DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 09-03-2026

Mapping Perspective

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Kurdistan

Syllabus: GS-2: International Relations – Separatist Movements across world.

Context:

➢ The **Kurds** are an **Indo-European ethnic group** indigenous to the **Mesopotamian plains and the Zagros–Taurus mountain regions of West Asia**.

➢ Estimated population: **30–40 million**, making them the **largest stateless ethnic group in the world**.

➢ **Language:** Kurdish (Northwestern Iranian branch of the Indo-European language family).

➢ **Religion:**

   o Majority **Sunni Muslims**

   o Minorities include **Shia Muslims, Alevis, Christians, and Yazidis**.

Historical Background

➢ The Kurds trace their origins to **ancient tribes of the Zagros Mountains** and have maintained a distinct cultural identity for centuries.

Post–World War I Developments

➢ **1920 – Treaty of Sèvres**

   o Proposed the creation of an **independent Kurdish state** after the fall of the Ottoman Empire.

➢ **1923 – Treaty of Lausanne**

   o Replaced the Sèvres treaty.

   o Kurdish homeland was **divided among newly created states**, preventing Kurdish independence.

➡ Result: Kurds became **minorities within multiple countries**, leading to continuous political struggles.

Geographic Distribution (Kurdistan Region)

The traditional Kurdish homeland, **Kurdistan**, spans across four countries:

Country	Kurdish Presence	Status
Turkey	Largest Kurdish population	Long conflict with Kurdish groups seeking autonomy
Iran	Significant Kurdish minority	Political marginalization and insurgency

Country	Kurdish Presence	Status
Iraq	Strong Kurdish political power	Semi-autonomous **Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG)**
Syria	Concentrated in the north	De-facto autonomous administration (Rojava)

Regional Struggles and Political Movements

Iran

- ➢ Kurdish groups demand **greater autonomy and democratic rights**.
- ➢ Prominent groups include:
  - o **PJAK (Party for a Free Life in Kurdistan)**
  - o **KDPI (Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran)**
- ➢ They have engaged in **low-intensity insurgency against the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)**.

Iraq

- Kurds achieved **semi-autonomous governance** through the **Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG)** after the 2003 Iraq War.

- KRG controls areas such as **Erbil, Duhok, and Sulaymaniyah**.

- In **2017**, a referendum on Kurdish independence was held but **not recognized internationally**.

Syria

- During the **Syrian Civil War**, Kurdish militia **YPG (People's Protection Units)** fought alongside the **US-led coalition against ISIS**.

- They administer **Rojava (Autonomous Administration of North and East Syria)**.

- Turkey considers the YPG linked to Kurdish militant groups and periodically launches **military operations** against them.

Turkey

- Conflict between the Turkish state and the **PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party)** since the **1980s**.

- Turkey designates PKK as a **terrorist organization**.

Recent Developments (2026 Context)

- A **Coalition of Political Forces of Iranian Kurdistan** was formed in **February 2026**.

- Reports indicate the **CIA may consider engagement with Kurdish armed groups** to pressure Iran.

- This development has again brought the **Kurdish issue into global geopolitical focus**.

Why the Kurdish Issue Matters

- Geopolitics of West Asia

- Ethnic nationalism and stateless nations

- US–Iran–Turkey strategic dynamics

- Impact on regional stability and energy routes

Conclusion

The Kurds represent one of the most enduring cases of **stateless nationalism in modern geopolitics**. Despite shared ethnicity, language, and culture, historical treaties and regional politics fragmented their homeland across several countries. Today, Kurdish movements continue to influence the **strategic balance of West Asia**, especially amid conflicts involving **Turkey, Iran, Syria, Iraq, and global powers**.

India's Woman Farmers

Syllabus: GS-1: Social Empowerment – Women empowerment.

Context:

- **International Women's Day (8 March)** highlights the need for **equal rights, justice, and action for women globally**.

- **2026 recognised as the International Year of the Woman Farmer**, bringing focus to women's role in agriculture.

- In **India**, women play a **major role in agri-food systems**, but face:
    - Lack of **legal recognition as farmers**
    - Limited **land ownership**
    - Poor access to **institutional support**.

- A **gap between progressive laws and ground realities** continues to affect women farmers' **economic security, health, and nutrition**.

Invisibility of Women Farmers

Structural Causes

- **Patrilineal inheritance patterns** lead to land being registered mainly in men's names.

- **Social norms and administrative barriers** prevent women from owning land.

- Women often perform key agricultural tasks:
    - Purchasing inputs
    - Supervising labour
    - Managing cultivation.

Consequences

- Lack of **formal recognition as farmers**.

- Exclusion from government schemes requiring **land ownership documentation**, such as:
    - Institutional credit
    - Crop insurance
    - Irrigation schemes
    - Agricultural extension services
    - Climate-resilient technologies.

Outcome

➢ **Women's labour remains undervalued and invisible** despite their central role in food production.

Feminisation of Agriculture

Causes

➢ **Male migration to urban areas** for non-farm employment.

➢ Women taking responsibility for:

- o Cultivation
- o Risk management
- o Household food provisioning.

Challenges

➢ Increased **workload without access to resources**.

➢ Women perform **dual roles**:

- o **Productive work** → farming activities.
- o **Reproductive work** → childcare, cooking, household duties.

Result

➢ **Severe time poverty** due to:

- o Lack of labour-saving technologies
- o Weak rural care infrastructure.

Nutrition, Health and Intergenerational Impact

Key Issues

➢ **Maternal undernutrition and anaemia** remain widespread.

➢ Effects on children:

- o Low birth weight
- o Stunting
- o Poor cognitive development.

Dietary Challenges

➢ Rural diets are **cereal-heavy**.

➢ Insufficient consumption of:

- o Pulses

- o Fruits

- o Vegetables

- o Animal-source foods.

Government Measures

- ➢ **National Food Security Act (NFSA)**:

  - o Subsidised cereals

  - o Nutrition support for pregnant and lactating women

  - o Maternity entitlements.

- ➢ Some states introduced:

  - o **Millets**

  - o **Fortified foods**.

Concern

- ➢ **Anaemia rates remain high** and nutrition outcomes uneven.

Gap Between Entitlements and Reality

Policy Implementation Issues

- ➢ Welfare schemes emphasise **cereal distribution** rather than **nutritional diversity**.

Administrative Constraints

- ➢ **Frontline workers (ASHA, Anganwadi workers)** often overburdened.

- ➢ Limited awareness among beneficiaries.

Digital Barriers

- ➢ Digitisation of welfare schemes has created obstacles:

  - o Lack of digital literacy

  - o Documentation gaps

  - o Poor connectivity.

Result

- ➢ Many women farmers **cannot fully access their entitlements**.

Key Priorities for Empowering Women Farmers

Improve Visibility in Policy and Data

- ➢ Recognise **"farmer" based on agricultural activity**, not just land ownership.

- Include:
  - Landless cultivators
  - Sharecroppers
  - Agricultural labourers
  - Tribal gatherers.
- Promote **gender-disaggregated agricultural data**.

Strengthen Women's Land Rights

Measures include:

- **Joint spousal land titles**
- Enforcement of **inheritance laws**
- **Gender-sensitive land registration processes**
- Access to:
  - Water resources
  - Institutional credit
  - Common lands.

Benefits:

- Improved **economic security**
- Greater **decision-making power**.

Align Food Systems with Nutrition Goals

Policy focus should include:

- Public procurement of:
  - Millets
  - Pulses
  - Fruits and vegetables
- Distribution through:
  - Public Distribution System (PDS)
  - Anganwadi centres
  - Mid-Day Meal Scheme.

Outcome:

➢ Promote **nutrition-sensitive agriculture** and better diets.

Improve Access to Technology and Extension Services

➢ Provide **labour-saving tools** to reduce drudgery.

➢ Expand women's access to:

- o Agricultural training

- o Market information

- o Climate-resilient farming practices.

Impact:

➢ Increased **productivity, agency, and resilience**.

Women as Drivers of Sustainable Agriculture

When empowered, women farmers:

➢ Promote **climate-resilient agriculture**.

➢ Support **biodiversity conservation**.

➢ Practice **nutrition-sensitive farming**.

Benefits:

➢ Improved **household food security**

➢ Strengthened **community resilience**

➢ Sustainable agricultural systems.

Conclusion

➢ Empowering women farmers requires **structural reforms, not symbolic recognition**.

➢ Key steps include:

- o Legal recognition as farmers

- o Secure land rights

- o Access to resources and technology

- o Realisation of the **right to food and nutrition**.

Strengthening women's position in agriculture will:

➢ Promote **gender equity**

➢ Improve **nutrition outcomes**

➢ Build **resilient food systems and rural development in India**.

Mascots for Census 2027

Syllabus: GS-1: Indian Geography – Census.

Context:

> The **Union Home Minister** unveiled the mascots **Pragati** and **Vikas** and soft-launched digital tools for **Census 2027** in New Delhi.

> The initiative aims to improve **public awareness, participation, and digital readiness** for the upcoming census.

Mascots for Census 2027

Purpose

> Mascots act as **communication ambassadors** to spread awareness about the census process.

> They help connect with **diverse communities across India**.

Mascot Names

> **Pragati** – Female enumerator mascot

> **Vikas** – Male enumerator mascot

Symbolism

• Represent **equal participation of men and women in nation-building**.

• Reflect the idea of **inclusive development**.

- Align with the national vision of **Viksit Bharat 2047**.

Key Features of Census 2027

1. World's Largest Enumeration Exercise

➢ Expected to involve **over 30 lakh enumerators, supervisors, and officials**.

➢ Will be the **largest population survey globally**.

2. First Fully Digital Census in India

➢ Data collection through **secure mobile applications and digital platforms**.

➢ Replaces traditional **paper-based enumeration**.

3. Self-Enumeration Facility

➢ Citizens can **submit household details online** before enumerator visits.

➢ Portal available in **16 languages**.

Two-Phase Census Process

Phase 1: Houselisting and Housing Census (HLO)

➢ Collects data on:

- o Housing conditions
- o Household amenities
- o Assets and infrastructure

Phase 2: Population Enumeration (PE)

➢ Collects:

- o Demographic data
- o Social and economic information
- o Family details and other population characteristics

Four Digital Platforms Launched

➢ **Houselisting Block Creator (HLBC)**

- o Web-based **mapping tool using satellite imagery**.

➢ **HLO Mobile Application**

- o **Offline mobile app** used by enumerators to collect field data.

➢ **Self-Enumeration Portal**

- o Citizens can **securely upload household information online**.

- ➤ **Census Management and Monitoring System (CMMS)**
  - o **Real-time monitoring dashboard** for administrators.

Additional Feature: Caste Data Collection

- ➤ The **Population Enumeration phase** will include **caste-related questions**.
- ➤ This data will support **evidence-based social policy and welfare planning**.

Significance

- ➤ Promotes **digital governance in statistical operations**.
- ➤ Enhances **transparency, efficiency, and accuracy** in census data collection.
- ➤ Strengthens policy planning for **inclusive development and welfare programs**.

Social Media Ban for Children

Syllabus: GS-2: Governance – Laws and Policies.

Context:

The Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh governments recently announced bans on social media for children (under 16 and under 13, respectively). However, legal experts and constitutional frameworks suggest these moves may face a **"jurisdictional barrier"** as regulating the internet is primarily the domain of the Central Government.

Recent Developments

- ➤ **Karnataka:** Proposed a ban on social media use for children under **16 years** to curb digital addiction and mental health issues.
- ➤ **Andhra Pradesh:** Announced plans to restrict social media for children below **13 years**, with a 90-day window for implementation.
- ➤ **Global Context:** Follows the footsteps of countries like **Australia** (first to ban social media for under-16s in Dec 2025).

The Jurisdictional Conflict (Constitutional Provisions)

- ➤ **Union List (Schedule VII):** Matters related to "Posts and telegraphs; telephones, wireless, broadcasting and other like forms of communication" (**Entry 31**) fall under the exclusive domain of the Parliament.
- ➤ **Residual Powers (Article 248):** The Union has exclusive power to make any law with respect to any matter not enumerated in the Concurrent List or State List. Cyber laws and internet regulation are generally treated as residual powers.
- ➤ **Central Statutes:**

- o **Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000:** The primary law governing the digital space and intermediaries.

- o **IT Rules, 2021:** Governs social media intermediaries.

- o **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023:** Specifically Section 9 mandates "verifiable parental consent" for processing data of children (defined as under 18).

Arguments for State Intervention

States may attempt to justify these bans using subjects under the **State List**:

- ➢ **Public Order (Entry 1):** States may argue social media content incites local unrest.

- ➢ **Public Health (Entry 6):** Arguing that digital addiction is a mental health crisis.

- ➢ **Education (Entry 25 - Concurrent List):** Protecting students' academic environments.

- ➢ **Police Powers:** General power to protect the welfare of the youth.

Key Challenges & Concerns

- ➢ **Constitutional Fit:** Since the IT framework is a Central subject, a state-level ban may be struck down by courts for "lack of legislative competence."

- ➢ **Enforceability:** How would a state enforce a ban that a platform operates nationally? It would require ISPs (Internet Service Providers) to geofence services, which is technically complex and regulated by the DoT (Union Dept of Telecommunications).

- ➢ **Privacy Risks:** Age-verification systems (mandatory ID uploads) create massive data privacy risks and potential surveillance.

- ➢ **Gendered Exclusion:** Groups like the *Internet Freedom Foundation (IFF)* warn that such bans might lead conservative families to deny girls internet access entirely, worsening the **Digital Gender Divide**.

- ➢ **Intermediary Liability:** Platforms like Meta (Instagram/WhatsApp) are "intermediaries" governed by Central IT Rules; state interference creates a "patchwork" of conflicting regulations.

Way Forward / Conclusion

- ➢ **Harmonized Regulation:** Instead of state-specific bans, a unified national policy under the **DPDP Act** and **Digital India Act** (proposed) is necessary to ensure uniform protection.

- ➢ **Platform Design:** Focus should shift from "blanket bans" to "safety by design," where platforms are forced to remove addictive algorithms for minors.

➤ **Digital Literacy:** Empowering parents and teachers through education rather than prohibition.

Raisina Dialogue 2026

Syllabus: GS-2: International Relations – Conferences and Summits.

Context:

➤ The **Raisina Dialogue** is India's premier multilateral conference on **geopolitics and geo-economics**.

➤ The **11th edition (2026)** was inaugurated by **Narendra Modi** in **New Delhi** on **5 March 2026**, with keynote address by **Alexander Stubb**.

➤ It brings together global leaders, policymakers, military officials, scholars, and industry experts to deliberate on international strategic issues.

About Raisina Dialogue

➤ India's flagship conference on **global governance, strategic affairs, and emerging international challenges**.

➤ Functions as a platform for **multilateral strategic dialogue and policy discussions**.

➤ Comparable to major global forums such as the **Munich Security Conference** and the **Shangri-La Dialogue**.

Establishment and Organisation

➤ **Launched:** 2016

➤ **Organised by:**

   o **Observer Research Foundation (ORF)**

   o In partnership with the **Ministry of External Affairs**

➤ **Venue:** Annually held in **New Delhi**.

➤ **Name Origin:** Derived from **Raisina Hill**, the seat of India's government.

Historical Evolution

➤ **First Edition:** 1–3 March 2016

➤ **Theme (2016):** "Asia: Regional and Global Connectivity"

➤ Over time, the dialogue has evolved into **India's most influential strategic affairs platform** with participation from governments, think tanks, and international organisations.

Theme of Raisina Dialogue 2026

Theme: "Saṁskāra – Assertion, Accommodation, Advancement."

This theme reflects:

- ➤ **Assertion:** Nations safeguarding strategic interests.

- ➤ **Accommodation:** Need for cooperation in a multipolar world.

- ➤ **Advancement:** Leveraging technology, innovation, and global partnerships.

Six Thematic Pillars (2026)

- ➤ **Contested Frontiers:** Power, Polarity and Periphery

- ➤ **Repairing the Commons:** New Groups, New Guardians, New Avenues

- ➤ **White Whale:** The Pursuit of Agenda 2030

- ➤ **The Eleventh Hour:** Climate, Conflict and the Cost of Delay

- ➤ **Tomorrowland:** Towards a Tech-topia

- ➤ **Trade in the Time of Tariffs:** Recovery, Resilience, Reinvention

Key Features of Raisina Dialogue 2026

- ➤ **Edition:** 11th

- ➤ **Dates:** 5–7 March 2026

- ➤ **Participants:** ~2700 delegates

- ➤ **Countries Represented:** 110

- ➤ Participants included:Ministers and former heads of state; Parliamentarians; Military commanders; Think tanks and academics; Technology leaders; Youth delegates.

Format of discussions:

- ➤ Panel discussions

- ➤ Closed-door strategic sessions

- ➤ Multilateral dialogues

- ➤ Global digital broadcast reaching millions of viewers.

Objectives of the Dialogue

- ➤ Shape global discourse on **geopolitics and geo-economics**.

- ➤ Promote **international cooperation and strategic policy exchange**.

- ➤ Strengthen **India's role as a convening power in global diplomacy**.