SSBCrack EXAMS

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India Explores Participation in France-Led Sixth-Generation Fighter Programme

- India has begun exploring the possibility of joining the **Future Combat Air System (FCAS)** programme, a French-led initiative aimed at developing next-generation combat aircraft. The move reflects India's growing focus on preparing its air power for future warfare, where advanced technology, networked operations and highly capable combat platforms are expected to play a decisive role.
- A Parliamentary Standing Committee on Defence has recommended that India establish a clear roadmap for the development and acquisition of **sixth-generation fighter aircraft**. The committee emphasised that maintaining technological relevance is essential because modern warfare is becoming increasingly dependent on-air power and advanced aerospace systems.
- According to the PPT, two major international groups are currently working on sixth-generation fighter programmes. One involves the **United Kingdom, Italy and Japan**, while the other brings together **France and Germany**. India is considering collaboration with one of these groups to avoid falling behind in the development of advanced combat aviation.
- The development of India's **Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA)** is also progressing, with its design completed and discussions concerning its production underway.
- **Significance**
- Participation in an international sixth-generation fighter programme could provide India with access to advanced aerospace technologies while supporting the country's long-term goal of developing an increasingly capable indigenous air force.

Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan Sign Joint Defence Agreement

- **Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan** have signed a joint defence agreement amid heightened security tensions in the wider Middle East. The agreement is intended to strengthen cooperation among the three countries and establish a framework for collective deterrence against potential aggression.
- Under the agreement, an armed attack against any one of the three countries would be treated as an attack against all three, according to their joint statement. The countries described the arrangement as a mechanism for strengthening collective security and promoting regional stability.
- The agreement comes against the backdrop of continuing tensions involving regional powers. The three countries have emphasised that the arrangement is defensive in nature and is not directed against a particular state. Türkiye has also indicated that the framework remains open to other regional countries and does not replace existing bilateral or multilateral security arrangements.
- Saudi Arabia's strategic importance is linked to its position as a major energy exporter, while Türkiye possesses one of NATO's largest militaries. Pakistan brings extensive military experience and is the only nuclear-armed Muslim-majority state.
- **Significance**
- The agreement could reshape security cooperation among the three countries and strengthen their ability to coordinate responses to emerging regional security challenges.

Bhawana Kanth Becomes India's First Woman Fighter Combat Leader

- **Indian Air Force Squadron Leader Bhawana Kanth** has achieved another milestone by becoming the **first Indian woman pilot to successfully complete the Fighter Combat Leader (FCL) course**. She completed the advanced training programme on **6 August 2026** at the **Tactics and Air Combat Development Establishment (TACDE), Gwalior**.
- The FCL course is a highly specialised **20-week programme** designed for selected IAF fighter pilots. It focuses on advanced air-combat tactics, leadership and the ability to command complex frontline missions. The course has a highly selective completion rate, with only around one percent of selected pilots reportedly completing it successfully.
- Bhawana Kanth was commissioned into the Indian Air Force in **June 2016** as part of the country's first batch of women fighter pilots. The batch also included **Avani Chaturvedi and Mohana Singh**. In 2019, Kanth became the first Indian woman fighter pilot to qualify for daytime combat missions.
- She has flown the **MiG-21 Bison** and later transitioned to the **Su-30MKI**. She was also awarded the **Nari Shakti Puraskar** in 2020 and became the first female fighter pilot to appear in the Indian Air Force's Republic Day parade tableau in 2021.
- **Significance**
- Her achievement represents an important milestone in the increasing participation of women in India's combat aviation and leadership roles.

FCRA Amendment Bill 2026

- Breaking its silence over concerns expressed by international stakeholders regarding the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment (FCRA) Bill, 2026, the Ministry of External Affairs on Friday (August 7, 2026) said that "legislative matters concerning India are internal affairs".
- "We have seen the comments. Legislative matters concerning India are our internal affairs to be decided by our Parliament. May I point out that several nations, including the U.S. regulate the flow of foreign funds," Official Spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, Randhir Jaiswal, said at the bi-weekly press briefing.
- **What is the FCRA?**
- The FCRA regulates the **receipt and utilisation of foreign contributions by organisations and individuals covered under the law**. It lays down conditions regarding who can receive foreign funds, how such funds must be received, how they can be used and what information must be disclosed to the authorities.
- The legislation was originally enacted in **1976** and was replaced by the present FCRA in **2010**. It was subsequently amended in **2016, 2018, 2020 and 2026**.
- **Is the FCRA a Ban on Foreign Donations?**
- No. The FCRA does not completely prohibit foreign contributions.
- Eligible organisations can receive overseas funding after obtaining **FCRA registration or prior permission**, provided they comply with the prescribed conditions and reporting requirements.
- According to the Ministry, around **16,200 associations** were registered under the Act during 2024–25 and collectively received approximately **₹22,963 crore** in foreign contributions.

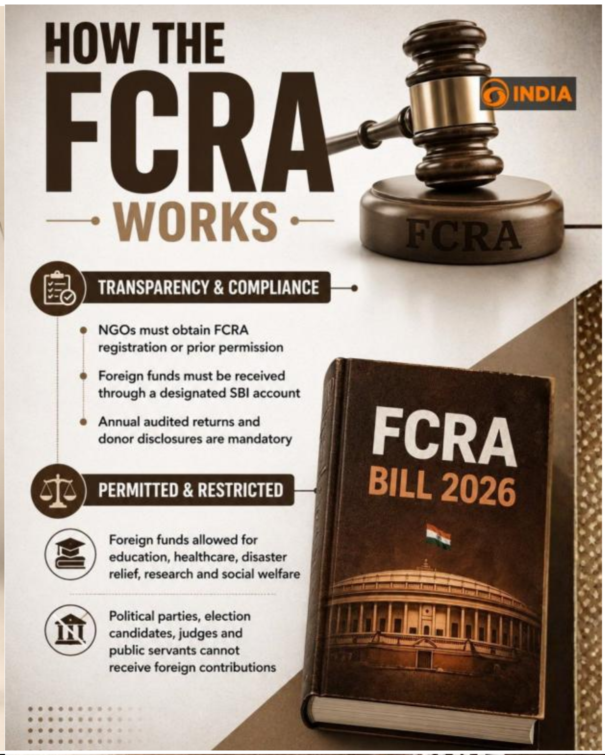
- This demonstrates that the FCRA operates primarily as a **regulatory, registration and disclosure framework**, rather than as a blanket prohibition on foreign donations.
- **Main Objectives of the FCRA**
- The framework focuses on five broad principles:
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Protection of sovereignty
- Facilitation of genuine developmental activities
- Maintaining public confidence
- Organisations receiving foreign contributions are required to disclose donor information, amounts received and the purpose for which the funds are utilised. They must also submit annual audited returns electronically.
- **Which Activities Can Receive Foreign Contributions?**
- Foreign contributions can be utilised for a wide range of legitimate activities, including:
- Education
- Healthcare
- Rural development
- Social welfare
- Environmental protection
- Scientific research
- Disaster relief
- Cultural preservation
- Certain charitable and faith-based activities
- The objective is to permit genuine international cooperation while maintaining regulatory safeguards.
- **Who Cannot Receive Foreign Contributions?**
- The Act restricts certain categories of persons and organisations from receiving foreign contributions. These include:
- Election candidates
- Legislators
- Judges
- Government/public servants
- Political parties and their office-bearers

- Organisations considered to be of a political nature
- Certain persons associated with newspapers and news or current-affairs media
- These restrictions are linked to the constitutional and public importance of the roles occupied by these categories.
- **How Does FCRA Registration Work?**
- An organisation seeking foreign contributions can generally follow one of two routes:
- **1. FCRA Registration**
- An organisation that has been operational for at least **three years** may apply for full FCRA registration.
- **2. Prior Permission**
- An organisation that does not meet the conditions for registration may seek permission for receiving foreign contributions for a **specific project or purpose**.
- FCRA registration is valid for **five years** and requires renewal subject to compliance requirements.
- **Banking and Utilisation Requirements**
- Foreign contributions must initially be received through a designated FCRA account at the **State Bank of India's New Delhi Main Branch** before being transferred to operational accounts.
- The funds must be used only for the objectives declared by the organisation.
- Another important requirement is that administrative expenditure cannot exceed **20% of the annual foreign contribution**. Organisations must also file audited annual returns containing details of receipts, donors and expenditure.
- **Major Changes Proposed in 2026**
- The proposed **FCRA Amendment Bill, 2026** seeks to address certain operational and enforcement issues.
- **Management of Assets**
- One major proposal concerns assets created using foreign contributions when an organisation's FCRA registration comes to an end.
- Such assets could be provisionally placed under a designated authority. If the organisation successfully restores or renews its registration within the prescribed period, the assets can be returned. If restoration does not occur, the assets could permanently vest with the authority for public purposes.
- The proposal applies to assets created from foreign contributions rather than the organisation's entire property.
- **Right of Revision and Judicial Appeal**

- The proposed framework also provides mechanisms for revision and allows judicial appeal before a **District Judge** against orders of the designated authority.
- **Changes in Penalties**
- The proposed Bill seeks to reduce the maximum imprisonment under certain provisions from **five years to one year**.
- **Central Approval for Investigations**
- Another proposal requires state agencies to obtain prior approval from the Central Government before beginning investigations under the FCRA. The stated purpose is to promote coordinated enforcement of a central law involving foreign relations and national security.
- **Revised FCRA Rules, 2026**
- The revised Rules notified in **June 2026** introduce additional disclosure and monitoring requirements.
- FCRA registration certificates will specify the **purpose and geographical area** for which foreign contributions may be received. Existing organisations have been given a transition period to provide the required information.
- Organisations seeking renewal must also demonstrate utilisation of at least **₹10 lakh in foreign contributions during the preceding two years**.
- The revised disclosure requirements include:
- Project-wise utilisation details
- Activity-wise expenditure information
- Organisation websites
- Social-media accounts
- Identification of the ultimate foreign donor, even where funds pass through intermediaries
- These provisions are intended to improve the traceability of foreign contributions from their original source to their final utilisation.
- **Does the FCRA Target Any Particular Religion?**
- The Ministry has stated that the FCRA applies **uniformly irrespective of religion, community or ideology**.
- Faith-based charitable activities can continue to receive foreign contributions when they comply with the law. The revised Rules provide greater clarity about permissible religious purposes, while restrictions concerning conversion-oriented activities funded through foreign contributions apply across religious groups.

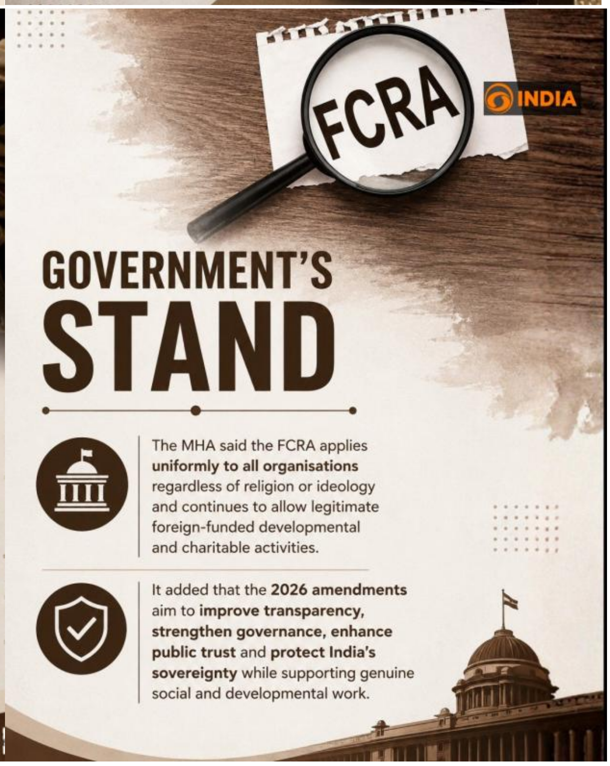
- **International Context**
- India is not the only country regulating foreign funding and foreign influence. The Ministry has pointed to similar transparency-related laws and regulatory frameworks in countries including the **United States, Australia, the United Kingdom and Canada**.
- The broader international trend is towards greater disclosure and oversight of foreign funding and influence.
- **Significance of the 2026 Changes**
- The proposed amendments and revised Rules seek to create greater transparency in the foreign-funding ecosystem. Stronger disclosure requirements can make it easier to identify the source of funds and understand how they are ultimately used.
- At the same time, the framework continues to permit foreign contributions for legitimate developmental, charitable, scientific and social activities.

WHAT IS THE
FCRA?
INDIA
The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act regulates how foreign donations are received, utilised and reported by eligible organisations in India.
The Ministry clarified that the FCRA is not a ban on foreign funding, but a legal framework that permits registered organisations to receive overseas contributions under prescribed rules.
FCRA



HOW THE
FCRA
WORKS
INDIA
FCRA
TRANSPARENCY & COMPLIANCE
NGOs must obtain FCRA registration or prior permission
Foreign funds must be received through a designated SBI account
Annual audited returns and donor disclosures are mandatory
PERMITTED & RESTRICTED
Foreign funds allowed for education, healthcare, disaster relief, research and social welfare
Political parties, election candidates, judges and public servants cannot receive foreign contributions
FCRA
BILL 2026

WHAT
CHANGES IN
2026?
INDIA
FCRA MANAGEMENT BILL, 2026
NGO ASSETS
FCRA-REGULATED
New framework for assets created through foreign contributions if registration lapses
Right to appeal before a District Judge against Designated Authority orders
Maximum imprisonment under certain provisions proposed to be reduced from 5 years to 1 year
Stronger disclosure norms for projects, donors, websites and social media accounts
FCRA
BILL 2026



FCRA
INDIA
GOVERNMENT'S
STAND
The MHA said the FCRA applies uniformly to all organisations regardless of religion or ideology and continues to allow legitimate foreign-funded developmental and charitable activities.
It added that the 2026 amendments aim to improve transparency, strengthen governance, enhance public trust and protect India's sovereignty while supporting genuine social and developmental work.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Which sixth-generation fighter programme is India exploring participation in?

A) GCAP
B) Future Combat Air System (FCAS)
C) Tempest
D) NGAD

Answer: B) Future Combat Air System (FCAS)

2. What is the primary significance of India's proposed participation in the French-led FCAS programme?

A) Development of civilian aircraft
B) Expansion of commercial aviation
C) Access to advanced next-generation combat-aircraft technology and cooperation
D) Development of passenger aircraft

Answer: C) Access to advanced next-generation combat-aircraft technology and cooperation

3. Bhawana Kanth became the first Indian woman pilot to successfully complete which course?

A) Combat Air Controller Course
B) Basic Fighter Training Course
C) Fighter Combat Leader (FCL) Course
D) Test Pilot Course

Answer: C) Fighter Combat Leader (FCL) Course

4. Which three countries signed the joint defence agreement discussed in the article?

A) Saudi Arabia, Iran and Türkiye
B) Türkiye, Qatar and Pakistan
C) Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan
D) Saudi Arabia, UAE and Pakistan

Answer: C) Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan

Explanation: The agreement seeks to strengthen defence cooperation and collective security among Saudi Arabia, Türkiye and Pakistan.

5. The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act is commonly known by which abbreviation?

A) FCRA
B) FEMA
C) FRCA
D) FCDA

Answer: A) FCRA

6. The original Foreign Contribution Regulation law was enacted in which year?

A) 1968
B) 1976
C) 1986
D) 1991

Answer: B) 1976

7. Under the FCRA framework, foreign contributions received by eligible organisations are primarily subject to:

A) No reporting requirements
B) Only state-level approval
C) Registration/prior permission and reporting requirements
D) Automatic approval for every organisation

Answer: C) Registration/prior permission and reporting requirements

8. What is the maximum proportion of foreign contribution that can generally be used for administrative expenses under the FCRA framework?

A) 10%
B) 15%
C) 20%
D) 30%

Answer: C) 20%

9. Which ministry is primarily responsible for administering the FCRA?

A) Ministry of Finance
B) Ministry of External Affairs
C) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
D) Ministry of Home Affairs

Answer: D) Ministry of Home Affairs

10. Consider the following statements about the FCRA:

1. **The original FCRA was enacted in 1976.**
2. **The present FCRA was enacted in 2010.**
3. **FCRA registration is generally valid for five years.**
4. **The Act completely prohibits foreign contributions in India.**

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A) 1 and 2 only
B) 1, 2 and 3 only
C) 2, 3 and 4 only
D) 1, 2 and 3 only

Answer: D) 1, 2 and 3 only