

UN Democracy Fund

April 11, 2023

In news— Recently India said that it has no objections to the UN Democracy Fund(UNDEF) giving grants to NGOs funded by George Soros, while he is put on the watchlist in India underlines a contradiction.

About UN Democracy Fund-

- **It was established in 2005 as a United Nations General Trust Fund to strengthen global participation in democratisation efforts.**
- The UNDEF has funded several significant projects over the years, including empowering civil society, promoting human rights, and encouraging participation of all groups in democratic processes.
- UNDEF projects are two years long, with project grants ranging from \$100,000 to \$300,000.
- It also backs a number of major global and regional projects with a normative and policy focus.
- **UNDEF works entirely on voluntary contributions from governments around the world.**
- **UNDEF provides financial support for the projects depending on the six thematic areas, including-**
 - Rule of law and human rights.
 - Women's empowerment.
 - Youth engagement.
 - Strengthening civil society interaction with government.
 - Media and freedom of information, and
 - Electoral processes.
- "The Fund supports projects that strengthen the voice of civil society, promote human rights, and encourage the participation of all groups in democratic processes. India considers the Fund to be an effective instrument for the promotion of democratic values and processes

- India and the US were prime movers behind the UN Democracy Fund in 2005, when they were negotiating the civilian nuclear co-operation deal.
- **India also handed over a voluntary contribution of US \$150,000 to the UN Democracy Fund** for the year 2022–23.
- **India is a founding partner of the UNDEF** and has contributed over US\$ 32 million to the fund since its inception.
- **Presently, the United States (first) followed by Sweden (second) top the contributor chart**, respectively and India is in third position.