- **Patrilineal and patrilocal** families; family unit = *Kutum*.
- Predominantly **monogamous**.
- Villages near water sources, range from **3–60 households**.
- Village chief = **Peda**.

### Religion & Festivals

- Ethnic religion blended with **Hindu deities**.
- Main deity: **Mother Earth**; also hill and nature gods.
- **Festivals**:
  - *Vijji Pandum* (seed-charming festival).
  - *Kondala Kolupu* (hill deity appeasement).
- **Bison Horn Dance (Permakok)** performed during festivals and marriages.

### Customs

- Maintain **community funds and grain banks** for social security.
- Funerals: **Burial or cremation**; erect **menhirs** to honor the dead.

# Great Salt Lake

### Syllabus: GS-1: World Geography – lakes

### Context:

- The **Great Salt Lake in Utah, USA**, has been shrinking dramatically, reaching record-low levels in 2022.

- As the lakebed dries, scientists have discovered **hidden groundwater-fed oases** beneath it.
- These oases could play a crucial role in sustaining the lake's fragile ecosystem, particularly for **migratory birds, brine shrimp, and microbial life**.
- However, the lake's decline poses serious risks, including **toxic dust storms** from the exposed lakebed and the collapse of surrounding ecosystems.


## About the Great Salt Lake

- **Location:** Northern Utah, USA.
- **Significance:** Largest inland saltwater body in the Western Hemisphere; among the world's saltiest inland waters.
- **Hydrology:** Fed by the **Bear, Weber, and Jordan rivers**; has **no outlet** → water only leaves via evaporation.
- **Fluctuations:**
    - Surface area varied between **6,200 sq. km (1873 & mid-1980s)** and **2,300 sq. km (2022)**.
    - Average depth: **4.9 m**; Maximum depth: **10 m**.
- **Salinity:** Much higher than oceans due to high evaporation; salts include **sodium chloride, sulfates, magnesium, and potassium**.

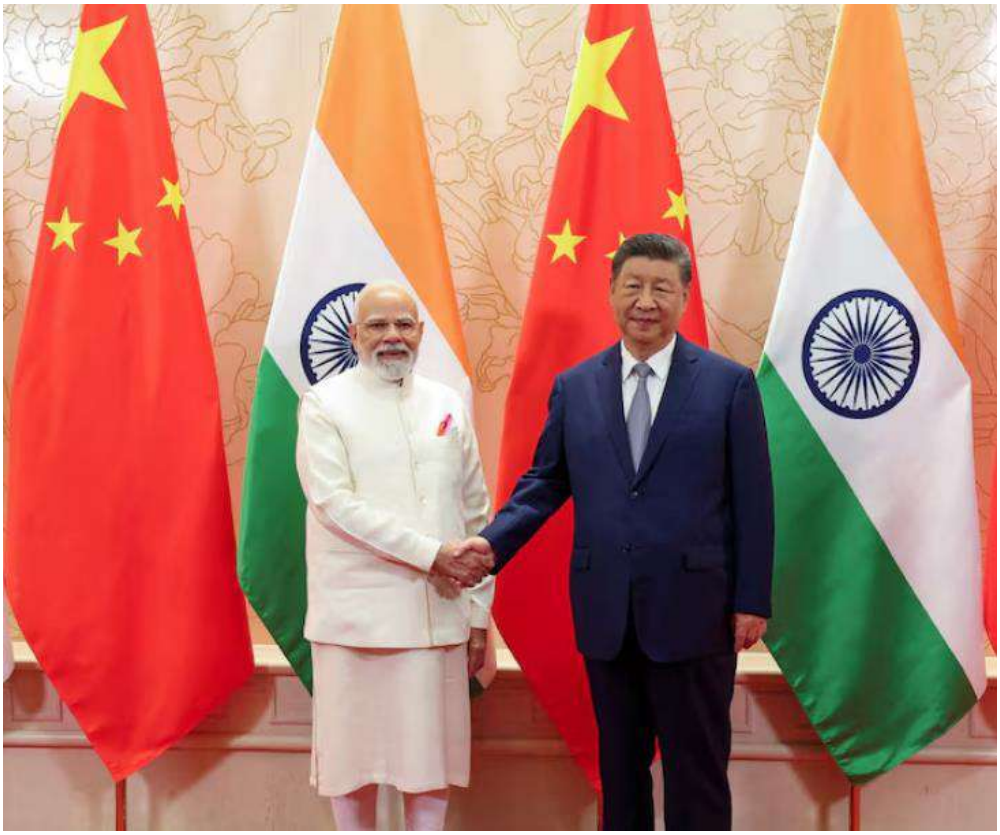
- **Ecosystem:** Supports brine shrimp, migratory birds, and microbial life, but is highly vulnerable to climate change and upstream water diversion.

# India–China Relations

### Syllabus: GS-2; International Relations

### Context

- India and China are partners, not rivals, Modi and Xi say



### Historical Evolution of Relations

- **Ancient contacts**: Records of interaction date back to the 2nd century BCE, facilitated by the **Silk Road**, which enabled trade and spread of Buddhism.
- **Cultural bridges**:
  - **Fa Xian** (5th century) and **Xuan Zang** (7th century) visited India, carrying Buddhist scriptures to China.
  - **Bodhidharma**, a South Indian monk, became the first patriarch of the Shaolin Monastery, shaping martial arts and philosophy.

- **Modern phase**: Independent India recognized the People's Republic of China in 1950. However, the **1962 border war** and subsequent military confrontations created deep mistrust.

## Convergences in India–China Relations

1. **Economic Interdependence**
   - Bilateral trade reached **$127.7 billion in 2024–25**, making China India's second-largest trading partner after the US.
   - China supplies ~70% of India's APIs (pharma), ~97% of electronics, and ~80% of renewable energy components.
   - Chinese investments also flow into India's startup ecosystem.
2. **Multilateral Platforms**
   - Both countries are key players in **BRICS, SCO, G20, AIIB**, advocating multipolarity and reforms of global institutions like the **UN, IMF, WTO**.
   - Shared positions on climate finance and **CBDR (Common But Differentiated Responsibilities)** strengthen cooperation.
3. **Cultural & People-to-People Linkages**
   - **Kailash Mansarovar Yatra**, Buddhist tourism circuits, and student exchanges sustain civilizational ties.
4. **Regional and Global Issues**
   - Cooperation on climate change, energy security, and global development financing enhances their joint influence.

## Divergences and Key Concerns

1. **Border Disputes**
   - Disagreements over **Aksai Chin** (controlled by China, claimed by India) and **Arunachal Pradesh** (claimed by China).
   - Flashpoints: Doklam (2017), Galwan (2020), and friction in **Depsang and Demchok**.
2. **Trade Imbalance**
   - India's trade deficit with China rose to **$99.2 billion in 2024–25**, accounting for ~35% of India's overall trade deficit.
   - Heavy reliance on Chinese imports for critical technologies creates strategic vulnerabilities.
3. **China–Pakistan Nexus**
   - The **China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)** runs through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), violating India's sovereignty.

- China's defense and strategic support to Pakistan deepens India's security concerns.

4. **Strategic Rivalry in the Indo-Pacific**
   - China's **"String of Pearls"** strategy (Sri Lanka, Maldives, Gwadar) expands its presence in India's maritime neighborhood.
   - India counters through partnerships with **Quad (India, US, Japan, Australia)** and I2U2.
5. **Five Fingers of Tibet Doctrine**
   - China historically viewed Ladakh, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, and Arunachal Pradesh as extensions of Tibet, raising concerns about expansionism.
6. **Water Security**
   - As an upper riparian, China controls headwaters of the **Brahmaputra (Yarlung Tsangpo)**.
   - Dams like **Zangmu, Dagu, Jiexu, Jiacha** raise fears of hydrological weaponization.

## Recent Steps Towards Normalisation

- **LAC Disengagement**: Protocols at **Depsang and Demchok** completed in 2024, reducing immediate risk of escalation.
- **Revival of Connectivity**:
  - **Nathu La border trade route** reopened.
  - Direct flights and visa issuance for businesspersons, journalists, and students resumed.
- **Hydro-diplomacy**: China restarted flood data-sharing on **Brahmaputra and Sutlej** (2025).
- **People-to-People Diplomacy**: **Kailash Mansarovar Yatra** resumed in April 2025, signaling goodwill.
- **Track-I Diplomacy**: Special Representatives met in 2024 to revive dialogue on boundary resolution.

## Way Forward

1. **Diplomatic Engagements**
   - Strengthen Track-I and Track-II dialogues through BRICS, SCO, and G20.
   - Institutionalize **hotline and joint verification mechanisms** to avoid border miscalculations.
2. **Economic Strategy**
   - Allow Chinese investment only in **low-risk, non-strategic sectors**.

- Develop "low-sensitivity" trade packages while diversifying critical supply chains.

3. **Water Resource Management**
   - Move beyond seasonal data-sharing to **long-term river-sharing frameworks**.
   - Explore joint hydrological projects to build trust.
4. **Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs)**
   - Expand CBMs beyond military disengagement to include cultural, educational, and business exchanges.
   - Encourage youth and academic interactions to counter entrenched mistrust.
5. **Strategic Balancing**
   - Pursue **engagement without appeasement**: safeguard sovereignty while avoiding unnecessary escalation.
   - Strengthen partnerships with like-minded nations for strategic hedging.

# Bordeaux mixture

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

### Context

- Planters in **Chikkamagaluru and Hassan districts of Karnataka** are preparing to apply Bordeaux mixture for the **third or fourth time this year** due to **crop damage from unseasonal rainfall**.

### About Bordeaux Mixture

- **Composition**: Copper sulfate + Lime (Calcium hydroxide) + Water.
- **Origin**: Discovered in the late 19th century in France's Bordeaux region.
- **Nature**: Bactericide and fungicide; effective in **organic farming**.
- **Uses**:
  - Controls **fungal & bacterial diseases** in fruits, vegetables, and plantation crops.
  - Applied after harvest, before rains.
  - Long-lasting, rain-resistant protection.
  - Useful in **pesticide resistance management** due to multi-site copper action.
- **Limitations**:
  - Low solubility, not volatile.
  - Can **injure new growth** if sprayed on tender leaves.

# Maldives & Lakshadweep Sea-Level Rise

### Syllabus: GS-1: Oceanography, GS-3; Climate change and sea level rise.

### Context:

Recent research on coral microatolls in the Maldives shows that sea levels in the central Indian Ocean have been rising since the late 1950s. This challenges the earlier view that sea-level acceleration began only in the 1990s.

### Data Highlights

- **Long-term trend:** Sea level rose by ~0.3 m between 1930 and 2019, showing sustained acceleration.
- **Rate of rise:**
  - 1930–59: 1–1.8 mm/yr
  - 1960–92: 2.7–4.1 mm/yr
  - 1990–2019: 3.9–4.8 mm/yr
- Since 1959, the average rise has been **3.2 mm/yr**, increasing to about **4 mm/yr** in recent decades.
- Over the last 50 years, the Maldives–Lakshadweep region has seen a **30–40 cm rise** in sea level, far more threatening for low-lying islands.

## Key Findings

- **Early acceleration:** Sea-level rise started accelerating in the 1950s, not in the 1990s as widely believed.
- **Evidence from corals:** Coral growth bands and uranium dating provided accurate long-term records.
- **Role of natural variability:** Coral interruptions matched with events like El Niño, the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD), and tidal cycles.
- **Regional peculiarity:** The central Indian Ocean experienced earlier and faster rise than many coastal zones, reflecting unique oceanographic factors.

## Causes of Sea-Level Rise

- **Thermal Expansion:** Warmer oceans expand, adding to sea-level rise globally.
- **Glacial & Ice-Sheet Melting:** Freshwater inflows from Himalayan glaciers, Arctic, and Antarctic ice sheets raise ocean levels.
- **Indian Ocean Warming:** Higher-than-average warming here alters circulation and currents, amplifying local sea-level rise.
- **Climate Variability:** Periodic events (El Niño, IOD, wind shifts) cause short-term fluctuations, adding to the long-term trend.

## Implications

- **Ecological:**

- Coral reefs lose sunlight due to deeper waters.
- Higher risks of coral bleaching and coastal erosion.
- Fragile reef ecosystems face disruption.

- **Social:**
  - Maldives and Lakshadweep, with low elevation, face the risk of forced displacement and habitat loss.
- **Economic:**
  - Fisheries and tourism — vital for island livelihoods — may decline.
  - Coastal infrastructure faces long-term inundation risks.
- **Geopolitical:**
  - Creation of climate refugees could strain governance and regional security in South Asia and beyond.

## Way Forward

- **Monitoring:** Coral microatolls, combined with tide gauges and satellites, can give long-term, precise datasets.
- **Building resilience:**
  - Restore mangroves and coral reefs as natural barriers.
  - Construct seawalls and adopt climate-resilient infrastructure.
- **Regional Cooperation:** Indian Ocean Rim countries must coordinate adaptation strategies and share data.
- **Global Climate Action:** Meeting Paris Agreement targets is vital to slow down ocean warming and sea-level rise.
- **For India:** Prioritise Lakshadweep by investing in disaster preparedness, ecosystem conservation, and community-based adaptation measures.

## Conclusion

Sea-level rise in the Indian Ocean has been **earlier, faster, and sharper than assumed**, threatening the survival of small island nations and coastal communities. Evidence from coral microatolls provides a valuable historical record, improving our ability to predict future trends. Addressing this challenge requires urgent adaptation, strong regional cooperation, and decisive global action on emissions.