1. Political Transformation in Sri Lanka

Overview

Anura Kumara Dissanayake, 55, has emerged as a transformative figure in Sri Lankan politics, rising from a humble rural background to win the presidency. He secured 42.31% of the vote, outpacing Sajith Premadasa (32.71%) and the incumbent, Ranil Wickremasinghe (17.27%).

Early Life and Background

Born in Galewela on November 24, 1968, Anura's political journey began in the rural heartlands of Sri Lanka. Unlike many leaders rooted in Sinhala Buddhist politics, his identity was shaped by the struggles of Sri Lanka's working class, not academia or ethnicity.

Joining the JVP and Early Activism

In the early 1990s, while attending university, Anura joined the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), a Marxist-Leninist party known for its armed uprisings in 1971 and 1987-89. The JVP, once defined by its violent struggles against perceived exploitation, gradually shifted to democratic politics, softening its hardline Marxist goals.

Political Ascent and Leadership of the JVP

Anura's political rise began in 1997 as the national organizer of the JVP's Socialist Youth Organization. He became an MP in 2000 and led the JVP by 2014. His background in the agricultural sector and his role as Minister of Agriculture in 2004 deepened his connection with Sri Lanka's rural working class.

Modernizing the JVP

After violent insurrections left the JVP associated with militancy, Anura's leadership marked a turning point. He modernized the party, broadening its appeal to younger voters and rebranding it as a platform against corruption and political patronage. This transformation played a key role in Anura's candidacy, which was buoyed by public frustration over economic collapse and political corruption.

JVP's Evolution from Militancy to Governance

This is the first time in decades that a Marxist party will lead Sri Lanka. Opinions differ on whether the JVP is ready to govern, as its history includes a lack of internal democracy and

intolerance of criticism. However, the JVP has matured, moving from its militant roots to a more pragmatic political force under Anura's leadership.

Foreign Relations with India and China
The JVP originated from a pro-China faction within Sri Lanka's Communist Party, fueling speculation about closer ties with China under Anura's presidency. Historically, the JVP has been anti-India, especially during the 1980s when it opposed Indian intervention in Sri Lanka. However, Anura has signaled a balanced approach to foreign relations, meeting with Indian officials in 2024 and adopting a pragmatic stance.

JVP's Stance on Tamil Nationalism and LTTE
The JVP's relationship with Tamil nationalism and the LTTE has been complex. Initially focusing on class struggle, the JVP later adopted a staunch nationalist position, opposing the LTTE's separatist demands and supporting the military defeat of the Tamil rebellion.

Ideological Shifts: Marxism and Pragmatism
Though Anura comes from a Marxist background, his leadership reflects a more centrist approach. While the JVP retains anti-imperialist rhetoric, its focus under Anura has shifted to anti-corruption, governance reform, and economic issues. His victory represents a protest against traditional political elites, rather than a strict endorsement of classical Marxist ideals.

Conclusion: A New Era for Sri Lankan Politics
Anura Kumara Dissanayake's victory marks a significant shift in Sri Lankan politics, driven by public dissatisfaction with the ruling elites. His ability to modernize the JVP and adapt its Marxist ideology to contemporary challenges will be tested as he leads Sri Lanka through its ongoing crises.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; International Relations
Source: Indian Express

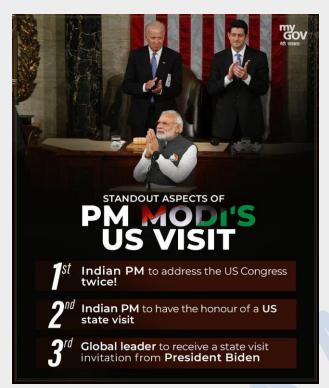## 2. Modi's US Visit and Key Takeaways

Introduction
Prime Minister Narendra Modi's three-day visit to the US included a meeting with President Joe Biden and participation in the Quad leaders' summit in Wilmington, Delaware. Here are the major takeaways from Day 1 of his visit:

1. Quad's Endurance and Purpose
PM Modi emphasized that the Quad is "here to stay" and not aimed against any particular country, highlighting the grouping's commitment to democratic values, international law, and a free Indo-Pacific. The leaders from the US, Japan, Australia, and India discussed cooperation in areas like health, technology, and climate change.

2. China's Aggressive Actions Addressed
The Quad leaders voiced strong concerns about China's behavior, particularly in the South and East China Seas. They emphasized the importance of adhering to international maritime law and condemned China's militarization and coercive tactics in disputed waters.

STANDOUT ASPECTS OF
PM MODI'S US VISIT

1st Indian PM to address the US Congress twice!

2nd Indian PM to have the honour of a US state visit

3rd Global leader to receive a state visit invitation from President Biden

3. China as the "Elephant in the Room"

US President Biden, caught on a hot mic, mentioned that Chinese President Xi Jinping is "testing" the Quad, reflecting the concern over China's assertiveness across economic, technological, and diplomatic fronts.

4. Quad Summit Deliverables: From Health to Infrastructure

Key initiatives announced include:

• **Quad Cancer Moonshot:** India will provide $7.5 million in cervical cancer kits to Indo-Pacific countries.

• **Coast Guard Cooperation:** A ship observer mission in 2025 to improve maritime safety.

• **Infrastructure Development:** The "Quad Ports of the Future Partnership" will support sustainable port infrastructure.

• **Semiconductor Supply Chain Resilience:** Quad members will work to strengthen supply chains in this critical area.

• **UN Security Council Reform:** Leaders agreed on the need for a more inclusive and effective UN Security Council.

5. Strengthening US-India Relations

In his meeting with President Biden, PM Modi underscored the deepening strategic partnership between India and the US, covering a range of global and regional issues. Biden highlighted the strong, dynamic relationship between the two nations, praising the progress made in various areas of cooperation.

6. Return of Indian Antiquities

During Modi's visit, the US handed over 297 smuggled antiquities to India, furthering efforts to combat cultural property trafficking. This brings the total number of recovered Indian artifacts to 640 since 2014.
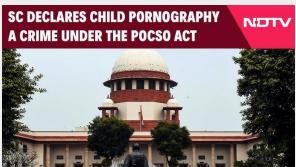
7. Discussion on Bangladesh

Modi and Biden discussed the situation in Bangladesh, particularly focusing on minority rights, as part of their broader conversation on regional stability.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; International Relations
Source: Indian Express

Introduction

The Supreme Court has clarified and expanded the interpretation of child pornography laws under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, specifically targeting the storage, viewing, and failure to report such content.

1. Expanded Definition of Child Pornography Offenses

In a landmark ruling, the Supreme Court has broadened the scope of Section 15 of the POCSO Act, which deals with the punishment for storing child pornography. The law now covers:

• **Possession with intent to share:** Failing to delete or report child pornography is punishable.

• **Transmission or distribution:** Sharing, transmitting, or displaying child pornography is an offense.

• **Commercial purposes:** Storing child pornography for profit also attracts severe penalties.

2. Court's Interpretation of "Possession"

The court expanded the meaning of "possession" to include not only physical possession but also constructive possession, which refers to control over child pornography even if it is not downloaded or saved. For instance:

• **Viewing content:** Simply watching child pornography online without downloading it is still considered possession because the viewer has control over it.

• **Unintentional access:** If someone accidentally receives child pornography but fails to report it, they are still liable under the law.

3. Strict Punishment for Not Reporting

The law mandates that anyone who views or possesses child pornography must report it to authorities. Failure to do so can result in fines of at least ₹5,000 for a first offense, and at least ₹10,000 for repeat offenses.

4. Overruling the Madras High Court Decision

The Supreme Court overturned a ruling by the Madras High Court that had quashed charges against a man for merely possessing child pornography. The High Court had argued that possession alone was not enough to prove an offense unless the material was shared or transmitted. The Supreme Court, however, ruled that possession itself constitutes an offense under Section 15.

5. Inchoate Offenses and Intent

The court emphasized that intent matters. Even if a person deletes child pornography before an FIR is registered, they can still be charged if it is proven that they had the material "at any point." The law focuses on overt steps taken towards sharing or distributing such material, not just the actual act.

6. Police and Courts Must Consider All Sub-sections
The Supreme Court advised law enforcement and courts to thoroughly investigate cases under all sub-sections of Section 15. Even if an offense is not made out under one sub-section, they must check if other sub-sections are applicable, ensuring no loopholes in the legal process.

Conclusion: Stronger Protection for Children
The Supreme Court's ruling significantly tightens child pornography laws by expanding the definition of possession and making the failure to report an offense. This move reinforces accountability and aims to curb the spread of child pornography through stricter legal measures.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; Governance
Source: Indian Express