

7. SHORT NEWS –

Raisina Dialogue 2026

Context –Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 11th edition of Raisina Dialogue 2026 in New Delhi, with Finland's President Alexander Stubb delivering the keynote address.

About Raisina Dialogue

1. It is India's premier multilateral conference on geopolitics and geo – economics, bringing together global leaders, policymakers, military officials, scholars, and industry experts to discuss major international strategic issues.
2. **Origin** –It is organised annually in New Delhi by the Observer Research Foundation in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs, launched in 2016.
 1. The first edition (2016) focused on the theme "Asia –Regional and Global Connectivity."
 2. The name derives from Raisina Hill, Delhi, the seat of India's government.
3. **2026 Theme** – "Samiskāra – Assertion, Accommodation, Advancement"
 1. Meaning –Refers to the "refining" of the global order through responsible assertion of interests, accommodating diverse views, and collective advancement.
4. **Participants** –Around 2700 participants from about 110 countries attended the conference.
 1. Participants included ministers, former heads of state, parliamentarians, military leaders, think – tank experts, and technology leaders.
5. **Six Thematic Pillars of 2026 Raisena Dialogue**
 1. **Contested Frontiers** –Power, polarity and geopolitical competition.
 2. **Repairing the Commons** –Global governance and collective action.
 3. **White Whale** –Achieving Agenda 2030 and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
 4. **The Eleventh Hour** –Climate change, conflict and global sustainability challenges.
 5. **Tomorrowland** –Technology governance, AI and digital transformation.
 6. **Trade in the Time of Tariffs** –Economic resilience and global trade disruptions.

Its Significance

- **Global Strategic Forum** –Comparable to international platforms like the Munich Security Conference and Shangri – La Dialogue.
- **Diplomatic Platform** –Strengthens India's role as a convening power in global diplomacy and strategic dialogue.
- **Policy Exchange** –Facilitates collaboration among governments, think tanks, industry leaders and civil society on emerging global challenges.

Gravity Bomb

Context –The U.S. announced a shift to using Gravity Bomb in operations against Iran after claiming that Iranian air – defence systems had been significantly degraded.

About Gravity Bomb

1. A gravity bomb, also known as a free – fall or "dumb" bomb, is an unpowered aerial munition dropped from an aircraft whose trajectory is determined mainly by gravity, aerodynamics, and the aircraft's speed and altitude.
2. **Working Mechanism of a Nuclear Gravity Bomb**
 1. A nuclear gravity bomb is released from an aircraft and falls toward the target under gravity, sometimes guided by tail – kit systems for improved accuracy.
 2. Detonation occurs at pre – set altitude or ground impact, triggered by onboard sensors.
 3. The nuclear fission/fusion reaction then releases massive blast, heat, and radiation energy.
3. **Examples** –The United States widely uses the Mark 80 series bombs, including –
 1. **Mk 82 bomb (500 – lb)** – designed for soft targets such as radar installations or light vehicles.
 2. **Mk 83 bomb (1,000 – lb)** – used against reinforced structures and bridges.

3. **Mk 84 bomb (2,000 - lb)** – heavy bunker – buster capable of destroying deeply buried targets.
4. Modern gravity bombs can be fitted with Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM) kits that add GPS guidance and steerable fins, converting them into precision – guided weapons.
5. **India's Similar Bomb** – Long – Range Glide Bomb (LRGB) "Gaurav", developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
 1. This is a 1,000 kg class indigenous smart bomb that can be launched from Sukhoi – 30 MKI fighter jets.
 2. Its non – winged version is named "Gautham".

Key Features of Gravity Bomb

1. **Cost Efficiency** – Gravity bombs are significantly cheaper than long – range missiles; a bomb fitted with a JDAM kit costs roughly \$25,000–\$30,000, compared with millions for cruise missiles.
2. **Versatility** – They are produced in multiple weight categories to target different military objectives, ranging from light equipment to hardened underground bunkers.
3. **High – Volume Deployment** – Because they are inexpensive and easy to transport, they enable sustained and large – scale aerial bombardment once air superiority is achieved.
4. **Wide Aircraft Compatibility** – They can be deployed from various platforms, including fighter jets such as the F – 35 Lightning II and strategic bombers like the B – 52 Stratofortress.

Overall, gravity bombs remain one of the most widely used conventional aerial weapons in modern warfare due to their simplicity, flexibility, and cost – effectiveness.

Presidential Appointments of Governors and Lieutenant Governors

Context – President Droupadi Murmu has made several key appointments and transfers of Governors and Lieutenant Governors across different States and Union Territories of India.

Constitutional Provisions for Appointment of Governor

1. **Governor** – The office of the Governor is provided under Part VI of the Constitution (Articles 153–162 and related provisions).
2. **Article 153** – Provides that there shall be a Governor for each State. The same person can be appointed Governor for two or more states.
 1. **7th Amendment Act (1956)** – Modified Article 153 to allow one person to serve as Governor for two or more States simultaneously.
3. **Article 155** – Appointment of Governor– The Governor is appointed by the President of India by a warrant under his/her hand and seal.
 1. The appointment is made on the advice of the Union Council of Ministers.
4. **Article 156 – Term of Office**– The Governor holds office during the pleasure of the President.
 1. Normally, the term is five years, but the Governor can be removed earlier.
 2. The "Pleasure" Doctrine – The Governor serves at the pleasure of the President. While the term is five years, the Supreme Court (B.P. Singhal case) ruled that removal cannot be arbitrary or capricious.
5. **Article 159 – Oath or Affirmation** – The Governor takes oath before the Chief Justice of the High Court of the State (or senior – most judge available).

Constitutional Provisions for Lieutenant Governor

1. Union Territories are governed under Part VIII of the Constitution (Articles 239–241).
2. **Article 239 – Administration of Union Territories** – Every Union Territory is administered by the President. The President appoints an Administrator (usually called Lieutenant Governor) to administer the UT on his/her behalf.

Kurds

Context – Reports of possible Central Intelligence Agency engagement with Kurdish armed groups amid rising Israel–Iran conflict tensions have brought the Kurds back into global focus.

About Kurds

1. The Kurds are an indigenous ethnic group of the Mesopotamian plains and surrounding mountains across Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria.
2. Their traditional homeland, known as Kurdistan, is a cultural–geographic region rather than a sovereign state.
3. With an estimated 30–40 million people, Kurds are widely regarded as the largest stateless ethnic group in the world.

Different Kurdish Communities

1. **Kurds in Turkey** – Kurds constitute 15–19% of Turkey's population and have historically faced restrictions on language and identity. The insurgency led by the Kurdistan Workers' Party since 1984 has shaped Kurdish–Turkish relations.
 2. **Kurds in Iran** – Kurds account for around 10% of Iran's population and have demanded cultural rights and regional autonomy since the Iranian Revolution of 1979.
 3. **Kurds in Iraq** – Iraqi Kurds established the Kurdistan Regional Government after the Gulf War, gaining significant autonomy in northern Iraq.
 4. **Kurds in Syria** – Syrian Kurds, about 10% of the population, gained territorial control in northern Syria during the Syrian Civil War and played a key role against Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.
- Large Kurdish diaspora communities also live across Europe, particularly in Germany, France, the Netherlands, and Switzerland.

Unique Cultural Identity

1. **Distinct Language** – The Kurdish language belongs to the northwestern branch of the Iranian languages within the Indo – European family and includes multiple regional dialects.
2. **Diverse Religious Composition** – Most Kurds follow Sunni Islam, though communities also practice Shia Islam, Alevism, Yazidism, and Christianity, reflecting West Asia's pluralism.
3. **Strong Tribal and Community Traditions** – Kurdish society historically emphasises tribal networks, clan loyalty, and local leadership structures, shaping political and social organisation.
4. **Rich Cultural Heritage** – Kurds maintain a strong cultural identity through traditional music, dance, folklore, and festivals such as Nowruz, symbolising renewal and resistance

Minuteman III

Context – Amid escalating Middle East tensions, the United States Space Force test – launched the nuclear-capable LGM – 30G Minuteman III from Vandenberg Space Force Base, California.

Minuteman III Intercontinental Ballistic Missile

1. The LGM – 30G Minuteman III is a nuclear – capable intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) forming the land – based component of the United States nuclear triad.
2. Developed during the Cold War, it is deployed in underground silos across the western United States and designed to ensure credible nuclear deterrence and second – strike capability.

Key Features

1. **Nuclear Warhead Capacity** – The missile can carry nuclear warheads significantly more powerful than the atomic bombs used in the Atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, enhancing its strategic deterrence capability.
2. **Long – Range Strike Capability** – Minuteman III has an approximate range of about 6,000 miles (≈9,600 km), enabling it to strike targets across continents from US territory.

3. **High Speed** – The missile can travel at speeds exceeding 15,000 miles per hour, allowing rapid intercontinental delivery of payloads.
4. **Test and Operational Deployment** – Test launches are often conducted from Vandenberg Space Force Base, with test vehicles typically impacting designated zones near the Marshall Islands in the Pacific Ocean.

Significance

As the land – based leg of the United States nuclear triad (land, sea and air delivery systems), Minuteman III ensures strategic stability and second – strike capability, deterring potential nuclear attacks

