

1. Proposal to Replace 'India' with 'Bharat' in Textbooks

Introduction

In 2022, the Social Science committee of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) recommended the use of 'Bharat' instead of 'India' in all Social Science textbooks up to Class 12. The implementation depends on NCERT's decision.

Debates Over the Nation's Name

The discussion around changing the nation's name from 'India' to 'Bharat' gained momentum after the G20 Summit in New Delhi, where the invitation referred to "The President of Bharat," and not the usual "President of India". Speculation about this change continues.

Historical Roots of 'Bharat'

The name 'Bharat' finds its origins in Puranic literature and the Mahabharata, describing it as the land between the southern sea and the northern abode of snow. Bharata was also an ancient legendary king, believed to be ancestor all the people of the subcontinent.

'India' and 'Hindustan'

'Hindustan' is believed to have originated from 'Hindu,' a Persian term for 'Sindhu,' referring to the Indus River. The Greeks transliterated it to 'Indus,' and 'India' referred to the region beyond the Indus. In the 16th century, 'Hindustan' was used for the entire Indo-Gangetic plain, associated with the Mughal territories.

In the late 18th century, 'India' gained prominence on British maps, while 'Hindustan' lost its South Asian association. This transition reflected changes in colonial perspectives and British territorial influence.

The Decision of the Constituent Assembly

The Constituent Assembly of India decided that "India, that is, Bharat, shall be a Union of States" as per Article 1 of the Constitution. There were debates over whether 'Bharat' should be the primary name. Some argued that 'India' was just an English translation of 'Bharat'.

Others, like Hargovind Pant, advocated for 'Bharatvarsha' and rejected 'India,' considering it an insulting word imposed by foreign rulers. Seth Govind Das emphasized the civilizational connotations of 'Bharat.'

Ultimately, the Constituent Assembly chose 'India, that is, Bharat.' Dr. BR Ambedkar, Chairman of the Constituent Assembly's Drafting Committee, emphasized the need to focus on practical work instead of civilizational debates.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance

Source: The Indian Express and The Hindu

2. The new made-in-India EV charging standard for bikes and scooters

Introduction

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has approved a new EV charging standard for light electric vehicles (LEVs) in India. This standard, ISI7017 (Part 2 / Sec 7): 2023, is a collaboration between various stakeholders and is significant for several reasons.

Combining AC and DC Charging

The new charging standard is the world's first to combine both alternating current (AC) and direct current (DC) charging for LEVs. While combined charging standards for electric four-wheelers are already in use globally, this innovation allows interoperability among different EV models and charging infrastructure providers.



Figure 1 European-style combined charging system (left) and Europe-style Type 2 connector for AC charging and slow DC charging (right).

The Need for a National Standard

In India, electric vehicle manufacturers have been using various charging standards for their EVs, similar to the diverse charging connectors seen in mobile phones. Ola Electric, Ather Energy, and Ultraviolet Automotive, among others, have each used different standards, making it challenging for public charging stations to accommodate these varied connectors. This issue can exacerbate range anxiety, the fear of running out of charge with no suitable charging point.

Global Standards in Other Countries

China: China uses a national standard for EV charging connectors called GB/T, combined with a vast network of charging stations, effectively addressing range anxiety concerns.

United States: While there isn't a national standard, EV makers in the US are working on some degree of standardization. Ford and General Motors (GM) are adopting the North American Charging Standard (NACS) developed by Tesla, enabling access to Tesla's fast charger network.

Europe: CCS is the primary charging connector standard in Europe and is an EU requirement for EV charging networks. Tesla has integrated CCS in its public Superchargers, benefiting both Tesla and other EV drivers.

Japan: Japan primarily uses the CHAdeMO charging standard, which is being phased out in North America but is still essential for certain EVs like the Nissan Leaf and Mitsubishi Outlander PHEV.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper III; Science & Technology

Source: The Indian Express

3. Understanding Bhutan's Unprecedented Talks with China

Boundary talks

Bhutan's Foreign Minister's, Tandi Dorji, recent visit to China holds significance due to several unprecedented factors, including a lack of diplomatic relations between Bhutan and China. His visit is the first ever by a Bhutanese Foreign Minister.

The main purpose of the visit was the holding of boundary talks. The boundary talks have not taken place for over past seven years. Moreover, the talks have shown promising results, with both countries signing a cooperation agreement for boundary delimitation.

Potential Implications for India

China's call for diplomatic relations and boundary negotiations with Bhutan raises concerns for India due to its special relationship with Bhutan. However, Bhutan has likely consulted India in its efforts to normalize relations with China while safeguarding India's security interests. India's red lines may include preventing China's presence near the southern Doklam plateau overlooking the "Siliguri corridor".



Doklam Plateau

Doklam, also called Donglang by China, is an area in Bhutan with a high plateau and a valley, lying between China's Chumbi Valley to the north, Bhutan's Ha District to the east and India's Sikkim state to the west. It has been depicted as part of Bhutan in the Bhutanese maps since 1961, but it is also claimed by China. The dispute has not been resolved despite several rounds of border negotiations between Bhutan and China. The area is of strategic importance to all three countries.

In June 2017 a military standoff occurred between China and India, as China attempted to extend a road on the Doklam plateau southwards near the Doka La pass and Indian troops moved in to prevent further road construction. India claimed to have acted on behalf of Bhutan, with which it has a 'special relationship'. Bhutan has formally objected to China's road construction in the disputed area.



Siliguri Corridor

The Siliguri Corridor, also known as the Chicken's Neck, is a stretch of land around the city of Siliguri in West Bengal, India. 20–22 kilometres (12–14 mi) at the narrowest section, this corridor connects the eight states of northeast India to the rest of the India. The countries of Nepal and Bangladesh lie on each side of the corridor and Bhutan lies at the northern end of the corridor.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; International Relations

Source: The Hindu