



## **DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 22-04-2026**

### **Mapping Perspective**

1. Bulgaria

### **Prelims Perspective**

2. Amber Fort
3. Col. Sher Jung National Park

### **Mains Perspective**

4. OCI Card Eligibility Expansion in Sri Lanka
5. Yellow Line Israel

## **Bulgaria**

### **Syllabus: GS-1: Geography – Mapping.**

#### **Context:**

- Bulgarians are headed to the polls for the **eighth time in five years**, aiming to elect a parliament capable of resolving the **longstanding political impasse**.

#### **Location & Political Geography**

- Located in the **south eastern region of the European continent**, occupying the **eastern part of the Balkan Peninsula**.
- Strategic position linking **Europe and West Asia** (important for geopolitics).

#### **Boundaries**

- **Bordering Countries (5):**
  - **North:** Romania
  - **South:** Turkey, Greece
  - **South-West:** North Macedonia
  - **West:** Serbia
- **Maritime Boundary:** Bounded by the **Black Sea in the east**.



### Capital

- Capital City: **Sofia**

### Physical Geography

#### Climate

- Predominantly **moderate continental climate**, with **Mediterranean influence in the south**.

#### Mountain Ranges

- **Balkan Mountains**: Cut across the **central part** of the country (important physiographic divide).
- **Rhodope Mountains**: Located in **southern Bulgaria along the Greece border**.

#### Highest Peak

- **Musala Mountain (9,594 ft)** – located in the **Rila Mountains** (highest peak in Bulgaria and Balkan Peninsula).

#### Drainage System (Rivers)

- Major rivers: **Danube, Iskur, Maritsa, Struma, Tundzha, Yantra**.
- **Danube River**: Forms part of the **northern boundary** (important for navigation and trade).

#### Natural Resources

- Rich in **Bauxite, Copper, Lead, Zinc, Coal** (important for industrial base and economic geography).

#### Analytical Insight

- Frequent elections indicate **political instability** → **governance challenges** → **policy paralysis**.
- Location in the **Balkan region** makes Bulgaria significant in **EU politics, migration routes, and energy corridors**.
- Presence of **Danube and Black Sea** enhances **strategic and economic connectivity**.

## **Amber Fort**

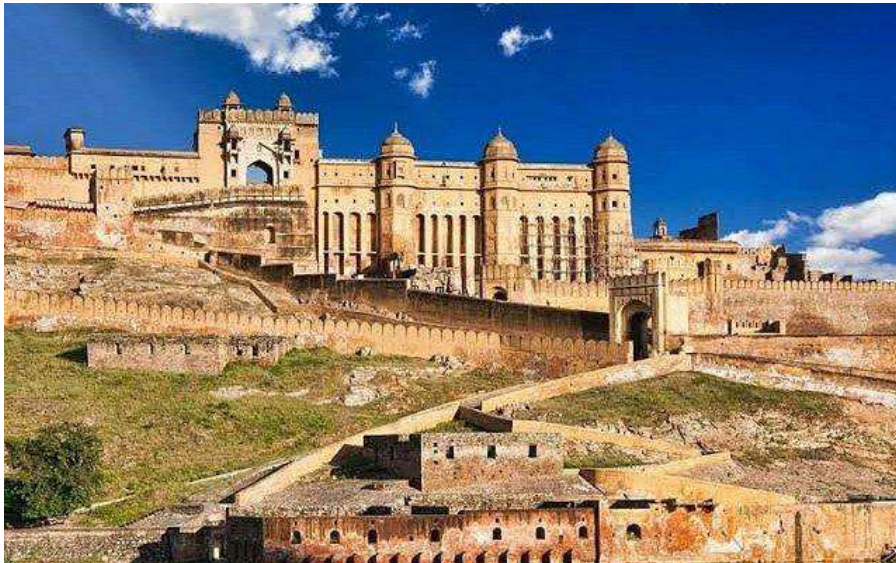
**Syllabus: GS-1: Indian Art and Culture.**

**Context:**

- The Rajasthan High Court, while hearing a plea against alleged illegal elephant rides near Amber Fort, issued notices to the state govt. and multiple respondents

### **Amber Fort – Location & Strategic Importance**

- Amber Fort, also known as Amer Fort, is located in Amer, approximately 11 km from Jaipur
- Constructed atop a hill on the Aravalli Range, providing a commanding view of the surrounding region
- Overlooks the Maota Lake at its forefront



### **Historical Background**

- Originally built by Raja Man Singh I in the late 16th century
- Man Singh I was a trusted general of Akbar and one of the Navaratnas of his court
- Amer served as the capital of the Kachhwaha Rajputs before shifting to Jaipur
- Initial construction of the fort began in **1592**

### **Expansion & Development**

- Significant expansion under Jai Singh I (reign: 1621–1667)
- Credited with constructing:
  - Diwan-i-Khas (Hall of Private Audience)

- Sheesh Mahal (Mirror Palace)
- Successive rulers of the Kachwaha dynasty continued development until the capital shifted to Jaipur in **1727**

### Architectural Features

- Architecture reflects fusion of **Rajput (Hindu)** and **Mughal (Islamic)** styles
- Built using **pink and yellow sandstones**
- Features:
  - Large ramparts, series of gates, cobbled paths
  - Splendid palaces and courtyards
  - Iconic **Sheesh Mahal**

### Recognition

- Designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site

### Analytical Insights

- Illustrates **Rajput-Mughal cultural synthesis** in architecture
- Reflects **strategic hill fort planning** in medieval India
- Contemporary issue: **heritage conservation vs tourism practices (elephant rides debate)** → governance, ethics, sustainable tourism angle

## Col. Sher Jung National Park

**Syllabus: GS-3: Environment – Protected Areas – National Parks.**

### Context:

- Himachal Pradesh High Court quashed a notification declaring areas of at least three grama panchayats around Col. Sher Jung National Park as an Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ).

### Location & Nomenclature

- Also known as **Simbalbara National Park**; located in **Paonta Valley of Sirmaur district, Himachal Pradesh**, along border with Haryana.
- Named after **freedom fighter and environmentalist Colonel Sher Jung**.
- Adjoins Kalesar National Park to its south and west.

### Physiography & Biogeography

- Situated in **lower Shiwalik region**, extending into **middle and upper Shiwaliks**.

- **Elevation:** 350–700 meters above sea level.
- Located at **confluence of three biogeographic regions:** Himalayas, Gangetic Plain, and semi-arid region.

### Drainage

- **Simbalbara River** flows through the park; acts as a **lifeline for flora and fauna.**

### Vegetation

- Dominated by **dense Sal forests with grassy glades.**

### Flora

- **Top canopy species:** Sal (*Shorea robusta*), *Terminalia tomentosa*.
- **Riverine vegetation:** Jamun (*Syzygiumcumini*), *Cassia siamea*, Eucalyptus.

### Fauna

- **Mammals:** Nilgai, Sambar deer, spotted deer, wild boar, goral, barking deer, Rhesus macaque.
- **Avifauna:** Indian roller, dollar bird, kingfishers, three types of hornbills.
- **Raptors:** Crested serpent eagle, Brahminy kite.

## OCI Card Eligibility Expansion in Sri Lanka

### Syllabus: GS-2: International Relations. & Citizenship.

#### Context:

- India has extended OCI card eligibility to the **sixth generation of Indian-origin people in Sri Lanka**
- Earlier, eligibility was generally limited to **up to the fourth generation**
- The new policy significantly **expands coverage of Indian diaspora in Sri Lanka**
- OCI cards will now be issued based on **documents provided by the Sri Lankan government**, simplifying the process

### Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) Scheme

#### Introduction

- The Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) scheme was introduced in **2005** through an amendment to the **Citizenship Act, 1955**

- It provides a form of **long-term residency and travel facility** to persons of Indian origin who are citizens of other countries

## Eligibility and Features

### Eligibility

- OCI status is granted to **foreign nationals who can prove Indian ancestry**
- Earlier, eligibility was generally limited to **up to the fourth generation in certain cases**

### Key Features

- OCI cardholders enjoy **multiple-entry, lifelong visa access to India**
- They are **exempt from registering with local police authorities** for long stays
- They are granted **parity with Non-Resident Indians (NRIs)** in areas such as education and economic opportunities, **except political rights**

### Limitations

- OCI is **not dual citizenship**
- OCI holders **cannot vote, hold constitutional posts, or acquire agricultural land**

### Significance of OCI Scheme

- Strengthens India's **engagement with its diaspora**
- Promotes **cultural ties, facilitates investment, and enhances people-to-people connections**
- Plays a **strategic role in foreign policy**, especially in regions with significant Indian-origin populations such as **Sri Lanka, Mauritius, and Southeast Asia**

### Merger of PIO and OCI

#### Background

- The **Person of Indian Origin (PIO)** scheme and OCI scheme were both introduced to facilitate engagement with the diaspora

#### Merger (2015)

- PIO scheme was **merged with OCI in 2015**
- Aimed to **simplify administrative processes and remove duplication**
- Provided a **unified and more beneficial framework under OCI**, strengthening diaspora engagement

### News Summary: India-Sri Lanka Engagement

#### Diplomatic Developments

- During a two-day visit, Vice-President **C. P. Radhakrishnan** announced extension of OCI eligibility
- Held discussions with Sri Lankan President **Anura Kumara Dissanayake** on bilateral issues

### Key Areas of Cooperation

- Emphasis on strengthening cooperation in **energy, trade, education, and tourism**
- Focus on **proposed energy hub in Trincomalee**, including fuel pipelines and oil tank farms
- India-funded **housing projects** and assistance under a **\$450 million package for cyclone recovery**
- Several **Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)** signed

### Fishermen Issue

- Addressed as a **sensitive aspect of India–Sri Lanka relations**
- Emphasis on a **humanitarian approach**, considering livelihoods on both sides

### Strategic Context

- India reiterated commitment under **“Neighbourhood First” policy**
- Sri Lanka acknowledged India as a **“first responder”** during crises, including **2022 financial crisis and disaster support**

### Analytical Insight

- Expansion to sixth generation reflects **deepening diaspora diplomacy**
- Enhances **India’s soft power and regional influence**, particularly in Sri Lanka
- Aligns with broader objectives of **Act East + Neighbourhood First policy synergy**
- Simplification via host-country documentation indicates **administrative pragmatism in diaspora outreach**

## **Yellow Line Israel**

**Syllabus: GS-2: International Relations & GS-4: War Ethics.**

### Context:

- Israel announced creation of a **“Yellow Line” buffer zone** in southern Lebanon during a temporary ceasefire.
- Enables Israeli forces to **restrict civilian return, dismantle Hezbollah infrastructure, and conduct strikes beyond the zone.**

- The **10-day ceasefire between Israel and Lebanon** began on **April 16 2026**.
- Extends up to the **Litani River**, indicating a **shift in Israel's security strategy toward deeper defensive control inside neighbouring territory** with long-term regional implications.

### Israel's new 'Yellow Line' in Lebanon

Israeli forces say they have established a "Yellow Line" in southern Lebanon, similar to an Israeli military measure in the besieged Gaza Strip.



### Israel's 'Yellow Line': A Forward Defensive Strategy

- Emerged during the **Gaza war of October 2025** as a **military boundary dividing Israeli-controlled and Palestinian-held areas**.
- Linked to proposals under **Donald Trump's Gaza peace framework**, physically marked using **barriers and markers inside Gaza**.
- Represents a **forward defensive posture** aimed at preventing militant groups like **Hamas and Hezbollah** from re-establishing strength near borders, especially after **October 7 attacks**.
- Initially a **temporary measure**, but increasingly evolving into a **permanent feature of Israel's military doctrine**, signalling **pre-emptive territorial defence**.

## Militarisation of Gaza: Redefining the Operational Theatre

### Strategic Re-engineering of Battlefield

- Reflects **Israel Defense Forces (IDF)** shift toward **restructuring operational theatre** for sustained territorial control with available resources.

### Expansion of Direct Military Control

- Nearly **58% of Gaza Strip under direct Israeli military control**.
- Areas east of the line treated as **closed military and free-fire zones**, restricting civilian access.

### Shift in Military Doctrine

- Transition from **mobile manoeuvre warfare to static defence**.
- Yellow Line functions as a **permanent defensive boundary**, not a temporary deployment.

### Fortified Infrastructure and Deployment

- Establishment of **fortified positions** including:
  - Elevated earth mounds
  - Communication towers
  - Concentrated troop deployments
- Requires **two full IDF divisions**, making it **resource-intensive and logistically demanding**.

### The “Gaza Model”: Expansion Beyond Gaza

- Refers to extension of Yellow Line strategy into **southern Lebanon**.
- Involves creation of a **deep militarised buffer zone (up to Litani River)**.
- Key features: **dismantling militant infrastructure, displacing civilians, preventing return**.
- Differs from earlier boundaries (e.g., **Green Line, West Bank divisions**) which were **political**, whereas Yellow Line is a **forward fortified military boundary inside hostile territory**.
- Signals shift toward **permanent, control-oriented security zones prioritising military dominance**.

### Humanitarian and Legal Concerns

- International bodies view the Yellow Line as a **potential violation of international humanitarian law and ceasefire norms**.

- **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** reported:
  - Significant **civilian casualties**
  - Continued **military strikes near the zone**
- Human rights groups describe it as:
  - **Systematic land seizure**
  - **Forced ghettoisation**
- Restricts Palestinians to **~42% of Gaza**, limiting access to **agricultural and urban areas**.
- Characterised as **forced displacement and creeping annexation**.

### Internal Criticism within Israel

- Opposition from **military experts, civil society, and economists**.
- Criticism: strategy may become a **strategic liability rather than defensive asset**.

### Operational Risks

- Static defence exposes troops to:
  - Guerrilla attacks
  - Sniper fire
  - Anti-tank missiles

### Historical Parallel

- Compared with **South Lebanon Security Zone occupation**, warning that **fixed deployments may turn soldiers into “sitting targets” in prolonged attrition warfare**.

### Analytical Insight

- Reflects **shift from deterrence-based security to territorial control-based strategy**.
- Raises issues of **sovereignty, international law, humanitarian ethics, and regional stability**.