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## 1. Durgadi Fort Dispute in Kalyan, Maharashtra

### Origins of the Dispute



On September 20, 1968, Shiv Sena founder Bal Thackeray raised a saffron flag at the Durgadi Fort in Kalyan, marking a pivotal moment in Maharashtra's political history and the Sena's early foray into Hindu revivalism. This event intensified the longstanding contention between local Hindu and Muslim communities over the site.

### Court Verdict After Five Decades

On December 12, 2023, a Kalyan Civil Court ruled in favor of the Maharashtra government, rejecting the Muslim community's claim to the disputed site at Durgadi Fort. The legal battle, spanning over five decades, has seen multiple petitions, protests, and tensions between the communities involved.

### A Historical Overview of Durgadi Fort

#### 16th-Century Beginnings

Durgadi Fort, situated in Kalyan (approximately 50 km northeast of Mumbai), dates back to the 16th century under the Bijapur-based Adil Shahi Sultanate. Historical records describe it as a significant trading post housing a mosque, a Muslim tomb, and other structures.

#### • Notable Features (as per 1892 Gazetteer):

- A 64-foot-long Idga (prayer wall).
- A mosque measuring 22 feet in length, width, and height.
- A deep, round stone well.

#### Transformation Under Maratha Rule

In 1760, the Marathas captured the fort, constructed a small wooden temple dedicated to Goddess Durgadevi, and renamed it "Durgadi Killa." A mosque within the fort was converted into a temple dedicated to Ramji.

### **Decline During British Rule**

By 1818, the British took control of Kalyan. By the late 19th century, the temple within the fort had ceased to function as a place of worship, primarily after the goddess's idol was stolen in 1876.

### **Escalation of Communal Tensions**

#### **Muslim Claims and Hindu Resistance (1960s)**

In the mid-1960s, local Kokni Muslims claimed they had offered Eid prayers at the fort for centuries and asserted ownership of the land. In response, Hindus demanded equal prayer rights at the site.

#### **Government Intervention**

In 1966, the Maharashtra government asserted ownership of the land, intending to develop it into a park. However, public protests led to the reversal of the decision, allowing Muslims to continue Eid prayers twice a year while restricting claims from both communities.

#### **Rise of Shiv Sena and Hindu Mobilization**

In 1968, local Hindus began celebrating Navratri at the site, asserting the fort's connection to Goddess Durga. Bal Thackeray's declaration to install an idol of the goddess within the fort further polarized the situation.

### **Legal Battle and Recent Developments**

#### **Decades-Long Dispute**

The legal tussle began in the early 1970s when the Maharashtra government reasserted its ownership. A 1974 order handing the land to the Kalyan Municipal Corporation was challenged by the Muslim community in 1976.

#### **Court Ruling (2023)**

The Kalyan Civil Court ruled in favor of the Maharashtra government, stating that the Muslim side's legal claim was invalid under the Limitation Act. The court emphasized that possession was interrupted in 1968, and the 1976 petition was filed too late.

#### **Reactions and Next Steps**

- **Muslim Community:** Plans to challenge the ruling in higher courts, citing the case's dismissal on a technicality rather than its merits.

- **Maharashtra Government:** Reaffirmed its ownership and right to use the land.

Notably, the court refrained from commenting on the historicity of the religious structures or denying prayer rights to either community.

Relevance: GS Prelims; Governance

## **2. India's Milestone in FDI Inflows**

### **Introduction**



India has achieved a significant milestone in its economic journey, with gross Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows surpassing \$1 trillion since April 2000. This achievement highlights India's growing stature as a global investment destination.

#### Recent Growth

During the first half of the current fiscal year, FDI inflows surged by nearly 26% to \$42.1 billion, reflecting increased investor confidence driven by:

- A proactive policy framework.
- A dynamic business

environment.

- Enhanced international competitiveness.

#### Impact of FDI

FDI has been transformative for India's development, offering:

- Substantial non-debt financial resources.
- Technology transfers.
- Employment generation.

#### Policies Boosting Investor Confidence

Key initiatives contributing to India's FDI success include:

- "Make in India" campaign to promote domestic manufacturing.
- Liberalized sectoral policies for foreign investments.
- Goods and Services Tax (GST) to streamline taxation.
- Competitive labor costs and strategic incentives.

#### A Decade of Exceptional Growth

From April 2014 to September 2024, India received \$709.84 billion in FDI, accounting for nearly 69% of total FDI inflows in the last 24 years.

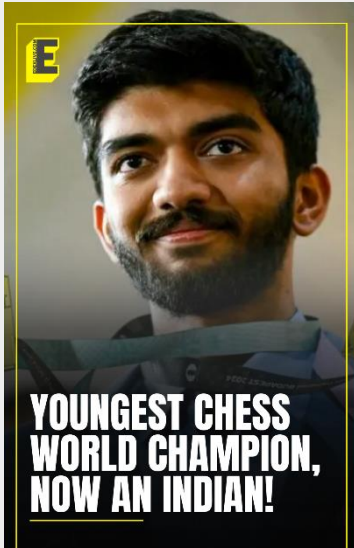
This robust inflow underscores India's pivotal role in the global economic landscape and its emergence as a preferred destination for multinational corporations.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper III; Economics

### 3. Gukesh is youngest world chess champion

#### Introduction

History was made in the small island of Sentosa as D. Gukesh became the youngest World chess champion ever after defeating Ding Liren of China in the final game of their match. The



18-year-old from Chennai broke the record held by the Russian Garry Kasparov for nearly four decades.

With his victory against the defending champion, which came after 58 moves, Gukesh took his points tally to 7.5 points. That was the requirement for a player to win the World title.

#### **Contested between India and China**

This was the first-ever World championship match contested by two Asian players. And it was a match between the players from India and China, the world's two most populous countries and the continent's superpowers.

#### **Third Asian**

Gukesh is only the third Asian to win the World championship. Viswanathan Anand, who is now a mentor for Gukesh, was the first, and Ding the second.

Gukesh is also only the 18th world champion in history, which dates back to 1886. That there have been only 17 undisputed world champions before him puts into perspective the enormity of the achievement.

Relevance: GS Prelims

### **4. India confers honorary rank on Nepal Army chief**

#### **Honorary General Title Conferred to Nepal's Army Chief**



President Droupadi Murmu conferred the honorary rank of 'General of the Indian Army' on Nepal's Army Chief, General Ashok Raj Sigdel, during a ceremony on Thursday. The title was awarded in recognition of his commendable military prowess and his role in strengthening the long-standing friendly ties between Nepal and India, as stated by the President's office.

#### **Tradition of Mutual Recognition**

The tradition of conferring the honorary rank of General on each other's Army Chiefs has been upheld by Nepal and India since 1950, symbolizing the close and friendly ties between the two nations.

#### **Recent Conferrals**

- Last month, Nepal's President Ramchandra Paudel conferred the honorary rank of 'General of the Nepal Army' on Indian Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi at a ceremony in Kathmandu, also known as Sheetal Niwas.

Relevance: GS Prelims; International Relations