



## **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 05-03-2026**

### **Mapping Perspective**

1. Durand Line

### **Prelims Perspective**

2. Karbi Anglong Ginger
3. Porcelain

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5. India-Canada Relations

## Durand Line

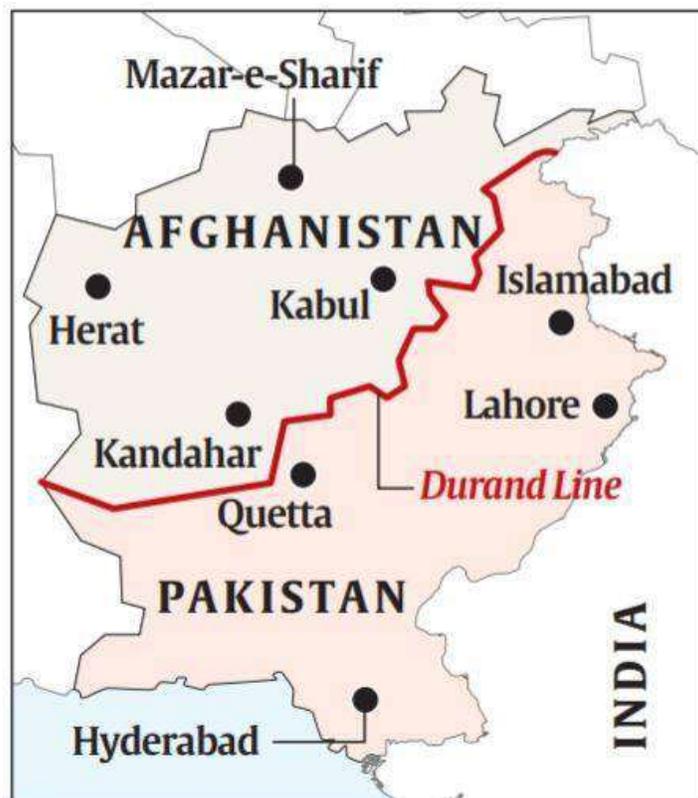
**Syllabus: Prelims Bits – Mapping.**

**Context:**

- The **Durand Line** is a ~2,600 km international boundary separating **Afghanistan** and **Pakistan**.
- It was drawn in **1893** to demarcate spheres of influence between **British India** and the **Abdur Rahman Khan** regime.
- Named after **Sir Henry Mortimer Durand**, who negotiated the agreement.

**Location**

- Runs from the **Iran–Afghanistan border** in the west to the **China–Pakistan border** in the east.
- Passes through major geographic features:
  - Karakoram Range
  - Spīn Ghar
  - Khyber Pass
- Cuts across **Pashtun and Baloch tribal regions** on both sides.



### Historical Background

- **1893 Durand Agreement:** Border negotiated between **Sir Mortimer Durand** and **Emir Abdur Rahman Khan**.
- **1894–1896:** Joint surveys demarcated the boundary on the ground.
- **1919:** Reaffirmed in the **Treaty of Rawalpindi**.
- **1947:** After Pakistan’s creation, **Pakistan inherited the boundary**, but **Afghanistan refused to recognise it as a permanent international border**.
- The dispute has persisted due to **ethnic and territorial concerns**.

### Key Features

- **Colonial Legacy Border:** Drawn during the **Great Game** to secure the northwest frontier of British India.
- **Ethnic Division:** Splits **Pashtun and Baloch tribes**, creating cross-border identity politics.
- **Strategic Corridor:** Linked to the **Wakhan Corridor**, created as a buffer between British India and Tsarist Russia.
- **Militarised Frontier:** Pakistan began **border fencing in 2017**, increasing tensions with Afghanistan.
- **Difficult Terrain:** Mountains, deserts, and tribal areas complicate surveillance and border control.

### Contemporary Significance

- Major source of tension between **Afghanistan and Pakistan**, especially over:
  - **Cross-border militancy**
  - Activities of **Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan**.
- Historically linked to Pakistan’s “**strategic depth**” **doctrine in Afghanistan**, which has become problematic amid strained relations with the Taliban regime.

## Karbi Anglong Ginger

### Syllabus: Prelims Bits

#### Context:

- **Karbi Anglong Ginger** is a premium variety of **ginger** known for its **distinct aroma, strong pungency, and medicinal value**.

- It has been granted a **Geographical Indication (GI) tag**, certifying its unique origin and quality characteristics.
- Recently, **Assam exported its first trial consignment (1.2 metric tonnes) to London**, marking a milestone in agricultural exports.

### Region

- Grown mainly in **Karbi Anglong District** in the state of **Assam**.
- Cultivated in the **Singhasan Hills** region.
- Farming methods include:
  - **Jhum (shifting cultivation)**
  - **Tila cultivation** (hill-slope farming).



### Key Characteristics

- **Aromatic & Pungent**
  - Strong earthy flavour with **high essential oil content**.
- **Medicinal Value**
  - Traditionally used for **digestive disorders and anti-inflammatory purposes**.
- **Organic & Traditional Farming**
  - Mostly grown using **low-chemical or traditional practices**, preserving natural quality.
- **High Market Demand**
  - Used in **culinary, pharmaceutical, and food-processing industries**.

### Significance

- **Boosts Farmer Income**
  - GI recognition ensures **premium pricing and brand identity**.

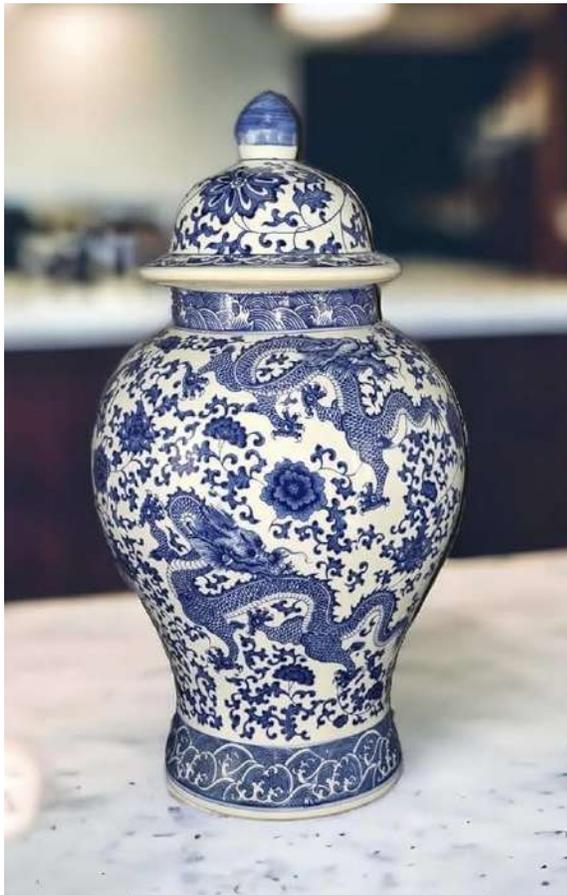
- **Promotes Agricultural Exports**
  - Supports India's strategy of **export diversification through region-specific products**.
- **Encourages Sustainable Farming**
  - Traditional cultivation methods preserve **biodiversity and soil health** in hill ecosystems.

## **Porcelain**

**Syllabus: Prelims Bits.**

**Context:**

- A **shipwreck near Singapore** containing **large quantities of blue-and-white porcelain** has been discovered.
- The cargo dates to the **Mongol-era trade networks**, highlighting the global demand for **Chinese porcelain during the Yuan dynasty**.



## About Porcelain

- **Porcelain** is a **high-quality ceramic material** known for its **strength, durability, translucency, and smooth glossy finish**.
- It is produced by **firing refined clay and minerals at very high temperatures ( $\approx 1200\text{--}1400^\circ\text{C}$ )**.
- Often referred to as "**china**", reflecting its historical origin in **China**.

## Composition (Raw Materials)

Porcelain is made from a mixture of natural minerals:

- **Kaolin (China clay)** – provides plasticity and white colour.
- **Feldspar** – acts as a **flux**, helping materials melt and fuse.
- **Quartz (Silica)** – improves **strength and hardness**.
- Sometimes additional minerals such as **mica** are included depending on the product.

## Historical Development

- **Origin:** China
- **Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE):** Early or primitive porcelain.
- **Yuan Dynasty (1279–1368 CE):** Development of the **classic blue-and-white porcelain** widely known in the West.
- The term "**porcelain**" comes from the Italian word "**porcellana**," used by **Marco Polo** to describe Chinese pottery.

## Major Types of Porcelain

### Hard-Paste Porcelain

- Originated in **China**.
- Fired at **very high temperatures**.
- Highly **durable, dense, and translucent**.
- Traditional Chinese porcelain type.

### Soft-Paste Porcelain

- Developed by **European potters** trying to imitate Chinese porcelain.
- Often contained **ground glass or soapstone**.
- Fired at **lower temperatures**, making it **softer and less durable**.

### Bone China

- Developed in **18th-century England**.
- Contains up to **50% bone ash**.
- Known for **extreme whiteness, translucency, and strength**.

### **Key Properties of Porcelain**

- High material density.
- Smooth and glossy surface finish.
- Translucent appearance, giving a refined aesthetic.
- High resistance to scratches and breakage.
- Heat and chemical resistance.

### **Uses**

- **Dinnerware and tableware** (plates, cups, bowls).
- **Decorative ceramics and art objects**.
- **Electrical insulators** due to heat resistance.
- **Dental and biomedical ceramics**.
- **Tiles and sanitary ware**.

## **Human Development Index (HDI)**

### **Syllabus: GS-2: Social Justice – Human Development.**

#### **Context:**

- **Human Development Index (HDI)** is a composite index developed by the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**.
- Introduced in **1990 Human Development Report**.
- Shifts focus from **economic growth (GDP)** to **people-centred development**.
- Measures **average achievement in three basic dimensions of human development**:
  - Health
  - Education
  - Standard of living
- HDI value ranges **between 0 and 1**.

## Dimensions of HDI

### Health Dimension

- Indicator: **Life expectancy at birth**
- Reflects:
  - Quality of healthcare
  - Nutrition levels
  - Living conditions

### Education Dimension

Measured using two indicators:

- **Mean Years of Schooling (MYS)**
  - Average years of schooling of adults aged **25+ years**.
- **Expected Years of Schooling (EYS)**
  - Total years a child entering school is expected to receive.

### Standard of Living

- Indicator: **Gross National Income (GNI) per capita (PPP)**.
- Adjusted using **Purchasing Power Parity (PPP)** to reflect real living standards.

### HDI Classification of Countries

Category	HDI Value
Very High Human Development	0.800 and above
High Human Development	0.700 – 0.799
Medium Human Development	0.550 – 0.699
Low Human Development	Below 0.550

### Historical Background

- Developed based on the work of:
  - **Mahbub ul Haq**
  - **Amartya Sen**
- Key idea:
  - **Development = expansion of people's choices and capabilities.**

- Introduced in **Human Development Report 1990**.

### India's Performance in HDI

- **HDI value (2023):** 0.685
- **Rank:** 130 out of 193 countries.
- Category: **Medium Human Development**.

### Long-Term Progress

Indicator	1990	2023
HDI Value	0.434	0.685
Life Expectancy	58.6 yrs	~72 yrs
Mean Years of Schooling	3.0 yrs	6.2 yrs
GNI per capita (PPP)	~\$2,000	~\$9,000

### State-level disparities

- **High HDI:** Kerala, Goa, Himachal Pradesh
- **Low HDI:** Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand

### Inequality-Adjusted Human Development Index (IHDI)

- Adjusts HDI based on **inequality in health, education, and income**.
- For **India**, inequality leads to **~31% loss in HDI value**.

### Related UNDP Indices

- **IHDI** – Inequality Adjusted HDI
- **GDI** – Gender Development Index
- **GII** – Gender Inequality Index
- **MPI** – Multidimensional Poverty Index

### Gender Indicators (India)

- **GII Rank:** 108 (UNDP 2024)
- Female labour force participation: **< 30%**

### Government Policies Improving HDI

#### Health

- **Ayushman Bharat (2018)** – health coverage for **10 crore families**.

### Education

- **National Education Policy (2020)** – inclusive and skill-based education.

### Skill Development

- **Skill India Mission (2015)** – vocational training.

### Income & Living Standards

- **PM-KISAN** – income support to farmers.
- **PM Awas Yojana** – housing for poor.

### Social Empowerment

- **Beti Bachao Beti Padhao** – girl child welfare.

### Digital Access

- **Digital India Mission** – improved service delivery.

### Significance of HDI

- Moves beyond **GDP-centric view of development**.
- Focuses on **human well-being and capabilities**.
- Helps:
  - Compare countries
  - Identify development gaps
  - Guide policy priorities.

### Limitations of HDI

- **Oversimplification:** reduces complex realities to one number.
- **Data lag:** statistics may not reflect current conditions.
- **Missing dimensions:**
  - Environmental sustainability
  - Governance
  - Informal economy.
- **Comparability issues** due to methodology changes.

### Way Forward for India

- Improve **quality of education and learning outcomes**.
- Strengthen **primary healthcare and nutrition programmes**.

- Ensure **inclusive economic growth**.
- Reduce **regional and social inequalities**.
- Integrate **climate resilience and sustainability** into development.

### Future Trends in Human Development

- **Digital inclusion and AI** shaping development opportunities.
- Greater emphasis on **climate resilience**.
- Need for **district-level HDI data**.
- Alignment with **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

## **India-Canada Relations**

### Syllabus:GS-2: International Relations – Bilateral.

#### Context:

The Prime Minister of Canada, **Mark Carney**, paid a landmark official visit to India (Feb 27 – March 2, 2026). This visit is significant as it marks a "Strategic Reset" following the diplomatic "rupture" of 2023–24.

- It was the first bilateral visit by a Canadian PM in eight years.
- Canada's "Indo-Pacific Strategy" and a shared need to diversify trade amid global economic shifts (including US trade protectionism).

#### Key Outcomes of the Visit

##### Economic & Trade Breakthroughs

- **CEPA Relaunch:** Signed the **Terms of Reference (ToR)** to resume negotiations for the **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)**, aiming for conclusion by the end of 2026.
- **Trade Target:** Ambitious goal to double bilateral trade to **USD 50 billion by 2030**.
- **CEO Forum:** Reconstituted the India-Canada CEO Forum to drive private-sector investment.

##### Energy & Critical Minerals

- **Uranium Deal:** A **USD 2.6 billion** long-term contract with **Cameco** (Canada) for Uranium Ore Concentrates.
  - *Significance:* Supports India's "Viksit Bharat 2047" goal of **100 GW nuclear capacity**.

- **Critical Minerals MoU:** Alignment with the **G7 Critical Minerals Action Plan** to build resilient supply chains for lithium, cobalt, etc.
- **Clean Energy:** Canada officially joined the **International Solar Alliance (ISA)** and the **Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA)**.

### Security & Geopolitics

- **Defence Dialogue:** Establishment of the **first-ever India-Canada Defence Dialogue** at the ministerial level.
- **IORA Partnership:** India formally backed Canada's application to become a **Dialogue Partner** in the **Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)**.
- **Counter-Terrorism:** Re-engagement between National Security Advisors (NSAs) to address organized crime and extremism.

### Innovation & Human Capital

- **ACITI Partnership:** A trilateral MoU (India-Canada-Australia) on emerging technologies.
- **Research Internships:** AICTE-Mitacs partnership providing **300 fully-funded internships** for Indian students in Canada.
- **NIFTEM-K Centre:** Establishment of a **Joint Pulse Protein Centre of Excellence** to tackle micronutrient deficiency through food tech.

### Importance of Uranium for India

Aspect	Significance
<b>Energy Security</b>	Essential for base-load, low-carbon power; current capacity ~9 GW $\rightarrow$ target 100 GW by 2047.
<b>Quality Gap</b>	Indian ore is low-grade ( <b>0.02%-0.45%</b> ) vs. Canadian ore (up to <b>15%</b> ).
<b>Import Reliance</b>	Over <b>70%</b> of India's uranium is imported (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Russia, Canada).
<b>Efficiency</b>	Higher grade Canadian uranium reduces extraction costs and increases reactor efficiency.

### Challenges & Way Forward

#### The Challenges

- **Khalistani Extremism:** Concerns regarding anti-India activities on Canadian soil remain the primary "trust deficit" factor.
- **Trade Barriers:** Disputes over agricultural tariffs and stringent Canadian sanitary/phytosanitary standards.

- **Consular Issues:** Lingering backlogs in visas following the 2023 staff reductions.

### The Way Forward

- **Pragmatic Engagement:** Focusing on "Economic Statecraft" to let trade lead the way while security agencies work quietly on sensitive issues.
- **Early Progress Trade Agreement (EPTA):** Potentially signing an interim deal to lock in gains in textiles, pharma, and energy.
- **Indo-Pacific Synergy:** Leveraging Canada's expertise in cold-chain logistics and India's manufacturing scale to secure regional supply chains.

### Conclusion

The 2026 visit signals a shift from **crisis management to structured expansion**. By anchoring the relationship in **energy security (Uranium)** and **technology (AI/Critical Minerals)**, both nations are attempting to insulate their strategic partnership from domestic political cycles.