



Taranaki Maunga Mountain Gains Legal Personhood

[Source: DTE](#)

Taranaki Maunga (New Zealand's **2nd-highest mountain in North Island**) was granted **legal personhood** becoming the third natural feature (after **Te Urewera park** in 2014 and **Whanganui River** in 2017) in the country to receive this status.

- It will now be officially recognized by its **Māori name**, replacing the colonial name **Mount Egmont**.
 - **Māori** are the **indigenous tribes (Iwi) of New Zealand**.

About Mount Taranaki:

- **Type:** **Stratovolcano** (composite cone) with a symmetrical shape.
- **Formation:** Result of **Pacific Plate subducting beneath the Australian Plate**.
- **Status:** **Snow-capped dormant volcano**.
- **Aoraki/Mount Cook (3724 m)**, located in the **Southern Alps** is the **highest mountain in New Zealand**, while **Mount Tasman** is **second-highest (3,497m)**.

Legal Rights to Natural Entities in India:

- **Uttarakhand HC (2017 & 2018):** Granted **legal personhood** to **Ganga & Yamuna rivers, Gangotri & Yamunotri glaciers**, and later extended **equal rights to all animals**. The **Supreme Court** stayed the river ruling.
- **Punjab & Haryana HC (2020):** Declared **Sukhna Lake, Chandigarh**, a **living entity** for environmental protection.
- The **Doctrine of Parens Patriae** empowers the **state (judiciary)** to act as a guardian for those unable to protect themselves, including **natural entities like rivers, forests, and wildlife**.

Read More: [Human Rights and Environment](#)

US Agency for International Development

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

The US President Donald Trump has imposed a 90-day freeze on foreign aid, halting **US Agency for International Development (USAID)** programs worldwide.

- Additionally, the US has announced that it will not attend the **2025 G20 Foreign Ministers' meeting** in Johannesburg, South Africa.

What is the US Agency for International Development?

- **About:** USAID is the primary US agency for **global humanitarian and development aid**.
- **Support:** In **2024, USAID was allocated USD 44.2 billion**, just **0.4% of the total US federal budget**, but accounted for **42% of all humanitarian aid tracked by the [United Nations](#)**.
 - USAID funds **healthcare, food aid, disaster relief, and policy advocacy** worldwide.
 - Top aid recipients include **Ukraine, Ethiopia, Jordan, Somalia, and Afghanistan**.
- **USAID and India:** India's association with USAID began in 1951 with the **India Emergency Food Aid Act**, evolving over decades from food aid to infrastructure, capacity building, and economic reforms.
 - The agency has been supporting **education, immunization, [polio eradication](#), and [HIV \(human immunodeficiency virus\) /Tuberculosis \(TB\) prevention](#)**.
 - In the last decade, India is said to have received around USD 1.5 billion from USAID (about 0.2 % to 0.4 % of USAID's total global funding).

What are the Implications for India?

- **India's Role in the Global South:** India has positioned itself as a **bridge between the [Global North](#) and the [Global South](#)**, benefiting from its **rising status within the G20**.
- **China and Russia:** If the US reduces its role in G20, **China and Russia could expand their influence**, potentially shifting global economic dynamics and weakening India's position amid **China's rising power**.
- **Healthcare:** Although direct financial aid to India has decreased, USAID contributions exceeded USD 50 million in 2024.
 - A permanent funding cut could impact India's vaccination programs, infectious disease control, and medical infrastructure.
 - India may need to redirect domestic funds to sustain health, environment, and governance projects.

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G-20 (The Group of Twenty)

About

- In 1999, following the **Asian Financial Crisis** of the **1990s**, **G20** was established as a Forum for **Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors**.
- Raised to the **Summit level in 2008** to address the global financial and economic crisis of 2008.

Aims

- Secure global financial stability by involving world's largest advanced and emerging economies.

Structure and Functioning of G20

- The **G20 Presidency** rotates annually
- No permanent **Secretariat** or **Headquarters**
- **19 countries** are divided into **5 groups**
- The presidency rotates between each group

Troika

- It is a working association between the **current presidency**, **past presidency** and **next presidency**.

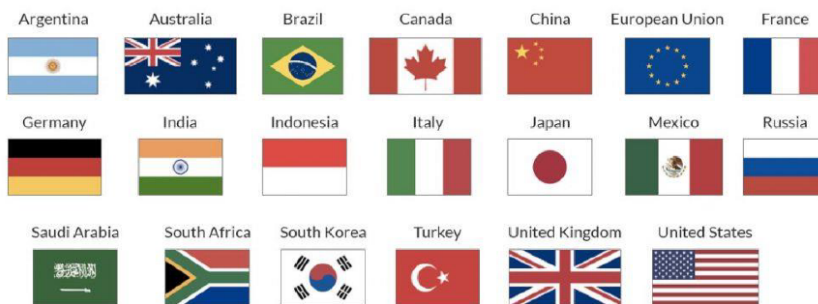
Challenges

- No Enforcement mechanism
- No legal binding
- Polarization of Interests:
 - Russia Ukraine Conflict
 - China's strategic rise
 - NATO's expansion

G20 India 2023

- India assumed the **18th G20 Presidency from December 1, 2022** for a **one-year period**.
- **Theme:**
 - **"Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam"** a Sanskrit word which Stands for **"One Earth - One Family. One Future"**.
 - This is taken from the ancient Sanskrit text of the **'Maha Upanishad'**.

G20 COUNTRIES



UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year's Questions (PYQs)

Prelims:

Q. In which one of the following groups are all the four countries members of G20? (2020)

- (a) Argentina, Mexico, South Africa and Turkey
- (b) Australia, Canada, Malaysia and New Zealand
- (c) Brazil, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam
- (d) Indonesia, Japan, Singapore and South Korea

Ans: (a)

Eurasian Otters in Kashmir Valley

Source: BL

Eurasian otters have been spotted in **Gurez Valley** (Kashmir) with the **first live documentation in 25 years**.

- It was spotted feasting on fish in the **Kishanganga River** (Originating from **Krishansar lake**, Ganderbal district (J&K).
 - The river flows northwards through the **Tulail and Gurez Valleys** of Kashmir before entering PoK.
- **About Eurasian Otters:**
 - **About:** Otters are members of the **mammalian family** called **Mustelidae** and inhabit both **marine and freshwater**.
 - In J&K, they are locally known as **Vodur** and help **maintain aquatic ecosystem health**.
 - Otters are mainly **active around dawn and dusk** (crepuscular).
 - **Habitat:** Found in the **Himalayas, northeast India, and Western Ghats**.
 - **Carnivorous Diet:** Feeds on **fish, crustaceans, amphibians**, and sometimes **reptiles, birds, eggs, insects, and worms**.
 - **Conservation Status:** Near threatened (**IUCN**), Schedule I (**Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**), Appendix I (**CITES**).
 - **Other Otter Species in India:** Smooth-coated Otter (throughout India), and Small-clawed Otter (Himalayas and southern India).

Read More: [Fishing Cat and Otters](#)

SC Slams Politicisation of Sports Administration

For Prelims: [Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India](#), [Supreme Court of India](#), [Indian Olympic Association](#), [State subject](#), [National Sports Code of India](#)

For Mains: Judicial Oversight in Sports Administration, Politicization in Indian Sports Federations, Sports Governance

[Source: TH](#)

Why in News?

The [Supreme Court of India](#) has directed the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports** to ensure Indian kabaddi players participate in the **Asian Kabaddi Championship 2025**.

- The directive comes amid [Amateur Kabaddi Federation of India \(AKFI's\)](#) suspension by the **International Kabaddi Federation (IKF)**, with the court slamming political interference and bureaucratic control in sports administration.

Why was the AKFI Suspended by IKF?

- **About:** The **AKFI** is the **apex governing body for Kabaddi** in India. It regulates all forms of Kabaddi, including **National, Indoor, Beach, and Circle Style**, and plays a key role in organizing tournaments, selecting teams, and overseeing the sport's development.
 - **Headquarters:** Jaipur, Rajasthan
 - **Affiliations:** [Indian Olympic Association \(IOA\)](#), **Asian Kabaddi Federation (AKF)**, and **International Kabaddi Federation (IKF)**. AKFI follows guidelines received from the IKF and AKF.
 - **Recognition:** Officially recognized by the **Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India**.
- **Concerns Regarding AKFI:** AKFI faces allegations of **opaque elections, mismanagement, and monopolization** by politicians, raising concerns over **nepotism** and fair representation.
- **Delhi HC Intervention:** Amid AKFI management concerns, the Delhi High Court appointed Justice (Retd) S.P. Garg as administrator to oversee its affairs.
- **AKFI Suspension:** IKF suspended AKFI over governance issues, citing the **absence of an elected body**, jeopardizing India's international Kabaddi participation.
 - IKF assured AKFI's affiliation restoration and India's participation at the Iran championship if an elected body replaced the administrator.

Note: The IKF, founded in 2004 and headquartered in Jaipur, is the global governing body of Kabaddi, with 24 affiliated countries (including India).

What Did the Supreme Court Order?

- The Supreme Court instructed **Justice (Retd.) S.P. Garg**, to **hand over charge to the newly elected body** from the **December 2023 elections**.
 - The Court stressed urgency due to the upcoming Asian Kabaddi Championship 2025, directing AKFI's Governing Body to immediately **select teams and arrange training camps**, and ensure India's participation in the tournament.
- The Court also clarified that the transfer of authority **does not imply endorsement** of the AKFI elections and that related issues remain open for adjudication.

What are the SC's Concerns Regarding Sports Administration?

- **Politicization:** Former politicians and bureaucrats dominate sports bodies, sidelining **athletes**.
 - SC acknowledges that sports associations improve when sportspersons take charge rather

than political or bureaucratic appointees.

- **Mismanagement:** Allegations of **opaque election processes, financial irregularities, and monopolization** by certain individuals have surfaced.
 - Federations like AKFI operate without **properly elected governing bodies**, violating sports norms not aligning with the [National Sports Code of India 2011](#).
- **No Checks and Balances:** With no clear oversight or accountability, sports bodies operate without transparency, as evident in the [2010 Commonwealth Games](#), where the [Central Vigilance Commission \(CVC\)](#) reported financial irregularities in 14 projects.
- **Impact on Athletes:** Delays in team selection, training, and tournament participation due to administrative inefficiencies harm athletes.
 - Athletes face [sexual harassment](#), but weak complaint systems and delayed action leave them vulnerable, demanding urgent reforms.
- **Sports Infrastructure:** As sports is a [State subject](#), there is no uniform approach to infrastructure development across India.

What is the National Sports Code of India 2011?

Click Here to Read: [National Sports Code of India 2011](#)

Way Forward

- **Auditing:** Engaging diplomatic channels to resolve sports federation recognition issues and ensuring [Central Bureau of Investigation \(CBI\)](#) and [INTERPOL](#) investigations to eliminate corruption and vested interests at national and international levels.
 - A **central regulatory body** with clear statutes and democratic principles is needed to **govern all sports federations**, ensuring transparent governance and strict oversight for fair and accountable administration.
- **Empowering Athletes:** Athletes must have **active roles in decision-making** for transparency and accountability.
 - Follow the **Olympic Charter**, which mandates athlete representatives in **National Olympic Committees** (e.g., IOA in India).

Increasing Women's Representation: Ensure **gender equality**, establish quotas, and **create a safe, inclusive environment** to encourage women in sports administration careers.

Drishti Mains Question:

Examine the impact of political interference and bureaucratic control in Indian sports federations.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Mains

Q. An athlete participates in the Olympics for personal triumph and nation's glory; victors are showered with cash incentives by various agencies, on their return. Discuss the merit of state sponsored talent hunt and its cultivation as against the rationale of a reward mechanism as encouragement. **(2014)**

