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TODAY'S ANALYSIS

(26 February 2025)

TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- **INDIA ASSUMES CHAIRMANSHIP OF BAY OF BENGAL INTER GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION**
- **WHY IRAQ IS SLOWLY SINKING?**
- **MCQs**



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INDIA ASSUMES CHAIRMANSHIP OF BAY OF BENGAL INTER GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION

- **Location:** Malé, Maldives
- **India's New Role:** India assumes the Chairmanship of the Bay of Bengal Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO) at the 13th Governing Council Meeting.
- **Leadership Transition:** India takes over the chairmanship from Bangladesh, a historic move that strengthens India's leadership role in the region.

BACKGROUND

- The 13th Governing Council Meeting of the BOBP-IGO, hosted in the Maldives, also marked a high-level conference on **Policy Guidance for Mainstreaming Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM) in Small-Scale Fisheries**.
- This event was organized by the **Ministry of Fisheries & Ocean Resources of the Maldives**, in collaboration with the BOBP-IGO, and took place from February 20 to 22, 2025.

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INDIA'S LEADERSHIP ROLE

- **Indian Delegation:** Led by the Secretary of the Department of Fisheries, Government of India (GoI), India officially took over the Chairmanship.
- **Commitment to Progress:** The Secretary emphasized India's commitment to continuing and enhancing the successes of the BOBP-IGO under its leadership.
 - Focus on **marine resource management, research, training, and capacity building** for sustainable fisheries development across the Bay of Bengal region.
 - Strengthening **regional cooperation** for economic development, **protection of marine ecosystems**, and addressing issues like **Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing**.

KEY OBJECTIVES & FOCUS AREAS

- **Strengthening Regional Cooperation:**
 - Focus on **capacity building, research, and policy advocacy** to address regional challenges in fisheries management.
 - Promote joint efforts between member countries to tackle shared concerns such as **IUU fishing and marine ecosystem protection**.

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- **Boosting the Blue Economy:**

- India's leadership is aimed at harmonizing economic development with sustainable marine resource utilization to enhance the **blue economy**.
- Collaboration with global organizations like **FAO**, **SEAFDEC**, and **UNODC** is expected to strengthen regional fisheries and improve marine ecosystems.

- **Focus on Small-Scale Fisheries (SSF):**

- India will prioritize the development of **small-scale fisheries**, an essential part of many regional economies.
- Policies focusing on **poverty alleviation**, **sustainability**, and **improving the livelihoods** of small-scale fishermen will be key areas of focus.

INDIA'S VISION FOR THE FUTURE

- **Enhanced Collaboration:** India aims to enhance mutual support across BOBP-IGO member countries, leveraging knowledge, technology, and data exchange.
- **Building a Sustainable Future:** India envisions fostering a cooperative approach to **small-scale fisheries** that aligns with the **sustainable development goals (SDGs)** and contributes to the national goal of '**Viksit Bharat 2047**'.
- **Leadership in Fisheries Management:** The Department of Fisheries will lead by example in advancing the **ecosystem approach to fisheries management**, ensuring

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that policies and actions contribute to the long-term viability of the marine ecosystems and the communities dependent on them.

Small Scale Fisheries

As per FAO's Glossary:

"Artisanal, or small-scale fisheries, are traditional fisheries involving fishing households (as opposed to commercial companies), using relatively small amount of capital and energy, relatively small fishing vessels (if any), making short fishing trips, close to shore, and mainly for local consumption. They can be for subsistence or commercial.

In practice, the definition varies between countries, e.g. from a one man canoe in poor developing countries, to more than 20-m trawlers, seiners, or long-liners in developed ones. Artisanal fisheries can be subsistence or commercial fisheries, providing for local consumption or export.

FAO WG SSF: It is inappropriate to formulate a universally applicable definition for a sector as dynamic as diverse as small scale fisheries.



Fisheries Sector in India: Small Scale

- India: World's 2nd biggest fish producer, 28 million people engaged
- 6th Largest Marine Capture Fish Producer (1/3rd production -marine)
- 13 coastal States/UTs, **11,099** km coastline, EEZ of **2.20** million sq. km
- **'Multi Species-Multi Gear'**: Large tropical diversity of fish harvested (~1000 sps), by nearly 30 fishing gear -craft combinations
- Traditional, labor -intensive, and **community-based**
- Use of **non-motorized, motorized or small mechanized boats**

~ 50%
Women workforce

~ 5 million
Active marine fishermen

Category	Nos.
Non Motorized	41,726
Motorized	1,36,165
Motorized-- Mechanical	66,463
Total	2,44,354

Govt aims to build an inclusive ecosystem for Fisheries Management

3 strategic pillars



Ecological sustainability



Social equity



Economic Viability

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Schemes and programs to strengthen SSF value chain and empower stakeholders

USD 4437 Mn
Targeted Investment
since 2014-15

Thrust: Production & Productivity, Post -Harvest Infra, Marketing
& Value Addition, Technology, **Welfare & Livelihood**



PM MATSYA SAMPADA YOJANA



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PM-MKSSY: Aims and Objectives

01

Gradual formalization of unorganized fisheries sector by creation of work based digital identities under the National Fisheries Digital Platform (NFDP) for improved service delivery.

02

Facilitating greater access to institutional finance for fish farmers & micro and small enterprises

03

Providing 'one-time incentive' for one crop cycle to aquafarmers for purchasing aquaculture insurance.

04

Incentivizing fisheries and aquaculture microenterprises through performance grants for improving fisheries sector value-chain efficiencies including creation and maintenance of jobs.

05

Incentivizing fisheries and aquaculture micro and small enterprises through performance grants for adoption and expansion of fish and fishery product safety and quality assurance systems including creation and maintenance of jobs.

06

Integration and consolidation of fisheries value chains.

Initiatives taken under various schemes



Enhancing production

- ✓ Upgradation of existing fishing vessels
- ✓ Brackishwater pond area expansion **1600 hectares**
- ✓ Establishment of brood banks, nuclear breeding centers and network of hatcheries



Welfare and capacity building

- ✓ **~600 thousand families** covered under **Social Safety Net** during fishing ban/lean period
- ✓ **Group Accident Insurance** Scheme for fishers provided to **~3.2 mn fishers**
- ✓ **Vessel Communication & Support System** (satellite based) in **100 thousand** fishing vessels
- ✓ Empowerment of fisheries cooperatives, Fish Farmer Producer Organizations (FFPOs) and SHGs
- ✓ Training & Capacity building programs

Reducing post-harvest loss

- ✓ Establishment of **117** fishing harbours landing centres; investment USD 1069.41 million
- ✓ Focus on cold-chain, processing for value-addition and improved transportation

Sustainable Fisheries

- ✓ Periodic Assessment of EEZ Fish Resources
- ✓ Ban on destructive fishing LED light, Pair Trawling
- ✓ Uniform Ban on Fishing for **61 days**
- ✓ Gear-Mesh Size Regulations, MLS of Fish, Zones,
- ✓ **100 climate resilient coastal fishing villages**
- ✓ Installation of 937 **artificial reefs** and sea ranching
- ✓ ReALCRaft, MCS, *SagarMitra*
- ✓ Turtle conservation- installation of TEDs in trawlers
- ✓ Promoting use of **low cost energy efficient fuel**

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Difficulties, Challenges & Advantages : Small Scale Fisheries

Difficulties & Challenges

- ✓ Pollution (urban, sewage, industrial, agri, effluents etc.)
- ✓ Climate Change, habitat destruction, availability of fish
- ✓ Destructive fishing methods
- ✓ Excessive fishing pressure in nearshore waters
- ✓ Low income, Resource poor, Credit / financing issues,
- ✓ Excessive by-catch and discards
- ✓ IUU fishing and conflicts with large industrial fleets
- ✓ Poor handling of fish, lack of infrastructure
- ✓ User conflicts and Inter-sectoral conflicts,
- ✓ Vulnerable community – displacement and deprivation of land use and access
- ✓ Access to markets – vulnerability to traders / middleman

Advantages

- Comparatively eco-friendly fishing with minimizing environmental impact (EAFM)
- Maintaining Cultural heritage and environmental knowledge
- Lower running cost and fuel consumption, low carbon emission
- Share of benefits with more people and the most needed ones
- Poverty alleviation, nutrition security for fishers, and low-income coastal populations

Way Forward



Implementation of FAO's Voluntary SSF Guidelines - integration with policy & schemes



Ensure sustainability of resources, adoption of Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management



Strict Implementation of the gear and mesh size regulations, prevent juvenile fishing, stock enhancement



Promotion of alternate livelihood opportunities like Seaweed culture, aquaculture, tourism etc.



Strengthening of MCS, focus on traceability, value-addition, infrastructure, skill development, credit support



Promotion of sustainable-best practices, prevention of IUU fishing, Regional cooperation, joint efforts



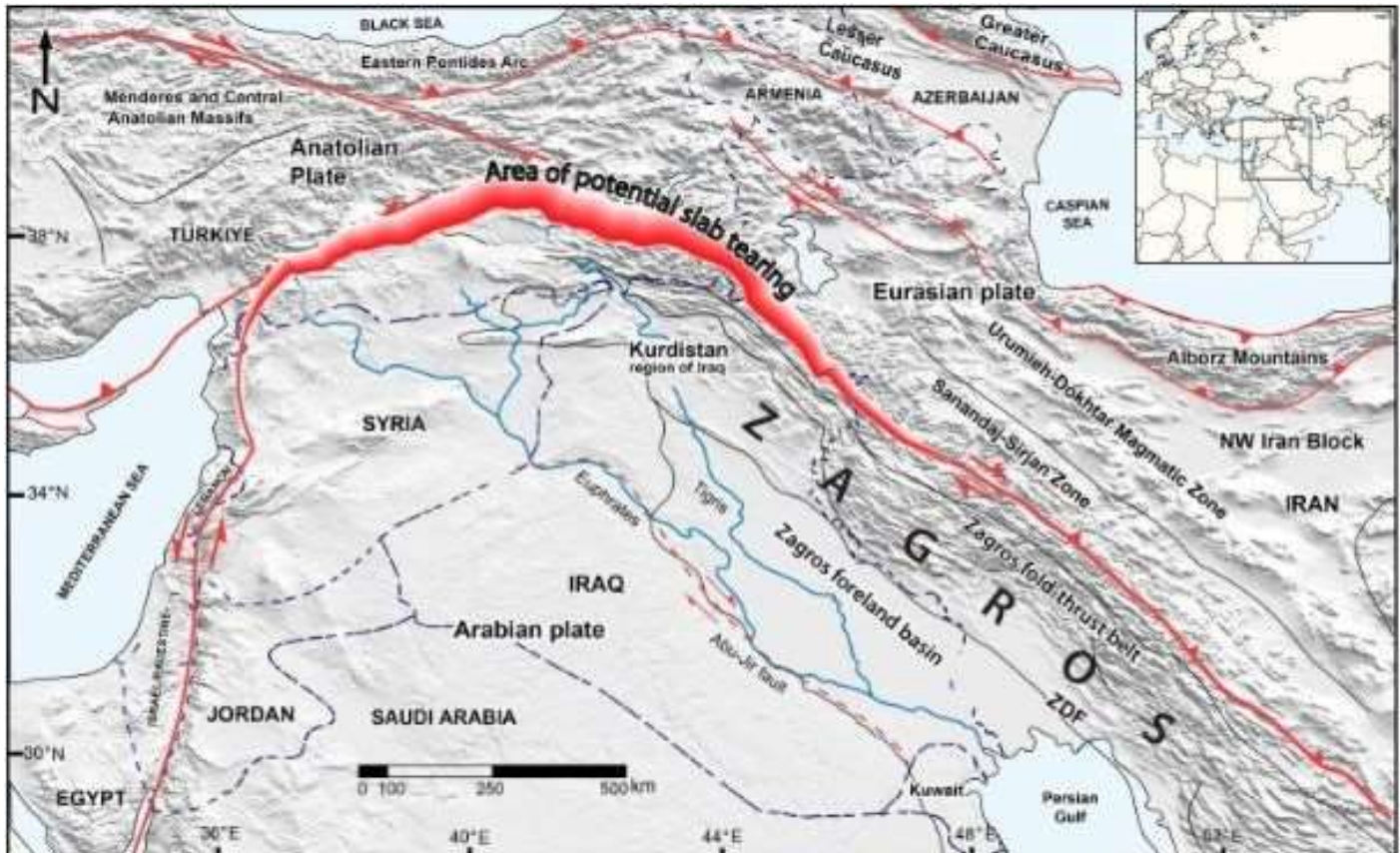
Addressing pollution, habitat degradation, climate change mitigation, implementation of CMMs

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WHY IRAQ IS SLOWLY SINKING?



- The **northern region of Iraq**, especially around the **Zagros Mountains**, is slowly sinking.
- This is **due to tectonic processes occurring deep beneath the Earth's surface**, a result of the movement of tectonic plates.
- The process is gradual, taking millions of years, and while not immediately noticeable, it has significant long-term implications.

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WHAT IS HAPPENING GEOLOGICALLY?

- **Plate Tectonics and the Neotethys Slab:** The sinking of northern Iraq is caused by **plate tectonics**, the movement of large sections of Earth's surface.
- The region is impacted by the **Neotethys slab**, an **oceanic plate that once formed the floor of an ancient ocean**.
- This slab is sinking into the Earth's mantle due to the collision of the **Arabian Plate** and the **Eurasian Plate**.
- **Tectonic Collision:** The two plates, **Arabian** and **Eurasian**, are pushing against each other.
- This collision is causing the **Neotethys slab** to tear and sink.
- As the slab sinks, the **surface above it, including northern Iraq, is gradually pulled downward**.
- This process, although slow, leads to the depression of land, which is why the **region around the Zagros Mountains** has deeper valleys than expected.

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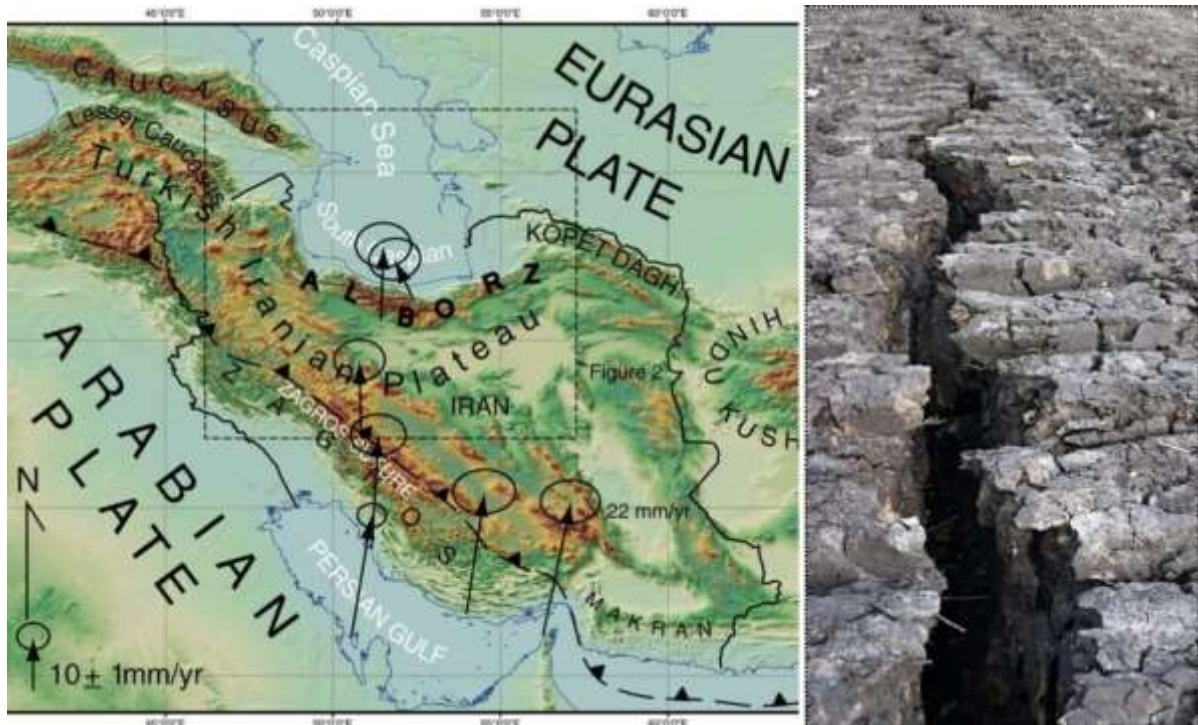
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SLOW PROCESS

- **Gradual Change:** The movement of the Neotethys slab and the sinking of the land above it happen over **millions of years**.
- The effects of this process are **not immediate or noticeable on a human timescale**.
- It's a slow geological event, and its full impact will only be seen over a long period.

HOW THIS SINKING COULD HELP PREDICT EARTHQUAKES

- **Earthquakes and Tectonics:** The sinking of the Neotethys slab is directly linked to **earthquake activity**.

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- **Earthquakes occur when rocks shift along fault lines due to tectonic movements.**
- By studying the geological processes beneath the surface, scientists can better understand where and how earthquakes are likely to happen.
- **Improved Geological Models:** The study of the sinking slab helps scientists create more accurate models of Earth's interior.
- These models can improve **earthquake predictions**, allowing scientists to determine the location, depth, and strength of future earthquakes.
- This is especially important for the **Middle East**, a region prone to earthquakes.
- **Relevance to the Region:** The research is important for countries like **Turkey** and **Syria**, which have experienced devastating earthquakes in recent years.
- Better understanding of tectonic movements could improve **early-warning systems** and help with disaster preparedness.

GEOTHERMAL ENERGY POTENTIAL

- **Geothermal Gradients:** The sinking of the Neotethys slab also has implications for **geothermal energy**.
- The **geothermal gradient** refers to the increase in Earth's temperature with depth.

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- In areas where the temperature rises quickly, there is potential for **geothermal energy production**.
- By understanding how the Earth's surface is changing, **scientists can identify regions where geothermal energy** might be harnessed to generate electricity. This could provide a sustainable energy source for the region.

CONCLUSION

The slow sinking of northern Iraq is caused by tectonic activity beneath the **Zagros Mountains**, a process that will unfold over millions of years. While the effects are not immediately noticeable, the research provides valuable insights into earthquake prediction and geothermal energy.

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MCQs

1. From which country has India taken over chairmanship of Bay of Bengal Inter Governmental Organisation?

- (A) Mauritius
- (B) Sri Lanka
- (C) Madagascar
- (D) None of the above

Ans. (D)

2. Consider the following statements wrt PM Matsya Kisan Samridhi Sah Yojana (PM MKSSY) and mark the correct one:

- 1. It is a sub scheme under PM Matsya Sampada Yojana.
- 2. It aims at gradual formalisation of fisheries sector.

- (A) Only 1
- (B) Only 2
- (C) Both 1 & 2
- (D) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans. (D)

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3. The Neotethys Slab is surrounded by which of the following tectonic plates?

- (A) Indian & Eurasian
- (B) Indian & Australian
- (C) Arabian & Indian
- (D) Arabian & Eurasian

Ans. (D)

4. What are the probable consequences of sinking of Northern region of Iraq?

- 1. Better Earthquake predictions.
- 2. Geothermal Energy potential.
- 3. Deeper valley in the Zagros mountain valley.

- (A) Only 3
- (B) Only 2 & 3
- (C) All of the above
- (D) Only 1 & 2

Ans. (D)

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