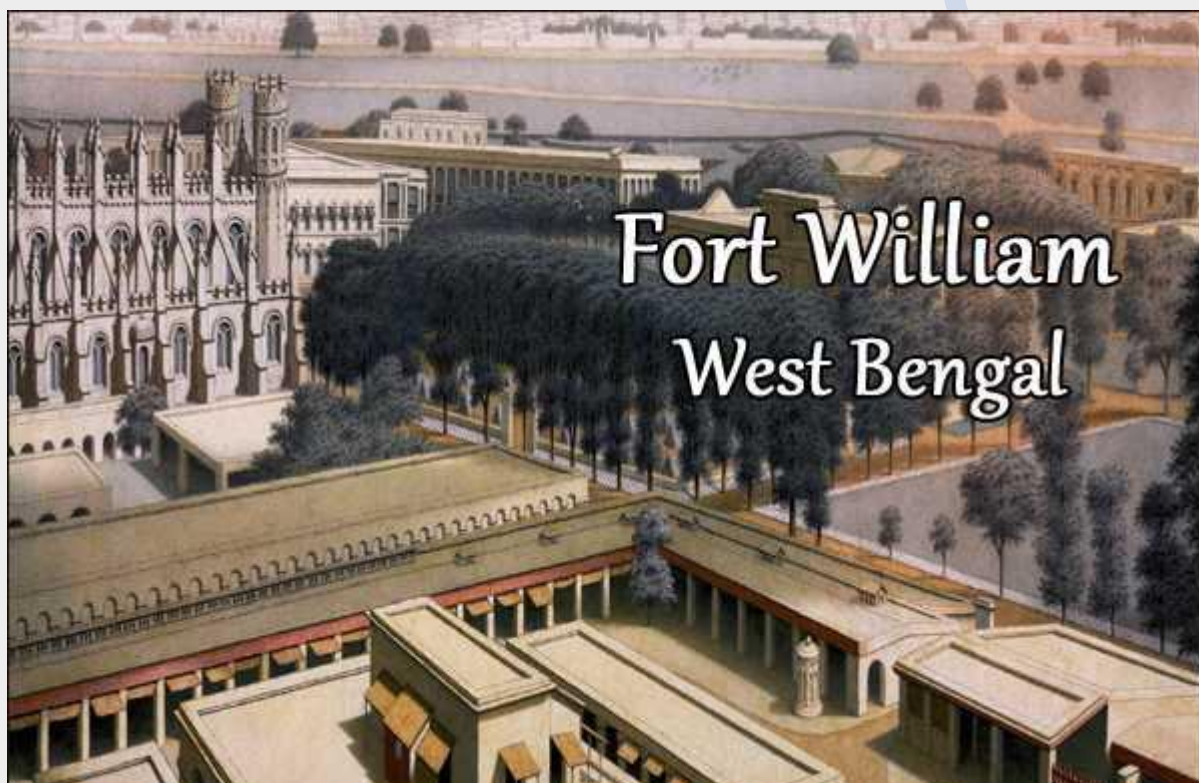


1. Fort William, Army's Eastern HQ, renamed Vijay Durg**Renaming**

In the latest step toward eliminating colonial practices and mindsets within the armed forces, Fort William in Kolkata, the headquarters of the Eastern Army Command, has been renamed Vijay Durg. Additionally, Kitchener House inside Fort William has been renamed Manekshaw House, and South gate, formerly known as St. George's Gate, is now Shivaji Gate.

**History of Fort William**

Fort William, named after King William III of England, was constructed by the British in 1781. The new name, Vijay Durg, is derived from the oldest fort along the Sindhudurg coast in Maharashtra and served as a naval base for the Marathas under Chhatrapati Shivaji.

Rationale

In recent years, there have been a series of measures aimed at removing "vestiges of the colonial era" and "Indianising" military traditions and customs — an initiative Prime Minister Narendra Modi has termed as "gulami ki mansikta se mukti (freedom from the mentality of slavery)".

In September 2022, the Navy adopted a new naval ensign that moves away from its colonial past, featuring a new octagonal design inspired by the seal of Chhatrapati Shivaji.

Relevance: GS Prelims

Source: The Hindu

2. Trump's plans to 'own' Gaza

Introduction

In an extraordinary press conference that he addressed with Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu by his side, United States President Donald Trump made some major policy announcements on the Middle East.



First, he said that Palestinians should leave Gaza, and insisted that Jordan and Egypt should take them in: "They (Jordanians and Egyptians) say they're not going to accept, I say they will." Any number of "alternate" sites could be identified for displaced Gazans to live in peace; "why would they want to return [to Gaza]? The place has been hell."

Second, he said that the US will "take over Gaza and...do a job with it too". America will "own" Gaza, and turn it into the "Riviera of the Middle East", he said – an idea similar to the one floated by his son-in-law Jared Kushner last year about making Gaza a valuable "waterfront property".

What are the analytical takeaways from Trump's proposals?

The President's new proposal for Gaza (and Palestine) risks violating long-standing UNSC and UNGA resolutions supporting the Palestinian right of self-determination (which India has proactively backed at the United Nations), and several peremptory norms of international law (jus cogens) including those that prohibit ethnic cleansing.

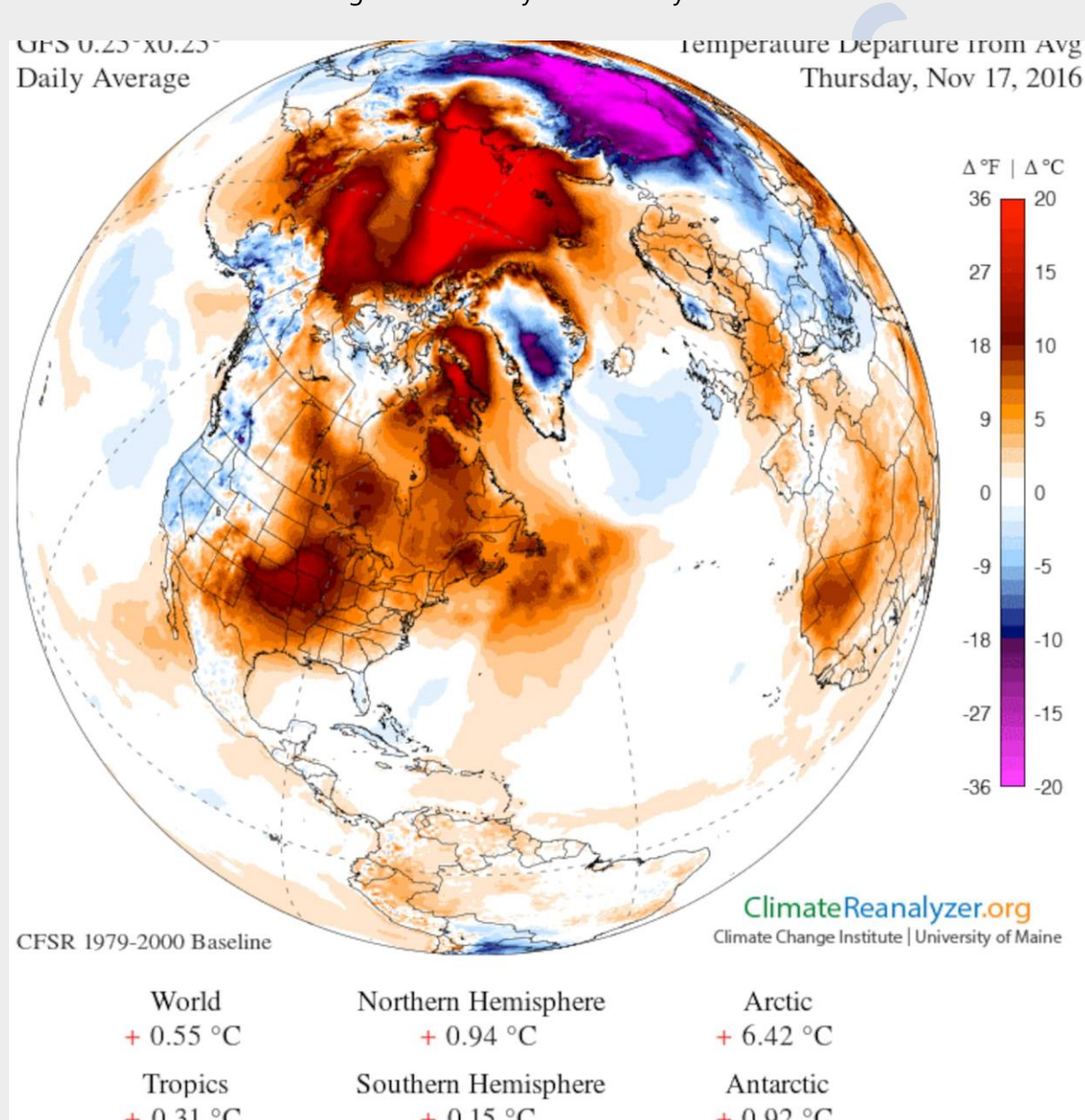
Trump's claim that Gazans do not want to return contrasts with abundant evidence from the enclave following the ceasefire, with thousands returning to North Gaza – even though Israeli bombardment has turned many homes to rubble.

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

3. Why temperatures at north pole reached 20 degrees Celsius above average

High temperature rise at North Pole

Temperatures increased by more than 20 degrees Celsius above average at the north pole, crossing the threshold for ice to melt, on February 2. While mercury soared to 18 degrees Celsius hotter than the 1991–2020 average in the north of Svalbard, Norway, on February 1, it had risen to more than 20 degrees Celsius by the next day.



Acted as Global Refrigerator

Since 1979, the Arctic has warmed four times faster than the global average. This is an issue because the region acts as a refrigerator for the rest of the world — it helps cool the planet. If

temperatures continue to soar at this rate, it can lead to severe global impacts including rising sea levels and disruption of weather patterns.

Why has the Arctic warmed faster than the global average?

The global temperatures have increased by around 1.3 degrees Celsius compared to the 1850-1900 baseline. However, this rise in temperatures is not uniform across the planet. For instance, the Arctic has warmed 3.8 times faster than the global average since the late 1970s.

There are multiple factors behind the Arctic's rapid warming.

1. Albedo Effect: One of the most prominent factors is the albedo effect or how much sunlight a surface reflects. Sea ice keeps temperatures down in the polar regions, as its bright, white surface reflects more sunlight back to space than liquid water. As the ice cover in the Arctic is melting, more land or water is getting exposed to the Sun and more heat is getting absorbed, leading to a rise in temperatures.

2. Lack of Convection: The lack of convection in higher latitudes such as the Arctic is another reason. Convection occurs when air close to the ground is heated by the warm surface of the Earth. In the tropics, where more sunlight can reach the surface compared to the Arctic, strong convection takes place, causing warm air to rise. This vertical mixing distributes heat throughout the atmosphere.

However, in the Arctic, due to weak convection, the extra warming from the greenhouse gases is not able to mix vertically and the heat remains concentrated near the surface.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper III; Environment

Source: Indian Express

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