



DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 23-06-2026

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Lebanon

Syllabus: GS-1; World Geography, GS-2: International Relations

Context

Lebanon has once again come into focus amid escalating tensions between Israel and Hezbollah. The conflict in southern Lebanon has contributed to regional instability and affected diplomatic efforts in West Asia.

About Lebanon

Lebanon is a country located on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea in **West Asia (Middle East)**. Owing to its strategic location, it has historically served as a cultural and commercial bridge between Asia, Europe, and Africa.

Location

- Situated on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea.
- Part of the Levant region of West Asia.

Boundaries

- **North and East:** Syria
- **South:** Israel
- **West:** Mediterranean Sea

Capital

- Beirut

Geographical Features

Climate

- Mediterranean climate
- Mild and wet winters
- Hot and dry summers
- Significant seasonal rainfall along coastal regions

Major Mountain Ranges

- Mount Lebanon (Jabal Lubnan)
- Hermon Range

Highest Peak

- **Qurnat as Sawda**
 - Height: 3,087 metres (10,128 feet)
 - Located in the Mount Lebanon range

Major Valley

- **Bekaa Valley (Al-Biqa)**
 - Fertile agricultural region
 - Lies between the Mount Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon mountain ranges

Major River

- **Litani River**
 - Longest and most significant river of Lebanon
 - Supports irrigation and agriculture in the Bekaa Valley

Natural Resources

Lebanon possesses limited but important natural resources:

- Limestone
- Gypsum
- Salt
- Natural Gas (offshore reserves)
- Petroleum resources (potential offshore deposits)

Strategic Importance of Lebanon

Geopolitical Significance

- Located at the crossroads of West Asia and the Mediterranean.
- Shares a sensitive border with Israel.
- Home to Hezbollah, a major political and armed group in the region.
- Plays an important role in regional security dynamics involving Israel, Iran, Syria, and Western powers.

Economic Importance

- Historically a major financial and trading hub of the Middle East.
- Beirut was once known as the "Paris of the Middle East."



SHe-Box Portal

Syllabus: GS-2; Governance, Women Empowerment

Context

The **SHe-Box Portal** has strengthened India's workplace safety framework for women under the **Mission Shakti** initiative.

About SHe-Box

- Stands for **Sexual Harassment electronic Box**.
- A centralized online platform for registering and monitoring workplace sexual harassment complaints.
- Launched by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD)** in 2024.
- Operationalises provisions of the **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013**.

Key Features

- Single-window platform for filing and tracking complaints.
- Covers women in:
 - Public sector
 - Private sector
 - Organised sector
 - Unorganised sector
- Maintains a repository of:
 - Internal Committees (ICs)
 - Local Committees (LCs)
- Enables real-time monitoring through designated nodal officers.
- Ensures time-bound complaint redressal.
- Available in **22 Indian languages**.

Significance

- Enhances transparency and accountability in grievance redressal.
- Strengthens implementation of the POSH Act, 2013.
- Provides a secure, confidential, and user-friendly reporting mechanism.

Spilomena malabarica

Syllabus: GS-3; Environment & Biodiversity

Context

Indian scientists have discovered a new species of aphid wasp named **Spilomena malabarica** from Kerala.



About *Spilomena malabarica*

- A newly identified species of **aphid wasp**.
- Discovered in **Kozhikode district, Kerala**.
- Named after the historic **Malabar region**.
- Represents the **11th species** of the genus recorded from India.
- Measures approximately **3.5 mm** in length.
- Predatory in nature and feeds on aphids and other plant pests.

Distinctive Features

- Possesses a unique wing venation pattern.
- Has only **one submarginal cell** on the forewing.
- Differs from its closest relative, *Spilomena unus*, through:
 - Head structure
 - Facial morphology
 - Proportional body characteristics

Significance

- Highlights the rich insect biodiversity of the Western Ghats region.
- Contributes to biological pest control by naturally regulating aphid populations.

US-Iran MoU

Syllabus: GS-2: International Relations

Context:

- The **US and Iran formally signed a 14-clause Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** — the US signing at the Palace of Versailles, France, and Iran signing in Tehran.
- The MoU initiates a **60-day negotiation window** for a final comprehensive deal.
- Unlike the **2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)**, which addressed only Iran's nuclear programme, the 2026 MoU covers the **entire US-Iran political relationship**.
- Considered potentially the **most significant West Asia agreement since the 1979 Islamic Revolution**.

What Makes the 2026 MoU Different?

Scope of the Agreement

The MoU covers:

- War termination and ceasefire
- Hormuz navigation rights
- Sanctions relief
- Economic reconstruction
- Nuclear status quo
- Military withdrawal
- Non-interference in internal affairs

Major Strategic Gain for Iran

- **Ballistic missiles** and Iran's **regional proxy networks (Axis of Resistance)** are not mentioned in any clause.
- Seen as a significant diplomatic gain for Tehran.



Axis of Resistance

Meaning

- An informal, Iran-led military coalition of state-controlled forces and armed militant groups operating across the Middle East.

Members

- Iran
- Hezbollah
- Houthis
- Palestinian militant groups
- Iraqi militias

Assessment

- Experts argue that the terms could make Iran stronger than at any point since the **1979 Islamic Revolution**.

Clause-by-Clause Summary

Clause 1: End to Hostilities on All Fronts, Including Lebanon

- Principal war termination clause.
- Lebanon explicitly included in cessation of hostilities, unlike the April 8 ceasefire.
- Risk of Israel resuming strikes on Lebanon remains during the 60-day period.
- Iran accepted US concessions (naval blockade removal) and refrained from retaliating against Israel's Beirut bombing, creating a new precedent.

Clause 2: No US Interference in Iran's Internal Affairs

- Removes the **regime change rationale** permanently.
- Significant for Tehran given decades of perceived US interventionism in Iranian politics.
- Ends oscillation between regime change and de-nuclearisation as justifications for military action.

Clause 3: Extension of the 60-Day Period

- Both sides may mutually agree to extend negotiations.
- Extension also prolongs:
 - Iran's obligation to keep Hormuz open.
 - US military drawdown commitments.
- Creates domestic political pressure on Tehran.

Clause 4: Removal of US Naval Blockade

- US Navy has effectively withdrawn its blockade.

- Full withdrawal relates to remaining US Carrier Strike Groups in the Strait of Hormuz.

Clause 5: Passage Through the Strait of Hormuz

Key Provisions

- Iran guarantees unconditional transit passage for commercial shipping.
- Iran and Oman may jointly define the future administration of Hormuz.

Strategic Significance

- Reflects Iran's demand that Hormuz should not revert to its pre-war status.
- Potential for a fee-based transit framework similar to Turkey's arrangements under the **Montreux Convention**.

Economic Importance

- Hormuz handles:
 - 20–25% of global oil shipping.
 - Around 20% of global gas shipping.
- Potential annual revenue estimated at **\$11–13 billion**.

Clause 6: \$300 Billion Reconstruction Plan

Importance

- Most economically significant clause.
- Major departure from the 2015 JCPOA.

Implications

- Facilitates Iran's reintegration into the international economy.
- Includes incentives for businesses linked to Trump and Steve Witkoff, indicating commercial interests in deal durability.

Clause 7: Full Sanctions Relief

Coverage

- Energy sanctions
- Shipping sanctions
- Nuclear-related sanctions
- Counter-terrorism designations

Economic Impact

- Post-sanctions Iranian oil and fuel sales could generate approximately **\$60 billion annually**.

Clause 8: Iran Will Not Develop Nuclear Weapons

Commitment

- Iran reiterates its long-standing position of not pursuing nuclear weapons.

Key Nuances

- US strikes on Natanz, Fordow, Arak and Isfahan reduced Iran's future enrichment capacity.
- Iran retains its stockpile of **60% enriched uranium**.
- No requirement to transfer uranium stockpiles to a third country.

Monitoring Challenge

- By late 2025, the **IAEA** reported a "loss of continuity of knowledge" regarding Iran's nuclear programme.
- Restoring monitoring and verification remains a major challenge.

Clause 9: Status Quo Until Final Deal

- Iran agrees not to undertake further enrichment for 60 days.
- No restrictions on:
 - Ballistic missiles
 - Hezbollah
 - Houthis
 - Iraqi militias
 - Other regional non-state actors

- Indicates these issues remain outside the MoU framework.

Clause 10: Interim Sanctions Waivers

- Functions as a bridge arrangement.
- Immediate sanctions waivers provided while comprehensive sanctions relief is negotiated.

Clause 11: Unfreezing Iranian Assets

Key Facts

- Iran possesses over **\$100 billion** in frozen overseas assets.
- Around **\$12 billion** already unfrozen through banks in Qatar and UAE.

Significance

- Iranian President Pezeshkian indicated funds would be used for pending government salary payments.
- Highlights the severity of Iran's economic distress.

Clause 12: Monitoring Mechanism

- Establishes an executive mechanism to monitor implementation.
- Essential for building confidence and enabling any extension of negotiations.

Clause 13: Hierarchy of Priorities

- Defines sequencing and priority order of issues during the 60-day negotiation period.

Clause 14: UN Security Council Endorsement

Provision

- Final agreement to be endorsed through a **UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR)**.

Significance

- Similar to the 2015 JCPOA endorsement through **UNSCR 2231** under Article 25 of the UN Charter.
- Reflects an effort to provide international legitimacy.

Limitation

- UNSC endorsement could not prevent the US withdrawal from the JCPOA in 2018.
- Iran may seek stronger safeguards in the final agreement.

Significance of the MoU

Geopolitical

- Potential reordering of West Asia's geopolitical architecture.
- Moves beyond a nuclear agreement to a broader political settlement.

Economic

- Reconstruction package, sanctions relief and asset unfreezing may accelerate Iran's economic recovery.

Strategic

- Iran retains:
 - Ballistic missile capabilities.
 - Regional proxy influence.
 - Stockpile of enriched uranium.
- Seen as emerging diplomatically empowered rather than weakened.

Challenges Ahead

- Successful implementation depends on:
 - Sustaining the ceasefire.
 - Restoring nuclear monitoring mechanisms.
 - Completing negotiations within the 60-day window.
 - Preventing breakdowns similar to past US–Iran agreements.

Conclusion

- The **2026 US–Iran MoU** is not merely a ceasefire arrangement but a framework for a broader political, economic and security realignment in West Asia.
- The next **60 days** will determine whether it evolves into a durable strategic settlement or becomes another episode in the history of fragile US–Iran engagements.

Global Energy Transition Challenge: Why Electrification Matters

Syllabus: GS-3: Energy, Environment, Climate Change, And Infrastructure

Context

At the mid-year climate negotiations in Bonn, Turkey proposed a global target to meet at least **35% of the world's energy demand through electricity by 2035**. The proposal emphasizes electrification as a key pathway for achieving global climate goals and limiting global warming to 1.5°C under the Paris Agreement.

What is Electrification?

Electrification refers to replacing the direct use of fossil fuels with electricity across various sectors of the economy.

Examples

- Electric vehicles replacing petrol and diesel vehicles
- Electric cooking replacing LPG and coal
- Electric heating systems replacing fossil-fuel-based heating
- Electrified industrial processes replacing coal and gas-based systems

The objective is to shift energy consumption from fossil fuels to electricity generated from clean sources such as solar, wind, hydropower, and nuclear energy.

Why is Electrification Important for Climate Action?

Climate change is primarily caused by greenhouse gas emissions from burning fossil fuels.

Key Difference

Fossil Fuels	Renewable Energy
Directly usable as energy	Mostly produce electricity
Emit greenhouse gases	Low or zero emissions
Finite resources	Renewable resources

Since most clean energy technologies generate electricity, deep decarbonisation is impossible without expanding electrification across all sectors.

Current Status of Global Electrification

According to the International Energy Agency (IEA):

- Electricity accounted for only **21% of global Total Final Energy Consumption (TFEC)** in 2025.
- India's share stood at approximately **23%**.
- Global electricity generation increased significantly over the last decade.
- However, the share of electricity in final energy consumption increased only moderately from about **18% in 2015 to 21% in 2025**.

What is TFEC?

Total Final Energy Consumption (TFEC) refers to energy actually consumed by end users and excludes energy lost during extraction, conversion, transmission, and distribution.

Major Challenges to Electrification

Several sectors remain difficult to electrify due to technological limitations.

Hard-to-Abate Sectors

- Aviation
- Shipping
- Heavy-duty freight transport
- Iron and steel production
- Cement manufacturing
- Glass and ceramic industries
- Certain heating applications

These sectors require high temperatures or energy-dense fuels that currently have limited electric alternatives.

The Clean Electricity Challenge

Electrification alone does not guarantee emission reductions.

Current Scenario

- Only **21%** of final energy use is electrified.
- Only **42%** of global electricity comes from non-fossil sources.

Result

Clean electricity contributes only about **8-9% of total global energy consumption**, while more than **90% of energy use still depends on fossil fuels**.

This highlights the dual challenge:

1. Increase electrification.
2. Ensure electricity is generated from clean sources.

Turkey's Proposal at Bonn Climate Talks

Turkey proposed that countries collectively aim for:

Global Target

- **35% electrification of global energy demand by 2035**

Basis of the Proposal

According to the roadmap of the **International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)**:

- A minimum electrification level of **35% by 2035** is necessary to remain on the **1.5°C pathway** under the Paris Agreement.

The proposal is expected to receive greater attention at **COP31**, scheduled to be hosted jointly by Turkey and Australia.

What is Required to Achieve the Target?

Key Requirements

- Annual investments of nearly **\$1.2 trillion** in electricity systems
- Expansion of renewable energy capacity
- Large-scale battery storage deployment
- Modernisation of transmission and distribution networks
- Electrification of transport and industry
- Development of smart grids and digital infrastructure

Emerging Challenges

- Geopolitical tensions
- Supply-chain disruptions
- Energy security concerns
- Financing constraints in developing countries

Implications for India

India is among the world's fastest-growing clean energy markets.

Potential Benefits

- Reduced dependence on imported fossil fuels
- Enhanced energy security
- Lower greenhouse gas emissions
- Expansion of electric mobility

- Support for India's **Net Zero by 2070** commitment
- Promotion of green industrial development

Key Priorities for India

- Accelerate renewable energy deployment
- Expand battery storage capacity
- Strengthen grid infrastructure
- Promote industrial decarbonisation
- Scale up electric vehicle adoption