

**P.L.RAJ IAS & IPS ACADEMY****Building Bureaucrats Since 2006****September 5, 2026 – Dinamani Newspaper – Tit bits**

1. The advanced EOS-05 (GISAT-1A) satellite, launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) aboard the GSLV F-17 rocket for Earth observation and disaster management operations, was successfully placed in its designated Geostationary orbit.
 - i. ISRO has been launching various satellites, including Cartosat, SCATSAT and RISAT, for remote-sensing applications in the country. As part of these efforts, ISRO developed the advanced 'Geo Imaging' satellite EOS-03 (GISAT) for Earth observation and disaster management. It was launched aboard the GSLV F-10 rocket on August 12, 2021. However, the mission failed due to a technical malfunction in the cryogenic engine.
 - ii. Following this, ISRO announced that the GISAT satellite would be rebuilt and launched again. Accordingly, ISRO planned to launch the advanced EOS-05 (GISAT-1A) satellite aboard the GSLV F-17 rocket.
 - iii. The GSLV F-17 rocket was launched as scheduled from the second launch pad at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh. The rocket successfully placed the EOS-05 satellite into its designated Geostationary orbit approximately 19 minutes after liftoff.
 - iv. The EOS-05 satellite weighs 2,367 kg and has a mission life of 10 years. It is currently orbiting in an orbit with a perigee of 171 km and an apogee of 31,026 km. Using its propulsion motors, the satellite will gradually be moved to its final orbit.
 - v. At a distance of 36,000 km
 - For the first time in ISRO's history, an Earth-observation satellite will carry out observation activities from a Geostationary orbit located approximately 36,000 km above the Earth's surface.

- As of February, India had 27 operational remote-sensing satellites. All of them had been placed in low Earth orbit or sun-synchronous orbit.
 - The EOS-05 satellite will provide real-time data on weather, agriculture, cloud movement, maritime surveillance, mineral exploration and several other areas. In particular, it has the capability to photograph a particular region of the Earth in near-real time four or five times a day. It also has several features that can contribute to national security.
 - Its two types of 3D cameras can capture highly detailed images of the Earth's surface with a resolution of up to 40 metres. The satellite will continuously monitor weather conditions and help authorities take rapid precautionary measures during disasters, including cyclones. It will also continuously monitor India's border areas and provide vital information required by the country's security agencies.
 - Meanwhile, ISRO has conducted only two launches so far this year. The EOS-NI satellite launched on January 12 failed. After a gap of about eight months, the GSLV F-17 launch has succeeded amid high expectations. This is the 19th rocket in the GSLV series, of which 13 have been successful and six have failed.
- vi. ISRO Chairman V. Narayanan stated that the rocket launch facility being constructed at Kulasekarapattinam in Thoothukudi district is Government infrastructure and that only its maintenance will be undertaken by private entities. Speaking to reporters at Sriharikota, he said:
- "This mission is significant because it is the first satellite to be placed in a geostationary orbit 36,000 km above Earth for applications including Earth observation and disaster management.
 - In the initial stages of GSLV launches, the rocket could carry only up to 1,536 kg. But now it has created history by carrying a payload weighing 2,367 kg.
 - The rocket launch facility being constructed at Kulasekarapattinam in Thoothukudi district is Government infrastructure. However, its maintenance will be carried out by private entities. Both ISRO and private-sector employees will be

present there. ISRO and private satellites will be launched from the facility.

- Around 8,000 tests have so far been completed for the Gaganyaan programme. We are preparing to implement the next phase, which involves launching an uncrewed spacecraft," he said.

2. Amid severe economic sanctions imposed by the United States and financial difficulties, the Cuban Government has announced new liberal economic reforms aimed at attracting foreign investment, trade and tourism.

- i. New regulations running to 34 pages have been published in Cuba's official gazette. Following the 176 changes announced in June, these are being viewed as the biggest changes to Cuba's socialist economic system since the 1959 revolution.
 - ii. Under the new regulations, private companies will no longer be required to approach Government agencies to recruit or dismiss employees.
 - iii. Domestic and joint-venture companies engaged in foreign trade will no longer need prior Government approval to open accounts with foreign banks. They will only have to notify the Government.
 - iv. In addition, private companies will now be permitted to operate travel agencies, while individuals will be allowed to work as tourist guides—activities that were previously largely under Government control.
 - v. Meanwhile, the United States has imposed new economic sanctions on Fidel Ernesto Castro, the 31-year-old grandson of former Cuban President Raúl Castro, and five Cuban state-owned companies.
- As part of the Trump administration's continuing efforts to intensify economic pressure on communist Cuba, sanctions have been imposed on the country's state bank, two companies associated with the nickel-mining industry and two companies in the energy sector.

3. Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated Giorgia Meloni for becoming the longest continuously serving Prime Minister in Italy's post-World War II history.

- i. Among Italian Prime Ministers who have served since World War II, 49-year-old Meloni reached the distinction of becoming the country's longest-serving Prime Minister on Thursday, having held office continuously for 1,413 days since October 22, 2022. It is noteworthy that she is the first woman to serve as Prime Minister of Italy.

4. Forty glacial lakes have been identified as being in a dangerous condition in Sikkim, an eastern Himalayan state. Of these, 16 lakes have been classified as posing a high risk of breaching.

- i. The State Government stated that if these lakes breach, they could cause catastrophic damage in the downstream river valleys. The information has gained significance following the devastating floods in Nepal a few days ago, in which many people were killed.
- ii. Sikkim Chief Secretary Sandeep Thambe, Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang's Media Secretary Yuken Tamang, and State Science and Technology Department Principal Director T.G. Shrestha told reporters:
 - Changes occurring in Sikkim's glacial lakes are being monitored with the help of remote-sensing equipment and satellite imagery. Through this process, 40 glacial lakes have been identified as dangerous. Of these, 16 have been classified as having a high risk of breaching. In particular, Lake Chhako Cho has been identified as being at very high risk.

5. International publisher HarperCollins India has come forward to publish the autobiography of Sonia Gandhi, Chairperson of the Congress

Parliamentary Party.

- i. The book, titled “Belonging: A Journey of Love,” is scheduled to be published on November 10, the company announced on Friday.
- ii. This brings an end to the uncertainty surrounding the publication of Sonia Gandhi’s autobiography after Penguin Random House India declined to publish it. The book is scheduled to be released on the newly announced date.

6. Seven states, including Tamil Nadu, have agreed to increase the retirement age of district judges to 62 years.

- i. For this purpose, all seven states will have to amend their service rules. They have been directed to complete these amendments as quickly as possible, preferably within two months, and formally raise the retirement age of district judges to 62.

7. A conference of Chief Justices of the Supreme Courts of BRICS member countries began in Delhi.

- i. The BRICS grouping consists of Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia. India currently holds the chairmanship of the grouping. The conference of Chief Justices and senior judicial leaders from the Supreme Courts of BRICS countries has begun in Delhi.
- ii. The conference is being hosted by the Supreme Court of India and will continue until the 6th. During the conference, Chief Justice of India Surya Kant will hold discussions with the Chief Justices of the Supreme Courts of BRICS member countries. Similarly, Surya Kant will also hold consultations with the Chief Justices of the Supreme Courts of BRICS partner countries, namely Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Thailand, Uganda, Uzbekistan and Vietnam.

8. Geopolitical and Economic Stature of the SCO

- i. Established in 1996, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is a vital international platform focusing on political, economic, security, and counter-terrorism cooperation, emerging as a powerful, unavoidable regional force in Eurasia.
 - Originally founded as the "Shanghai Five" (comprising China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan), the body was formally renamed the SCO in 2001 when Uzbekistan joined. India and Pakistan joined in 2017, followed by Iran in 2023 and Belarus in 2024, bringing the current strength to 10 member states.
 - The SCO is the world's largest regional organization, spanning 24% of the global land area (constituting 65% of the Eurasian landmass) and representing 42% of the global population.
 - The collective Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of SCO member nations represents 36% of global GDP, far surpassing the powerful G7 nations, whose collective share stands at 28%.
 - Afghanistan and Mongolia serve as observer states, while 15 countries—including Middle Eastern nations like Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)—act as official dialogue partners.
- ii. Institutional Framework and the 26th Bishkek Summit
 - The Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS), which oversees intelligence exchange, specialized training, and institutional coordination, is permanently headquartered in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan.
 - The 26th annual SCO Summit was held on September 1, 2026, in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan, resulting in a crucial joint declaration.
 - In the declaration, the member countries expressed deep condolences to the citizens of Iran following the tragic demise of the nation's supreme religious leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.
- iii. Stand on the Middle East Conflict and Global Energy Crisis

- The joint Bishkek Declaration openly criticized and condemned the US-Israeli military attacks on Iran, noting that they violate international law and the UN Charter while threatening global peace, security, and stability.
- The SCO warned that the military conflict has severely impacted maritime trade passing through the highly critical Strait of Hormuz, disrupting global supply chains, energy markets, and financial systems.
- Amidst the worsening global energy crisis, the declaration reaffirmed the bloc's commitment to expanding inclusive and mutually beneficial cooperation in the energy sector.

iv. Direct Opposition to Unilateral Sanctions

- Without directly naming the United States, the SCO declaration strongly condemned unilateral economic sanctions imposed on Iran, Russia (citing the Ukraine war), and nations trading with them.
- The declaration stated that such unilateral mandatory measures in the global economy directly violate the established rules of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization (WTO).

v. Counter-Terrorism and PM Modi's Address

- The member states resolved to launch a concerted fight against the "three evils" of terrorism, separatism, and extremism.
- The SCO strongly condemned all forms of terrorism, asserting that there can be no "double standards" in the international fight against terror and calling for a united global front to stop cross-border infiltration.
- The bloc declared that the entire support structure of terrorism—including recruitment, financing, radicalization, and safe havens—must be completely dismantled.
- Addressing the summit, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterated that terrorism is a grave threat and urged member nations to speak in a single voice against it, a statement directly targeting Pakistan's state-sponsored terrorism.

vi. Raising a Voice Against Hegemony

- In an increasingly divided global environment, the Bishkek Declaration underscored the critical necessity of regional cooperation.
- The joint statement displayed the collective courage of regional nations to raise their voice against the dominating, unilateral hegemonic mindset of Western superpowers.