



**THE STUDY**  
By Manikant Singh



**DAILY NEWS**



## India and France

### Why in the news ?

- ❖ India and France have reached a historic agreement in Paris, finalizing a deal for the procurement of 26 Rafale-M fighter jets from France.
- ❖ The 26 Rafale-M fighters include 22 single seater jets and four twin-seater trainers.
- ❖ France has also given approval for India to purchase three additional diesel-electric submarines of the Scorpene class.

### Defense Acquisition Council (DAC)

- ❖ The Defense Acquisition Council (DAC) is the highest decision-making body in the Ministry of Defense, responsible for formulating new policies and approving capital acquisitions for all three branches of the Indian Armed Forces (Army, Navy, and Air Force) and the Indian Coast Guard.
- ❖ The council is headed by the Defense Minister, and recently, it approved the Acceptance of Necessity (AON) for the purchase of 26 Rafale-M naval fighter aircraft from France, including relevant support equipment, weapons, simulators, spares, documentation, pilot training, and logistical support for the Indian Navy.
- ❖ Out of these 26 jets, 22 will be single-seat fighters meant for carrier-based operations, while the remaining four will serve as twin-seat trainers.
- ❖ The DAC also prioritized the establishment of the Air Maintenance, Overhaul, and Repair (AMOR) hub for indigenous equipment and various systems.
- ❖ Additionally, AON was given for the purchase of three more Scorpene-class submarines, to be manufactured by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in India. This acquisition will enhance the operational capabilities of the Indian Navy and generate employment opportunities domestically.



210, Virat Bhawan, 2nd Floor Near Post Office, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi-09

Contact Us 9999516388, 8595638669

- ❖ The DAC has also approved guidelines to procure desired indigenous content in all capital acquisition cases, with a focus on achieving 'self-reliance' in vital manufacturing technologies and defense platforms/equipment through indigenous production.
- ❖ As part of naval aviation development, the Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO) is working on the Twin-Engine Deck-Based Fighter (TEDBF) under the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) to operate on aircraft carriers.
- ❖ Presently, the Indian Navy operates two aircraft carriers - INS Vikramaditya and INS Vikrant. The domestically built INS Vikrant was commissioned in September in last year.
- ❖ Under a signed deal worth \$3.75 billion in October 2005, MDL is constructing six Scorpene-class submarines under Project-75, with five already inducted into service and the sixth, INS Vagsheer, launched in April 2022, expected to be handed over to the Navy by 2024.
- ❖ The Indian Navy plans to install Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) modules on all Scorpene submarines, beginning with the retrofit of INS Kalvari, to increase their endurance. Domestic AIP modules have already undergone shore-based trials.



210, Virat Bhawan, 2nd Floor Near Post Office, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi-09

Contact Us

9999516388, 8595638669

## GST Council Meet

### Why in the news ?

- ✦ The Chairman marked the milestone of the 50th meeting of the GST Council by releasing a short film titled 'GST Council - 50 Steps towards a Journey' in the presence of the Council members.
- ✦ The film showcases the journey of the GST Council and is available in Hindi, English, and 11 regional languages.
- ✦ A stamp was also issued on this occasion.
- ✦ The GST Council convened after almost five months and successfully resolved some long-pending complex issues.
- ✦ The issues addressed included the formation of an appellate tribunal and tax treatment for the flourishing online gaming industry.

### Key Points

- ✦ The council approved the appointment criteria for tribunal members and announced that the first work would be completed within the next six months.
- ✦ States proposed 50 tribunal benches to be set up gradually, with the initial focus on high court benches in state capitals and cities.
- ✦ The meeting was in response to the council's decision to finalize a 28% GST levy on the face value of all bets placed by traders on online games, casinos, or horse races, which e-gaming players have criticized as the death knell for the gaming industry.
- ✦ The council also considered the ethical aspect of equating casino-driven tourism revenue in states like Goa and Sikkim with the required tax treatment for essential goods and services.
- ✦ The Ministry of Electronics and IT is working on formulating a policy for online gaming, which may require amendments to the GST law and subsequent review and reform.
- ✦ The council granted tax exemptions, reduced or clarified certain rates, and addressed past anomalies in tax payment on specific items due to confusion over their classification.

### Change in Tax Rates

- ✦ The decision to reduce the rate on Raw/Unfried Snack Pellets to 5% and regularize the payment of GST on them during the previous period on an "as-is" basis has been taken.
- ✦ Drug dinutuximab (Quarziba) will be exempted from IGST when imported for personal use.



210, Virat Bhawan, 2nd Floor Near Post Office, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi-09

Contact Us

9999516388, 8595638669

- ✦ **The National Policy for Rare Diseases, 2021**, has led to the exemption of IGST on drugs used in the treatment of rare diseases and foods for special medical purposes (FSMPs) when imported for personal use, subject to extant conditions.
- ✦ FSMPs will also receive IGST exemption when imported on the recommendation of Centers of Excellence for Rare Diseases or any of the listed Centers of Excellence by any person or entity.
- ✦ The supply of raw cotton, including black cotton, by farmers to co-operative societies is taxable under the reverse charge mechanism, and the issues relating to previous periods will be regularized on an "as-is" basis.
- ✦ The decision is to reduce GST on pirated zari thread or yarn from 12% to 5% and to regularize the payment of GST related to this matter during the previous period on an "as-is" basis.
- ✦ Entry 52-B in the Compensation Cess Notification will be amended to include all utility vehicles exceeding 4000 mm in length, with an engine capacity of 1500 cc and ground clearance of more than 170mm, and meeting the standard higher ground clearance standards.
- ✦ The GST rate on LD slag will be reduced from 18% to 5% to encourage better use of this product and protect the environment.
- ✦ The cases relating to Trauma, Spine, and Arthroplasty Implants will be regularized on an "as-is" basis for the period prior to 18.07.2022, considering the genuine interpretative issues.
- ✦ RBL Bank and ICBC Bank will be included in the list of specified banks eligible for IGST exemption on the import of gold, silver, or platinum as per Annexure 4B of Foreign Trade Policy-2023, and the list of eligible banks/institutions will be updated.

\*\*\*\*\*



210, Virat Bhawan, 2nd Floor Near Post Office, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi-09

Contact Us

9999516388, 8595638669

# The first GSI survey of the Siachen

## Why in the news ?

- The 65th anniversary of a significant event in the exploration of the Siachen Glacier is being celebrated from June to August 2023.
- In June 1958, the Geological Survey of India's first expedition to the Siachen Glacier was led by top Indian geologist V.K. Raina.
- This event holds historical and geo-strategic importance as it dispels the myths that Pakistan had control over the glacier from the very beginning.
- Grid point NJ 9842 is well-known, as it is the last mutually demarcated point between India and Pakistan, as per the Karachi Ceasefire Agreement of 1949.
- It also marks the point where the Line of Control, as per the Simla Agreement, comes to an end.

## The first Siachen survey

- Exactly 65 years ago, in June 1958, a prominent Indian geologist named V.K. Raina, who was then serving as an assistant geologist in the GSI (Geological Survey of India), led the first GSI survey of the Siachen Glacier.
- The Siachen Glacier later became a contentious issue between India and Pakistan and was the site of Operation Meghdoot, launched by the Indian Armed Forces in 1984.
- In 1956, Mr. Raina took part in the **Sasser Kangri expedition** organized by the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute of Darjeeling, where he studied the geology and geomorphology from Nubra Valley to Panamik.
- Subsequently, in 1957, he was involved in the geological survey of the proposed alignment for the Leh-Manali highway.
- The year 1958 was of global importance for geologists as it was celebrated as the International Geophysical Year.
- While some institutions planned research expeditions to the Arctic Circle or Antarctica, the GSI, due to limited resources, proposed to study the Himalayan glacier systems, including the Sikkim Himalaya and the Kumaon Himalaya, and also monitor the glaciers.

\*\*\*\*\*



210, Virat Bhawan, 2nd Floor Near Post Office, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi-09

Contact Us

9999516388, 8595638669