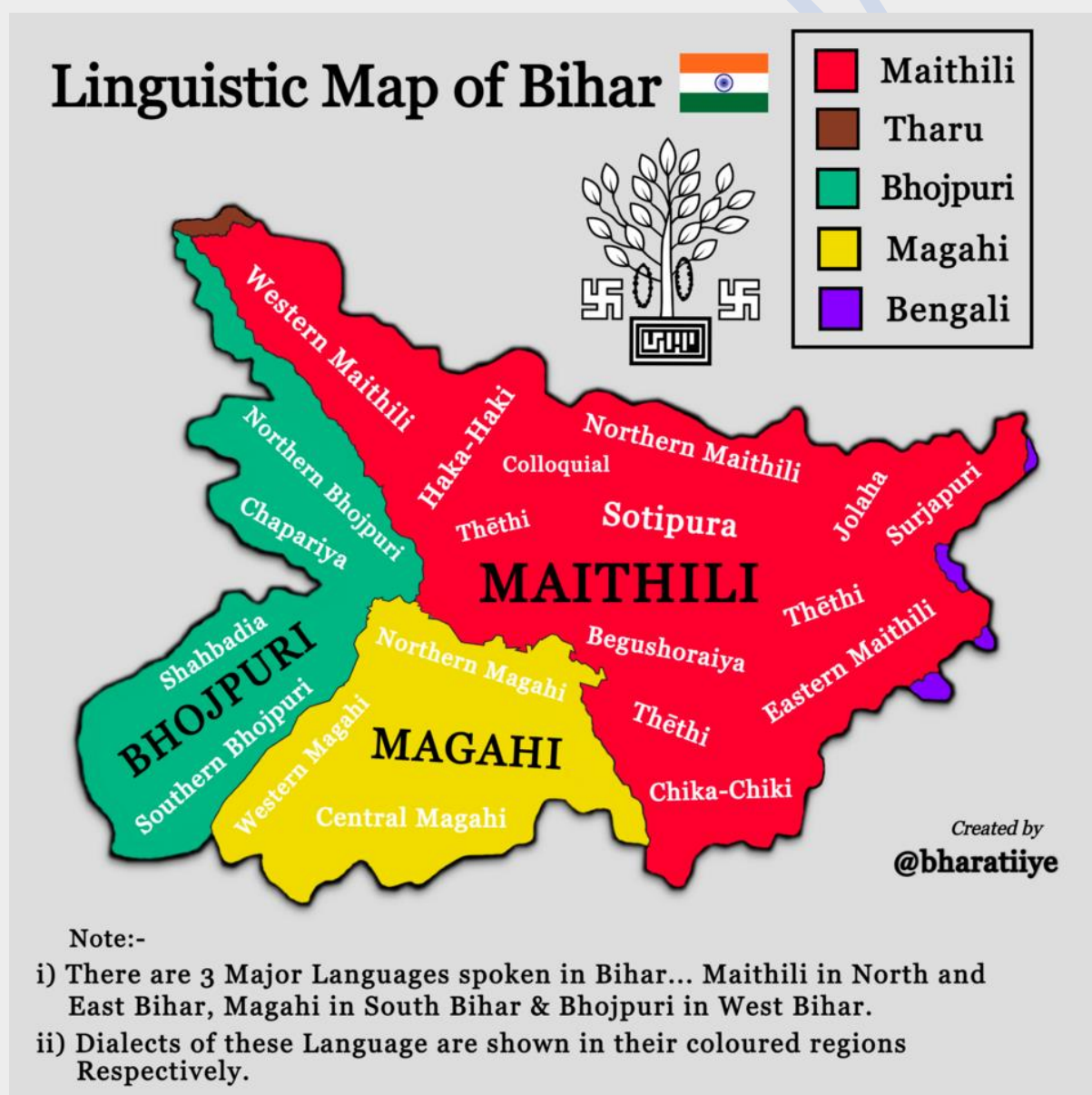


1. Namo Bharat Rapid Rail from Jaynagar to Patna**Why in News?**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the Namo Bharat Rapid Rail train between Jaynagar and Patna while addressing a rally in the city of Madhubani.

What is the Namo Bharat Rail project?

Namo Bharat Rapid Rail (also referred to as Vande Metro) is a short-distance service that operates on an inter-city rail network to connect major cities within a distance of around 100–250 km (62–155 mi). The Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala had rolled out the first Basic Unit (4 coaches) of the train in April 2024. This train is part of the 'Make in India' initiative by the Government of India and entered commercial service in September 2024.



Self propelled coaches

The Namo Bharat Rapid Rail is a self-propelled trainset similar to the Vande Bharat Express. The self-propelled feature eliminates the need for a separate locomotive and offers faster acceleration and deceleration. Designed to replace Mainline Electric Multiple Unit (MEMU) trains, its primary aim is to reduce the inter-city travel time. With a maximum operational speed of 130 km/h (81 mph), it surpasses the current running MEMUs.

Recent Projects

The Namo Bharat Rapid project will be the fastest and the first fully air-conditioned train between Jaynagar, which borders Nepal, and the state capital. It is only the second rake of the train project, after being launched between Ahmedabad and Bhuj last September.

What's behind the Centre's announcements for Mithilanchal, specifically?

Jaynagar falls in Mithilanchal region. The Mithilanchal region, comprising districts such as Darbhanga, Madhubani, Sitamarhi, Saharsa, Supaul and Madhepura.

Relevance: GS Prelims; Economics

Source: The Hindu

2. CCS takes measures against Pakistan on Pahalgam: What is the Cabinet Committee on Security?

Why in News?

Noting "the cross-border linkages of the terrorist attack" in Pahalgam that led to the deaths of 26 people, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) on Wednesday announced a series of extraordinary retaliatory measures against Pakistan.

These included India suspending the decades-old Indus Waters Treaty, downgrading diplomatic relations with Pakistan by reducing the mission strength in Islamabad, cancelling visas granted to Pakistan nationals under a South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) scheme, and shutting the Attari-Wagah border.

What is the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS)?



security, and defence expenditure are taken by the CCS.

With the Prime Minister at the helm, the CCS includes the cabinet ministers holding the big four portfolios of Finance, Defence, Home Affairs and External Affairs as its members. It is responsible for debates, discussions and appointments of/ in the national security bodies. Major decisions with respect to significant appointments, issues of national

It can also include the defence chiefs and other senior bureaucrats, depending on the situation and the nature of the discussion. Besides dealing with defence-related issues, the CCS brainstorms on issues relating to law and order and internal security, and policy matters concerning foreign affairs on security-related issues. It also considers matters relating to atomic energy.

What are Cabinet committees, in general?

Following general elections, once a Union Cabinet is sworn in and ministerial portfolios are allocated, the next step is the formation of the high-profile Cabinet committees. The Prime Minister sets up these committees with selected members of the Cabinet and assigns specific functions to these committees; both may later be modified.

The membership of each committee varies from three to eight. Usually, only Cabinet ministers are members of these committees. However, it is not unheard of for non-Cabinet ministers to be members or special invitees to committees. If the Prime Minister himself is a member of any such committee, he acts as the head of that committee.

The committees resolve issues and formulate proposals for the consideration of the Cabinet and take decisions on matters assigned to them. The Cabinet is empowered to review such decisions.

There are eight Cabinet committees at present, including on issues such as Economic Affairs, Political Affairs, and Parliamentary Affairs. All committees except the Cabinet Committee on Accommodation and the Cabinet Committee on Parliamentary Affairs are headed by the PM.

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; International Relations

Source: Indian Express

3. Pakistan shuts airspace, snaps trade relations with India

Why Now?

Islamabad ups the ante

Pakistan's countermeasures after India's five-pronged response to Pahalgam attack



Back to home: Indian citizens return from Pakistan through Wagah border on Thursday. AFP

- **Pakistan** airspace shut to Indian-operated airlines

- **Wagah** border, cross-border transit and trade closed

- **SAARC** visas suspended, except for Sikh pilgrims

- **Indian Defence, Naval, Air** Advisors told to exit

- **High** Commission staff cut from 55 to 30

- **Blocking** Indus flow deemed 'act of war'; Simla Accord may be held in abeyance

Pakistan closed its air space to Indian airliners and suspended all trade as part of its response to India's actions after the Pahalgam terror attack. It warned against any "misadventure", indicating that it expects a military response from India over brutal killing of 26 men in Jammu and Kashmir by terrorists belonging to a group linked to the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba.

'Act of war'

Pakistan also matched the decisions taken by the Cabinet Committee on Security chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, including closing the Wagah border check post, declaring Indian defence, naval and air advisors persona non grata, and downsizing the High Commission from 55 to 30 personnel. Pakistan said any attempt to "stop or divert" Indus water flow to the country would be considered an 'act of war'.

In addition, Pakistan also cancelled the SAARC visa held by Indians, but made an exception for Sikh pilgrims; officials said the Kartarpur corridor to Pakistan will remain open for the present.

Pakistan's National Security Council (NSC)

These decisions were announced after a meeting of Pakistan's National Security Council (NSC) in Islamabad, chaired by Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif.

A statement issued by the Pakistan Prime Minister's office said that the NSC had expressed "concern over the loss of tourists' lives" and "unequivocally condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations", but criticised the measures taken by India in response to the Pahalgam attack as "unilateral, unjust, politically motivated, extremely irresponsible and devoid of legal merit".

The Pakistan NSC warned that any attempt to "stop or divert the flow of water belonging to Pakistan as per the Indus Waters Treaty", would be considered an Act of War.

It also threatened to cancel other bilateral agreements with India, including the Shimla Accord of 1972

Relevance: GS Prelims & Mains Paper II; International Relations

Source: The Hindu

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