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S.NO.	TOPIC
1.	RISING TENSIONS IN THE KOREAN PENINSULA
2.	RAJYA SABHA: THE UPPER HOUSE OF THE PARLIAMENT
3.	PRELIMS POINTERS

RISING TENSIONS IN THE KOREAN PENINSULA

SOURCE: [THE HINDU](#)

TAG: GS Paper II- **Effect of Policies & Politics of Developed and Developing countries on India.**

Practice Question:

Mains

Q. Examine the recent aggravation in the Korean Peninsula and its impact on regional and global security. Also, discuss how India can contribute to the peaceful resolution of conflicts in the region. **(150 words)**

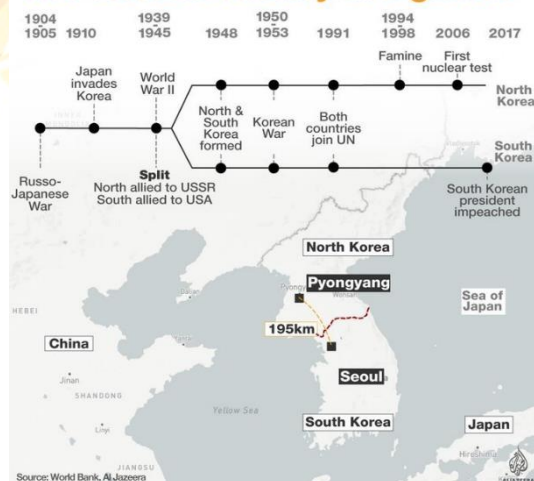
WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ The heightened tensions and **provocative actions between North and South Korea**, including **missile tests and military drills**, raise concerns about a potential conflict, attracting global attention.

WHAT IS THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND?

- ❖ The history of tension in the Korean Peninsula is rooted in a complex interplay of factors, including geopolitical rivalries, ideological differences, and historical events
- ❖ The Korean Peninsula was divided along the **38th parallel after World War II**, with the **Soviet Union occupying the north** and the **United States occupying the south**.
- ❖ In **1948**, **two separate governments** were established:
 - The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) and the Republic of Korea (South Korea). Tensions boiled over in 1950 when North Korea, supported by China and the Soviet Union, invaded South Korea, sparking the **Korean War**.
 - The Korean War, which broke out as a result of North Korea's attempt to take over the South, was the **first "hot war" of the Cold War**.
- ❖ The war resulted in significant loss of life and ended with an armistice, leaving the two Koreas. On July 27, 1953, the **Korean Armistice Agreement** was signed, leading to a complete cessation of hostilities, a ceasefire, and the establishment of the **Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ)** as a buffer zone between North and South Korea. The agreement did not result in a peace treaty, and the war officially never ended.
- ❖ The subsequent decades have seen **alternating periods of engagement and estrangement** between the two Koreas.
- ❖ In December 1991, North and South Korea signed a **pact agreeing to refrain from aggression**, focusing on mutual respect, the renunciation of armed aggression, exchange and cooperation in many sectors, and the guarantee of free exchange of people between the two countries.

Two Koreas: History at a glance





- ❖ However, unresolved issues, such as North Korea's nuclear ambitions, missile testing, and provocative statements, have raised concerns about **escalating tensions on the Korean Peninsula**.
- ❖ The evolving dynamics between North and South Korea, including the **hardening of North Korea's stance** on relations with South Korea, have significant implications for regional and global security.
- ❖ The unresolved issues, including **North Korea's nuclear program**, have continued to fuel tensions and maintain the fragile nature of inter-Korean relations.

WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR RECENT AGGRAVATIONS?

- ❖ The recent aggravation has been fueled by:
 - **North Korea's abandonment of its goal of Korean reunification.**
 - North Korea's rebranding of **South Korea as an enemy state.**
 - **North Korea testing of advanced missile systems**, including those with hypersonic capabilities.
- ❖ These actions have prompted **joint naval drills by the U.S., South Korea, and Japan**, further escalating the situation.
- ❖ The growing ties between **North Korea and its allies, China and Russia**, as well as the involvement of other major powers, have significant implications for international security, especially in the context of the global strategic competition and the activation of historically rooted conflicts in other parts of the world.

HOW DO THE TENSIONS IN THE KOREAN PENINSULA IMPACT INDIA ?

- ❖ **Geopolitical Concerns:**
 - The **rising tensions in the Korean Peninsula** occur amidst a global strategic competition involving key external stakeholders, including the U.S., China, and Russia.
 - The tensions in the Korean Peninsula can have broader geopolitical implications, potentially affecting **regional stability and security**.
 - As a significant player in the Asia-Pacific region, India may need to closely monitor the situation.
- ❖ **Trade and Economic Impact:**
 - The tensions in the Korean Peninsula can have implications for global trade and economic stability.
 - India, as a major global economic player, may need to assess the potential impact of these tensions on international trade, particularly in the context of its export and oil trade, and consider alternative trade routes to mitigate any adverse effects.
- ❖ **Security and Diplomacy:**
 - The ongoing tensions in the Korean Peninsula, especially in the context of North Korea's nuclear program, can have implications for **global security and diplomacy**.
 - India may need to engage in diplomatic efforts to support peaceful resolution of conflicts and contribute to regional stability, given its **commitment to peaceful coexistence and conflict resolution**.



WHAT HAS BEEN INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS THE KOREAN PENINSULA?

- ❖ **India's foreign policy towards North and South Korea has evolved over time**, reflecting a nuanced approach and a response to changing regional and global dynamics:



❖ **India's Foreign Policy Regarding NORTH KOREA:**

- ☛ India has historically maintained diplomatic ties with the country, reflecting the legacy of its commitment to the Non-Alignment Movement.
- ☛ However, India has consistently voiced its opposition to North Korean nuclear and missile tests, reflecting its concerns about regional security.
- ☛ India's stand on the North Korean nuclear weapons issue has evolved over the years, and in **2017, the Indian Government came out with official notifications** that imposed severe restrictions on any cooperation with North Korea, except for providing food and medical assistance to this isolated state.
- ☛ India's relationship with North Korea has been affected by North Korean relations with Pakistan, which has had a devastating impact on India and naturally has impeded many NSP initiatives.

❖ **India's Foreign Policy Regarding SOUTH KOREA:**

- ☛ India has deepening ties with the country, reflecting its broader strategic outlook and the evolving geopolitical dynamics in the Asia-Pacific region.
- ☛ India views South Korea as an **"indispensable partner" in its Act East Policy**, and bilateral ties have expanded across all domains since diplomatic relations were established.
- ☛ India's relationship with South Korea has far greater economic and technological depth.

- ❖ Overall, India's foreign policy towards North and South Korea reflects its **commitment to upholding international norms** and its concerns about regional security, while also seeking to play a **constructive role in promoting peace and security on the Korean Peninsula.**

WHAT IS INDIA'S OFFICIAL STAND?

- ❖ India's official stand on the tensions in the Korean Peninsula is characterized by a neutral stance and a commitment to diplomatic engagement.
- ❖ India has consistently voiced its opposition to North Korean nuclear and missile tests, reflecting its concern over regional security.
- ❖ However, India has maintained a **neutral stance regarding sanctions** and has **diplomatic relations with both North and South Korea.**
- ❖ India's historical involvement in the Korean War and its subsequent role as a mediator and **chair of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission** demonstrate its commitment to peace and stability in the region.
- ❖ Additionally, India's engagement with South Korea and its **support for peaceful resolution and dialogue on the Korean Peninsula** reflect its broader commitment to promoting regional stability and security.

CONCLUSION:

- ❖ **In conclusion**, the tensions in the Korean Peninsula have significant implications for international security, given the potential for unintended consequences and the **interconnectedness of various geopolitical dynamics.**
- ❖ The deepening of major power rivalry and the involvement of key external stakeholders raise concerns about the potential for further escalation, necessitating careful attention and diplomatic efforts to address the ongoing tensions.



RAJYA SABHA: THE UPPER HOUSE OF THE PARLIAMENT

SOURCE: THE MINT

TAG: GS Paper II- *Parliament, Indian Constituion*

UPSC PYQs

Mains

Q. Parliament’s power to amend the Constitution is a limited power and it cannot be enlarged into absolute power.” In the light of this statement explain whether Parliament under Article 368 of the Constitution can destroy the Basic Structure of the Constitution by expanding its amending power? (2019)

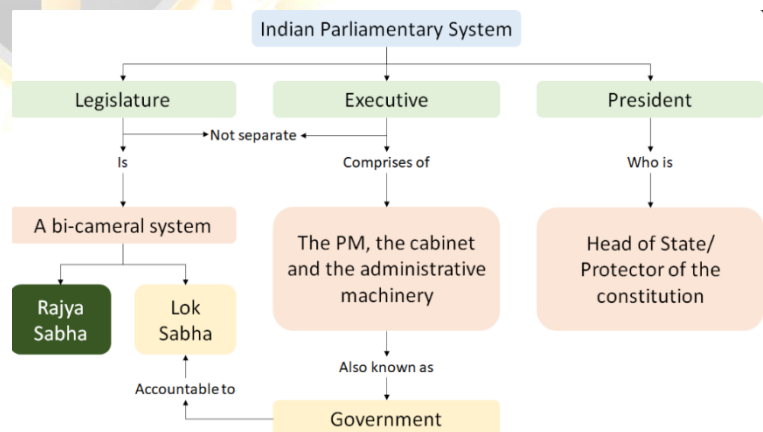
Q. ‘Simultaneous election to the Lok Sabha and the State Assemblies will limit the amount of time and money spent in electioneering but it will reduce the government’s accountability to the people’ Discuss. (2017)

WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ The Election Commission announced Rajya Sabha elections for 56 seats across 15 Indian states on 27th February.
- ❖ The states where the elections for the Rajya Sabha are scheduled to occur encompass **Uttar Pradesh (10), Maharashtra (6), Bihar (6), West Bengal (5), Madhya Pradesh (5), Gujarat (4), Karnataka (4), Andhra Pradesh (3), Telangana (3), Rajasthan (3), Odisha (3), Uttarakhand (1), Chhattisgarh (1), Haryana (1), and Himachal Pradesh (1).**

INTRODUCTION:

- ❖ Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian Parliament, plays a crucial role in the legislative process and represents the states and union territories of India.
- ❖ The Rajya Sabha, or the Council of States, holds significant importance in the Indian Parliament due to its distinctive features and special powers under the Constitution.
- ❖ It finds its roots in the **Montague-Chelmsford Report of 1918**, which proposed a **bicameral legislature** consisting of the Lower House, known as the Central Legislative Assembly, and the Upper House, referred to as the Council of State.
- ❖ As the upper house of the Parliament, it represents the interests of the states and union territories, ensuring their effective participation in the legislative process.
- ❖ Its members are elected by state and union territory legislatures, and a portion is nominated by the President, reflecting a diverse range of expertise and experience

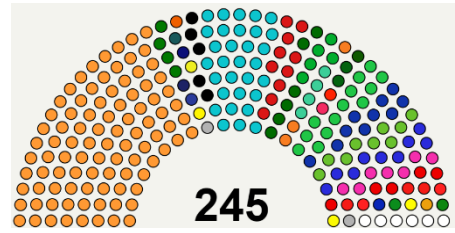


FORMATION AND COMPOSITION:

- ❖ **Constitutional Provisions:**
 - Established under **Article 80** of the Indian Constitution.



- Maximum membership capped at **250**, with **238 members** elected by state and union territory legislatures and **12 members** nominated by the President for their contributions towards arts, literature, sciences, and social services.
 - This right has been bestowed upon the President according to the **Fourth Schedule (Articles 4(1) and 80(2))** of the Constitution of India.
- ❖ **Allocation of Seats:**
- The **Fourth Schedule of the Constitution** governs the allocation of seats in the Rajya Sabha.
 - As of now, it has **245 members**, with 229 representing states, 4 representing union territories, and 12 nominated members.



ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST REFORMING THE COMPOSITION OF RAJYA SABHA COMPOSITION:

ARGUMENTS FOR REFORMING THE COMPOSITION OF RAJYA SABHA:

- ❖ **Improved Representation:**
- Reforming the Rajya Sabha to ensure fair and equitable representation of states, union territories, women, minorities, and backward classes can enhance its legitimacy and effectiveness
- ❖ **Enhanced Legitimacy:**
- Some argue that reforming the composition of the Rajya Sabha to reflect the vote share in each state can enhance the legitimacy of its members
- ❖ **Federal Representation:**
- The original rationale behind the composition of the Rajya Sabha was the federal representation of states on a territorial basis. Reforming its composition can further strengthen this federal character.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST REFORMING THE COMPOSITION OF RAJYA SABHA:

- ❖ **Complexity of Reform:**
- The process of reforming the composition of the Rajya Sabha, such as reallocating seats based on population changes, is a complex and challenging task
- ❖ **Potential Disruption:**
- Reforming the composition, such as moving toward an equal number of seats for each state, could lead to significant political and representational implications, causing potential disruption
- ❖ **Domicile Issue:**
- The issue of ending the indirect election of Rajya Sabha members and addressing the domicile problem is a contentious issue and is debated in the context of reform



ELECTIONS AND TENURE:

- ❖ The Rajya Sabha elections are conducted by the **Election Commission of India**. The Rajya Sabha has an **indirect election, with only elected members of state legislative assemblies taking part in the voting.**



- ❖ The election process is carried out through a **single transferable vote** and is based on the principle of **proportional representation**.
- ❖ The voting is carried out through an **open ballot system**, unlike the Lok Sabha polls, where the MLAs need to show their votes to an authorized agent of their party.
- ❖ The Rajya Sabha elections are **held every two years, with one-third of the members retiring every two years**.
- ❖ The Rajya Sabha is a **permanent body** and cannot be dissolved. However, vacancies are filled by fresh elections and presidential nominations
- ❖ Members serve a term of **six years, with one-third of the members retiring every two years**.

FUNCTIONS AND POWERS:

❖ Legislative Powers:

- ☛ The Rajya Sabha can **initiate and pass bills**, and it has the authority to make any changes in the qualifications for the membership of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha.

❖ Special Powers: The Rajya Sabha enjoys **two exclusive powers** –

- ☛ The **power to declare a subject of State List** as a subject of National Importance, which empowers the Union Parliament to legislate on such a state subject for a specified period.
- ☛ The power in respect of the **creation or abolition of an All India Service (Article – 312)**, where it can create or disband All India Services by passing a resolution supported by a **two-thirds majority** on the plea of national interest.



❖ In situations of emergency:

- ☛ If the President issues a proclamation for enacting a national emergency, president's rule, or financial emergency, and this occurs during the period when the Lok Sabha is dissolved or if the Lok Sabha dissolves within the allowed approval period, the proclamation can stay in effect even if it receives approval solely from the Rajya Sabha, as per **Articles 352, 356, and 360**.

❖ Union-State Relations:

- ☛ The Rajya Sabha acts as a **representative of the states in the union legislature**, thereby protecting the rights of states against the union government.
- ☛ It has the power to pass a resolution by a two-thirds majority, granting the union government the authority to make laws on matters reserved for states

❖ Financial Matters:

- ☛ The Rajya Sabha, unlike the Lok Sabha, **cannot introduce, reject, or amend revenue bills**, which are the sole prerogative of the Lok Sabha.
- ☛ It also cannot **issue a vote of confidence** in the government, which is the responsibility of the lower house

These powers and functions are essential for upholding the federal structure of the Indian Parliament and ensuring the representation of states and union territories in the decision-making processes of the country.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RAJYA SABHA AND LOK SABHA:



Aspect	Lok Sabha	Rajya Sabha
Representation	✓ Represents the people of India as a whole	✓ Represents the states and union territories of India
Election Process	✓ Members are directly elected by the people	✓ Members are elected by state and union territory legislatures, and a portion is nominated by the President
Powers	✓ Has the primary role in financial matters, can introduce, reject, or amend money bills, and can issue a vote of confidence in the government	✓ Has special powers such as creating All India Services and approving the imposition of President's Rule in states, cannot introduce, reject, or amend revenue bills, and cannot issue a vote of confidence in the government
Tenure	✓ Members serve a term of five years	✓ Members serve a term of six years, with one-third of the members retiring every two years

CHALLENGES FACED BY RAJYA SABHA:

- ❖ The Rajya Sabha in India faces several challenges, including **limited powers related to money bills, frequent disruptions, and absenteeism of members.**
- ❖ The limited power of the Rajya Sabha in terms of money bills hampers its ability to fully participate in the legislative process.
- ❖ Additionally, **frequent disruptions during sessions** have affected the smooth functioning of the house, leading to difficulties in conducting business.
- ❖ Moreover, **absenteeism of members has impacted the quorum** and the house's ability to carry out its duties effectively.

These challenges have hindered the Rajya Sabha's role in the parliamentary system.

WAY FORWARD:

Following can be done to improve the functioning of the Rajya Sabha:

- ❖ **Enhancing Representation:**
 - ☛ Ensuring fair and equitable representation of states, union territories, **women, minorities, and backward classes** in the composition of the Rajya Sabha.
- ❖ **Promoting Deliberation:**
 - ☛ Fostering a culture of debate and dialogue among members, encouraging more participation and attendance, and **leveraging technology and innovation** to enhance its deliberative capacity.
- ❖ **Strengthening Law-making:**
 - ☛ Empowering the Rajya Sabha to play a **more proactive role in law-making**, especially in non-financial matters that affect its jurisdiction
- ❖ **Enhancing Oversight:**
 - ☛ Granting the Rajya Sabha a **more significant role in overseeing the executive**, including the appointment and removal of key constitutional positions, and providing increased access to information and documents from the executive
- ❖ **Improving Productivity and Legislative Output:**



- Striving to increase the productivity and legislative output of the Rajya Sabha, as well as ensuring **better attendance in committee meetings**

CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, *the Rajya Sabha is an essential part of the Indian parliamentary system, and its composition, functions, and powers are integral to upholding the federal structure of the Indian Parliament and ensuring the representation of states and union territories in the decision-making processes of the country.*

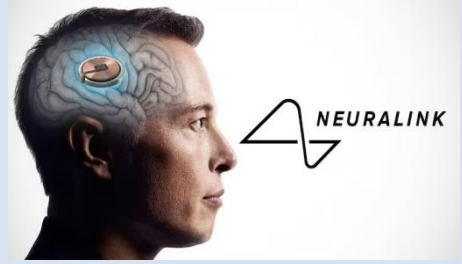




PRELIMS POINTERS:

1st February, 2024

TOPIC	DESCRIPTION
NEURALINK'S DEVICE	<p>WHY IN NEWS?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>Elon Musk's Neuralink marked a significant milestone as it successfully implanted its brain-computer interface in a human, according to Musk's announcement.</i> <p>ABOUT NEURLINK DEVICE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Immediate Goal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Neuralink aims to assist paralyzed individuals by developing brain-computer interfaces (BCIs), initially focusing on controlling devices through thought. ❖ FDA Approval and Trials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Neuralink gained FDA approval in 2023, initiating clinical trials to assess the implant's efficacy in enabling paralyzed individuals to control external devices. ❖ Long-Term Ambition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Elon Musk envisions Neuralink's role in achieving symbiosis with artificial intelligence (AI), allowing humans to merge with AI to address growing intelligence gaps. ❖ Bandwidth Emphasis: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Musk emphasizes the importance of high bandwidth for effective brain-machine communication, a crucial element in realizing human-AI symbiosis. ❖ Invasive Approach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Neuralink's invasive implantation involves drilling into the skull, raising safety and ethical concerns among experts and former employees.



LAB-GROWN FISH	<p>WHY IN NEWS?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ <i>In a groundbreaking initiative, the ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has forged a pioneering collaboration with Neat Meatt Biotech to develop lab-grown fish meat, marking the first-of-its-kind public-private partnership in India.</i> <p>ABOUT LAB-GROWN FISH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Lab-Grown Fish Meat Defined: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ Lab-grown or cultivated meat refers to seafood produced without traditional fishing by isolating and cultivating fish cells in a laboratory. ☛ Aims to replicate the flavour, texture, and nutritional qualities of real fish meat. ❖ Collaboration between CMFRI and Neat Meatt: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) partners with Neat Meatt Biotech for lab-grown fish meat. ☛ The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) marks a unique public-private partnership in India. <p>CMFRI'S RESEARCH FOCUS:</p>
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- ❖ Research on **early cell line development of high-value marine fish species.**
- ❖ Initial focus on developing cell-based meat for fish like **pomfret, kingfish, and seerfish.**

NEED FOR LAB-GROWN FISH MEAT:

- ❖ Addresses the **increasing demand for seafood while reducing pressure on wild resources.**
- ❖ Mitigates overfishing and its **impact on marine ecosystems.**
- ❖ Offers food security and environmental benefits **by being antibiotics-free and devoid of contaminants from oceans.**

GLOBAL SCENARIO

- ❖ Several countries actively working on **lab-grown fish meat, including Israel, Singapore, the United States, and China.**
- ❖ Israel's Forsea Foods successfully **produced lab-grown freshwater eel meat.**

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

- ❖ **Antibiotics-free** and environmentally safe.
- ❖ No contact with **microplastics or heavy metals** in polluted oceans.
- ❖ A sustainable **alternative to traditional fishing.**

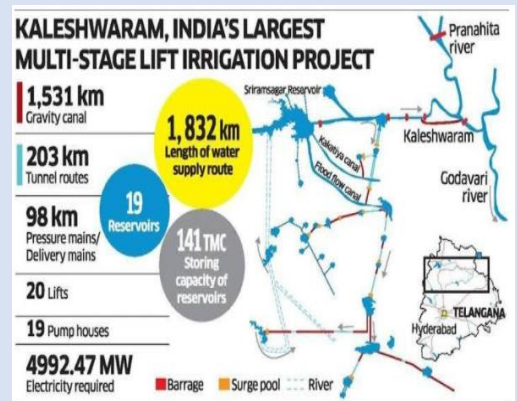
KALESHWARAM PROJECT

WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ *The Kaleshwaram project is making headlines due to an ongoing inquiry revealing extensive damage to the **Medigadda Barrage**, turning it into a failure in just four years.*

ABOUT KALESHWARAM PROJECT

- ❖ **Objective:**
 - ☛ Kaleshwaram project aims to **make Telangana drought-proof** by utilizing Godavari floodwaters for multi-purpose irrigation.
- ❖ **Location:**
 - ☛ Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project (KLIP) is in Telangana at the confluence of **Pranhita-Godavari Rivers.**
- ❖ **Drainage Basin:**
 - ☛ Involves **Wardha, Painganga, Wainganga** rivers, forming the subcontinent's seventh-largest drainage basin.
- ❖ **Scale:**
 - ☛ **World's largest multi-stage, multi-purpose lift irrigation project**, spanning 300 km.
- ❖ **Pumping Stations:**
 - ☛ Boasts **world's largest underground and surface water pumping stations.**
- ❖ **Water Redistribution:**
 - ☛ Lift irrigation system efficiently moves water from river/reservoir sources through channels and reservoirs.
- ❖ **Initiation:**
 - ☛ Started in 2016, initially named **Pranahita-Chevella Lift Irrigation Project.**
- ❖ **Water Usage:**
 - ☛ **Aims to use 283 TMC of Godavari River water**, supplying irrigation to 45 lakh acres and drinking water to 13 Telangana districts.





KOREAN PENINSULA

WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ Escalating tensions in the Korean Peninsula, with North Korea's provocative actions, raise global security concerns amid major power rivalries.

ABOUT THE KOREAN PENINSULA

❖ Topography:

- ☛ The Korean Peninsula is predominantly mountainous, with about 70 percent of the land characterized by mountains.
- ☛ Volcanic and granitic rocks form the bedrock, shaped by glacial processes over the past 25,000 years.

GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS

❖ Western Region:

- ☛ Features an extensive coastal plain, river basins, and small foothills.

❖ Eastern Region:

- ☛ Marked by high mountain ranges and a narrow coastal plain.

❖ Southeastern Basin and Southwestern Region:

- ☛ Comprise mountains, valleys, and diverse landscapes.

❖ Islands:

- ☛ Off the southern and western coasts, South Korea has around 3,000 small, mostly uninhabited islands, the largest being about 712 square miles.

❖ Size and Division:

- ☛ The Korean Peninsula is divided into North and South Korea, with North Korea slightly larger in physical size.
- ☛ The division was a consequence of World War II and the subsequent influence of the Soviet Union and the United States.



LABHA – LAGHU BANA JATYA DRABYA KRAYA SCHEME

WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ Recently, the Odisha Cabinet approved a new scheme for the development of the tribals of Odisha, LABHA – Laghu Bana Jatya Drabya Kraya.

ABOUT LABHA

- ❖ LABHA Yojana is a 100% state-funded MSP for the MFP scheme (minimum support price for minor forest produce).

- ☛ The Minimum Support Price will be determined every year by the State Govt.
- ☛ Under the scheme, a primary collector (tribal) will be able to sell the minor forest produce at the Minimum Support Price collected at the procurement centres by TDCCOL.





BRAIN-LIKE TISSUE TO MAKE COMPUTER

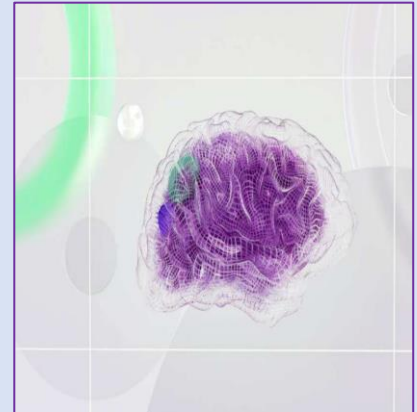
- ❖ **Minor Forest Produce (MFP)** is all non-timber forest produce of plant origin and includes *bamboo, brushwood, stumps, canes, Tusser, cocoon, honey, waxes, Lac, tendu/kendu leaves, medicinal plants and herbs, roots, tuber* and the like.
- ❖ Minor Forest Produce is defined **under section 2(4) of the Indian Forest Act, 1927.**

WHY IN NEWS?

- ❖ *Brain organoids fused with electronics pioneer neuromorphic computing, advancing AI capabilities.*

KEY FINDINGS:

- ❖ According to a research published in Nature Electronics, '**Brain organoids**, developed from **pluripotent stem cells**, have been integrated with electronics to create an '**organoid neural network.**'
- ❖ This integration signifies a **breakthrough in neuromorphic computing**, leveraging brain tissue.
- ❖ The study explores **biocomputing by incorporating live brain cells.**
- ❖ The study serves as a proof-of-concept for **adaptive reservoir computing using brain organoids.**
- ❖ It paves way for potential treatment of **Neuro-degenerative Diseases.**



WHAT IS NEUROMORPHIC COMPUTING?

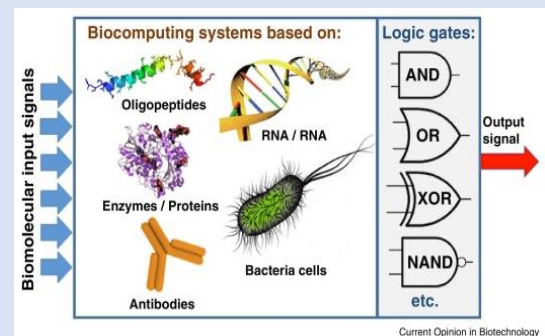
- ❖ **Neuromorphic computing** mimics the brain's architecture for efficient information processing in artificial intelligence.

WHAT IS BIOCOMPUTING?

- ❖ Biocomputing involves using biological components, like **live brain cells**, for **computational processes** in technology."

WHAT IS BRAINWARE SYSTEM?

- ❖ '**Brainware**' represents the integration of an organoid neural network into a reservoir computer.
- ❖ The system comprises three layers: **input, reservoir (organoid neural network), and output.**



Current Opinion in Biotechnology