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PCS Special:

07 January 2026

1. Hungarian director Béla Tarr, master of long, darkly comic films, dies at 70
हंगेरियन निर्देशक बेला टार, लंबे और गहरे हास्यपूर्ण फ़िल्मों के उस्ताद, का 70 वर्ष की आयु में निधन

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Hungarian director Béla Tarr, master of long, darkly comic films, dies at 70

PCS

Associated Press

BUDAPEST

The celebrated Hungarian filmmaker Béla Tarr, director of such works as *Sátántangó* and *The Turin Horse* and the recipient of numerous awards for his long and often darkly comic films, has died at 70.

During a career spanning decades, Tarr wrote and directed nine feature films, starting with his debut, *Family Nest*, in 1979 and ending in 2011 with *The Turin Horse*, which won the Silver Bear Jury Grand Prize at the Berlin International Film Festival that year.

Tarr frequently collaborated with Hungarian author László Krasznahorkai,



Celebrated filmmaker: Béla Tarr completed his first feature film, *Family Nest*, when he was only 23. REUTERS

who last year won the Nobel Prize in literature. Tarr's films, some of which were adaptations of Mr. Krasznahorkai's novels (*Sátántangó* and *Werckmeister Harmonies*), have been awarded prizes at festivals around Europe and

Asia, and he received honorary professorships at universities in China.

In a statement on Tuesday, the Hungarian Filmmakers' Association confirmed Tarr's death, writing that "with deep sorrow we announce that,

after a long and serious illness, film director Béla Tarr passed away early this morning".

Tarr completed his first feature film, *Family Nest*, when he was only 23. That film won the Grand Prize at the Mannheim-Heidelberg International Film Festival that year.

Slow-paced films

His films, the longest of which, *Sátántangó*, clocks in at 439 minutes, often used slow pacing and stark imagery to depict despair and social decay.

Often shot in black and white and defined by long, hypnotic takes, Tarr's films depict bleak, hopeless, even dystopian landscapes.

Hungarian director Béla Tarr, master of long, darkly comic films, dies at 70 हंगेरियन निर्देशक बेला टार, लंबे और गहरे हास्यपूर्ण फ़िल्मों के उस्ताद, का 70 वर्ष की आयु में निधन

- The celebrated Hungarian filmmaker Béla Tarr, director of such works as *Sátántangó* and *The Turin Horse* and the recipient of numerous awards for his long and often darkly comic films, has died at 70
प्रसिद्ध हंगेरियन फ़िल्मकार बेला टार, *Sátántangó* और *द ट्यूरिन हॉर्स* जैसी कृतियों के निर्देशक और अपनी लंबी व अक्सर गहरे हास्यपूर्ण फ़िल्मों के लिए अनेक पुरस्कारों के प्राप्तकर्ता, का 70 वर्ष की आयु में निधन हो गया
- During a career spanning decades, Tarr wrote and directed nine feature films, starting with his debut, *Family Nest*, in 1979 and ending in 2011 with *The Turin Horse*, which won the Silver Bear Jury Grand Prize at the Berlin International Film Festival that year
दशकों तक चले अपने करियर में, टार ने नौ फीचर फ़िल्में लिखीं और निर्देशित कीं, जिनकी शुरुआत 1979 में उनकी पहली फ़िल्म *Family Nest* से हुई और 2011 में *The Turin Horse* के साथ समाप्त हुई, जिसने उसी वर्ष बर्लिन अंतरराष्ट्रीय फ़िल्म महोत्सव में सिल्वर बेयर जूरी ग्रैंड प्राइज जीता
- Tarr frequently collaborated with Hungarian author László Krasznahorkai, who last year won the Nobel Prize in literature
टार ने अक्सर हंगेरियन लेखक लास्लो क्रास्नाहोरकाई के साथ सहयोग किया, जिन्हें पिछले वर्ष साहित्य का नोबेल पुरस्कार मिला
- Tarr's films, some of which were adaptations of Mr. Krasznahorkai's novels (*Sátántangó* and *Werckmeister Harmonies*), have been awarded prizes at festivals around Europe and Asia, and he received honorary professorships at universities in China
टार की फ़िल्में, जिनमें से कुछ श्री क्रास्नाहोरकाई के उपन्यासों (*Sátántangó* और *Werckmeister Harmonies*) के रूपांतरण थीं, को यूरोप और एशिया के महोत्सवों में पुरस्कार मिले, और उन्हें चीन की विश्वविद्यालयों में मानद प्रोफेसरशिप भी प्राप्त हुई



- In a statement on **Tuesday**, the **Hungarian Filmmakers' Association** con-firmed Tarr's death, writing that "with deep sorrow we announce that, after a long and serious illness, • Im director **Béla Tarr** passed away early this morning"
मंगलवार को जारी एक बयान में हंगेरियन फ़िल्ममेकर्स एसोसिएशन ने टार के निधन की पुष्टि करते हुए लिखा कि "गहरे दुख के साथ हम घोषणा करते हैं कि लंबी और गंभीर बीमारी के बाद फ़िल्म निर्देशक बेला टार का आज सुबह निधन हो गया"
- Tarr completed his first feature film, **Family Nest**, when he was only **23**
टार ने अपनी पहली फीचर फ़िल्म **Family Nest** तब पूरी की जब उनकी आयु केवल **23** वर्ष थी
- That Im won the **Grand Prize at the Mannheim-Heidelberg International Film Festival** that year
उस फ़िल्म ने उसी वर्ष मैनहाइम-हाइडेलबर्ग अंतरराष्ट्रीय फ़िल्म महोत्सव में ग्रैंड प्राइज जीता

Slow-paced Ims धीमी गति की फ़िल्में

- Often shot in **black and white** and defined by **long, hypnotic takes**, Tarr's films depict **bleak, hopeless, even dystopian landscapes**

GS Paper 1: History,	
TOPICS COVERED	07 January 2026
1.	Education Minister releases 55 volumes of literary works शिक्षा मंत्री ने साहित्यिक कृतियों के 55 खंड जारी किए
2.	QUIZ



Education Minister releases 55 volumes of literary works

The books are released in classical Indian languages such as Kannada, Odia, Telugu, Malayalam, and Tamil, along with a sign-language series of the *Tirukkural* by Tamil poet Thiruvalluvar

GS I: History
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Tuesday officially released 55 volumes of literary works in classical Indian languages such as Kannada, Odia, Telugu, Malayalam, and Tamil, along with a sign-language series of the *Tirukkural* by Tamil poet Thiruvalluvar.

Mr. Pradhan said that this was a "part of our larger national effort to place India's linguistic heritage at the centre of education, research and cultural pride".

A government statement said that of these literary works, 41 were brought out by the Centres of Excellence for Classical Languages under the Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL). In addition, 13 books and the sign language series of *Tirukkural* have been brought out by the Central Institute of Classical Tamil.

Vision of inclusive India
While releasing the works, Mr. Pradhan said, "The inclusion of the essence of the *Tirukkural* in sign lan-



Higher Education Secretary Vineet Joshi, Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Chamu Krishna Shastry, Chairperson of Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti, at the book release. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

guage empowers the vision of an inclusive India, where access to knowledge is ensured for all." Mr. Pradhan emphasised the role of language as a "unifying force", noting that the Prime Minister Narendra Modi had "always" stressed how all Indian languages were national languages.

Mr. Pradhan also posted independent messages on social media hailing the launch of these books in their respective languages.

In one such post in Tamil, the Union Minister said that the released books had six Malayalam translations of Sangam-period works such as *Puranooruu*, *Pathitrapathu*, and

Pathuppattu, and later period works such as *Nannanikkatigai*, *Nannarpattu*, and *Muthollayiram*. A Telugu translation of *Silappathikaram*, one of the five great epics, is also included in this.

In another post about the works released in Odia, Mr. Pradhan said this was a "proud moment for the world of Odia literature and culture". He noted how works such as *Charyapada* and *Madalapanji* would create a "new introduction to the rich vocabulary of the Odia language", also mentioning how the English and Hindi translations would "help bring Odisha's history closer to non-Odia readers."

The Education Minister said the Union government had worked "extensively to strengthen and promote all Indian languages", citing measures such as including more languages on the scheduled list, translation of classical texts into Indian languages, and encouraging education in Indian languages.

He said that the National Education Policy of 2020 advanced this vision of education in Indian languages, and that India continued to be a "vibrant example of unity in diversity".

He said, "In contrast to the Macaulay (Thomas Babbington Macaulay) mindset of the colonial era, Indian civilisation has always regarded languages as bridges for dialogue and cultural harmony."

"Indian languages have stood the test of time despite the attempts to destroy them. India is a country of immense linguistic diversity, and it is the responsibility of society to ensure that the nation's historical, cultural, and literary wealth is preserved and that future generations are made aware of it," Mr. Pradhan said.

Education Minister releases 55 volumes of literary works शिक्षा मंत्री ने साहित्यिक कृतियों के 55 खंड जारी किए

- The books are released in **classical Indian languages** such as **Kannada, Odia, Telugu, Malayalam, and Tamil**, along with a **sign-language series of the *Tirukkural* by Tamil poet Thiruvalluvar**
ये पुस्तकें कन्नड़, ओड़िया, तेलुगु, मलयालम और तमिल जैसी शास्त्रीय भारतीय भाषाओं में जारी की गई हैं, साथ ही तमिल कवि तिरुवल्लुवर की तिरुक्कुरल की सांकेतिक भाषा श्रृंखला भी शामिल है
- Union Education Minister **Dharmendra Pradhan** on Tuesday officially released **55 volumes of literary works** in classical Indian languages such as Kannada, Odia, Telugu, Malayalam, and Tamil, along with a sign-language series of the *Tirukkural* by Tamil poet Thiruvalluvar
केंद्रीय शिक्षा मंत्री **धर्मेंद्र प्रधान** ने मंगलवार को कन्नड़, ओड़िया, तेलुगु, मलयालम और तमिल जैसी शास्त्रीय भारतीय भाषाओं में **55 साहित्यिक कृतियों के खंड** तथा तमिल कवि **तिरुवल्लुवर** की **तिरुक्कुरल** की सांकेतिक भाषा श्रृंखला को आधिकारिक रूप से जारी किया



- A government statement said that of these literary works, **41** were brought out by the **Centres of Excellence for Classical Languages** under the **Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL)**
एक सरकारी बयान में कहा गया कि इन साहित्यिक कृतियों में से **41** को **केंद्रीय भारतीय भाषा संस्थान (CIIL)** के अंतर्गत **शास्त्रीय भाषाओं के उत्कृष्टता केंद्रों** द्वारा प्रकाशित किया गया
- In addition, **13 books** and the **sign language series of Tirukkural** have been brought out by the **Central Institute of Classical Tamil**
- In one such post in **Tamil**, the Union Minister said that the released books had **six Malayalam translations of Sangam-period works** such as **Purananooru, Pathitruvathu, and Pathuppattu**, and later period works such as **Nanmanikkatigai, Nanarpattu, and Muthollayiram**
ऐसी ही एक **तमिल** पोस्ट में केंद्रीय मंत्री ने कहा कि जारी पुस्तकों में **संगम काल** की कृतियों जैसे **पुरनानूरु, पथित्रुवपथु और पथुप्पट्टु** तथा बाद के काल की कृतियों जैसे **ननमणिक्कटिगै, ननरपट्टु और मुथोल्लयिरम** के **छह मलयालम अनुवाद** शामिल हैं
- A **Telugu translation of Silappathikaram, one of the five great epics**, is also included in this
इसमें **पांच महान महाकाव्यों** में से एक **सिलप्पथिकारम** का **तेलुगु अनुवाद** भी शामिल है
- In another post about the works released in **Odia**, Mr. Pradhan said this was a **“proud moment for the world of Odia literature and culture”**
ओड़िया में जारी कृतियों पर एक अन्य पोस्ट में श्री प्रधान ने इसे **“ओड़िया साहित्य और संस्कृति की दुनिया के लिए गर्व का क्षण”** बताया
- He noted how works such as **Charyapada** and **Madalapanji** would create a **“new introduction to the rich vocabulary of the Odia language”**
उन्होंने कहा कि **चर्यापद** और **मदालापांजी** जैसी कृतियां **“ओड़िया भाषा की समृद्ध शब्दावली का नया परिचय”** देंगी
- He also mentioned how the **English and Hindi translations would “help bring Odisha’s history closer to non-Odia readers”**
उन्होंने यह भी उल्लेख किया कि **अंग्रेज़ी और हिंदी अनुवाद “ओड़िशा के इतिहास को गैर-ओड़िया पाठकों के करीब लाने में मदद करेंगे”**
- The Education Minister said the Union government had worked **“extensively to strengthen and promote all Indian languages”**, citing measures such as including more languages on the **scheduled list**, translation of **classical texts** into Indian languages, and encouraging education in Indian languages
शिक्षा मंत्री ने कहा कि केंद्र सरकार ने **“सभी भारतीय भाषाओं को सशक्त और प्रोत्साहित करने के लिए व्यापक रूप से काम किया है”**, जिसमें **अनुसूचित सूची** में अधिक भाषाओं को शामिल करना, **शास्त्रीय ग्रंथों** का भारतीय भाषाओं में अनुवाद और भारतीय भाषाओं में शिक्षा को बढ़ावा देना शामिल है
- He said that the **National Education Policy of 2020** advanced this vision of education in **Indian languages**, and that India continued to be a **“vibrant example of unity in diversity”**
उन्होंने कहा कि **राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति 2020** ने भारतीय भाषाओं में शिक्षा की इस दृष्टि को आगे बढ़ाया और भारत **“विविधता में एकता का जीवंत उदाहरण”** बना हुआ है
- He said, **“In contrast to the Macaulay (Thomas Babington Macaulay) mindset of the colonial era, Indian civilisation has always regarded languages as bridges for dialogue and cultural harmony.”**
उन्होंने कहा, **“औपनिवेशिक काल की मैकॉले (थॉमस बैबिंगटन मैकॉले) मानसिकता के विपरीत, भारतीय सभ्यता ने हमेशा भाषाओं को संवाद और सांस्कृतिक सद्भाव के सेतु के रूप में माना है”**
- **“Indian languages have stood the test of time despite the attempts to destroy them. India is a country of immense linguistic diversity, and it is the responsibility of society to ensure that the nation’s historical, cultural, and literary wealth is preserved and that future generations are made aware of it,”** Mr. Pradhan said
“भारतीय भाषाओं ने समय की कसौटी पर खुद को साबित किया है, उन्हें नष्ट करने के प्रयासों के बावजूद। भारत विशाल भाषाई विविधता वाला देश है, और यह समाज की जिम्मेदारी है कि देश की ऐतिहासिक, सांस्कृतिक और साहित्यिक संपदा को संरक्षित किया जाए और आने वाली पीढ़ियों को इसके बारे में जागरूक किया जाए,” श्री प्रधान ने कहा



GS Paper 1: Society	
TOPICS COVERED	07 January 2026
1.	Haryana woman with 10 daughters gives birth to a son 10 बेटियों वाली हरियाणा की महिला ने बेटे को जन्म दिया



GS I: Society

Haryana woman with 10 daughters gives birth to a son

Ten daughters and now a son. A woman and her labourer husband married for 19 years welcomed their 11th child in a Haryana hospital this week, raising concerns over maternal health and the age-old desire for families to have a son come what may. It was a high-risk delivery but both mother and child are doing fine, said Dr. Narveer Sheoran of the Ojas Hospital and Maternity Home in Jind district's Uchana town. The 37-year-old woman was admitted to the hospital on January 3 and the baby was born the next day. She was back home in her village in adjoining Fatehabad district the next day. PTI

Haryana woman with 10 daughters gives birth to a son

10 बेटियों वाली हरियाणा की महिला ने बेटे को जन्म दिया

- Ten daughters and now a son. दस बेटियाँ और अब एक बेटा।
- A woman and her labourer husband, married for **19 years**, welcomed their **11th child** in a **Haryana hospital** this week, raising concerns over **maternal health** and the **age-old desire** for families to have a **son** come what may. **19 वर्षों** से विवाहित एक महिला और उसके **मजदूर पति** ने इस सप्ताह **हरियाणा के एक अस्पताल** में अपने **11वें बच्चे** का स्वागत किया, जिससे **मातृ स्वास्थ्य** और किसी भी कीमत पर **बेटा पाने की पुरानी इच्छा** को लेकर चिंताएँ बढ़ीं।
- It was a **high-risk delivery** but both **mother and child** are doing one, said **Dr. Narveer Sheoran** of the **Ojas Hospital and Maternity Home** in **Jind district's Uchana town**. यह एक **उच्च-जोखिम प्रसव** था लेकिन **माँ और बच्चा** दोनों ठीक हैं, ऐसा **जिंद ज़िले के उचाना कस्बे** स्थित **ओजस अस्पताल एवं मैटरनिटी होम** के **डॉ. नरवीर श्योराण** ने कहा।
- The **37-year-old woman** was admitted to the hospital on **January 3** and the baby was born the **next day**. **37 वर्षीय महिला** को **3 जनवरी** को अस्पताल में भर्ती कराया गया और

अगले दिन बच्चे का जन्म हुआ।

- She was back home in her village in adjoining **Fatehabad district** the **next day**. वह अगले दिन ही पास के **फतेहाबाद ज़िले** के अपने गाँव वापस लौट गई।

GS Paper 1: Geography	
TOPICS COVERED	07 January 2026
1.	Madras HC upholds order to light lamp at Madurai stone pillar मद्रास उच्च न्यायालय ने मदुरै के पत्थर स्तंभ पर दीप प्रज्वलन के आदेश को बरकरार रखा
2.	Death toll in Siau Island woods in Indonesia इंडोनेशिया के सियाउ द्वीप में बाढ़ से मौतों की संख्या



Madras HC upholds order to light lamp at Madurai stone pillar

GS I: Geography

The Hindu Bureau
MADURAI

A Division Bench of the Madras High Court on Tuesday upheld an earlier single-judge order directing the Subramaniya Swamy Temple management to light the Karthigai Deepam at a stone pillar, identified as the *deepathoon*, atop Thirupparankundram Hill in Madurai of Tamil Nadu, dismissing fears of public disturbance as an “imaginary ghost”, which would only happen if sponsored by the State itself.

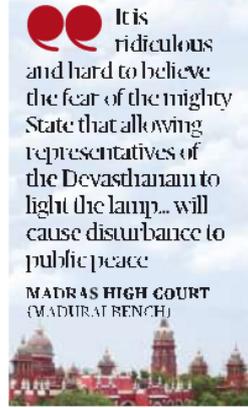
The State government plans to challenge the order in the Supreme Court, Minister S. Regupathy told journalists after the ruling.

The Madurai Bench of Justices G. Jayachandran and K.K. Ramakrishnan criticised the State government for citing its apprehension of law and order issues and public peace as a reason for not complying with the earlier order of Justice G.R. Swaminathan.

‘Imaginary ghost’

“It is ridiculous and hard to believe the fear of the mighty State that by allowing representatives of the Devasthanam [temple management] to light the lamp at the stone pillar near top of the hill located within its territory of Devasthanam land, on a particular day in a year, will cause disturbance to public peace. Of course, it may happen only if such disturbance is sponsored by the State itself. We pray no State should stoop to that level to achieve their political agenda,” it said.

For the administration to act as though such a congregation will disturb the peace or cause stam-



pedes or disharmony among communities is either an exposure of their incapacity to maintain law and order or their hesitation to bring harmony among communities, the court said.

“We find that the apprehension expressed by the District Administration regarding the probability of disturbance to the public peace is nothing but an imaginary ghost created by them for their convenience sake and to put one community against another community under suspicion and constant mistrust. By allowing a few persons from Devasthanam to the pillar for lighting the lamp and keeping the devotees stay at the foothill and worship is not an un-manageable task,” the judges said.

They said no member of the public should be allowed to accompany the team from the Devasthanam, whose size is to be decided in consultation with the police and the Archaeological Society of India. The District Collector is to co-ordinate and supervise the event, the court said.

Madras HC upholds order to light lamp at Madurai stone pillar

मद्रास उच्च न्यायालय ने मदुरै के पत्थर स्तंभ पर दीप प्रज्वलन के आदेश को बरकरार रखा

• A Division Bench of the Madras High Court on Tuesday upheld an earlier single-judge order directing the **Subramaniya Swamy Temple management** to light the **Karthigai Deepam** at a stone pillar, identified as the **deepathoon**, atop **Thirupparankundram Hill** in **Madurai** of **Tamil Nadu**, dismissing fears of public disturbance as an “imaginary ghost”, which would only happen if sponsored by the **State itself**.

• The **State government** plans to challenge the order in the **Supreme Court**, **Minister S. Regupathy** told journalists after the ruling.

निर्णय के बाद **मंत्री एस. रेगुपति** ने पत्रकारों को बताया कि **राज्य सरकार** इस आदेश को **सुप्रीम कोर्ट** में चुनौती देने की योजना बना रही है।

• “It is ridiculous and hard to believe the fear of the mighty **State** that by allowing representatives of the **Devasthanam** [temple management] to light the lamp at the stone pillar near top of the hill located within its territory of **Devasthanam land**, on a particular day in a year, will cause disturbance to public peace. Of course, it may happen only if such disturbance is sponsored by the **State itself**. We pray no State should stoop to that level to achieve their political agenda,” it said.

Death toll in Siau Island floods in Indonesia

• At least **16 people** were killed after **torrential rains** triggered a **flash flood** on **Indonesia’s Siau island**, north of **Sulawesi**

कम से कम **16 लोगों** की मौत **मूसलाधार बारिश** के बाद **अचानक आई बाढ़** से हुई, जो **इंडोनेशिया के सियाउ द्वीप, सुलावेसी** के उत्तर में स्थित है

• A **river** inundated **four towns**, injuring **22 people** and displacing nearly **700 residents**

एक **नदी** ने **चार कस्बों** को जलमग्न कर दिया, जिसमें **22 लोग** घायल हुए और लगभग **700 निवासियों** को विस्थापित होना पड़ा



GS Paper II: Polity,	
TOPICS COVERED	07 January 2026
1.	EC tells SC it has duty to weed out foreigners ईसी ने एससी से कहा कि विदेशियों को हटाना उसका कर्तव्य है
2.	Poll panel publishes draft rolls for U.P.; 18.7% names removed यूपी के लिए निर्वाचन आयोग ने मसौदा मतदाता सूची जारी की; 18.7% नाम हटाए गए
3.	The right to disconnect in an 'always-on' economy 'हमेशा-सक्रिय' अर्थव्यवस्था में डिस्कनेक्ट होने का अधिकार

EC tells SC it has duty to weed out foreigners

Poll body defends SIR in the Supreme Court, insists it has power to verify citizenship status

EC stresses that NRC register includes all citizens; the electoral rolls only consider those above 18

Counsel for the EC says the Constitution is citizen-centric; the central theme is citizenship

GS II: Polity

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission of India (EC) began its defence of the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls before the Supreme Court on Tuesday by dismissing claims that it is conducting a "parallel" National Register of Citizens (NRC) as sheer "rhetoric".

The poll body maintained that it has the "constitutional power, even a constitutional duty" to ensure that not a single foreigner, as far as possible, occupies space in the nation's electoral rolls.

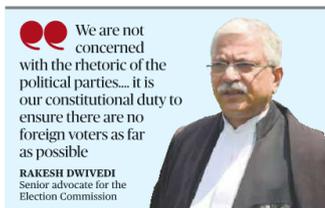
The SIR kicked off in Bihar last year and expanded to cover 12 more States and Union Territories in the ongoing second phase.

"We have a constitutional duty, and not just a constitutional power, to ensure

no foreigners are there on the electoral rolls. It is not important how many foreigners are found... It was repeatedly asked of us to show how many foreigners were found in Bihar, but that is not important. Even if there was one foreigner, he had to be excluded. We are not concerned with the rhetoric of the political parties. They may be right or wrong. As the Election Commission, it is our constitutional duty to ensure there are no foreign voters as far as possible," senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, appearing for the EC, clarified before a Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant.

Faulty comparison

Mr. Dwivedi said the comparison of the SIR with the NRC was devoid of truth. The EC differentiated between the NRC conducted in Assam and the "special



RAKESH DWIVEDI
Senior Advocate for the Election Commission

revision" of electoral rolls underway in the State.

"The NRC register includes all the people, all citizens, whereas, in electoral rolls it is citizens who are above 18 years of age. Less than that they are not in the electoral roll. A person of unsound mind is excluded from the electoral roll, but is part of the NRC. Preparation of the electoral roll is not a parallel NRC on the face of it," Mr. Dwivedi contended.

The senior counsel argued that it was for the Centre to issue a 'national identity card' and maintain a 'National Register of Indian Citizens' and, for that purpose, establish a National Registration Authority under Section 14A of the Citizenship Act, 1955. On the other hand, the EC drew its power to verify citizenship for the "preparation of the electoral rolls" under Article 324 of the Constitution. Mr. Dwivedi

2.89 crore voters deleted in U.P.

NEW DELHI/LUCKNOW
The Election Commission on Tuesday published the draft rolls for Uttar Pradesh under the special intensive revision with 2.89 crore names deleted, the highest for any State or Union Territory where SIR has been held so far. » PAGE 5

said the Constitution was "citizen-centric", which meant 'citizenship' was a central theme.

"All the important functionaries of the three organs of governance have to be citizens of India, be it the President, Vice-President, MPs, MLAs, or judges of the constitutional courts. One of the conditions is that they be citizens... No person is eligible to participate in the electoral process unless he is a ci-

tizen," Mr. Dwivedi said.

Citizenship status

He noted how citizenship had played a prime part in the struggle for nationhood. The Government of India Act, 1935, had allowed a separate electorate for Europeans, leading to an objection raised in the Constituent Assembly.

"From the aforesaid, it is evident that from its inception, the Constituent Assembly intended that authorities responsible for preparation of electoral rolls would enquire into citizenship and exclude those who were not citizens from the electoral rolls of constituencies. Later, the EC was vested with plenary powers with respect to superintendence, direction, and control over all elections, as well as the power to verify the status of citizenship under Article 324 read with Article 326

(adult suffrage)," Mr. Dwivedi submitted for the poll body.

Even the power of Parliament under Article 327 to frame election laws was "subject to provisions of the Constitution", Mr. Dwivedi said, adding that this means that "the legislative powers of Parliament envisaged under Article 327 are subject to Articles 324 and 326."

Citizenship Act

Addressing the petitioners' submission that citizenship was exclusively the domain of the Union government, the EC counsel pointed to Section 9(2) of the Citizenship Act. "The Central government has exclusive jurisdiction only with termination of citizenship on account of voluntary acquisition of foreign citizenship under this provision," Mr. Dwivedi submitted.

EC tells SC it has duty to weed out foreigners

ईसी ने एससी से कहा कि विदेशियों को हटाना उसका कर्तव्य है

- The poll body maintained that it has the "constitutional power, even a constitutional duty" to ensure that not a single foreigner, as far as possible, occupies space in the nation's electoral rolls.

चुनाव आयोग ने कहा कि उसके पास "संवैधानिक शक्ति, बल्कि संवैधानिक कर्तव्य" है कि यथासंभव देश की मतदाता सूचियों में एक भी विदेशी न रहे।

- "The NRC register includes all the people, all citizens, whereas, in electoral rolls it is citizens who are above 18 years of age. Less than that they are not in the electoral roll. A person of unsound mind is excluded from the electoral roll, but is part of the NRC. Preparation of the electoral roll is not a parallel NRC on the face of it,"
- "All the important functionaries of the three organs of governance have to be citizens of India, be it the President, Vice-President, MPs, MLAs, or judges of the constitutional courts. One of the conditions is that they be citizens... No person is eligible to participate in the electoral process unless he is a citizen," Mr. Dwivedi said.

"शासन के तीनों अंगों के सभी प्रमुख पदाधिकारियों को भारतीय नागरिक होना होता है, चाहे वह राष्ट्रपति, उपराष्ट्रपति, सांसद, विधायक या संवैधानिक न्यायालयों के न्यायाधीश हों। शर्तों में से एक यह है कि वे नागरिक हों... कोई भी व्यक्ति नागरिक हुए बिना चुनावी प्रक्रिया में भाग लेने का पात्र नहीं है," श्री द्विवेदी ने कहा।



- He noted how **citizenship** had played a prime part in the struggle for **nationhood**. The **Government of India Act, 1935**, had allowed a separate electorate for Europeans, leading to an objection raised in the **Constituent Assembly**.
उन्होंने बताया कि **नागरिकता** ने **राष्ट्र-निर्माण** के संघर्ष में अहम भूमिका निभाई। **भारत सरकार अधिनियम, 1935** ने यूरोपियों के लिए अलग निर्वाचक मंडल की अनुमति दी थी, जिस पर **संविधान सभा** में आपत्ति उठाई गई।
- “From the aforesaid, it is evident that from its inception, the **Constituent Assembly** intended that authorities responsible for preparation of **electoral rolls** would enquire into **citizenship** and exclude those who were not citizens from the electoral rolls of constituencies. Later, the **EC** was vested with **plenary powers** with respect to **superintendence, direction, and control** over all elections, as well as the power to verify the status of citizenship under **Article 324 read with Article 326 (adult suffrage)**,” Mr. Dwivedi submitted for the poll body.
“उपरोक्त से यह स्पष्ट है कि प्रारंभ से ही **संविधान सभा** का उद्देश्य था कि **मतदाता सूची** तैयार करने वाले प्राधिकरण **नागरिकता** की जांच करें और जो नागरिक नहीं हैं उन्हें निर्वाचन क्षेत्रों की मतदाता सूची से बाहर रखें। बाद में **चुनाव आयोग** को सभी चुनावों पर **निगरानी, निर्देशन और नियंत्रण** की **पूर्ण शक्तियां** दी गईं, साथ ही **अनुच्छेद 324 को अनुच्छेद 326 (वयस्क मताधिकार)** के साथ पढ़ते हुए नागरिकता की स्थिति जांचने का अधिकार दिया गया,” श्री द्विवेदी ने प्रस्तुत किया।
- Even the power of **Parliament** under **Article 327** to frame election laws was “**subject to provisions of the Constitution**”, Mr. Dwivedi said, adding that this means that “the **legislative powers of Parliament envisaged under Article 327 are subject to Articles 324 and 326.**”
श्री द्विवेदी ने कहा कि **अनुच्छेद 327** के तहत चुनाव कानून बनाने की **संसद** की शक्ति भी “**संविधान के प्रावधानों के अधीन**” है, अर्थात् “अनुच्छेद 327 के तहत संसद की विधायी शक्तियां **अनुच्छेद 324 और 326** के अधीन हैं।”
- Addressing the petitioners’ submission that **citizenship** was exclusively the domain of the **Union government**, the EC counsel pointed to **Section 9(2) of the Citizenship Act**.
याचिकाकर्ताओं की इस दलील पर कि **नागरिकता** केवल **केंद्र सरकार** का विषय है, ईसी के वकील ने **नागरिकता अधिनियम की धारा 9(2)** का हवाला दिया।
- “The **Central government** has exclusive jurisdiction only with termination of citizenship on account of voluntary acquisition of foreign citizenship under this provision,” Mr. Dwivedi submitted.
“इस प्रावधान के तहत **केंद्र सरकार** को केवल स्वेच्छा से विदेशी नागरिकता ग्रहण करने के कारण नागरिकता समाप्त करने का विशेष अधिकार है,” श्री द्विवेदी ने कहा।
- The senior counsel argued that it was for the **Centre** to issue a ‘**national identity card**’ and maintain a ‘**National Register of Indian Citizens**’ and, for that purpose, establish a **National Registration Authority** under **Section 14A of the Citizenship Act, 1955**. On the other hand, the **EC** drew its power to verify **citizenship** for the “**preparation of the electoral rolls**” under **Article 324 of the Constitution**.



Poll panel publishes draft rolls for U.P.; 18.7% names removed

Most populous State sees 2.89 crore names being deleted, the highest absolute number of removals under SIR in any State so far; **urban centres saw highest percentage of names being left out;** month-long claims and objections period begins

GS II: Polity

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
Mayank Kumar
NEW DELHI/LUCKNOW

The Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday published the draft electoral rolls for Uttar Pradesh after conducting the special intensive revision (SIR) with 2.89 crore names deleted from the earlier voter list of the State.

The number of names deleted in Uttar Pradesh is the highest for any State or Union Territory in absolute numbers where SIR has been conducted so far.

Only the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, a Union Territory, has more deletions in percentage terms than Uttar Pradesh.

Uttar Pradesh is the last State to publish the draft list in the second phase of SIR. Among other States and Union Territories where the SIR has been carried out in the second

Record deletions

Following a months-long Special Intensive Revision (SIR), nearly 2.89 crore electors were removed from U.P.'s electoral rolls

■ This exercise saw the highest deletions in any State so far. With 18.7% of its electorate removed, Uttar Pradesh also recorded the highest deletion percentage among states. A lowdown:

15.44 crore: Electors in earlier list

2.89 crore: Removed during SIR

46.23 lakh: Deceased voters removed



2.17 crore: Voters removed due to permanent migration/absent

25.47 lakh: Voters removed due to duplications

12.55 crore: Final electors (as on Jan 6 2026)

phase, the deletions for Tamil Nadu was 15.19%, Gujarat 14.5%, West Bengal 7.59%, Madhya Pradesh 7.45%, Rajasthan 7.65%, Chhattisgarh 12.88%, Kerala 8.65%, Puducherry 10.12%, Goa 8.44%, and Lakshadweep 2.47%.

Out of the 15.44 crore voters in the earlier 2025 list, 12.55 crore names

were retained on the draft list, **U.P. Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Navdeep Rinwa** told presspersons in Lucknow.

The remaining 18.7%, or about 2.89 crore voters, could not be included on the draft list due to deaths, permanent migration or multiple registrations.

While 46.23 lakh voters

(2.99%) were found to be deceased, 2.17 crore voters (14.06%) had either permanently migrated or were not available during the verification process. Another 25.47 lakh voters (1.65%) were found to be registered at more than one place.

Most deletions

Urban centres saw the highest percentage of deletions, led by State capital Lucknow at 30% and closely followed by Ghaziabad, an industrial district adjoining Delhi, at 28%. Gautam Buddha Nagar, another district adjoining Delhi saw 23.7% deletion, Prayagraj 24% and Kanpur 25%.

The SIR process in the State has till now taken a total of 62 days and has seen three extensions. The exercise was originally scheduled to end on December 11. The first extension was given for 15 days till December 26, then till

December 31 and finally January 6.

With the publication of the draft list, the month-long claims and objections period begins. All those who have submitted enumeration forms, but have not been mapped to the 2003 list would be called for hearing with any of the 12 documents mandated by the EC as proof of citizenship and residence.

Mr. Rinwa said the EC had capped voters per polling station for future elections at 1,200 instead of the earlier norm of 1,500. To meet this requirement, around 15,030 new polling stations were created across the State.

Meanwhile, Opposition parties in the State alleged names were wrongly cut as voters shifted residence from one place to another in the State, adding the burden of proof onto individuals, amid strict deadlines.

Poll panel publishes draft rolls for U.P.; 18.7% names removed

यूपी के लिए निर्वाचन आयोग ने मसौदा मतदाता सूची जारी की; 18.7% नाम हटाए गए

- Most populous **State** sees **2.89 crore names being deleted**, the highest absolute number of removals under **SIR** in any State so far; **urban centres saw highest percentage of names being left out;** month-long claims and objections period begins
सबसे अधिक जनसंख्या वाले राज्य में **2.89 करोड़ नाम** हटाए गए, जो अब तक किसी भी राज्य में
- Among other **States and Union Territories** where the **SIR** has been carried out in the second phase, **the deletions for Tamil Nadu was 15.19%, Gujarat 14.5%, West Bengal 7.59%, Madhya Pradesh 7.45%, Rajasthan 7.65%, Chhattisgarh 12.88%, Kerala 8.65%, Puducherry 10.12%, Goa 8.44%, and Lakshadweep 2.47%**
- **The remaining 18.7%, or about 2.89 crore voters, could not be included on the draft list due to deaths, permanent migration or multiple registrations**
शेष **18.7%**, यानी लगभग **2.89 करोड़ मतदाता**, मृत्यु, स्थायी प्रवास या एक से अधिक पंजीकरण के कारण मसौदा सूची में शामिल नहीं किए जा सके
- While **46.23 lakh voters (2.99%)** were found to be **deceased**, **2.17 crore voters (14.06%)** had either **permanently migrated** or were **not available during the verification process**
जहाँ **46.23 लाख मतदाता (2.99%)** मृत पाए गए, वहीं **2.17 करोड़ मतदाता (14.06%)** या तो स्थायी रूप से स्थानांतरित हो चुके थे या सत्यापन प्रक्रिया के दौरान उपलब्ध नहीं थे
- **Another 25.47 lakh voters (1.65%)** were found to be **registered at more than one place**
अन्य **25.47 लाख मतदाता (1.65%)** एक से अधिक स्थानों पर पंजीकृत पाए गए

Most deletions

सबसे अधिक नाम हटाए गए

- **Urban centres** saw the highest percentage of deletions, led by **State capital Lucknow at 30%** and closely followed by **Ghaziabad**, an industrial district adjoining **Delhi**, at **28%**
शहरी केंद्रों में नाम हटने का प्रतिशत सबसे अधिक रहा, जिसमें **राज्य की राजधानी लखनऊ** में **30%** और **दिल्ली** से सटे औद्योगिक ज़िले **गाजियाबाद** में **28%** नाम हटाए गए



- **Gautam Buddha Nagar**, another district adjoining **Delhi**, saw **23.7%** deletion, **Prayagraj 24%** and **Kanpur 25%**
दिल्ली से सटे एक अन्य ज़िले गौतम बुद्ध नगर में 23.7%, प्रयागराज में 24% और कानपुर में 25% नाम हटाए गए
- The **SIR process** in the State has till now taken a total of **62 days** and has seen **three extensions**
- All those who have submitted **enumeration forms**, but have not been mapped to the **2003 list** would be called for **hearing** with **any of the 12 documents** mandated by the **EC** as **proof of citizenship and residence**

The right to disconnect in an 'always-on' economy

GS II: Polity

MOB

In the digital age, our greatest tools of productivity – the smartphone, the laptop, the instantaneous email – have become our silent, 24X7 taskmasters. They have eroded the vital boundary between professional life and personal well-being, turning evenings, weekends, and even holidays, into extensions of the workday. This culture of constant availability is not a badge of dedication; it is a creeping sickness, and its diagnosis is writ large across the face of the Indian workforce. The time has come for India to officially legislate a fundamental right for its citizens: the right to disconnect.

As the proposer of a Private Member's Bill advocating this very measure, I believe that this is not merely a piece of progressive labour reform. It is a national imperative for public health, long-term economic productivity, and social stability. We cannot achieve our aspirations as a global power if our most valuable resource – our people – are quietly burning out.

An unsustainable pace of work in India

The data paint a grim picture. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), a staggering 51% of India's workforce works more than 49 hours per week, placing the country second globally for extended working hours. This is an unsustainable pace. The human cost of this relentless cycle is even more alarming: 78% of employees in India report experiencing job burnout, leading inevitably to physical and emotional exhaustion.

This crisis of perpetual availability is not a matter of feeling fatigued; it translates directly into severe health conditions. The lack of a proper work-life balance contributes significantly to lifestyle diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, anxiety and depression. These are not just individual tragedies; they are a societal burden that drains our health-care system and severely impairs organisational productivity. A fatigued worker is less creative, more prone to error, and, ultimately, less productive. The current emphasis on measuring work by sheer duration over quality is archaic and self-defeating. The tragic death of Anna Sebastian Perayil (the healthy young E&T employee who literally died of overwork in 2024) was a warning for the entire workforce. Furthermore, work-related stress, often fuelled by the expectation of 24X7 digital availability, is a significant contributor to the burgeoning national mental health crisis, accounting for 10%-12% of cases, as per the National Mental Health Survey. To ignore this silent epidemic is to willfully neglect the well-being of the nation.

India's current legal framework, despite recent attempts, remains insufficient to protect the average worker in the hyper-connected, modern economy. The Occupational Safety, Health, and



Shashi Tharoor

is the fourth-term Member of Parliament (Congress) for Thiruvananthapuram (Lok Sabha), an award-winning author, a former Minister of State for Human Resources Development and a former Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology

India's legal framework is still weak and insufficient in protecting the average worker in the hyper-connected and modern economy

Working Conditions Code, 2020, sets a maximum limit on working hours for traditional "workers", but critically, it often fails to extend the same protection to all "employees", particularly contractual, freelance, and gig workers. This gap leaves a large portion of India's young, digitally-native, and highly vulnerable workforce exposed to exploitative working hours, without adequate safeguards. In a system where employees fear disciplinary action or termination simply for failing to answer a late night email, the power dynamic is inherently skewed towards the employer.

A global issue

My proposed Bill aims to correct this foundational flaw. It is crucial that the Code is amended to clearly define and limit working hours for all employees. It seeks to enshrine the "right to disconnect" in law, ensuring two core protections: first, employees cannot be penalised, disciplined, or discriminated against for refusing to respond to work-related communication beyond their specified working hours. Second, a mechanism must be established to address and resolve grievances when the rights of workers are infringed upon. Both are fundamentally about restoring dignity and ensuring that the right to recharge is respected, allowing individuals to maintain their physical and mental well-being without fear of professional repercussions.

India is not alone in grappling with the challenges of the 'always-on' economy. This is a global issue demanding a legislative response. Countries across the world have already recognised this necessity, setting a clear precedent that we must now follow. France, a pioneer in this area, introduced the "right to disconnect" as far back as 2017. Since then, Portugal, Italy, Ireland, and Australia have followed suit, embedding similar protections into their labour codes.

These laws mandate that companies negotiate specific protocols to limit after-hours digital communication. This is a clear signal that the most developed economies understand that respecting downtime is not an impediment to economic growth, but a precondition for sustainable growth. We must shed the myth that the world will stop turning if an email is answered the next morning.

The law, however, is merely a framework. The "right to disconnect" is defined as the employee being no longer compelled to remain available beyond their regular working hours, thereby blurring the lines between their personal and professional lives and exacerbating stress and burnout. The legislation provides the shield, but we must also wield the sword of cultural change.

The legislative momentum behind the right to

disconnect confirms its urgency, with pioneering States such as Kerala already introducing their own legislation for the local private sector. While these State-level initiatives are commendable steps, the complexity and national scale of the 'always-on' crisis demand a uniform, central amendment to secure this protection for every Indian worker. My proposed Bill, by amending the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code (2020), ensures that this right is foundational across all States and, critically, extends protection to the vulnerable contractual and gig workforce often left out by current definitions. This national approach embeds the right to disconnect as an essential pillar of occupational safety, including mandated mental health support, transforming it from a simple prohibition on employer action into a holistic mandate for employee well-being.

Other interconnected steps to take

Still, laws alone are insufficient to facilitate meaningful transformation. For any legislation to be effective, it must be supported by comprehensive awareness programmes, advocacy and sensitisation workshops for both employees and management. It is especially important to address the organisational norms that perpetuate toxic work cultures – those where "presenteeism" is valued over actual output, and where the late night email is seen as a proxy for commitment. The provisions for proactive mental health support services, including counselling and psychological support for workers, must, therefore, become integral to the new workplace ethos.

The right to disconnect is an investment. It is an acknowledgment that well-rested minds are sharper, more innovative and more committed in the long run. By allowing employees to genuinely recharge and recover, we are not simply reducing working hours. We are dramatically enhancing the quality of those hours spent on the job.

Incorporating legal protections for a work-life balance – the right to disconnect and limiting working hours – will forge a holistic and vigorous approach toward improving the workplace environment in India. By focusing on the well-being of our employees, both their physical and mental health will improve, creating a more sustainable and, ultimately, more productive workforce for the future of India.

The choice before us is clear: to continue down the path of burnout, risking the health and potential of our young demographic dividend, or to embrace this reform, liberating our workforce and proving that India's economy is built not just on speed, but on the strength and sustainability of its people. I urge the government to implement this necessary step towards a healthier, happier, and more productive nation.

The right to disconnect in an 'always-on' economy 'हमेशा-सक्रिय' अर्थव्यवस्था में डिस्कनेक्ट होने का अधिकार

- In the digital age, our greatest tools of productivity — the **smartphone**, the **laptop**, the **instantaneous email** — have become our silent, **24X7 taskmasters**.



डिजिटल युग में उत्पादकता के हमारे सबसे बड़े साधन — स्मार्टफोन, लैपटॉप, तत्काल ईमेल — हमारे मौन 24X7 कार्य-प्रबंधक बन गए हैं।

- They have eroded the vital **boundary between professional life and personal well-being, turning evenings, weekends, and even holidays into extensions of the workday.**
इन्होंने पेशेवर जीवन और व्यक्तिगत कल्याण के बीच की महत्वपूर्ण सीमा को मिटा दिया है, जिससे शामें, सप्ताहांत और यहाँ तक कि छुट्टियाँ भी कार्यदिवस का विस्तार बन गई हैं।
- **This culture of constant availability is not a badge of dedication, it is a creeping sickness, and its diagnosis is writ large across the face of the Indian workforce.**
लगातार उपलब्ध रहने की यह संस्कृति समर्पण का प्रतीक नहीं है, बल्कि एक बढ़ती हुई बीमारी है, और इसका निदान भारतीय कार्यबल के चेहरे पर साफ दिखाई देता है।
- The time has come for India to officially legislate **a fundamental right for its citizens, the right to disconnect.**
- It is a national imperative for **public health, long-term economic productivity, and social stability.**
- According to the **International Labour Organization (ILO)**, a staggering **51% of India's workforce works more than 49 hours per week**, placing the country **second globally for extended working hours.**
- The human cost of this relentless cycle is even more alarming, **78% of employees in India report experiencing job burnout**, leading inevitably to physical and emotional exhaustion.
इस निरंतर चक्र की मानवीय कीमत और भी भयावह है, भारत में **78% कर्मचारी नौकरी से होने वाले बर्नआउट** का अनुभव करते हैं, जो अनिवार्य रूप से शारीरिक और भावनात्मक थकान की ओर ले जाता है।
- **This crisis of perpetual availability is not a matter of feeling fatigued, it translates directly into severe health conditions.**
लगातार उपलब्ध रहने का यह संकट केवल थकान की भावना नहीं है, बल्कि सीधे गंभीर स्वास्थ्य समस्याओं में बदल जाता है।
- The **lack of a proper work-life balance** contributes significantly to lifestyle diseases such as **hypertension, diabetes, anxiety and depression.**
उचित कार्य-जीवन संतुलन की कमी उच्च रक्तचाप, मधुमेह, चिंता और अवसाद जैसी जीवनशैली संबंधी बीमारियों में बड़ा योगदान देती है।
- **These are not just individual tragedies, they are a societal burden that drains our health-care system and severely impairs organisational productivity.**
ये केवल व्यक्तिगत त्रासदियाँ नहीं हैं, बल्कि एक सामाजिक बोझ हैं जो हमारी स्वास्थ्य प्रणाली को कमजोर करता है और संगठनात्मक उत्पादकता को गंभीर रूप से प्रभावित करता है।
- **A fatigued worker is less creative, more prone to error, and, ultimately, less productive.**
- Furthermore, **work-related stress, often fuelled by the expectation of 24X7 digital availability, is a significant contributor to the burgeoning national mental health crisis, accounting for 10%–12% of cases, as per the National Mental Health Survey.**
- The **Occupational Safety, Health, and Working Conditions Code, 2020**, sets a maximum limit on working hours for traditional “workers”, but critically, it often fails to extend the same protection to all “employees”.
व्यावसायिक सुरक्षा, स्वास्थ्य और कार्य परिस्थितियाँ संहिता, 2020, पारंपरिक “श्रमिकों” के लिए कार्य घंटों की अधिकतम सीमा तय करती है, लेकिन अक्सर सभी “कर्मचारियों” को वही सुरक्षा देने में विफल रहती है।
- This gap leaves a large portion of India's young, **digitally-native**, and highly vulnerable workforce **exposed to exploitative working hours, without adequate safeguards.**
यह अंतर भारत के युवा, डिजिटल-प्रवीण, और अत्यधिक संवेदनशील कार्यबल के बड़े हिस्से को शोषणकारी कार्य घंटों के सामने बिना पर्याप्त सुरक्षा के छोड़ देता है।
- In a system where employees fear **disciplinary action or termination** simply for failing to answer a late night email, the power dynamic is inherently skewed towards the employer.
- First, employees cannot be **penalised, disciplined, or discriminated against** for refusing to respond to work-related communication beyond their specified working hours.
पहला, निर्धारित कार्य घंटों के बाद काम से जुड़ी संचार का जवाब न देने पर कर्मचारियों को दंडित, अनुशासित या उनके साथ भेदभाव नहीं किया जा सकेगा।
- Second, **a mechanism must be established to address and resolve grievances when the rights of workers are infringed upon.**



दूसरा, जब कर्मचारियों के अधिकारों का उल्लंघन हो तो **शिकायतों** के समाधान के लिए एक तंत्र स्थापित किया जाना चाहिए।

- Both are fundamentally about **restoring dignity** and ensuring that the right to **recharge** is respected, allowing individuals to maintain their **physical and mental well-being** without fear of professional repercussions.
 - **France**, a pioneer in this area, introduced the “**right to disconnect**” as far back as **2017**. इस क्षेत्र में अग्रणी फ्रांस ने 2017 में ही “डिस्कनेक्ट होने का अधिकार” लागू किया था।
 - Since then, **Portugal, Italy, Ireland, and Australia** have followed suit, embedding similar protections into their **labour codes**.
 - This is a clear signal that the most developed economies understand that **respecting downtime** is not an impediment to **economic growth**, but a precondition for **sustainable growth**.
 - The “**right to disconnect**” is defined as the employee being no longer compelled to remain available beyond their regular working hours, thereby blurring the lines between their personal and professional lives and exacerbating **stress** and **burnout**.
 - The legislative momentum behind the right to disconnect confirms its **urgency**, with pioneering **States such as Kerala** already introducing their own legislation for the local private sector.
 - My proposed Bill, by amending the **Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code (2020)**, ensures that this right is foundational across all States and, critically, extends protection to the vulnerable **contractual and gig workforce** often left out by current definitions.
 - For any legislation to be effective, it must be supported by comprehensive **awareness programmes, advocacy** and **sensitisation workshops** for both employees and management.
- किसी भी कानून को प्रभावी बनाने के लिए आवश्यक है कि उसे कर्मचारियों और प्रबंधन दोनों के लिए व्यापक जागरूकता कार्यक्रमों, वकालत और संवेदनशीलता कार्यशालाओं का समर्थन मिले।
- It is especially important to address the **organisational norms** that perpetuate **toxic work cultures**, those where “**presenteeism**” is valued over actual output, and where the **late night email** is seen as a proxy for commitment.
- विशेष रूप से उन संगठनात्मक मानदंडों को संबोधित करना ज़रूरी है जो विषाक्त कार्य संस्कृति को बढ़ावा देते हैं, जहाँ वास्तविक उत्पादकता से अधिक “प्रेजेंटीज़्म” को महत्व दिया जाता है और देर रात के ईमेल को प्रतिबद्धता का पैमाना माना जाता है।
- The provisions for proactive **mental health support services**, including **counselling** and **psychological support** for workers, must, therefore, become integral to the new workplace ethos.
- इसलिए कर्मचारियों के लिए मानसिक स्वास्थ्य सहायता सेवाओं, जिनमें परामर्श और मनोवैज्ञानिक सहयोग शामिल हैं, को नए कार्यस्थल की संस्कृति का अनिवार्य हिस्सा बनना चाहिए।
- The **right to disconnect** is an **investment**.
 - **डिस्कनेक्ट होने का अधिकार** एक निवेश है।
 - It is an acknowledgment that **well-rested minds** are **sharper, more innovative** and **more committed** in the long run.
 - We are dramatically **enhancing the quality** of those hours spent on the job.

GS Paper II: Governance,	
TOPICS COVERED	07 January 2026
1.	Privatisation and policy gaps threaten India’s public health system निजीकरण और नीतिगत कमियाँ भारत की सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य प्रणाली को खतरे में डाल रही हैं



Privatisation and policy gaps threaten India's public health system

India's public health system struggles with chronic underfunding, privatisation, policy failure, and social inequities; doctors occupy a unique position of trust and moral authority, giving them the power to act as agents of social change and challenge policies that worsen disease and suffering

GS II: Governance: Health Sector

Parth Sharma

The state of healthcare in India has repeatedly been in the news. From fake medicines and unnecessary surgeries to unethical clinical trials, countless people have suffered across the country. At the same time, risk factors for disease are steadily rising due to policy gaps and systemic policy failures. The consumption of ultra-processed foods is driving an epidemic of non-communicable diseases, while unchecked air, water, and soil pollution, along with climate change, are pushing millions more into sickness. Access to good health and quality healthcare remains a privilege that only a few can afford. Class, caste, religion, gender, and other social markers profoundly determine how long one lives in good health and how much suffering one is made to endure.

Existing problems

The situation from the perspective of those providing care is equally worrisome. ASHA workers continue to struggle for their rights, and working conditions for healthcare workers in most public hospitals remain abysmal.

Privatisation further compounds the problem. With private equity increasingly driving India's private healthcare industry, doctors are now expected to meet monthly targets, much like in any profit-driven sector. Through schemes such as AB PMJAY and rampant public-private partnerships, public money is increasingly shunted to the private sector, further weakening the public health system.

Privatisation has also impacted medical education. With most private medical colleges charging upwards of ₹40 lakhs for undergraduate medical training, doctors are forced to shift their focus from understanding and acting on the social causes of disease to earning enough to recover the massive investment of money and time required to become doctors. Additionally, the medical education system has reduced medical training to MCQ-solving, producing doctors who are more focused on memorising facts and cracking exams than acquiring real clinical skills that can save lives. Today, "just an MBBS" is seen as having little value, and doctors are expected to pursue fellowships even after post-graduation to secure respectable practice or employment.

As health and healthcare increasingly become expensive commodities, and the public health system continues to erode, the future of India's health looks deeply worrisome. While increased public health funding, greater investment in primary care, and regulation of privatisation are frequently discussed as solutions, these remain largely abstract ideas. Their implementation depends on those in power, who repeatedly display apathy at every opportunity. What, then, can save India's crumbling public health system?

Doctors as agents of change

Doctors occupy a unique position of power and trust in society, giving them an exceptional capacity to drive social change. They are among the few professionals who witness, firsthand and daily, how policy decisions translate into human suffering: how poverty becomes malnutrition, how unsafe roads become trauma, how weak regulation becomes



GETTY IMAGES

cancer, kidney failure, or tuberculosis. This proximity to suffering grants doctors moral authority that few other groups possess. Their voices carry credibility across social classes, in courts, in the media, and in policymaking spaces, precisely because they speak from lived clinical experience rather than abstract ideology.

The idea that the physician's responsibility extends beyond the clinic is not new. To undergraduate students in India, Rudolf Virchow, a German pathologist, is known primarily for his contribution to cell theory and the foundations of modern pathology. However, Virchow's role as a revolutionary physician is rarely discussed.

In 1848, he helped start Medical Reform, a weekly newspaper that promoted the idea that "medicine is a social science" and that "the physician is the natural attorney of the poor." He argued that disease was not merely a biological event but a political and social outcome shaped by poverty, poor housing, hunger, lack of education, and exclusion from power.

Virchow did not limit these ideas to academic writing. Convinced that lasting improvements in health required structural change, he entered active politics. In 1861, he co-founded the German Progressive Party and was elected to the Prussian Diet, where he emerged as a leading constitutional opponent of Otto von Bismarck's authoritarian and militaristic policies. Virchow consistently argued that state resources should be directed away from military expansion and toward sanitation, housing, education, and public health infrastructure. For him, these were not welfare measures but essential medical interventions.

His political engagement continued in the German Reichstag from 1880 to 1893, where he advocated for urban sanitation systems, clean water supply, public education, and scientific freedom. Virchow used legislative spaces to translate epidemiological observations into policy, insisting that physicians had a duty to confront the social conditions that produced illness.

By stepping beyond hospitals and

laboratories into newspapers, parliaments, and public debate, Virchow exemplified the physician not as a passive technician, but as an active agent of social change.

Virchow's legacy is not an isolated historical exception.

In 1985, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, recognising how physicians mobilised their scientific authority and moral credibility to challenge nuclear proliferation and frame it as an existential public health threat. Their work demonstrated how medical knowledge could be deployed to confront global political violence and reframe security debates around human survival and health.

Similarly, doctors have played visible roles in struggles against oppressive political systems. During the apartheid era in South Africa, physicians organised to expose racial discrimination in healthcare, document abuses, and challenge the medical establishment's complicity with state violence. Groups of doctors openly opposed apartheid policies, asserting that neutrality in the face of injustice was incompatible with medical ethics.

India, too, has its own history of physicians as social reformers. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy stands out as a powerful example, a doctor who used her medical training to challenge deeply entrenched social injustices. As one of India's first women doctors and legislators, she fought against child marriage, devadasi practices, and the exclusion of women from education and public life. Her work illustrates how medical authority can be leveraged to advance gender justice, social reform, and public welfare far beyond the clinic.

Together, these examples underline a critical point: the physician's role has never been confined to diagnosis and treatment alone.

Across history and geographies, doctors have stepped into public life to confront injustice, authoritarianism, and structural violence, affirming Virchow's enduring claim that medicine is inseparable from social change, and that physicians, by virtue of their work, are

uniquely positioned to act as its agents.

Political accountability

It is high time doctors in India began questioning why their outpatient departments are increasingly crowded with patients presenting at advanced stages of disease; why the medicines they prescribe are unaffordable for most; and why, when affordable, those treatments are often ineffective.

Oncologists must ask why tobacco and alcohol continue to be aggressively promoted through surrogate advertising, why smokeless tobacco has become more affordable rather than less, why patients in India lack access to newer and potentially life-saving cancer therapies, and why so much suffering remains normalised. Trauma surgeons must confront why road traffic injuries are rising in India. Nephrologists must ask why the number of people requiring dialysis is rising so rapidly, and why access to dialysis remains so limited. Obstetricians must question why anaemia continues to be a major and persistent problem among pregnant women. Pulmonologists must ask why we have failed to eliminate tuberculosis despite decades of sustained effort and resources.

Following these questions inevitably leads to the same conclusions: policy failure, either because effective policies do not exist or because existing policies remain confined to paper and are never meaningfully implemented. These answers also point to persistent complacency, and often complicity, among those in power. They lead us to multiple "industries" that prioritise profit over people's health, often enabled, protected, or even actively supported by the state.

India's health system can be compared to a bucket whose job is to contain suffering and keep the floor dry. Today, that bucket is overflowing, yet most of our attention is focused on finding better and more sophisticated mops to manage the spill. These mops, our diagnostic and treatment modalities, are themselves often flawed, while the flooding continues to worsen because of the holes in the bucket: public-private partnerships, unchecked privatisation, and chronic underfunding of public healthcare. Meanwhile, few are willing to look upstream at the tap and ask the more uncomfortable questions: Who benefits from the tap being left open? How can it be closed? Who is responsible for closing it, and why are they not doing so? Doctors must help shift the focus to the tap, even as they continue to question the tools used to keep the floor dry.

Doctors not only have the power to drive social change; they also carry a moral responsibility to stand up for the rights of those who suffer, the very people who entrusted them with their bodies and made it possible for them to become doctors in the first place. Silence, therefore, is not neutrality but a conscious choice to forgo influence. In a deeply unequal society like India, where many affected communities lack voice or power, doctors can amplify lived realities into public action. Their social standing, combined with ethical obligation, places them uniquely, not just as healers of disease, but as challengers of the structures that produce it.

Parth Sharma is a community physician and a public health researcher. Views expressed are personal

Privatisation and policy gaps threaten India's public health system
निजीकरण और नीतिगत कमियाँ भारत की सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य प्रणाली को खतरे में डाल रही हैं



- **India's public health system** struggles with **chronic underfunding, privatisation, policy failure, and social inequities**; **doctors** occupy a unique position of **trust and moral authority**, giving them the power to act as **agents of social change** and challenge **policies** that worsen **disease and suffering**.
- From **fake medicines and unnecessary surgeries to unethical clinical trials**, countless people have suffered across the country
नकली दवाओं, अनावश्यक सर्जरी से लेकर अनैतिक क्लिनिकल ट्रायल तक, देश भर में अनगिनत लोगों ने पीड़ा झेली है
- At the same time, **risk factors for disease** are steadily rising due to **policy gaps and systemic policy failures**
इसी समय नीति की खामियों और प्रणालीगत विफलताओं के कारण बीमारियों के जोखिम कारक लगातार बढ़ रहे हैं
- The consumption of **ultra-processed foods** is driving an epidemic of **non-communicable diseases**
- **ASHA workers** continue to struggle for their **rights** and working conditions in most public hospitals remain **abysmal**
- **प्राइवेट इक्विटी** के प्रभाव से निजी स्वास्थ्य क्षेत्र में डॉक्टरों पर **मासिक लक्ष्य** पूरे करने का दबाव बढ़ गया है
- Through schemes like **AB PMJAY** and growing **public-private partnerships**, public money is increasingly diverted to the **private sector**
- With most private medical colleges charging over **₹40 lakhs** for undergraduate training doctors shift focus from **social causes of disease** to recovering **financial investment**
- While solutions like **increased public funding, primary care investment, and regulation of privatisation** are often discussed they remain **abstract ideas**
- Doctors occupy a unique position of **power and trust** in society giving them an exceptional capacity to drive **social change**
- How **poverty** becomes **malnutrition** how **unsafe roads** become **trauma** how **weak regulation** becomes **cancer, kidney failure or tuberculosis**
कैसे गरीबी कुपोषण बनती है कैसे असुरक्षित सड़कें दुर्घटना बनती हैं कैसे कमज़ोर नियम कैंसर किडनी फेल्योर या टीबी बन जाते हैं
- This proximity to suffering grants doctors **moral authority** that few other groups possess
पीड़ा के इतने निकट होने से डॉक्टरों को वह **नैतिक अधिकार** मिलता है जो बहुत कम समूहों के पास होता है
- Their voices carry **credibility** across social classes in courts in the media and in policymaking spaces
उनकी आवाज़ हर **सामाजिक वर्ग** में **विश्वसनीयता** रखती है अदालतों में मीडिया में और नीति निर्माण के मंचों पर भी
- Because they speak from **lived clinical experience** rather than abstract ideology क्योंकि वे **वास्तविक चिकित्सकीय अनुभव** से बोलते हैं न कि किसी अमूर्त विचारधारा से
- The idea that a physician's responsibility extends beyond the **clinic** is not new यह विचार कि डॉक्टर की जिम्मेदारी केवल **क्लिनिक** तक सीमित नहीं है नया नहीं है
- In India students know **Rudolf Virchow** mainly for his contribution to **cell theory** and modern **pathology**
भारत में छात्र **रूडोल्फ विरचो** को मुख्यतः **कोशिका सिद्धांत** और आधुनिक पैथोलॉजी के योगदान के लिए जानते हैं
- However his **role as a revolutionary physician** is rarely discussed लेकिन एक **क्रांतिकारी चिकित्सक** के रूप में उनकी भूमिका पर बहुत कम चर्चा होती है
- **In 1848 he helped start Medical Reform** a weekly newspaper
1848 में उन्होंने साप्ताहिक पत्रिका **मेडिकल रिफॉर्म** शुरू करने में मदद की
- Which promoted the idea that **medicine is a social science** and the **physician is the natural attorney of the poor**
जिसने यह विचार फैलाया कि **चिकित्सा एक सामाजिक विज्ञान है** और डॉक्टर गरीबों का प्राकृतिक वकील होता है
- He argued that **disease is not only a biological event but a political and social outcome**
उन्होंने तर्क दिया कि बीमारी केवल **जैविक घटना** नहीं बल्कि एक **राजनीतिक और सामाजिक परिणाम** है
- **Shaped by poverty, poor housing, hunger, lack of education and exclusion from power**



- In 1861 he co founded the **German Progressive Party**
1861 में उन्होंने **जर्मन प्रोग्रेसिव पार्टी** की सह स्थापना की
- And was elected to the **Prussian Diet**
और **प्रशियन संसद** के लिए चुने गए
- Where he became a leading constitutional opponent of **Otto von Bismarck**
जहां वे **ओटो वॉन बिस्मार्क** की नीतियों के प्रमुख संवैधानिक विरोधी बने
- Virchow argued that **state resources should move away from military expansion to sanitation housing education and public health infrastructure**
- His political engagement continued in the **German Reichstag from 1880 to 1893**
उनकी राजनीतिक भागीदारी **1880 से 1893 तक जर्मन राइखस्टैग** में जारी रही
- Where he **advocated urban sanitation clean water supply public education and scientific freedom**
- In 1985, the **Nobel Peace Prize** was awarded to **International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War**
1985 में **नोबेल शांति पुरस्कार इंटरनेशनल फिज़िशियन्स फॉर द प्रिवेंशन ऑफ न्यूक्लियर वॉर** को दिया गया
- Recognising how physicians mobilised their **scientific authority and moral credibility to challenge nuclear proliferation**
- During the **apartheid era in South Africa**, physicians exposed **racial discrimination in healthcare**
दक्षिण अफ्रीका में रंगभेद काल के दौरान डॉक्टरों ने स्वास्थ्य सेवा में **नस्लीय भेदभाव** को उजागर किया
- They documented **abuses** and challenged the medical establishment's **complicity with state violence**
उन्होंने **अत्याचारों** का दस्तावेजीकरण किया और **राज्य हिंसा में चिकित्सा व्यवस्था की मिलीभगत** को चुनौती दी
- Doctors openly opposed apartheid policies asserting that **neutrality in injustice is incompatible with medical ethics**
डॉक्टरों ने रंगभेद नीतियों का खुलकर विरोध किया और कहा कि **अन्याय के सामने तटस्थता चिकित्सा नैतिकता** के खिलाफ है
- India too has its own history of physicians as **social reformers**
भारत की भी डॉक्टरों के **सामाजिक सुधारक** होने की अपनी परंपरा रही है
- **Dr Muthulakshmi Reddy stands out as a powerful example**
डॉ मुथुलक्ष्मी रेड्डी इसका एक सशक्त उदाहरण हैं
- One of India's first **women doctors and legislators**
वे भारत की पहली **महिला डॉक्टरों और विधायकों** में से थीं
- She fought against **child marriage, devadasi practices, and the exclusion of women from education and public life**
उन्होंने **बाल विवाह, देवदासी प्रथा और महिलाओं के सामाजिक बहिष्कार** के खिलाफ संघर्ष किया
- Her work shows how **medical authority can advance gender justice, social reform, and public welfare**
- **Oncologists must ask why tobacco and alcohol are still aggressively promoted**
कैंसर विशेषज्ञों को पूछना चाहिए कि **तंबाकू और शराब** का प्रचार अब भी आक्रामक रूप से क्यों होता है
- **Why smokeless tobacco has become more affordable rather than less**
धुआं रहित तंबाकू सस्ता क्यों होता जा रहा है महंगा क्यों नहीं
- **Why patients lack access to life saving cancer therapies**
मरीजों को **जीवन रक्षक कैंसर उपचार** क्यों उपलब्ध नहीं हैं
- And why so much **suffering** remains normalised
और इतनी अधिक **पीड़ा** को सामान्य क्यों मान लिया गया है
- **Trauma surgeons must confront why road traffic injuries are rising**
ट्रॉमा सर्जनों को यह सवाल उठाना चाहिए कि **सड़क दुर्घटनाएं** क्यों बढ़ रही हैं
- **Nephrologists must ask why dialysis needs are rising and access remains limited**
नेफ्रोलॉजिस्टों को पूछना चाहिए कि **डायलिसिस** की जरूरत तेजी से क्यों बढ़ रही है और पहुंच इतनी **सीमित** क्यों है
- **Obstetricians must question why anaemia persists among pregnant women**
प्रसूति विशेषज्ञों को यह पूछना चाहिए कि **गर्भवती महिलाओं में एनीमिया** अब भी क्यों बना हुआ है



- Pulmonologists must ask why India has failed to eliminate tuberculosis despite decades of effort**
फेफड़ा विशेषज्ञों को यह सवाल करना चाहिए कि दशकों की कोशिशों के बावजूद भारत टीबी को खत्म क्यों नहीं कर सका

Doctors and the Responsibility to Challenge Systemic Failure प्रणालीगत विफलताओं को चुनौती देने की डॉक्टरों की जिम्मेदारी

- Following these questions inevitably leads to the same conclusions: **policy failure**, either because effective policies do not exist or because existing policies remain confined to paper and are never meaningfully implemented.
 इन सवालों के पीछे वही निष्कर्ष सामने आते हैं **नीति विफलता**, या तो इसलिए कि प्रभावी नीतियाँ मौजूद नहीं हैं या इसलिए कि जो नीतियाँ हैं वे केवल कागज़ों तक सीमित रह जाती हैं और कभी सार्थक रूप से लागू नहीं होतीं।
- These answers also point to persistent complacency, and often complicity, among those in power.**
 ये उत्तर सत्ता में बैठे लोगों की लगातार बनी रहने वाली **उदासीनता** और अक्सर **सांठगांठ** की ओर भी इशारा करते हैं।
- They lead us to multiple **industries** that prioritise **profit over people's health**, often enabled, protected, or even actively supported by the **state**.
- Who benefits from the tap being left open. How can it be closed. Who is responsible for closing it, and why are they not doing so.**

Ultra-Processed Foods

- Ultra-processed foods are industrial formulations made mostly from substances extracted from foods or created in laboratories**, rather than from whole foods themselves.
- These foods are designed to be **convenient, long-lasting, and highly palatable**, but they usually contain **high levels of sugar, salt, unhealthy fats, and additives**.

Meaning and Concept

- Ultra-processed foods are products that undergo **multiple stages of industrial processing** and contain ingredients not commonly used in home cooking.
- These foods typically include **preservatives, artificial colours, flavours, emulsifiers, and sweeteners**.
- The main purpose of ultra-processing is to **increase shelf life, enhance taste, and maximise profit**, rather than to improve nutritional value.

Source: University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, Getty Images



Food can be classified in four categories

Unprocessed/Minimally processed	Processed ingredients	Processed	Ultra-processed
Fruit	Oils	Ham	Supermarket bread
Vegetables	Sugar	Cheese	Ready meals
Eggs	Salt	Bread	Breakfast cereal
Milk	Honey	Bacon	Cakes
Meat	Butter	Salted nuts	Crisps

Note: Nova classification of food categories. "Processed ingredients"

GS Paper II: International Relations

TOPICS COVERED

07 January 2026

- Dangerous paradigm.**
खतरनाक प्रतिमान।
- At a crossroads.**
चौराहे पर।



3.	America's Venezuelan actions are most unlawful अमेरिका की वेनेजुएला से जुड़ी कार्रवाइयाँ सबसे अधिक गैरकानूनी हैं
4.	Data shows Venezuela's pivot from the U.S. to China आंकड़े दिखाते हैं कि वेनेजुएला का झुकाव अमेरिका से चीन की ओर

THE HINDU
GS II: IR
Dangerous paradigm

Trump has lowered the threshold of norms for conduct on global stage

Following the kidnapping and removal to U.S. soil of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife, on the back of military action not authorised by Congress or supported by the UN, U.S. President Donald Trump has now made clear his intent to set the crosshairs of American neo-imperialist expansionism on other nations and territories including Colombia, Greenland, Mexico, Cuba, and Iran. The Trump administration surprised the world, and apparently Venezuelan military forces, when it launched an overnight strike on Caracas over the weekend, including likely use of artillery and special forces, to extract the Maduros to face federal drug trafficking and weapons charges - charges that Mr. Maduro pleaded not guilty to. Responding to media after the event, Mr. Trump appeared to be setting his sights on Colombian President Gustavo Petro, when he said that that country was being "run by a sick man who likes making cocaine and selling it to the U.S.," and "He's not going to be doing it for very long." Similarly, Mr. Trump has remarked that the U.S. has a "need" for Greenland from the perspective of its "national security", that "something will have to be done about Mexico" to rid the nation of the scourge of drug cartels, that Cuba is "ready to fall" in the absence of revenue linked to Venezuelan oil, and that Iran would be "hit very hard by the U.S." if it cracked down on protesters on its soil.

While the Trump administration has consistently lowered the threshold of norms and acceptable standards for the conduct of nations on the global stage and diverged from the positions of previous Democrat- and Republican-led governments on the threat posed, for example by Russia to Europe, to directly engage in unauthorised and illegal interference of a brazen kind and seek regime change through the use of force in an established hemispheric power is a new low. The deeper danger of this so called "Donroe Doctrine" - ultimately premised on seizing Venezuela's cherished oil resources rather than any pretext of "restoring democracy" - is that it may embolden autocrats and nations with an appetite for fomenting conflict to engage in similar destabilising unilateral military action against perceived enemies, potentially resulting in full-fledged cross-border confrontations. Today's Venezuela was yesterday's Ukraine and might be tomorrow's Taiwan, if Mr. Trump's paradigm for settling scores propagates further. While the leaders of each potential future target of U.S. aggression and the UN leadership have protested such action by Washington, it might take nothing less than the major powers of today, including India, Europe, Australia, Africa and Latin America, speaking in one voice against this unhinged depredation by the Trump administration to halt this dangerous new paradigm in its tracks.

Dangerous paradigm.
खतरनाक प्रतिमान।

- Following the kidnapping and removal to U.S. soil of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife, on the back of military action not authorised by Congress or supported by the UN, U.S. President Donald Trump has now made clear his intent to set the crosshairs of American neo-imperialist expansionism on other nations and territories including Colombia, Greenland, Mexico, Cuba, and Iran.

- The Trump administration surprised the world, and apparently Venezuelan military forces, when it launched an overnight strike on Caracas over the weekend, including likely use of artillery and special forces, to extract the Maduros to face federal drug trafficking and weapons charges, charges that Mr. Maduro pleaded not guilty to.

ट्रंप प्रशासन ने सप्ताहांत में काराकास पर रातोंरात हमला कर दुनिया और शायद वेनेजुएला की सेना को भी चौंका दिया, जिसमें संभवतः तोपखाने और विशेष बलों का उपयोग हुआ, ताकि मादुरो दंपती को संघीय ड्रग तस्करी और हथियारों के आरोपों का सामना कराने के लिए निकाला जा सके, जिन आरोपों पर श्री मादुरो ने खुद को निर्दोष बताया।

- Responding to media after the event, Mr. Trump appeared to be setting his sights on Colombian President Gustavo Petro, when he said that that country was being "run by a sick man who likes making cocaine and selling it to the U.S.," and "He's not going to be doing it for very long."

घटना के बाद मीडिया से बात करते हुए श्री ट्रंप ने कोलंबिया के राष्ट्रपति गुस्तावो पेट्रो पर निशाना साधते हुए कहा कि वह देश "एक बीमार आदमी द्वारा चलाया जा रहा है जो कोकीन बनाना और उसे अमेरिका में बेचना पसंद करता है," और "वह यह काम ज्यादा समय तक नहीं कर पाएगा।"

- Similarly, Mr. Trump has remarked that the U.S. has a "need" for Greenland from the perspective of its "national security", that "something will have to be done about Mexico" to rid the nation of the scourge of drug cartels, that Cuba is "ready to fall" in the absence of revenue linked to Venezuelan oil, and that Iran would be "hit very hard by the U.S." if it cracked down on protesters on its soil.

- The deeper danger of this so called "Donroe Doctrine" - ultimately premised on seizing Venezuela's cherished oil resources rather than any pretext of "restoring democracy" - is that it may embolden autocrats and nations with an appetite for fomenting conflict to engage in similar destabilising unilateral military action against perceived enemies, potentially resulting in full-fledged cross-border confrontations.



America's Venezuelan actions are most unlawful

GS II: IR: South America

MOE

The attack by the United States on Venezuela and the capture of the Venezuelan President, Nicolás Maduro, is yet another gigantic affront to international law, notwithstanding the authoritarian practices of the Maduro administration. This adventure comes on the heels of a series of illegal American strikes in the last few months on alleged Venezuelan drug boats in the Caribbean Sea.

The subject of the use of force

It is axiomatic that Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter proscribes the use of force in international relations. The UN Charter, as Oona A. Hathaway and Scott J. Shapiro argue, outlawed war and fundamentally reshaped international law, making war an illegitimate instrument for settling disputes. Article 2(4) permits only two narrow exceptions: force may be used in self-defence or with the authorisation of the UN Security Council. None is present in the extant case.

Legal scholar Nico Krisch has argued that the prohibition on the use of force is the most constraining aspect of international law. Hegemonic states such as the U.S. have consistently sought to overcome this constraint by adopting innovative solutions, including the broadening of the concept of self-defence. Arguably, self-defence is not limited to repelling an ongoing armed attack but also encompasses pre-emptive and anticipatory self-defence to combat cross-border terrorism. Moreover, the use of force has also been invoked to justify humanitarian interventions such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999.

In the Venezuelan case, the U.S. appears to have surpassed even these contested categories and identified new grounds for the use of force. Senior U.S. officials are on record as stating that this cross-border operation was done as part of a law enforcement measure, bringing accused



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The U.S.'s actions create a precarious precedent, surpassing even contested categories under international law

criminals such as Mr. Maduro and his wife to face trial in the U.S. Other reasons offered are that the President was waging a ceaseless campaign of violence and subversion against the U.S. and posed a threat to the entire region. However, none of these reasons, even if true, passes muster to legally justify the U.S. using force against a sovereign state. The talk of this operation resurrecting the antiquated Monroe Doctrine of American foreign policy is not just an affront to the sovereignty of the countries of the Western Hemisphere but also a pie in the face of the anti-imperial struggles of the Third World people.

Leaders and immunity

The other legal issue this case has thrown up is the treatment of President Maduro. As the International Court of Justice held in the Arrest Warrant Case (Democratic Republic of the Congo vs Belgium), heads of state enjoy inviolability and immunity *ratione personae* (personal immunity) from the criminal jurisdiction of a foreign court. Accordingly, the U.S. courts lack jurisdiction to try President Maduro for the alleged criminal activities. The argument that Mr. Maduro is not the legitimate President of Venezuela because he came to office through rigged elections in 2024, or that the U.S. does not recognise Mr. Maduro as a legitimate President, cuts no ice under international law. Irrespective of how someone came to office, under international law, what matters is the test of effective control. The Maduro administration exercised effective control over Venezuelan territory. Thus, President Maduro, as the head, is entitled to personal immunity and inviolability under international law.

Holding otherwise would give states a licence to stop recognising regimes or heads of state they do not consider lawful, using their subjective criteria, thereby denying them immunity, which would wreak havoc in the international legal system. Moreover, forcibly taking the custody of a

foreigner, let alone a head of state, on foreign land without that state's consent or without a legal procedure, and physically bringing the person to face trial before a domestic court, is an internationally wrongful act. The U.S. endeavouring to 'run' Venezuela – reminiscent of naked imperialism – is also unlawful, as it amounts to undue interference in Venezuela's internal affairs.

Strengthening international law

The U.S.'s actions create a precarious precedent. It is part of a series of flagrant violations of cardinal rules of international law, including the use of force, that have been observed in recent years. Thus, the larger question is whether the content of international law must change to address its abuse. As public international law scholar Marko Milonevic argues, the problem is not so much with the content of the law as with the complete lack of commitment to comply with it. The meteoric rise of authoritarian regimes, including in countries that were once regarded as the vanguards of liberal democracy, has meant that governments do not want to be constrained by any law, whether domestic or international. The weakening of the domestic rule of law has negatively impacted the efficacy of international law in constraining power. Thus, to strengthen the international rule of law, one must bolster the domestic rule of law and democracy.

While it is true that powerful nations use international law as an instrument to perpetuate their dominance, it is equally undeniable that several elements of international law are antithetical to authoritarianism. Article 2(4) of the UN Charter is one of them. Authoritarian regimes will continue to assault these norms and treat international law with utter derision. Therefore, it is incumbent on the democratic forces to come together to resist them with renewed resolve.

The views expressed are personal

America's Venezuelan actions are most unlawful अमेरिका की वेनेजुएला से जुड़ी कार्रवाइयाँ सबसे अधिक गैरकानूनी हैं

- It is axiomatic that **Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter** proscribes the use of force in international relations.
यह सर्वविदित है कि संयुक्त राष्ट्र चार्टर का अनुच्छेद 2(4) अंतरराष्ट्रीय संबंधों में बल प्रयोग को प्रतिबंधित करता है।
- The **UN Charter**, as **Oona A. Hathaway** and **Scott J. Shapiro** argue, **outlawed war and fundamentally reshaped international law, making war an illegitimate instrument for settling disputes.**
जैसा कि **ऊना ए हैथवे** और **स्कॉट जे शापिरो** तर्क देते हैं, संयुक्त राष्ट्र चार्टर ने युद्ध को गैरकानूनी ठहराया और अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानून को मूल रूप से बदल दिया, जिससे विवाद सुलझाने का साधन युद्ध नहीं रह गया।
- Article 2(4) permits only two narrow exceptions, force may be used in self-defence or with the authorisation of the UN Security Council.**
- Hegemonic states** such as the **U.S.** have consistently sought to overcome this constraint by adopting innovative solutions, including the **broadening of the concept of self-defence.**
अमेरिका जैसे प्रभुत्वशाली देशों ने इस बाधा को पार करने के लिए लगातार नए उपाय अपनाए हैं, जिनमें **आत्मरक्षा** की अवधारणा का विस्तार भी शामिल है।
- Arguably, self-defence is not limited to repelling an ongoing armed attack but also encompasses **pre-emptive and anticipatory self-defence to combat cross-border terrorism.**
तर्क दिया जाता है कि आत्मरक्षा केवल जारी सशस्त्र हमले को रोकने तक सीमित नहीं है, बल्कि सीमा-पार आतंकवाद से निपटने के लिए **पूर्व-निवारक** और **पूर्वानुमानित आत्मरक्षा** को भी शामिल करती है।
- Moreover, the use of force has also been invoked to justify **humanitarian interventions such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999.**



इसके अलावा, बल प्रयोग को **मानवीय हस्तक्षेपों** को उचित ठहराने के लिए भी इस्तेमाल किया गया है, जैसे **1999 में यूगोस्लाविया पर नाटो की बमबारी**।

- In the Venezuelan case, the **U.S.** appears to have surpassed even these contested categories and identified new grounds for the use of force.
वेनेजुएला के मामले में **अमेरिका** इन विवादित श्रेणियों से भी आगे बढ़कर बल प्रयोग के लिए नए आधार गढ़ता हुआ प्रतीत होता है।
- **Senior U.S. officials are on record as stating that this cross-border operation was done as part of a law enforcement measure, bringing accused criminals such as Mr. Maduro and his wife to face trial in the U.S.**
वरिष्ठ अमेरिकी अधिकारियों ने रिकॉर्ड पर कहा है कि यह सीमा-पार कार्रवाई एक **कानून प्रवर्तन उपाय** के तहत की गई, ताकि श्री मादुरो और उनकी पत्नी जैसे आरोपितों को **अमेरिका** में मुकदमे का सामना कराया जा सके।
- **Other reasons offered are that the President was waging a ceaseless campaign of violence and subversion against the U.S. and posed a threat to the entire region.**
- The other legal issue this case has thrown up is the treatment of President **Maduro**.
इस मामले ने राष्ट्रपति **मादुरो** के साथ किए गए व्यवहार से जुड़ा एक और कानूनी प्रश्न खड़ा किया है।
- **As the International Court of Justice held in the Arrest Warrant Case (Democratic Republic of the Congo vs Belgium), heads of state enjoy inviolability and immunity ratione personae (personal immunity) from the criminal jurisdiction of a foreign court.**
जैसा कि **अंतरराष्ट्रीय न्यायालय** ने **अरेस्ट वारंट केस (डेमोक्रेटिक रिपब्लिक ऑफ कांगो बनाम बेल्जियम)** में कहा, राष्ट्रध्यक्षों को किसी विदेशी अदालत के आपराधिक अधिकार क्षेत्र से **अस्पर्शनीयता** और **व्यक्तिगत प्रतिरक्षा** प्राप्त होती है।
- **Irrespective of how someone came to office, under international law, what matters is the test of effective control.**
कोई व्यक्ति सत्ता में कैसे आया, इससे परे, अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानून में **प्रभावी नियंत्रण** की कसौटी ही निर्णायक होती है।
- The **Maduro administration** exercised effective control over Venezuelan territory.
मादुरो प्रशासन का वेनेजुएला के क्षेत्र पर प्रभावी नियंत्रण था।
- Thus, President **Maduro**, as the head, is entitled to **personal immunity and inviolability under international law**.
इसलिए राष्ट्रपति **मादुरो** को राष्ट्रध्यक्ष होने के नाते अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानून के तहत **व्यक्तिगत प्रतिरक्षा** और **अस्पर्शनीयता** प्राप्त है।
- Holding otherwise would give states a licence to stop recognising regimes or heads of state they do not consider lawful, using their subjective criteria, thereby denying them immunity, which would **wreak havoc in the international legal system**.
इसके विपरीत मानने से राज्यों को यह छूट मिल जाएगी कि वे अपने व्यक्तिपरक मानदंडों के आधार पर किसी शासन या राष्ट्रध्यक्ष को अवैध घोषित कर उनकी प्रतिरक्षा छीन लें, जिससे **अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानूनी व्यवस्था** में भारी अव्यवस्था फैल जाएगी।
- **Moreover, forcibly taking the custody of a foreigner, let alone a head of state, on foreign land without that state's consent or without a legal procedure, and physically bringing the person to face trial before a domestic court, is an internationally wrongful act.**
इसके अलावा, किसी विदेशी व्यक्ति को, विशेषकर किसी राष्ट्रध्यक्ष को, बिना उस राज्य की सहमति या कानूनी प्रक्रिया के विदेशी भूमि पर जबरन हिरासत में लेना और घरेलू अदालत में मुकदमे के लिए ले जाना एक **अंतरराष्ट्रीय रूप से गलत कार्य** है।
- The **U.S.** endeavouring to 'run' **Venezuela**, reminiscent of naked **imperialism**, is also unlawful, as it amounts to **undue interference in Venezuela's internal affairs**.
- The **meteoric rise of authoritarian regimes**, including in countries that were once regarded as the vanguards of **liberal democracy**, has meant that governments do not want to be constrained by any law, whether domestic or international.
तानाशाही शासनों के तेज़ उभार ने, उन देशों में भी जो कभी **उदार लोकतंत्र** के अगुआ माने जाते थे, यह स्थिति पैदा कर दी है कि सरकारें किसी भी कानून से बंधना नहीं चाहतीं, चाहे वह घरेलू हो या अंतरराष्ट्रीय।
- The **weakening of the domestic rule of law** has negatively impacted the **efficacy of international law in constraining power**.



घरेलू विधि शासन के कमजोर पड़ने से सत्ता को सीमित करने में अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानून की प्रभावशीलता भी घट गई है।

- Thus, to strengthen the international rule of law, one must bolster the domestic rule of law and democracy.
अतः अंतरराष्ट्रीय विधि शासन को मजबूत करने के लिए घरेलू विधि शासन और लोकतंत्र को सुदृढ़ करना आवश्यक है।
- While it is true that powerful nations use international law as an instrument to perpetuate their dominance, it is equally undeniable that several elements of international law are antithetical to authoritarianism.
- तानाशाही शासन इन मानदंडों पर हमला करते रहेंगे और अंतरराष्ट्रीय कानून को पूरी उपेक्षा से देखेंगे।
- Therefore, it is incumbent on the democratic forces to come together to resist them with renewed resolve.
इसलिए लोकतांत्रिक शक्तियों पर यह ज़िम्मेदारी है कि वे नए संकल्प के साथ एकजुट होकर इसका प्रतिरोध करें।

Data shows Venezuela's pivot from the U.S. to China

Was the growing Chinese influence in Venezuela also a trigger behind U.S.'s invasion?

ISS II IR: South America

MOJ

DATA POINT

Sambavi Parthasarathy

With close to 200 American troops entering Caracas on Saturday, the Trump administration's invasion of Venezuela and the capture of its President Nicolas Maduro was the most dramatic U.S. intervention in Latin America since the 1989 Panama invasion.

The U.S. military intervention has sent shock waves across the globe, with allies and adversaries condemning the U.S. action as a clear violation of international law. Experts suggest that the move was primarily aimed at reimposing the Monroe Doctrine to re-establish U.S. hegemony in the Americas and reducing China's influence in the region.

It is interesting to note that Venezuela relied heavily on the U.S. for weapons till 1995 before diversifying largely to players like Germany and Russia.

However, since the mid-2000s, China has consistently emerged as one of its key partners for weapons imports. There were no recorded instances of arms exports, in the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)'s database from the U.S. to Venezuela in the last two decades, except for a negligible share in 2015. (Chart 1). The trend became more apparent during the Maduro regime. Since 2014, China has accounted for 46% of all arms imports by Venezuela. (Chart 2)

Secondly, Venezuela is one of China's key trade partners in Latin America.

While Venezuela holds the world's largest proven crude oil reserves, it lacks the resources to effectively extract and refine them.

Consequently, the South American country has sought alternative economic alliances with nations like China and Russia, which have demonstrated a greater tolerance

for the financial and geopolitical risks involved. This trend is visible not just in the arms trade but also in oil exports.

While direct crude oil data was unavailable, this analysis relies on mineral export figures – a category in which crude oil is a primary component. China formed less than 1% of Venezuela's mineral exports in the early 2000s but reached a peak of 28% by 2018 (Chart 3). A Reuters analysis showed that for some months in mid-2025, almost all the oil exports from the country went to China.

China has also surpassed the U.S. as the primary source of imports for Venezuela. In 2023, the U.S. accounted for only one-fourth of Venezuela's imports, with China accounting for one-third in the same period. This, however, was not always the case. In the mid-1990s, the share of the U.S. in Venezuela's imports crossed the 40% mark consistently for many years. However, in the last two decades, the U.S.'s share had almost halved, compensated by the increase in China's share. (Chart 4)

Thirdly, one of the reasons behind the Trump administration's latest move is also supposedly to counter the Chinese influence in the region.

China's investments in the Latin America region, in forms of aid, loans and grants, total up to more than \$300 billion between 2001-2023. Of which more than one-third (about \$106 billion) was invested just in Venezuela, making it the biggest recipient of Chinese investments in the region. (Chart 5)

Not only within Latin America, Venezuela is also the fourth-largest recipient of Chinese aid globally, figures from AidData, a research lab, show. China has committed to more than 170 projects in the country during this period. Almost all of these funds have been disbursed as loans, and over 26% has been invested in key sectors such as energy, mining and other related industries.

The Chinese factor

Data were sourced from Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Harvard Growth Lab and AidData.org



Rising influence: China's President Xi Jinping with Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro in 2023. REUTERS

Chart 2: Countrywise share of weapon imports by Venezuela in the 2014-2023 period put together. Figures in %

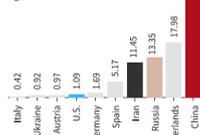


Chart 4: Countrywise share (in %) of imports by Venezuela. China has also surpassed the U.S. as the primary source of imports

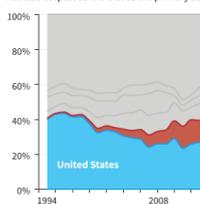


Chart 1: Countrywise share of weapon imports by Venezuela in the 1950-2023 period. Figures in %

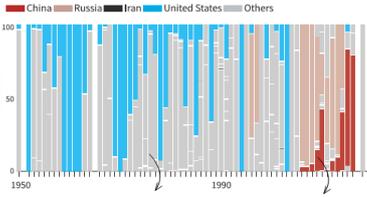


Chart 3: Countrywise share (in %) of Venezuela's mineral exports. As direct crude oil data was unavailable, this analysis relies on mineral export.

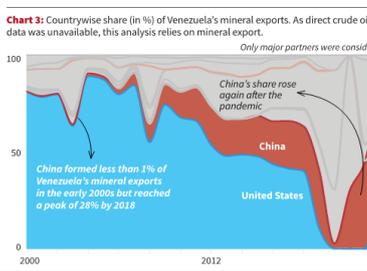


Chart 5: China's investments (loans/grants/aid) in the Latin American countries in the 2001-2023 period. Figures in \$ billion



Data shows Venezuela's pivot from the U.S. to China आंकड़े दिखाते हैं कि वेनेजुएला का झुकाव अमेरिका से चीन की ओर

- With close to 200 American troops entering Caracas on Saturday, the Trump administration's invasion of Venezuela and the capture of its President Nicolas Maduro was the most dramatic U.S. intervention in Latin America since the 1989 Panama invasion. शनिवार को लगभग 200 अमेरिकी सैनिकों के कराकास में प्रवेश के साथ, ट्रंप प्रशासन द्वारा वेनेजुएला पर



आक्रमण और राष्ट्रपति निकोलस मादुरो की गिरफ्तारी 1989 के पनामा आक्रमण के बाद लैटिन अमेरिका में सबसे नाटकीय अमेरिकी हस्तक्षेप माना गया।

- Experts suggest that the move was primarily aimed at reimposing the **Monroe Doctrine to re-establish U.S. hegemony in the Americas and reducing China's influence in the region.**
विशेषज्ञों का मानना है कि यह कदम मुख्यतः मोनरो सिद्धांत को फिर से लागू कर अमेरिका की प्रभुता स्थापित करने और क्षेत्र में चीन के प्रभाव को कम करने के उद्देश्य से उठाया गया।
- It is interesting to note that **Venezuela relied heavily on the U.S. for weapons till 1995 before diversifying largely to players like Germany and Russia.**
यह उल्लेखनीय है कि वेनेजुएला 1995 तक हथियारों के लिए अमेरिका पर काफी हद तक निर्भर था, इसके बाद उसने जर्मनी और रूस जैसे देशों की ओर रुख किया।
- However, **since the mid-2000s, China has consistently emerged as one of its key partners for weapons imports.**
लेकिन 2000 के दशक के मध्य से चीन लगातार वेनेजुएला के लिए हथियार आयात का एक प्रमुख साझेदार बनकर उभरा है।
- There were no recorded instances of arms exports in the **SIPRI database** from the U.S. to Venezuela in the last **two decades, except for a negligible share in 2015.**
SIPRI डेटाबेस में पिछले दो दशकों में अमेरिका से वेनेजुएला को हथियार निर्यात का कोई उल्लेख नहीं है, सिवाय 2015 में नगण्य हिस्से के।
- The trend became more apparent during the **Maduro regime, and since 2014, China has accounted for 46% of all arms imports by Venezuela.**
यह प्रवृत्ति मादुरो शासन के दौरान और स्पष्ट हुई, तथा 2014 से चीन वेनेजुएला के कुल हथियार आयात का 46% हिस्सा बन चुका है।
- Secondly, **Venezuela is one of China's key trade partners in Latin America.**
दूसरे, वेनेजुएला लैटिन अमेरिका में चीन का एक प्रमुख व्यापारिक साझेदार है।
- **While Venezuela holds the world's largest proven crude oil reserves, it lacks the resources to effectively extract and refine them.**
हालांकि वेनेजुएला के पास दुनिया का सबसे बड़ा सिद्ध कच्चे तेल का भंडार है, लेकिन उसे प्रभावी ढंग से निकालने और परिष्कृत करने के संसाधनों की कमी है।
- Consequently, the country has sought alternative economic alliances with nations like **China and Russia, which show greater tolerance for financial and geopolitical risks.**
- **China formed less than 1% of Venezuela's mineral exports in the early 2000s but reached a peak of 28% by 2018.**
2000 के शुरुआती वर्षों में चीन वेनेजुएला के खनिज निर्यात का 1% से भी कम था, लेकिन 2018 तक यह बढ़कर 28% हो गया।
- **A Reuters analysis showed that for some months in mid-2025, almost all the oil exports from the country went to China.**
रॉयटर्स के विश्लेषण के अनुसार, 2025 के मध्य में कुछ महीनों तक देश का लगभग सारा तेल निर्यात चीन को गया।
- China has also surpassed the **U.S. as the primary source of imports for Venezuela.**
चीन ने वेनेजुएला के लिए आयात का प्रमुख स्रोत बनने में अमेरिका को पीछे छोड़ दिया है।
- **In 2023, the U.S. accounted for only one-fourth of Venezuela's imports, while China accounted for one-third.**
2023 में अमेरिका वेनेजुएला के आयात का केवल एक-चौथाई था, जबकि चीन का हिस्सा एक-तिहाई था।
- **In the mid-1990s, the U.S. share in Venezuela's imports consistently crossed the 40% mark, but in the last two decades, it has almost halved, compensated by the rise in China's share.**
- **China's investments in Latin America in the form of aid, loans and grants total more than \$300 billion between 2001–2023.**
2001 से 2023 के बीच लैटिन अमेरिका में चीन का निवेश सहायता, ऋण और अनुदान के रूप में 300 अरब डॉलर से अधिक रहा है।
- **Of this, more than one-third about \$106 billion was invested in Venezuela, making it the biggest recipient of Chinese investments in the region.**
इसमें से एक-तिहाई से अधिक लगभग 106 अरब डॉलर केवल वेनेजुएला में निवेश किए गए, जिससे वह क्षेत्र में चीनी निवेश का सबसे बड़ा लाभार्थी बना।
- **Not only in Latin America, Venezuela is also the fourth-largest recipient of Chinese aid globally, according to AidData.**



केवल लैटिन अमेरिका ही नहीं, बल्कि **AidData** के अनुसार वेनेजुएला दुनिया भर में **चीनी सहायता का चौथा सबसे बड़ा प्राप्तकर्ता** भी है।

- **China has committed to more than 170 projects in the country during this period.** इस अवधि में चीन ने देश में **170 से अधिक परियोजनाओं** के लिए प्रतिबद्धता जताई है।
- **Almost all of these funds have been disbursed as loans, and over 26% has been invested in key sectors such as energy, mining and related industries.**

इनमें से लगभग सभी धनराशि ऋण के रूप में दी गई है और इनमें से **26% से अधिक ऊर्जा, खनन और संबंधित उद्योगों** जैसे प्रमुख क्षेत्रों में निवेश किया गया है।

Monroe Doctrine

- The **Monroe Doctrine** was a foreign policy principle announced by the United States in **1823**, declaring that the **Western Hemisphere was no longer open to European colonisation**.
- It stated that any attempt by European powers to interfere in the political affairs of the Americas would be viewed as a **hostile act against the United States**.
- The doctrine became one of the most influential ideas in shaping **U.S. foreign policy** and the political order of the American continents.



Historical Background

- The Monroe Doctrine was proclaimed by **President James Monroe on 2 December 1823** during his annual message to the U.S. Congress.
- At the time, many Latin American countries had recently gained independence from Spain and Portugal.
- European powers, especially **Spain, France, and Russia**, were considering reasserting control over their former colonies.
- The United States feared that renewed European intervention would threaten both regional stability and American security.



Core Principles of the Monroe Doctrine

- The **Monroe Doctrine** declared that **no new European colonies** should be established in the Americas.
- It stated that the **political systems of Europe and the Americas were fundamentally different**, and therefore European powers should not interfere in the New World.
- The **doctrine promised that the United States would not interfere in internal affairs of European countries**, provided Europe stayed out of the Americas.
- It asserted that any **European intervention in the Western Hemisphere would be treated as a direct threat to U.S. peace and safety**.

Key Features of the Doctrine

- The Monroe Doctrine created a **clear geographical division of influence**, with Europe dominating the Old World and the United States asserting leadership in the New World.
- It strengthened the idea of **regional sovereignty** for newly independent Latin American states.
- Although the doctrine had **no immediate military enforcement power**, it relied on British naval strength and U.S. diplomatic influence in its early years.

Evolution of the Monroe Doctrine



- In the nineteenth century, the Monroe Doctrine gradually evolved from a defensive statement into a tool of **American regional dominance**.
- The **Roosevelt Corollary (1904)** added a new dimension by asserting that the United States had the right to intervene in Latin American countries to maintain order and stability.
- This expansion transformed the doctrine from a shield against Europe into a justification for **U.S. interventionism** in the Americas.

Practical Application of the Monroe Doctrine

- The United States used the Monroe Doctrine to oppose **French intervention in Mexico** during the 1860s.
- It was invoked during disputes involving **Venezuela and European creditors** in the late nineteenth century.
- In the twentieth century, it influenced U.S. actions in **Cuba, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Panama**.

Cold War Context

- During the Cold War, the Monroe Doctrine was frequently cited to justify U.S. efforts to limit **Soviet influence in Latin America**.
- The **Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962** reflected the continuing relevance of the doctrine, as the United States opposed the presence of Soviet missiles in the Western Hemisphere.
- In this period, the doctrine became closely linked with the policy of **containment**.

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. What was the intent of the Monroe Doctrine issued in 1823? **Ans: To oppose European intervention in the Western Hemisphere and declare the Americas as a sphere of influence separate from Europe**
2. What geopolitical crisis preceded the articulation of the Roosevelt Corollary? **Ans: The Venezuelan crisis of 1902–1903, in which Britain, Germany, and Italy blockaded Venezuela over unpaid debts**
3. How does the Roosevelt Corollary expand the Monroe Doctrine? **Ans: It asserted the U.S. right to intervene in Latin American countries to preserve order and prevent European intervention, effectively making the U.S. a hemispheric "policeman"**
4. What was one of the earliest uses of the Roosevelt Corollary in practice? **Ans: U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic to manage the country's debt and finances**
5. Which U.S. policy later renounced the Roosevelt Corollary's interventionist thrust? **Ans: Franklin D. Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policy**

Visual: The American intervention in which a Latin-American country is being depicted in this political cartoon? **Ans: The Dominican Republic**
Early Birds: K.N. Viswanathan | Tamal Biswas | Sukdev Shet | Sumana Dutta | Sadhan Panda

- Weak economies and political instability made **regular repayment difficult**.
- European powers, especially **Britain and Germany**, began using **gunboat diplomacy** to protect their financial interests.

The Venezuelan Crisis (1902–1903)

- In **December 1902**, **Britain, Germany, and Italy** sent their naval fleets to the Caribbean.
- They **blockaded Venezuelan ports**, seized ships, and cut off trade routes.
- Their goal was to force Venezuela to **repay outstanding loans and compensation claims**.
- The action directly violated the spirit of the **Monroe Doctrine (1823)**, which opposed European intervention in the Americas.

QUIZ

What geopolitical crisis preceded the articulation of the Roosevelt Corollary?

- The **geopolitical crisis** that led to the formulation of the **Roosevelt Corollary** was the **Venezuelan Crisis of 1902–1903**.
- During this crisis, **Britain, Germany, and Italy** imposed a **naval blockade on Venezuela** to force repayment of **unpaid foreign debts**.
- The episode alarmed the United States and pushed it to redefine its role in the **Western Hemisphere**.
- Many Latin American nations, including **Venezuela**, had accumulated heavy **foreign debts** after independence.



- The U.S. feared that Europe might go beyond debt collection and establish **permanent political control** in Latin America.
- President **Theodore Roosevelt** realized that simply warning Europe was no longer enough.

From Crisis to Policy: Birth of the **Roosevelt Corollary**

- If Latin American nations failed to maintain **economic and political stability**, European powers would use that as an excuse to intervene.
- Therefore, the United States should step in **first**, rather than allow Europe to do so.

Roosevelt Corollary (1904)

- Announced in **1904**, it was an extension of the **Monroe Doctrine**.
- It declared that the United States had the right to exercise “**international police power**” in the Western Hemisphere.
- This meant the U.S. could intervene in Latin American countries to **prevent European involvement**.
- The **Venezuelan blockade** proved that European powers were still willing to use **military force** in the Americas.
- The **U.S. responded by shifting from a defensive policy (Monroe Doctrine) to an interventionist policy (Roosevelt Corollary)**.
- Thus, the Venezuelan Crisis became the **immediate trigger** for the Roosevelt Corollary.

Why this Crisis Matters in International Relations

- It marked the transition of the U.S. from a **passive guardian** of the Monroe Doctrine to an **active regional enforcer**.
- It laid the foundation for future U.S. interventions in **Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and Haiti**.
- It reshaped the balance of power in the **Caribbean and Latin America** for the entire 20th century.
- The European blockade convinced the United States that **words alone could not protect the Americas** from outside intervention.
- As a result, the Roosevelt Corollary transformed U.S. policy from **non-interference** to **regional interventionism**, redefining power politics in the Western Hemisphere.

What was one of the earliest uses of the Roosevelt Corollary in practice?

- One of the **earliest and most significant uses** of the **Roosevelt Corollary** was the **U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic** in the early **20th century**.
- The United States intervened to **manage the country’s debt and financial system** in order to prevent **European powers** from intervening, maintain **political stability**, and safeguard **U.S. strategic interests** in the Caribbean.

Economic and political conditions in the Dominican Republic

- By the early **1900s**, the Dominican Republic was suffering from chronic **political instability**, heavy **foreign debt**, weak **state institutions**.
- European creditors, particularly from **Germany and Italy**, were demanding repayment.
- There was a strong possibility that European nations would use **military pressure** to recover their money, as seen earlier in **Venezuela (1902–1903)**.
- In **1905**, the U.S. government took control of the **Dominican customs administration**.
- American officials managed the collection of **port revenues**, which were the country’s main source of income.



- These funds were used to repay **foreign creditors**, stabilise **government finances**, prevent **European military involvement**.

Why this was a Landmark Case

- This was one of the **first times** the United States exercised **direct financial control** over another sovereign nation in Latin America.
- It demonstrated that the Roosevelt Corollary was not merely a statement of policy, but a **tool for active intervention**.
- It set a **precedent** for future U.S. involvement in countries such as **Haiti, Nicaragua, Cuba**.

Which U.S. policy later renounced the Roosevelt Corollary's interventionist thrust?

Franklin D. Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy

- The U.S. policy that **renounced the interventionist thrust** of the **Roosevelt Corollary** was **Franklin D. Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy**, introduced in the **1930s**.
 - This policy rejected the idea of the United States acting as a "**hemispheric policeman**" and instead promoted **non-intervention, mutual respect, and cooperation** with Latin American countries.
 - After **1904**, the Roosevelt Corollary justified frequent U.S. interventions in **Cuba, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Haiti**.
 - These actions created resentment in Latin America, diplomatic tensions, anti-American sentiment.
 - By the late **1920s**, it became clear that constant intervention was politically costly, economically burdensome, and strategically risky.
- To replace coercion with **diplomacy and partnership**.
 - To build **regional solidarity** in the Western Hemisphere.

Major Steps Taken Under the Good Neighbor Policy

- **1933** – Withdrawal of U.S. Marines from **Nicaragua**.
- **1934** – End of U.S. military occupation of **Haiti**.
- **1934** – Repeal of the **Platt Amendment**, which allowed U.S. intervention in Cuba.
- Expansion of **diplomatic and economic cooperation** instead of military control.

Why This Policy Shift Was Important

- It restored **trust** between the U.S. and Latin American nations.
- It improved **hemispheric unity** during the lead-up to **World War II**.
- It marked the **official abandonment** of the interventionist logic of the Roosevelt Corollary.
- It reshaped U.S.–Latin American relations for decades.



GS II: IR: West Asia

At a crossroads

Iran must initiate reforms and re-engage with the world

What began as a strike by shopkeepers in Tehran on December 28 against the sharp fall in the value of the Iranian rial, has snowballed into the largest nationwide protest Iran has witnessed since the 2022-2023 unrest triggered by the custodial death of Mahsa Amini. While the government has promised to address the economic grievances of the traders, it has also warned of a harsh response to "rioters". At least 12 people have been killed in the past week with the protests spreading. This renewed cycle of unrest comes amid the deepening economic vulnerabilities and political risks confronting Iran's theocratic state, just six months after it survived a fierce 12-day war with Israel. What makes the protests challenging for Iran's rulers is the perceived involvement of foreign powers. Mossad, Israel's spy agency, claimed, on December 29, that its operatives were present "in the field" with the protesters. On January 2, U.S. President Donald Trump, who had ordered strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities during the June 2025 war between Iran and Israel, threatened Iran that the U.S. was "locked and loaded" to use force if protesters were killed.

The Islamic Republic is facing immense economic strain. In October, food inflation hit 64%, the second highest after South Sudan. The rial has lost 60% of its value since the June war, while oil exports in 2025 fell by about 7% from its 2024 average. Power outages have become a daily reality. The severity of the crisis was underscored in December when President Masoud Pezeshkian said his government was "stuck" and could not perform "miracles" to fix the problems. As the economy deteriorates and external threats mount, the regime's greater repression is creating a cycle of crisis. Mr. Pezeshkian has relaxed the grip of the morality police on public life. But when it comes to the economy or national security, his hands are tied. Washington's policy of economic squeeze and threats is deepening the suffering of ordinary Iranians while turning the regime more paranoid. If the U.S. genuinely seeks to resolve the Iran problem, it should engage with and empower Mr. Pezeshkian, rather than threatening Tehran on Israel's behalf. Iran's rulers should also be open for reforms. The regime's default response to any crisis has been to blame external forces, but it ignores a more fundamental reality. Years of shrinking economic opportunity and the erosion of political and personal freedoms have created a reservoir of public anger that could erupt. Religion and nationalism may no longer suffice in the face of an economic crisis. Iran's leadership must initiate reforms, tackle corruption and re-engage with the world.

संकट की गंभीरता दिसंबर में तब उजागर हुई जब राष्ट्रपति मसूद पेज़ेशकियान ने कहा कि उनकी सरकार "फँसी हुई" है और समस्याओं को हल करने के लिए "चमत्कार" नहीं कर सकती।

- As the economy deteriorates and external threats mount, the regime's greater repression is creating a cycle of crisis.

At a crossroads. चौराहे पर।

- What began as a strike by shopkeepers in Tehran on December 28 against the sharp fall in the value of the Iranian rial, has snowballed into the largest nationwide protest Iran has witnessed since the 2022-2023 unrest triggered by the custodial death of Mahsa Amini.

- This renewed cycle of unrest comes amid the deepening economic vulnerabilities and political risks confronting Iran's theocratic state, just six months after it survived a fierce 12-day war with Israel.

अशांति का यह नया दौर ईरान के धार्मिक शासन के सामने खड़ी बढ़ती आर्थिक कमजोरियों और राजनीतिक जोखिमों के बीच आया है, ठीक छह महीने बाद जब वह इज़राइल के साथ 12 दिनों के भीषण युद्ध से उबर पाया था।

- What makes the protests challenging for Iran's rulers is the perceived involvement of foreign powers.

ईरान के शासकों के लिए इन विरोध प्रदर्शनों को चुनौतीपूर्ण बनाने वाला पहलू विदेशी शक्तियों की कथित संलिप्तता है।

- Mossad, Israel's spy agency, claimed, on December 29, that its operatives were present "in the field" with the protesters.

इज़राइल की खुफिया एजेंसी मोसाद ने 29 दिसंबर को दावा किया कि उसके एजेंट प्रदर्शनकारियों के साथ "मैदान में" मौजूद थे।

- On January 2, U.S. President Donald Trump, who had ordered strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities during the June 2025 war between Iran and Israel, threatened Iran that the U.S. was "locked and loaded" to use force if protesters were killed.

- In October, food inflation hit 64%, the second highest after South Sudan.

अक्टूबर में खाद्य मुद्रास्फीति 64% तक पहुँच गई, जो दक्षिण सूडान के बाद दूसरी सबसे अधिक है।

- The rial has lost 60% of its value since the June war, while oil exports in 2025 fell by about 7% from its 2024 average.

जून के युद्ध के बाद से रियाल ने अपनी 60% कीमत खो दी है, जबकि 2025 में तेल निर्यात 2024 के औसत से लगभग 7% घट गया है।

- Power outages have become a daily reality.

बिजली कटौती अब रोज़मर्रा की सच्चाई बन गई है।

- The severity of the crisis was underscored in December when President Masoud Pezeshkian said his government was "stuck" and could not perform "miracles" to fix the problems.



- Washington's policy of **economic squeeze** and **threats** is deepening the suffering of **ordinary Iranians** while turning the regime more **paranoid**.
- Years of shrinking **economic opportunity** and the erosion of **political and personal freedoms** have created a reservoir of **public anger** that could erupt.
सालों से घटते **आर्थिक अवसरों** और **राजनीतिक व व्यक्तिगत स्वतंत्रताओं** के क्षरण ने **जन आक्रोश** का ऐसा भंडार तैयार कर दिया है जो कभी भी फूट सकता है।
- **Religion and nationalism** may no longer suffice in the face of an **economic crisis**.
आर्थिक संकट के सामने अब शायद **धर्म और राष्ट्रवाद** भी पर्याप्त नहीं रह गए हैं।
- Iran's leadership must initiate **reforms**, tackle **corruption** and **re-engage with the world**.
ईरान के नेतृत्व को **सुधारों** की शुरुआत करनी होगी, **भ्रष्टाचार** से निपटना होगा और **दुनिया से फिर से जुड़ना** होगा।

GS Paper III: Economy,	
TOPICS COVERED	07 January 2026
1.	Trade union urges Centre to increase EPF and ESI cap ट्रेड यूनियन ने केंद्र से ईपीएफ और ईएसआई सीमा बढ़ाने की मांग की
2.	Rethinking India's skilling outcomes भारत के स्किलिंग परिणामों पर पुनर्विचार
3.	SEBI mulls new norm for sharing price data सेबी कीमत डेटा साझा करने के लिए नए मानदंड पर विचार कर रहा है
4.	Crorepati I-T lers surge 22% in AY26 even as tax base stagnates एवाई26 में करोड़पति आयकर रिटर्न दाखिल करने वालों की संख्या 22% बढ़ी, जबकि कर आधार स्थिर रहा



Trade union urges Centre to increase EPF and ESI cap

GS III: Economy

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A delegation of leaders of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh-backed trade union Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) met Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya here on Tuesday and demanded that the Indian Labour Conference (ILC) be convened at the earliest. The BMS leadership also urged the Union government to increase the ceiling limits of the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) and Employees' State Insurance (ESI). They sought a substantial increase in the minimum PF pension from ₹1,000, an enhancement of bonus calculation limits, and an increase in gratuity entitlement from 15 days to 30 days. The leaders also demanded a hike in the honorarium and incentives for all scheme workers.

BMS general secretary Ravindra Himte said in a statement after the meeting that Mr. Mandaviya had promised to look into the issues raised, particularly the demands related to increasing the ceiling limits of ESI and EPF and the minimum pension. The BMS had earlier threatened agi-

The union sought a raise in the minimum PF pension from ₹1,000 and gratuity from 15 to 30 days

tation to press these demands. The meeting was apparently convened in the context of the pending demands, and the BMS had postponed protests following the implementation of the Labour Codes.

Trade unions' strike

Other central trade unions, meanwhile, have announced a general strike on February 12, raising similar issues.

The BMS statement said its leaders highlighted the plight of various categories of contract workers across the private, public and government sectors. It also requested the Minister to establish welfare Boards for all categories of drivers in the private transport service sector. "The Minister patiently heard all the issues, discussed the implications of the demands, and promised the delegation that the Centre would consider these issues seriously and take positive steps at the earliest possible date," Mr. Himte said.

Trade union urges Centre to increase EPF and ESI cap

ट्रेड यूनियन ने केंद्र से ईपीएफ और ईएसआई सीमा बढ़ाने की मांग की

• The BMS leadership also urged the **Union government** to increase the ceiling limits of the **Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) and Employees' State Insurance (ESI)**

बीएमएस नेतृत्व ने केंद्र सरकार से कर्मचारी भविष्य निधि (ईपीएफ) और कर्मचारी राज्य बीमा (ईएसआई) की सीमा बढ़ाने का भी आग्रह किया

• They sought a substantial increase in the **minimum PF pension from ₹1,000, an enhancement of bonus calculation limits, and an increase in gratuity entitlement from 15 days to 30 days**

उन्होंने न्यूनतम पीएफ पेंशन को ₹1,000 से पर्याप्त रूप से बढ़ाने, बोनस गणना सीमा बढ़ाने और ग्रेज्युटी पात्रता को 15 दिनों से 30 दिनों तक बढ़ाने की मांग की

• The leaders also demanded a hike in the **honorarium and incentives for all scheme workers**

• It also requested the Minister to **establish welfare Boards for all categories of drivers in the private transport service sector**



Rethinking India's skilling outcomes

What prevents skilling from becoming a first-choice pathway for youth? Why has formal vocational training reached only a small share of the workforce? What limits industry participation in public skilling programmes? Why do Sector Skill Councils lack credibility with employers?

GS III: Economy

MOB

EXPLAINER

Pravesh Dudani

The story so far:

Over the last decade, India has built one of the largest skilling ecosystems in the world. Between 2015 and 2025, India's flagship skilling programme, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana, has trained and certified around 1.40 crore candidates. Yet skilling has not become a first-choice pathway for most young Indians. Employability outcomes remain uneven, and Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data show that wage gains from vocational training are modest and inconsistent, particularly in informal employment, where most workers are absorbed, offering limited recognition for certified skills and little visible improvement in quality of life.

Why does skilling still fail to inspire aspiration?

India's Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) stands at 28%, but the National Education Policy 2020 aims to raise it to 50% by 2035. This cannot be done just by expanding traditional education; it must be integrated into higher education pathways in a way that makes it easier for people to learn new skills. Despite years of investment, only about 4.1% of India's workforce has received formal vocational training, barely improving from about 2% a decade ago (PLFS; World Bank). In contrast, across OECD countries, about 44% of upper-secondary learners are enrolled in vocational programmes, rising to around 70% in countries such as Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, the Netherlands, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia.

The India Skills Report 2025 shows that post-degree skilling by graduates is not a mainstream or high-participation behaviour in India. If skilling is to scale



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meaningfully, it must travel through and alongside formal education.

How can industry contribute meaningfully?

Industry is the single largest beneficiary of effective skilling and trained manpower. According to various industry reports, high attrition, long onboarding cycles, and productivity losses impose real costs, with attrition rates of 30-40% common across retail, logistics, hospitality, and manufacturing alone.

Yet, there is still not much participation from the industry. Most employers do not use public skilling certifications as hiring benchmarks; instead, they use internal training, referrals, or private platforms (NITI Aayog; World Bank). The National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) has increased participation, but its effects are still unequal, particularly among bigger companies.

Industry is neither incentivised nor obligated to meaningfully contribute to relevant curriculum development, certification standards, or assessment rigour at scale. As long as skilling remains something industry consumes rather than

co-designs, it will lag labour-market reality.

Why do Sector Skill Councils fail?

The most serious structural failure in India's skilling ecosystem lies with the Sector Skill Councils (SSCs).

SSCs were created with a clear mandate: to act as industry-facing institutions that define standards, ensure relevance, and anchor employability. In effect, they were meant to own the skilling value chain – from identifying industry demand to certifying job readiness. That mandate has not been fulfilled.

Today, responsibility is fragmented: training is delivered by one entity, assessment by another, certification by SSCs, and placement by someone else – if at all. Unlike higher education or technical institutions such as polytechnic diploma colleges, where reputational risk enforces accountability, the skilling system diffuses responsibility without consequence.

This fragmentation has eroded trust. Employer surveys frequently indicate that SSC credentials have limited signalling

value compared to degrees or prior work experience. Standards exist, but employers do not reliably hire against them. Industry-led certification models illustrate what is missing. Certifications from AWS, Google Cloud, or Microsoft work because the certifier's credibility is at stake. Assessments are fair and graded, not binary, and employers know what a certified candidate can do.

SSCs were meant to play this role at a national scale. Instead, they have largely limited themselves to standards creation, without owning outcomes. Until SSCs are held accountable for employability, certification will remain symbolic rather than economic.

The ongoing overhaul of standard-setting bodies must confront this directly.

How can skilling drive sustained economic growth?

India's skilling challenge is a failure of accountability, not of intent or government funding.

Expanding NAPS and deepening industry integration can become one of the fastest levers to improve job readiness at scale by pushing skilling into the workplace. Initiatives like PM-SETU, the central scheme for modernisation of ITIs, point towards stronger execution models where industry ownership and accountability are built into programme design.

When skills are embedded in degrees, when industry is treated as a co-owner, and when SSCs are made answerable for placement outcomes, skilling move from fragmented welfare intervention to a pillar of national economic empowerment.

That shift is not just about jobs. It is about the dignity of labour, productivity, and India's ability to convert its demographic strength into sustained national growth.

Pravesh Dudani is the Founder & Chancellor of Medhavi Skills University and an Advisor to NSDC

THE GIST

Despite PMKVY training around 1.40 crore candidates, employability outcomes remain uneven, wage gains are modest and inconsistent, and informal employment offers limited recognition for certified skills and little visible improvement in quality of life.

Limited industry participation, uneven NAPS outcomes, and the structural failure of Sector Skill Councils – fragmented responsibility, weak signalling value of certifications, and lack of accountability for employability – have reduced skilling to a fragmented welfare intervention rather than a driver of sustained economic growth.

Rethinking India's skilling outcomes भारत के स्किलिंग परिणामों पर पुनर्विचार

- Over the last decade, India has built one of the largest **skilling ecosystems** in the world पिछले एक दशक में भारत ने दुनिया के सबसे बड़े **कौशल विकास तंत्रों** में से एक का निर्माण किया है
- Between **2015 and 2025**, India's flagship skilling programme **Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana** has trained and certified around **1.40 crore candidates**
- India's **Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)** stands at **28%**, but the **National Education Policy 2020** aims to **raise it to 50% by 2035**
- Despite years of investment, **only about 4.1% of India's workforce** has received formal **vocational training**, **barely improving from about 2% a decade ago** वर्षों के निवेश के बावजूद भारत के कार्यबल का केवल **4.1%** ही औपचारिक व्यावसायिक प्रशिक्षण प्राप्त कर सका है, जो एक दशक पहले के लगभग **2%** से बहुत अधिक नहीं है
- In contrast, across **OECD countries**, **about 44% of upper-secondary learners** are enrolled in **vocational programmes** इसके विपरीत **OECD देशों** में लगभग **44%** उच्च माध्यमिक छात्र व्यावसायिक कार्यक्रमों में नामांकित हैं
- This rises to around **70%** in countries such as **Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, the Netherlands, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia** यह अनुपात **ऑस्ट्रिया, चेक गणराज्य, फिनलैंड, नीदरलैंड्स, स्लोवाक गणराज्य और स्लोवेनिया** जैसे देशों में बढ़कर लगभग **70%** हो जाता है
- The **India Skills Report 2025** shows that **post-degree skilling by graduates** is not a **mainstream behaviour** in India



इंडिया स्किल्स रिपोर्ट 2025 बताती है कि डिग्री के बाद स्नातकों द्वारा स्किलिंग भारत में अब भी **मुख्यधारा का व्यवहार नहीं बन पाई है**

- **If skilling is to scale meaningfully, it must travel through and alongside formal education**
यदि स्किलिंग को वास्तव में व्यापक बनाना है, तो उसे **औपचारिक शिक्षा** के साथ और उसी के माध्यम से आगे बढ़ना होगा

How can industry contribute meaningfully उद्योग सार्थक रूप से कैसे योगदान दे सकता है

- **Industry is the single largest beneficiary of effective skilling and trained manpower**
प्रभावी स्किलिंग और प्रशिक्षित मानव संसाधन का सबसे बड़ा लाभार्थी स्वयं **उद्योग** है
- According to various industry reports, **high attrition, long onboarding cycles, and productivity losses impose real costs**
विभिन्न उद्योग रिपोर्टों के अनुसार अधिक **कर्मचारी पलायन**, लंबी **ऑनबोर्डिंग प्रक्रियाएँ** और **उत्पादकता में कमी** वास्तविक लागत बढ़ाती हैं
- **Attrition rates of 30–40% are common across retail, logistics, hospitality and manufacturing**
रिटेल, लॉजिस्टिक्स, हॉस्पिटैलिटी और मैनुफैक्चरिंग क्षेत्रों में **30–40%** तक की एट्रिशन दर सामान्य है
- Yet there is still not much participation from the **industry**
इसके बावजूद **उद्योग की भागीदारी** अब भी सीमित है
- **Most employers do not use public skilling certifications as hiring benchmarks**
अधिकांश नियोजक भर्ती के लिए **सरकारी स्किलिंग प्रमाणपत्रों** को मानक के रूप में उपयोग नहीं करते
- Instead, they rely on **internal training, referrals, or private platforms**
इसके बजाय वे **आंतरिक प्रशिक्षण, सिफारिशों या निजी प्लेटफॉर्मों** पर निर्भर रहते हैं
- The **National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS)** has increased participation, but its effects are still **unequal, particularly among bigger companies**
राष्ट्रीय प्रशिक्षता प्रोत्साहन योजना (NAPS) से भागीदारी बढ़ी है, लेकिन इसके प्रभाव अब भी **असमान** हैं, खासकर बड़ी कंपनियों में
- **Industry is neither incentivised nor obligated to contribute meaningfully to curriculum development, certification standards, or assessment rigour at scale**
उद्योग को न तो पर्याप्त रूप से **प्रोत्साहन** दिया गया है और न ही **बाध्य** किया गया है कि वह पाठ्यक्रम निर्माण, प्रमाणन मानकों या मूल्यांकन की कठोरता में सार्थक योगदान दे
- **As long as skilling remains something industry consumes rather than co-designs, it will lag behind labour-market reality**
जब तक स्किलिंग ऐसी प्रक्रिया बनी रहेगी जिसे उद्योग केवल **उपयोग करता है न कि सह-डिज़ाइन करता है**, तब तक वह **श्रम बाज़ार की वास्तविकताओं** से पीछे ही रहेगी

Why do Sector Skill Councils fail सेक्टर स्किल काउंसिल क्यों असफल होती हैं

- The most serious **structural failure** in India's skilling ecosystem lies with the **Sector Skill Councils (SSCs)**
भारत के स्किलिंग इकोसिस्टम की सबसे गंभीर **संरचनात्मक विफलता** सेक्टर स्किल काउंसिल (SSC) से जुड़ी हुई है
- **SSCs were created with a clear mandate to act as industry-facing institutions that define standards ensure relevance and anchor employability**
SSCs को स्पष्ट **मंडेट** के साथ बनाया गया था ताकि वे **उद्योग से जुड़ी संस्थाएं** बनें जो मानक तय करें प्रासंगिकता सुनिश्चित करें और **रोज़गारयोग्यता** को आधार दें
- **They were meant to own the skilling value chain from identifying industry demand to certifying job readiness**
- **Today responsibility is fragmented training is delivered by one entity assessment by another certification by SSCs and placement by someone else if at all**
आज जिम्मेदारी **बिखर चुकी** है प्रशिक्षण कोई देता है मूल्यांकन कोई और करता है प्रमाणन SSCs करते हैं और प्लेसमेंट कोई और या कभी होता ही नहीं



- Unlike higher education or **technical institutions** where reputational risk enforces **accountability** the skilling system diffuses responsibility without consequence
उच्च शिक्षा और तकनीकी संस्थानों के विपरीत जहां प्रतिष्ठा का डर जवाबदेही तय करता है स्किलिंग सिस्टम में जिम्मेदारी बंट जाती है और किसी पर असर नहीं पड़ता
- This fragmentation has **eroded trust**
इस बिखराव ने विश्वास को कमजोर किया है
- Employer surveys show that **SSC credentials** have limited value compared to **degrees or prior work experience**
नियोक्ता सर्वे बताते हैं कि **SSC प्रमाणपत्रों** की अहमियत डिग्री या पूर्व कार्य अनुभव से कम है
- **Standards exist but employers do not reliably hire against them**
मानक मौजूद हैं लेकिन नियोक्ता उनके आधार पर भरोसेमंद तरीके से भर्ती नहीं करते
- **Industry led certification models** show what is missing
उद्योग आधारित प्रमाणीकरण मॉडल यह दिखाते हैं कि क्या कमी है
- **Certifications from AWS Google Cloud Microsoft** work because the certifier's **credibility** is at stake
AWS गूगल क्लाउड माइक्रोसॉफ्ट के प्रमाणपत्र इसलिए चलते हैं क्योंकि वहां प्रमाणित करने वाले की विश्वसनीयता दांव पर होती है
- **Assessments are fair and graded** not binary and employers know what a certified candidate can do
मूल्यांकन **निष्पक्ष और ग्रेडेड** होता है केवल पास फेल नहीं और नियोक्ता जानते हैं कि प्रमाणित उम्मीदवार क्या कर सकता है
- **SSCs were meant to play this role at a national scale**
SSCs को यही भूमिका राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर निभानी थी
- **Instead they have limited themselves to standards creation without owning outcomes**
लेकिन उन्होंने खुद को केवल मानक बनाने तक सीमित कर लिया और परिणामों की जिम्मेदारी नहीं ली
- **Until SSCs are held accountable for employability** certification will remain **symbolic** rather than economic
- **India's skilling challenge is a failure of accountability** not of intent or **government funding**
भारत की स्किलिंग चुनौती जवाबदेही की कमी है न कि नीयत या सरकारी फंडिंग की
- **Expanding NAPS** and deepening **industry integration** can become the fastest levers to improve **job readiness** at scale
NAPS का विस्तार और उद्योग से गहरा जुड़ाव बड़े पैमाने पर नौकरी की तैयारी सुधारने का सबसे तेज़ तरीका बन सकता है
- Initiatives like **PM SETU** and modernisation of **ITIs** show stronger execution models
PM SETU और **ITI आधुनिकीकरण** जैसी पहलें बेहतर क्रियान्वयन मॉडल की ओर संकेत करती हैं
- These models build **industry ownership** and **accountability** into programme design
इन मॉडलों में कार्यक्रम की संरचना में ही उद्योग की हिस्सेदारी और जवाबदेही शामिल होती है
- **When skills are embedded in degrees**
जब कौशल को डिग्री में जोड़ा जाता है
- **When industry is treated as a co owner**
जब उद्योग को सह स्वामी माना जाता है
- **When SSCs are made answerable for placement outcomes**
जब SSCs को प्लेसमेंट के परिणामों के लिए जवाबदेह बनाया जाता है
- **Skilling moves from fragmented welfare intervention** to a pillar of **national economic empowerment**
तब स्किलिंग बिखरी हुई कल्याण योजना से बदलकर राष्ट्रीय आर्थिक सशक्तिकरण का आधार बन जाती है
- That shift is not just about **jobs**
यह बदलाव केवल नौकरियों तक सीमित नहीं है
- **It is about the dignity of labour productivity** and India's ability to convert its **demographic strength** into **sustained national growth**
यह श्रम की गरिमा उत्पादकता और भारत की अपनी जनसांख्यिकीय शक्ति को स्थायी राष्ट्रीय विकास में बदलने की क्षमता से जुड़ा है



Loan Support

- Street vendors are eligible for an **initial working capital loan of ₹10,000**.
- On timely repayment, vendors become eligible for **higher loan tranches of ₹20,000 and ₹50,000**.
- These loans are **collateral-free** and provided through scheduled commercial banks, regional rural banks, small finance banks, and cooperative banks.

Interest Subsidy

- The Government **provides an interest subsidy of 7 percent per annum** on timely repayment of loans.
- This subsidy is directly credited to the beneficiary's loan account.

Digital Incentives

- Vendors using **digital modes of payment** such as UPI, QR codes, and mobile wallets receive **cashback incentives**.

Eligibility under PM SETU

- The scheme covers **street vendors engaged in vending on or before 24 March 2020**.
- Vendors are identified through surveys conducted by **Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)**.
- Even vendors without formal identity cards can apply through a **Letter of Recommendation** issued by local authorities.

Institutional Framework

- The **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs** is responsible for policy design and national-level coordination.
- **State governments and Urban Local Bodies** implement the scheme on the ground.
- **Public and private sector banks** act as lending institutions.
- **Common Service Centres (CSCs)** assist vendors in application and digital onboarding.

Recent Updates and Progress

- According to official government data, **more than 50 lakh street vendors** have benefited from the scheme since its launch.
- The scheme has been extended beyond its initial phase due to its **positive impact on urban livelihoods**.
- PM SETU has been integrated with **Jan Dhan accounts, Aadhaar, and mobile connectivity**,



Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
Government of India

PM SVANidhi

75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

SVANidhi Se Samriddhi

Building safety net for Street Vendors' Families

55 lakh scheme sanctions for more than **22 lakh** street vendors families across 8 central government welfare scheme under **PM SVANidhi**

<https://pmsvanidhi.mohua.gov.in/> @pmsvanidhi



Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
Government of India

PM SVANidhi

PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi

पीएम स्वनिधि के संग अब डिजिटल लेनदेन पर केशबैक कमाएँ

Cash Backs in DBT per month:

- 50 after 50 transactions
- 75 after 100 transactions
- 100 after 200 transactions*
- * More than 25 each

Banks/ Digital Aggregators to Provide durable QR code for free

Handholding at place of business

#AatmaNirbharVendor



strengthening the JAM trinity framework.

- The government continues to refine the scheme to improve **credit flow and digital inclusion**.

Crorepati I-T filers surge 22% in AY26 even as tax base stagnates

GS III: Economy

Shishir Sinha
NEW DELHI

The number of individuals declaring annual incomes of over ₹1 crore has increased sharply in India, even as the overall base of income-tax filers has seen minimal expansion, underscoring a growing concentration of reported income at the upper end.

Data from the Income-Tax e-filing portal show that individuals declaring incomes above ₹1 crore rose by around 22% in FY26, a striking jump given that the total number of returns filed grew by only about 1% during the same period.

December 31, 2025, was the deadline for filing income-tax returns for Assessment Year (AY) 2025-

26, although updated returns can still be filed till March 31, 2030.

Data showed that during FY26, between April 1 and December 31, over 9 crore returns were filed compared with 8.92 crore during the corresponding period of FY25, indicating a modest growth of 1.22%.

Data for the fiscal year includes e-returns (excluding online rectifications) filed for various Assessment Years, but largely the current one.

Income shift

While the headline growth in total filers remains muted, the composition of income reported has shifted materially upward.

The number of individuals filing returns with income up to ₹5 lakh de-



Top-end trends: The four highest brackets, from ₹50 lakh to over ₹10 crore, have each recorded over 20% growth. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

clined, but all six higher income slabs – from above ₹5 lakh to over ₹10 crore – recorded double-digit growth.

The four highest bracket-

ets, ranging from ₹50 lakh to over ₹10 crore, have each recorded growth of more than 20%, with the top income category registering the fastest increase.

Tax experts say the surge reflects a mix of stronger income growth at the top-end and improved reporting, rather than a statistical anomaly. Sandeep Bhalla, Partner at Dhruva Advisors, attributed the trend to a broad-based increase in economic activity.

“We are seeing tangible improvements in household earnings at the upper end, driven by wage growth, stronger bonus cycles and healthier business profitability,” Bhalla said. Echoing the view, Sandeep Sehgal, Partner - Tax at AKM Global, said the roughly 21% rise in crorepati filers despite only a 1% increase in total returns highlights better capture of high incomes within the tax net.

“Tighter reporting norms, wider use of data analytics, and greater transparency through AIS and TDS/TCS tracking have significantly curtailed underreporting,” Mr. Sehgal said, adding that the surge likely reflects improved compliance rather than sudden creation of new wealth.

Bhalla said the consistent expansion across multiple high-income brackets points to a maturing tax system.

“The data signals a genuine upward trend in prosperity and income generation, marked by rising urban incomes, stronger business performance and a compliance-driven expansion of the formal tax base,” he said.

(The writer is with The Hindu businessline)

Crorepati I-T lers surge 22% in AY26 even as tax base stagnates

एवाई26 में करोड़पति आयकर रिटर्न दाखिल करने वालों की संख्या 22% बढ़ी, जबकि कर आधार स्थिर रहा

- While the headline growth in total less remains muted, the composition of income reported has shifted materially **upward**.
- The four highest brackets, ranging from **₹50 lakh to over ₹10 crore**, have each recorded **growth of more than 20%**, with the top income category registering the fastest increase. **₹50 लाख से लेकर ₹10 करोड़** से अधिक तक के चार सबसे ऊंचे आय वर्गों में प्रत्येक में **20%** से अधिक की वृद्धि हुई, जिसमें शीर्ष आय वर्ग में सबसे तेज़ बढ़ोतरी दर्ज की गई।
- Tax experts say the surge reflects a mix of **stronger income growth** at the top-end and **improved reporting**, rather than a statistical anomaly.
- “Tighter reporting norms, wider use of **data analytics**, and greater transparency through **AIS** and **TDS/TCS** tracking have significantly curtailed **underreporting**,” Mr. Sehgal said, adding that the surge likely reflects improved **compliance** rather than sudden creation of new wealth.
- “The data signals a genuine **upward trend in prosperity and income generation**, marked by **rising urban incomes**, **stronger business performance** and a **compliance-driven expansion of the formal tax base**,”.

GS Paper III: S&T,

TOPICS COVERED

07 January 2026

1. **ISRO calls for proposals from Indian scientists to analyse data from Aditya-L1**
ISRO ने आदित्य-L1 के डेटा के विश्लेषण के लिए भारतीय वैज्ञानिकों से प्रस्ताव आमंत्रित किए
2. **New way to study surfaces brings 'real world' pressure into the lab**



	सतहों का अध्ययन करने का नया तरीका प्रयोगशाला में 'वास्तविक दुनिया' का दबाव लाता है
3.	What are biomaterials and how do they work? बायोमैटीरियल्स क्या हैं और वे कैसे काम करते हैं?

Wellness drive



Smiles assured: Students at Government Girls LP School in Kochi, Kerala reacting to deworming pills distributed on Tuesday as part of National Deworming Day. THULASI KAKKAT

Smiles assured: Students at Government Girls LP School in Kochi, Kerala reacting to deworming pills distributed on Tuesday as part of **National Deworming Day**.

National Deworming Day

- **National Deworming Day (NDD)** is a public health initiative of the **Government of India** aimed at eliminating **intestinal worm infections** among children and adolescents.
- It is observed **twice every year**, usually in **February and August**, across all States and Union Territories.
- The programme focuses on improving **nutritional status, cognitive development, school attendance, and overall health** of children by reducing the burden of parasitic infections.

Meaning and Concept

- National Deworming Day involves the **mass administration of anti-helminthic medicines**, mainly **Albendazole**, to children.
- The programme targets **children because they are most vulnerable to soil-transmitted helminth infections due to poor sanitation and hygiene practices**.

NATIONAL DEWORMING DAY

9 WAYS TO PREVENT WORM INFECTION



Treat dogs who have worm infection



Wash your hands before and after eating



Wash your hands after using the bathroom



Do not defecate in open



Keep food covered & drink clean water



Wash fruits and vegetables before eating



Boil vegetables for a minute before cooking



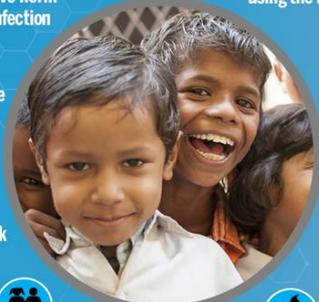
Keep children's fingernails short and change their underwear daily



Do not eat raw beef, pork or fish



Ensure proper disposal of animal and human faeces

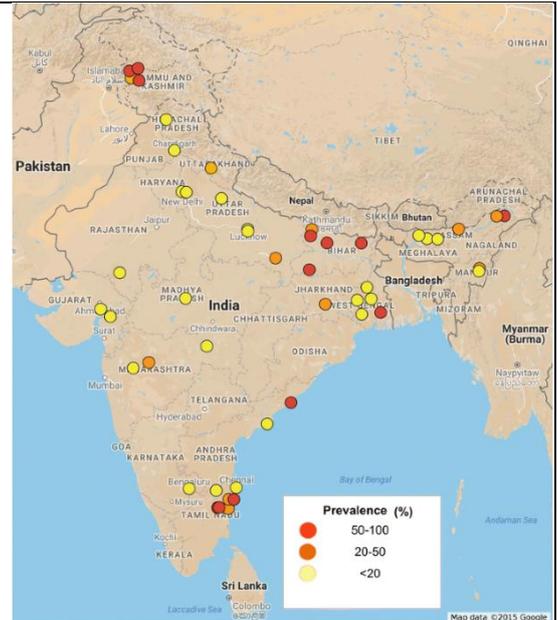




- Deworming is recognised as a **cost-effective public health intervention** that directly contributes to child development and educational outcomes.
- **National Deworming Day was launched in February 2015 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.**

Target Group

- The programme covers **all children and adolescents aged 1 to 19 years**.
- Children aged **1 to 5 years** are covered through **Anganwadi centres**.
- Children aged **6 to 19 years** are covered through **schools**, including government, government-aided, and private institutions.
- Out-of-school children are reached through **community platforms and special drives**.

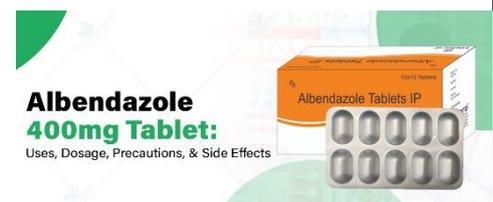


Diseases Addressed under National Deworming Day

- National Deworming Day targets **soil-transmitted helminths**, which include **roundworm, hookworm, and whipworm**.
- These worms spread through **contaminated soil, unsafe drinking water, and poor sanitation practices**.
- Chronic infection leads to **anaemia, malnutrition, stunted growth, fatigue, and poor learning ability**.

Medicine Used

- The programme administers **Albendazole**, which is safe, effective, and recommended by the **World Health Organization**.
- The medicine is given as a **single dose**, making it suitable for large-scale public health delivery.



Mode of Implementation

- Deworming tablets are distributed in **schools and Anganwadi centres** by trained teachers and frontline health workers.
- **Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs), ASHA workers, and Anganwadi workers** support supervision and follow-up.
- A **National Mop-Up Day** is organised after the main day to cover children who missed the first round.
- The **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** is the nodal ministry for the programme.
- The **Ministry of Education** and the **Ministry of Women and Child Development** play a key role in implementation.
- Technical support is provided by organisations such as the **World Health Organization**.



ISRO calls for proposals from Indian scientists to analyse data from Aditya-L1

GS III: S&T

Hemanth C.S.
BENGALURU

On the second anniversary of India's maiden solar mission Aditya-L1 reaching the Lagrangian point (L1), the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on Tuesday made the Announcement of Opportunity (AO) soliciting proposals for the first AO cycle observations.

The Aditya-L1 spacecraft reached the L1 point on January 6, 2024, 127 days after it was launched on September 2, 2023, and since then has been making continuous and comprehensive observations of the Sun from the Sun-Earth L1 point.

According to ISRO, scientific data from the mission are regularly re-



The Aditya-L1 spacecraft reached the L1 point on January 6, 2024, 127 days after it was launched. FILE PHOTO

leased in public domain for global scientific utilisation.

To maximise return

"At present there are more than 23 TB data in public domain and several important scientific results have been published in International peer reviewed jour-

nals. To further maximise the scientific return from this unique mission, the ISRO has released the first AO inviting proposals from the Indian solar physics community for Aditya-L1 observation time," ISRO said.

It added that this L1

point, located approximately 1.5 million kilometers away from Earth, offers the unique advantage of continuous, uninterrupted observation of the Sun, free from eclipses or occultation.

This announcement soliciting proposals for Aditya-L1 observation is open to Indian scientists and researchers residing and working at institutes, universities and colleges in India who are involved in research in the area of solar science. Eligible applicants must be equipped to submit proposals as Principal Investigators (PIs) for solar observations with necessary scientific and technical justification and analyse the data, if observation is made based on approvals.

ISRO calls for proposals from Indian scientists to analyse data from Aditya-L1 ISRO ने आदित्य-L1 के डेटा के विश्लेषण के लिए भारतीय वैज्ञानिकों से प्रस्ताव आमंत्रित किए

- The **Aditya-L1 spacecraft** reached the **L1 point** on **January 6, 2024**, **127 days** after it was launched on **September 2, 2023**, and since then has been making **continuous and comprehensive observations** of the **Sun** from the **Sun-Earth L1 point**.
- It added that this **L1 point**, located approximately **1.5 million kilometers** away from **Earth**, offers the **unique advantage of continuous, uninterrupted observation** of the **Sun**, free from **eclipses or occultation**.



New way to study surfaces brings 'real world' pressure into the lab

GS III: S&T
Vasudevan Mukunth

To understand how materials work, whether a metal in a car's catalytic converter or the substances in a battery, scientists need to look at their surfaces at the atomic level.

One of the best tools for this is X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS). A device shoots X-rays at a material and measures the properties of electrons that bounce off, revealing to researchers exactly what elements are present and how they're bonding.

The problem is that there's a major catch. XPS usually requires a vacuum (a space with no air). If there are gas molecules around, they block the electrons before they reach the detector. This creates a problem called the pressure gap'.

While XPS works great in a vacuum, real-world chemical reactions usually happen under atmospheric pressure, about 1 atm. Studying a catalyst in a vacuum is a bit like trying to study how a fish swims by looking at it on dry land: you aren't seeing its natural behaviour.

Currently, to bridge this gap, scientists often have to travel to large, stadium-sized facilities called synchrotrons.

If the technology proves reliable, scientists could study surface chemistry at realistic pressures in their own labs, rather than applying for time at synchrotron facilities

they're bonding.

एक उपकरण पदार्थ पर एक्स-रे डालता है और लौटकर आने वाले इलेक्ट्रॉनों के गुणों को मापता है, जिससे शोधकर्ताओं को यह पता चलता है कि कौन-कौन से तत्व मौजूद हैं और वे किस तरह बंधन बना रहे हैं।

- The problem is that there's a major catch, **XPS usually requires a vacuum** (a space with no air).
समस्या यह है कि इसमें एक बड़ी बाधा है, क्योंकि **XPS** को सामान्यतः **वैक्यूम** यानी बिना हवा की जगह की आवश्यकता होती है।
- **If there are gas molecules around, they block the electrons before they reach the detector.**
यदि आसपास **गैस के अणु** हों तो वे इलेक्ट्रॉनों को डिटेक्टर तक पहुँचने से पहले ही रोक देते हैं।
- **This creates a problem called the pressure gap.**
इससे **प्रेसर गैप** नामक समस्या पैदा होती है।

Now, a team of researchers from ShanghaiTech University and other institutions has published a paper in *Photon Science* proposing a solution that could fit in a standard laboratory.

The researchers modified a standard laboratory XPS machine to handle high pressures. Their innovation was a piece of engineering usually associated with rocket engines: a de Laval nozzle.

A de Laval nozzle is a tube that pinches in the middle and flares out at the end. This shape accelerates gas flowing through it to supersonic speeds. In the study, the researchers used the nozzle to shoot a focused jet of gas directly at the sample surface.

According to the paper, the localised pressure creates a small zone up to 1 atm right on the sample's surface. Because the gas is moving so fast and is focused, the pressure drops off rapidly just a few millimeters away, keeping the rest of the machine in a vacuum, sparing the detectors.

The team used computer simulations and a custom pressure sensor to verify the pressure at the sample surface actually reached 1 atm.

To test the system, the researchers examined a sample of platinum while spraying it with nitrogen gas.

In a standard XPS machine, filling the chamber with this much gas would make it impossible to see the sample. But the researchers reported their gas jet created a layer of high pressure only about 20µm thick, thin enough to also allow the electrons from the platinum to still reach the detector.

According to the study, the team successfully detected signals from both the nitrogen gas and the platinum surface at pressures up to 1 atm. They also found that as the pressure increased, the signal from the surface got fainter.

If the technology proves reliable, scientists could study surface chemistry at realistic pressures in their own labs, rather than applying for time at synchrotron facilities. They could also better understand how catalysts break down pollutants or how rust forms in real time, potentially leading to more efficient industrial processes.

researchers exactly what **elements** are present and how

New way to study surfaces brings 'real world' pressure into the lab

सतहों का अध्ययन करने का नया तरीका प्रयोगशाला में 'वास्तविक दुनिया' का दबाव लाता है

• To understand how materials work, whether a metal in a car's **catalytic converter** or the substances in a **battery**, scientists need to look at their surfaces at the **atomic level**.

कार के **कैटलिटिक कन्वर्टर** में मौजूद धातु हो या **बैटरी** के भीतर के पदार्थ, इन सभी को समझने के लिए वैज्ञानिकों को उनकी सतहों को **परमाणु स्तर** पर देखना पड़ता है।

• One of the best tools for this is **X-ray photoelectron spectroscopy (XPS)**.

इसके लिए सबसे अच्छे उपकरणों में से एक है **एक्स-रे फोटोइलेक्ट्रॉन स्पेक्ट्रोस्कोपी (XPS)**।

• **A device shoots X-rays at a material and measures the properties of electrons that bounce off, revealing to**



- While **XPS** works great in a vacuum, real-world chemical reactions usually happen under **atmospheric pressure**, about **1 atm**.
जहाँ **XPS** वैक्यूम में बेहतरीन काम करता है, वहीं वास्तविक दुनिया की रासायनिक अभिक्रियाएँ आमतौर पर **वायुमंडलीय दबाव**, लगभग **1 एटीएम**, पर होती हैं।
- Studying a catalyst in a vacuum is a bit like trying to study **how a fish swims by looking at it on dry land, you aren't seeing its natural behaviour**.
वैक्यूम में किसी उत्प्रेरक का अध्ययन करना ऐसा ही है जैसे **सूखी ज़मीन** पर रखी मछली को देखकर यह समझना कि वह **पानी में कैसे तैरती है**, यानी उसका **स्वाभाविक व्यवहार** नहीं दिखता।
- Currently, **to bridge this gap, scientists often have to travel to large, stadium-sized facilities called synchrotrons**.
- This shape accelerates gas flowing through it to **supersonic speeds**.
यह आकार उसमें से गुजरने वाली गैस को **सुपरसोनिक गति** तक पहुँचा देता है।
- If the technology proves **reliable**, scientists could **study surface chemistry at realistic pressures** in their own labs, rather than applying for time at **synchrotron facilities**.
यदि यह तकनीक **विश्वसनीय** साबित होती है, तो वैज्ञानिक अपने ही प्रयोगशालाओं में वास्तविक दबाव पर **सतह रसायन** का अध्ययन कर सकेंगे, बजाय **सिंक्रोट्रॉन केंद्रों** में समय माँगने के।
- They could also **better understand how catalysts break down pollutants or how rust forms in real time, potentially leading to more efficient industrial processes**.
इससे वे यह भी बेहतर समझ सकेंगे कि **उत्प्रेरक प्रदूषकों को कैसे तोड़ते हैं** या **जंग** वास्तविक समय में कैसे बनती है, जो आगे चलकर अधिक **कुशल औद्योगिक प्रक्रियाओं** का मार्ग खोल सकता है।

What are biomaterials and how do they work?

How can indigenous biomaterials reduce dependence on fossil-based imports?

SS III-S&T
Shambhavi Naik

The story so far:
As countries look to shift to cleaner processes to manufacture consumer products, be it **plastics or textiles**, biomaterials will become the new frontier of materials engineering.

What are biomaterials?
Biomaterials are materials derived wholly or partly from biological sources, or engineered using biological processes, that are designed to replace or interact with conventional materials. They are increasingly used across sectors such as packaging, textiles, construction, and healthcare. Biomaterials can be broadly categorised into three types: drop-in biomaterials, which are chemically identical to petroleum-based materials and can be used in existing manufacturing systems (such as bio-PET); drop-out biomaterials, which are chemically different and require new processing or end-of-life systems (such as

MOB

polylactic acid or PLA); and novel biomaterials, which offer new properties not found in conventional materials, such as self-healing materials, bioactive implants, and advanced composites.

Why does India need biomaterials?
For India, biomaterials address multiple goals, including environmental sustainability, industrial growth, revenue generation, and supporting farmer livelihoods through a single pathway. Indigenous biomaterials biomaterials can reduce India's heavy dependence on fossil-based imports for plastics, chemicals, and materials. It would also enable diversified value for agricultural feedstocks and residues, offering farmers new income streams beyond food markets. As global regulations and consumer preferences shift toward low-carbon and circular products, biomaterials position the Indian industry to remain competitive in export markets. Biomaterials also support domestic policy goals around waste reduction, such as the ban on single-use

plastics and climate action goals.

Where does India stand today?
India's biomaterials sector, spanning bioplastics, biopolymers, and bio-derived materials, is rapidly emerging as a strategic industrial and sustainability opportunity, with the bioplastics market alone valued at around \$500 million in 2024 and forecast to grow strongly through the decade. Balrampur Chini Mills planned PLA plant investment in Uttar Pradesh is one of the biggest investments in India. Domestic innovation includes startups like Phool.co, converting temple flower waste into biomaterials and Praj Industries, who have their own demonstration-level bioplastics plant in progress. Although India has a rich agricultural base, in some sectors, there is foreign dependence for the technologies required for the transformation of feedstocks into market-ready final products.

What is the way forward?
India has an advantage in building a

biomaterials industry, but some issues would need to be addressed first. If feedstocks also do not scale with increased demand, there could be feedstock competition with food sources. Similarly, aggressive agricultural practices could lead to water stress and soil deterioration. Further, weak waste-management and composting infrastructure could undermine environmental benefits. Fragmented policy coordination across agriculture, environment, and industry may slow adoption, and failure to move quickly could leave India dependent on imports as other countries scale faster.

To capitalise on this sector, policy actions include scaling biomaterials infrastructure (especially fermentation and polymerisation capacity), improving feedstock productivity for crops such as sugarcane, maize, and agricultural residues using emerging technologies, and investing in R&D and standards to develop both drop-in and novel biomaterials.

Clear regulatory definitions, labelling norms, and end-of-life pathways (recycling or industrial composting) are essential to build consumer and industry confidence.

Government procurement, time-bound incentives under frameworks, and support for pilot plants and shared facilities can help de-risk early investments.

Shambhavi Naik is chairperson, Takshashila Institution's Health & Life Sciences Policy

THE GIST

▼ Biomaterials derived from biological sources are increasingly used across sectors and can reduce dependence on fossil-based imports while supporting environmental sustainability, industrial growth, and farmer livelihoods.

▼ India's biomaterials sector is emerging as a strategic opportunity, but scaling biomaterials infrastructure, feedstocks, waste-management systems, and policy coordination is essential to remain competitive as other countries scale faster.

What are biomaterials and how do they work?

बायोमैटीरियल्स क्या हैं और वे कैसे काम करते हैं?

- As countries look to shift to cleaner processes to manufacture consumer products be it plastics or textiles biomaterials will become the new frontier of materials engineering
जब देश उपभोक्ता उत्पादों के निर्माण में स्वच्छ प्रक्रियाओं की ओर बढ़ रहे हैं चाहे वह प्लास्टिक हो या वस्त्र बायोमैटीरियल्स मटेरियल इंजीनियरिंग का नया मोर्चा बनेंगे



What are biomaterials बायोमैटीरियल्स क्या हैं

- **Biomaterials are materials derived wholly or partly from biological sources or engineered using biological processes that are designed to replace or interact with conventional materials**
बायोमैटीरियल्स वे सामग्री हैं जो पूरी तरह या आंशिक रूप से जैविक स्रोतों से प्राप्त होती हैं या जैविक प्रक्रियाओं से तैयार की जाती हैं और जिन्हें पारंपरिक सामग्रियों को बदलने या उनके साथ काम करने के लिए डिज़ाइन किया गया है
- They are increasingly used across sectors such as **packaging, textiles, construction and healthcare**
इनका उपयोग तेजी से **पैकेजिंग वस्तु निर्माण और स्वास्थ्य सेवा** जैसे क्षेत्रों में बढ़ रहा है
- Biomaterials can be broadly categorised into **three types**
बायोमैटीरियल्स को मोटे तौर पर **तीन प्रकारों** में बांटा जा सकता है
- **Drop in biomaterials which are chemically identical to petroleum based materials and can be used in existing manufacturing systems such as bio PET**
ड्रॉप इन बायोमैटीरियल्स जो **रासायनिक रूप से पेट्रोलियम आधारित सामग्रियों के समान** होते हैं और मौजूदा विनिर्माण प्रणालियों में इस्तेमाल किए जा सकते हैं जैसे **बायो पीईटी**
- **Drop out biomaterials which are chemically different and require new processing or end of life systems such as polylactic acid PLA**
ड्रॉप आउट बायोमैटीरियल्स जो **रासायनिक रूप से अलग** होते हैं और जिनके लिए नई प्रोसेसिंग या अंत उपयोग प्रणालियों की आवश्यकता होती है जैसे **पॉलीलैक्टिक एसिड पीएलए**
- **Novel biomaterials which offer new properties not found in conventional materials such as self healing materials bioactive implants and advanced composites**
नवीन बायोमैटीरियल्स जो पारंपरिक सामग्रियों में न मिलने वाले **नए गुण** प्रदान करते हैं जैसे **स्वयं मरम्मत करने वाली सामग्री बायोएक्टिव इम्प्लांट और उन्नत कंपोज़िट**

Why does India need biomaterials

भारत को बायोमैटीरियल्स की आवश्यकता क्यों है

- For India biomaterials address multiple goals including **environmental sustainability industrial growth revenue generation and farmer livelihoods through a single pathway**
भारत के लिए बायोमैटीरियल्स **पर्यावरणीय स्थिरता औद्योगिक विकास राजस्व सृजन और किसानों की आजीविका** जैसे कई लक्ष्यों को एक ही मार्ग से पूरा करते हैं
- **Indigenous biomaterials biomanufacturing can reduce India's heavy dependence on fossil based imports for plastics chemicals and materials**
स्वदेशी बायोमैटीरियल्स का बायोमैनुफैक्चरिंग भारत की **जीवाश्म आधारित आयातों पर निर्भरता** को कम कर सकता है
- It would also **enable diversified value for agricultural feedstocks and residues offering farmers new income streams beyond food markets**
यह कृषि कच्चे माल और अवशेषों के लिए **विविध मूल्य संवर्धन** संभव करेगा जिससे किसानों को खाद्य बाजारों के अलावा नए आय स्रोत मिलेंगे
- **As global regulations and consumer preferences shift toward low carbon and circular products biomaterials position Indian industry to remain competitive in export markets**
जैसे जैसे वैश्विक नियम और उपभोक्ता प्राथमिकताएं **लो कार्बन और सर्कुलर उत्पादों** की ओर बढ़ रही हैं बायोमैटीरियल्स भारतीय उद्योग को **निर्यात बाजारों** में प्रतिस्पर्धी बनाए रखते हैं
- Biomaterials also **support domestic policy goals around waste reduction such as the ban on single use plastics and climate action goals**
बायोमैटीरियल्स **कचरा घटाने** जैसे घरेलू नीति लक्ष्यों को भी समर्थन देते हैं जैसे **सिंगल यूज़ प्लास्टिक पर प्रतिबंध और जलवायु कार्रवाई लक्ष्य**

Where does India stand today

आज भारत कहां खड़ा है

- **India's biomaterials sector spanning bioplastics, biopolymers and bio derived materials is rapidly emerging as a strategic industrial and sustainability opportunity**



भारत का बायोमैटीरियल्स क्षेत्र जिसमें **बायोप्लास्टिक्स बायोपॉलिमर और जैव-आधारित सामग्री** शामिल हैं तेजी से एक रणनीतिक औद्योगिक और स्थिरता अवसर के रूप में उभर रहा है

- The **bioplastics market alone is valued at around 500 million dollars in 2024 and is forecast to grow strongly through the decade**
केवल बायोप्लास्टिक्स बाजार का मूल्य **2024 में लगभग 500 मिलियन डॉलर** आंका गया है और इसके दशक भर तेज़ी से बढ़ने का अनुमान है
- **Balrampur Chini Mills planned PLA plant investment in Uttar Pradesh is one of the biggest investments in India**
बलरामपुर चीनी मिल्स द्वारा **उत्तर प्रदेश** में प्रस्तावित पीएलए संयंत्र निवेश भारत के सबसे बड़े निवेशों में से एक है
- **Domestic innovation includes startups like Phool.co converting temple flower waste into biomaterials**
घरेलू नवाचार में **फूल डॉट को** जैसे स्टार्टअप शामिल हैं जो मंदिरों के फूलों के कचरे को बायोमैटीरियल्स में बदलते हैं
- And **Praj Industries** which have their own demonstration level bioplastics plant in progress और **प्राज इंडस्ट्रीज़** जिनका अपना डेमोंस्ट्रेशन स्तर का बायोप्लास्टिक्स संयंत्र निर्माणाधीन है
- **Although India has a rich agricultural base in some sectors there is foreign dependence for technologies required to transform feedstocks into market ready final products**
हालांकि भारत के पास मजबूत कृषि आधार है फिर भी कुछ क्षेत्रों में कच्चे माल को बाज़ार योग्य उत्पादों में बदलने वाली तकनीकों के लिए **विदेशी निर्भरता** बनी हुई है

What is the way forward आगे का रास्ता क्या है

- India has an advantage in building a biomaterials industry but some issues need to be addressed first
भारत को बायोमैटीरियल्स उद्योग विकसित करने में बढ़त है लेकिन पहले कुछ मुद्दों को सुलझाना होगा
- **If feedstocks do not scale with increased demand there could be competition with food sources**
यदि कच्चा माल बढ़ती मांग के साथ नहीं बढ़ा तो **खाद्य स्रोतों के साथ प्रतिस्पर्धा** हो सकती है
- **Aggressive agricultural practices could lead to water stress and soil deterioration**
आक्रामक कृषि पद्धतियां **जल संकट और मिट्टी के क्षरण** का कारण बन सकती हैं
- **Weak waste management and composting infrastructure could undermine environmental benefits**
कमजोर **कचरा प्रबंधन और कम्पोस्टिंग अवसंरचना** पर्यावरणीय लाभों को कमजोर कर सकती है
- **Fragmented policy coordination across agriculture, environment and industry may slow adoption**
कृषि पर्यावरण और उद्योग के बीच **नीति समन्वय की कमी** अपनाने की गति धीमी कर सकती है
- **Failure to move quickly could leave India dependent on imports as other countries scale faster**
तेज़ी से कदम न उठाने पर भारत **आयात पर निर्भर** रह सकता है जबकि अन्य देश तेज़ी से आगे बढ़ जाएंगे
- To capitalise on this sector policy actions include **scaling biomanufacturing infrastructure especially fermentation and polymerisation capacity**
इस क्षेत्र का लाभ उठाने के लिए नीतिगत कदमों में **बायोमैनुफैक्चरिंग अवसंरचना** का विस्तार शामिल है विशेषकर **फर्मेंटेशन और पॉलिमराइज़ेशन क्षमता**
- **Improving feedstock productivity for crops such as sugarcane maize and agricultural residues using emerging technologies**
उभरती तकनीकों से **गन्ना मक्का और कृषि अवशेषों** जैसे फसलों की **उत्पादकता बढ़ाना**
- **Investing in R and D and standards to develop both drop in and novel biomaterials**
आर एंड डी और मानकों में निवेश कर **ड्रॉप इन और नवीन बायोमैटीरियल्स** दोनों का विकास
- **Clear regulatory definitions labelling norms and end of life pathways such as recycling or industrial composting are essential**
स्पष्ट **नियामक परिभाषाएं लेबलिंग मानक और जीवन अंत मार्ग** जैसे रीसाइक्लिंग या औद्योगिक कम्पोस्टिंग अत्यंत आवश्यक हैं



- These build **consumer and industry confidence**
ये उपभोक्ता और उद्योग का भरोसा बढ़ाते हैं
- **Government procurement time bound incentives and support for pilot plants and shared facilities** can help de risk early investments
सरकारी खरीद समयबद्ध प्रोत्साहन और पायलट संयंत्रों तथा साझा सुविधाओं के लिए समर्थन शुरुआती निवेश के जोखिम को कम कर सकते हैं

GS Paper III: Environment,	
TOPICS COVERED	07 January 2026
1.	Sufferers of poor AQI contribute to the problem too: SC on air pollution खराब AQI से पीड़ित लोग भी समस्या में योगदान देते हैं: वायु प्रदूषण पर सुप्रीम कोर्ट
2.	Not just forests: why grasslands also belong in national climate plans सिर्फ जंगल ही नहीं: राष्ट्रीय जलवायु योजनाओं में घास के मैदानों को भी क्यों शामिल किया जाना चाहिए

Sufferers of poor AQI contribute to the problem too: SC on air pollution

GS III: Environment

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday said the victims of poor air quality index in the national capital are themselves directly or indirectly "contributors" to the perennial problem.

"The sufferers of AQI issue are themselves indirectly contributing to it," the top court observed orally.

Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, heading a Bench comprising Justice Joymalya Bagchi, candidly said past reports and methods employed over the years have failed to improve the air quality. "The weapon which was sought to be evolved, did not come about. Nothing has come out despite all the efforts. Nothing," the CJ said.

The court said there was no clarity even as to what was exactly causing the



Delhi's air quality remained in the 'poor' category on Tuesday with the average Air Quality Index reading of 293. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

pollution. The **problem of pollution and its causes were riddled with conflicting claims, one side accusing farmers for stubble burning while the other side pointing a finger at vehicular pollution.**

"As an expert body, have you been able to identify the causes? Are you convinced about the causes? Which causes are affecting to what extent?"

Chief Justice Kant asked the Centre for Air Quality Management (CAQM), represented by Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati.

The Chief Justice and the *amicus curiae* differed over the exact percentage of contribution of pollution caused by heavy vehicles. *Amicus curiae*, senior advocate Aparajita Singh, said it was 20% while the

Chief Justice suggested it is close to 40%.

"See that is the problem. You have a report saying it is 20% and I looked at another report saying it is 40%," the CJ said addressing Ms. Singh.

The CJ said **curbing the entry of trucks and banning construction to provide clean air would affect the public in another way. Stopping trucks may disrupt the supply of essential commodities and halting construction would affect housing, which many in the capital were in dire need of.**

The CAQM said it had held a meeting on January 2 and would need two months to firm up a plan. The Supreme Court said two months was too long.

"Let us go issue-wise. Experts are there, but we can look at them and suggest ways to go the best way," the CJ said.

Sufferers of poor AQI contribute to the problem too: SC on air pollution
खराब AQI से पीड़ित लोग भी समस्या में योगदान देते हैं: वायु प्रदूषण पर सुप्रीम कोर्ट



- The **Supreme Court** on Tuesday said the victims of poor **air quality index** in the national capital are themselves directly or indirectly “**contributors**” to the perennial problem
सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने मंगलवार को कहा कि राष्ट्रीय राजधानी में खराब **वायु गुणवत्ता सूचकांक** के पीड़ित स्वयं प्रत्यक्ष या अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से इस स्थायी समस्या के “**योगदानकर्ता**” हैं
- “The sufferers of **AQI issue** are themselves indirectly contributing to it,” the top court observed orally
शीर्ष अदालत ने मौखिक टिप्पणी में कहा, “**AQI समस्या** से पीड़ित लोग स्वयं अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से इसमें योगदान दे रहे हैं”
- **Chief Justice of India Surya Kant**, heading a Bench comprising **Justice Joymalya Bagchi**, candidly said past reports and methods employed over the years have failed to improve the air quality
भारत के मुख्य न्यायाधीश सूर्य कांत, न्यायमूर्ति **जॉयमाल्या बागची** वाली पीठ का नेतृत्व करते हुए, स्पष्ट रूप से कहा कि वर्षों में अपनाई गई पिछली रिपोर्टें और तरीके वायु गुणवत्ता में सुधार करने में विफल रहे हैं
- “The weapon which was sought to be evolved, did not come about. Nothing has come out despite all the reports. Nothing,” the **CJI** said
सीजेआई ने कहा, “जिस हथियार को विकसित करने की कोशिश की गई, वह बन ही नहीं पाया। सभी प्रयासों के बावजूद कुछ भी सामने नहीं आया। कुछ भी नहीं”
- The court said there was no clarity even as to what was exactly causing the pollution
अदालत ने कहा कि प्रदूषण का वास्तविक कारण क्या है, इस पर भी कोई स्पष्टता नहीं है
- The problem of pollution and its causes were riddled with conflicting claims, one side accusing farmers for **stubble burning** while the other side pointing a finger at **vehicular pollution**
प्रदूषण की समस्या और उसके कारण विरोधाभासी दावों से भरे हुए हैं, जहां एक पक्ष **पराली जलाने** के लिए किसानों को दोषी ठहराता है, वहीं दूसरा पक्ष **वाहन प्रदूषण** की ओर उंगली उठाता है
- “As an expert body, have you been able to identify the causes? Are you convinced about the causes? Which causes are affecting to what extent?” **Chief Justice Kant** asked the **Centre for Air Quality Management (CAQM)**, represented by **Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati**
मुख्य न्यायाधीश कांत ने **वायु गुणवत्ता प्रबंधन केंद्र (CAQM)** से, जिनका प्रतिनिधित्व **अतिरिक्त सॉलिसिटर जनरल ऐश्वर्या भाटी** कर रही थीं, पूछा, “एक विशेषज्ञ निकाय के रूप में, क्या आप कारणों की पहचान कर पाए हैं? क्या आप कारणों को लेकर आश्वस्त हैं? कौन से कारण किस हद तक प्रभाव डाल रहे हैं?”
- The **Chief Justice** and the **amicus curiae** differed over the exact percentage of contribution of pollution caused by **heavy vehicles**
मुख्य न्यायाधीश और **एमिकस क्यूरी** के बीच **भारी वाहनों** से होने वाले प्रदूषण के योगदान के सटीक प्रतिशत को लेकर मतभेद था
- **Amicus curiae**, senior advocate **Aparajita Singh**, said it was **20%** while the **Chief Justice** suggested it is close to **40%**
एमिकस क्यूरी, वरिष्ठ अधिवक्ता **अपराजिता सिंह** ने कहा कि यह **20%** है, जबकि **मुख्य न्यायाधीश** ने इसे लगभग **40%** बताया
- “See that is the problem. You have a report saying it is **20%** and I looked at another report saying it is **40%**,” the **CJI** said addressing **Ms. Singh**
सीजेआई ने **सुश्री सिंह** को संबोधित करते हुए कहा, “देखिए यही समस्या है। आपके पास एक रिपोर्ट है जो **20%** कहती है और मैंने दूसरी रिपोर्ट देखी जो **40%** कहती है”
- The **CJI** said curbing the entry of **trucks** and banning **construction** to provide clean air would affect the public in another way
सीजेआई ने कहा कि स्वच्छ हवा प्रदान करने के लिए **ट्रकों** की आवाजाही पर रोक और **निर्माण कार्य** पर प्रतिबंध जनता को दूसरे तरीके से प्रभावित करेगा
- Stopping trucks may disrupt the supply of **essential commodities** and halting construction would affect **housing**, which many in the capital were in dire need of
ट्रकों को रोकने से **आवश्यक वस्तुओं** की आपूर्ति बाधित हो सकती है और निर्माण रोकने से **आवास** प्रभावित होगा, जिसकी राजधानी में कई लोगों को अत्यधिक आवश्यकता है
- The **CAQM** said it had held a meeting on **January 2** and would need **two months** to form up a plan
CAQM ने कहा कि उसने **2 जनवरी** को एक बैठक की थी और योजना को अंतिम रूप देने के लिए **दो महीने** की आवश्यकता होगी



Not just forests: why grasslands also belong in national climate plans

Protecting a biome like grasslands cannot happen in isolation but must come about through goals shared by the various U.N. bodies; unfortunately, there are still debates ongoing about whether biodiversity and climate goals align and how institutions can build synergies

GS III: Environment

MOB

Sutirtha Lahiri

The United Nations has declared 2026 to be the 'International Year for Rangelands and Pastoralists'.

In 2022, a group of scientists from institutions in Tanzania, Zambia, the U.K., the U.S., Germany and Canada wrote an open letter urging the parties of the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) to broaden their goals to be inclusive of all biomes on earth, but especially grasslands and savannahs. Their letter, published in *Science*, asserted that even though savannahs are potentially better carbon sinks, forests have hogged the limelight in global climate negotiations. Unfortunately, three years since the letter was written, the UNFCCC climate summits have continued to fall short of addressing this key issue.

The UNFCCC COP30 climate talks took place over the course of 10 days in the city of Belém in Brazil, and it had a major focus on forests. Hosting the bulk of the Amazon River, Brazil had an opportunity to place forests at the centre of its agenda. Early on at the conference, the announcement of the Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF) was exciting to most attendees. With commitments of multi-million-dollar funds from different countries, the TFFF was established to fund countries to keep tropical forests intact.

COP30, which ended with a lack of any concrete roadmap to protect the climate, also signalled a glaring disparity in a global climate action agenda that has continued to favour forests alone. Much like forests, other major biomes the world over are also facing the consequences of climate change and biodiversity loss – and protecting them can also aid climate action.

"Everyone is facing the effects of climate change, but the desert people are facing some of the harshest effects," said Samantha Murray, an Ilka/Wongutha/Nyoongar indigenous person and the CEO of Indigenous Desert Alliance (IDA). "It is getting hotter, and it is getting harder to live here"

The IDA is a network of indigenous community rangers that works to protect and manage the vast desert grasslands that make up more than a third of Australia's landmass.

Just beginning

Grasslands are one of the most threatened ecosystems in the world. The biome has suffered rapid habitat loss due to agriculture, conversion to forests and plantations, the spread of invasive species, and the extraction of fossil fuels. In addition, many governments have suppressed indigenous and local land management techniques such as controlled fires and grazing, leaving forest land to burn during wildfires with greater intensity and to release more carbon into the atmosphere as forests degrade.

Today, the desert grasslands of Australia are reeling under the effects of dry spells and flash floods induced by climate change. These consequences are playing out in tandem with those of the

buffel grass (*Cenchrus ciliaris*), an invasive species of grass that hasn't only replaced native grass but which also burns with higher intensity.

Organisations like the IDA have been at the forefront of bringing more attention to the desert grasslands of Australia. Stewarded by indigenous communities, the IDA has been working on the ground to protect their grasslands through culturally appropriate burning regimes, round-the-clock monitoring by indigenous rangers, and invasive species management.

This said, the fight to preserve grasslands has just begun.

"I still think that in my lifetime, there won't be a chance for me to walk up to someone in Melbourne and ask them about climate change, for them to say, 'yes, it is affecting the deserts of our country'," Samatha said, further highlighting that the grasslands are often seen as nothing more than empty spaces and is thus also insufficiently funded by the government.

No cerrado, no Amazon

The same situation in Australia is echoed around the world. Brazil is home to one of the world's most biodiverse savannahs, called the cerrado. Home to eight of the 12 water systems of Brazil, including major river systems like the Sao Francisco and the Tocantins, the cerrado is stressed; in fact the cerrado grasslands face twice as much range loss due to human activities as well as climate change compared to the Amazon rainforests in the country.

Of late, small-scale efforts have been bringing forth the importance of grasslands at the COP summits. Scientists, members of indigenous and local communities, and policymakers have been coming together to advocate for this imperilled biome. At the COP30 itself, big billboards at the central hall of the venue; public demonstrations by indigenous communities living in the cerrado; and special youth groups formed by the Brazilian ministry with representatives from each of the six biomes in the country all brought issues related to grasslands to the participants' attention, even if these efforts were scattered.

Several side events also highlighted grasslands. In one event called 'Cerrado Amazonia; Conectados Pelas Aguas', Dandara Tonantzin, a federal congresswoman from the state of Minas Gerais in Brazil and coordinator of the Cerrado Defense Group of the Environmental Parliamentary Front, highlighted the crucial role of the cerrado grasslands. In her words: "The Cerrado and the Amazon are two biomes, and brothers, that are connected ecologically. It is important to understand that without the cerrado, there is no Amazon."

A social justice issue

The cerrado today faces multiple pressures from growing agricultural expansion, mining, fire suppression, disenfranchisement of communities' rights to their land, and public policies that protect agribusiness over ecosystems. In addition, 70% of Brazil's agricultural toxic wastes are dumped in this biome,

Recognising the importance of grasslands, valuing their potential for carbon sequestration, integrating grassland protection in countrywide NDCs, while giving local communities the rights to their land, are the first steps in mainstreaming the protection of grasslands

endangering the ecology as well as the people that live there.

"We can still choose another path.

First, by officially recognising territorial rights and secure demarcations for Indigenous peoples and Quilombolas (Afro-descendant communities in Brazil), Dandara said, highlighting that protecting the cerrado is also a social justice issue. "We need to ensure the implementation of inclusive public policies that integrate the participation of traditional communities in the management of natural resources."

Bridging these narratives from the side events to the negotiating rooms of the COP is a long road. By design, the UNFCCC COP focuses almost exclusively on conversations around managing carbon, while biodiversity and land degradation largely remain the talking points for the U.N. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the U.N. Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD). To their credit, however, the CBD and the CCD have made better efforts to recognise grasslands in their programmes.

For example, at the UNCCD COP16 conference in Saudi Arabia, there were efforts to highlight the importance of grasslands and rangelands in achieving land degradation neutrality. Through resolution L15, the UNCCD COP officially recognised that rangelands are complex socio-ecological systems and called on its parties to "prioritise policies and investments" and to "improve tenure security in rangelands".

Building bridges

Protecting a biome like grasslands can't happen in isolation but must come about through goals shared by the various U.N. bodies. Unfortunately, there are still debates ongoing about whether biodiversity and climate goals align and how institutions can build synergies. In 1992, the formation of the three Rio Conventions marked a historic first step in bridging the gap between the UNCBD, the UNFCCC, and the UNCCD – and from there a mechanism to cooperate on goals to address climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation together.

COP30 also saw the active participation of organisations such as the World Wide Fund for Nature and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature on the matter of these overlooked biomes. In a report jointly released during the conference, titled 'Protecting the overlooked carbon sink', authors from these organisations highlighted a growing need to integrate grasslands in climate negotiations. In its policy recommendation, the report stated that

grasslands should be considered in "an integrated manner across all three Rio Conventions to break silos and maximise effectiveness". The report also stated that grasslands must be recognised in the country-specific nationally determined contributions (NDCs), which are national climate action plans that outline a country's commitment to reducing emissions under the Paris Agreement.

Small step for India

Laying bridges between the U.N. bodies is in fact the best way to protect the world's grasslands, and a similar exercise between various branches of the Indian government could benefit the country's grasslands as well. According to a white paper released by the Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE), Bengaluru, at the UNFCCC COP16 in Saudi Arabia, grasslands in India come under the purview of 18 Ministries, each with competing interests and policy goals. While the Union Environment Ministry considers grasslands for afforestation purposes, say, the Ministry of Rural Development publishes the "wasteland atlas of India" that often includes grasslands the atlas deems available for conversion to other uses.

If the governing bodies are unified from the national to the multilateral levels, however, the benefits could trickle down through mechanisms such as the country-specific NDCs. In fact, one of India's eight NDCs is "to create an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent through additional forest and tree cover by 2030." By recognising grasslands as a crucial carbon sink, the Indian government can easily encompass this biome, move away from forest-focused carbon sequestration schemes, and give its own climate mitigation efforts a boost.

In a similar vein, a policy brief shared by a group of researchers from Brazil urged the UNFCCC to "adopt the Ecosystem-Based Approach as an immediate pathway" to conserve and sustainably manage "open ecosystems as adaptation actions, enabling their inclusion in Brazil's NDCs".

Recognising the importance of grasslands as unique ecosystems worthy of attention, valuing their potential for carbon sequestration and ecosystem services, integrating grassland protection in countrywide NDCs, all while giving local communities the rights to their land and management practices – these are essential first steps in mainstreaming the protection and sustenance of grasslands worldwide. Creating bridges between the relevant U.N. bodies such that countries can develop unified policies is also crucial.

All these goals can be achieved if the parties to the U.N. uphold the values of multilateralism and prioritise science and civil society over the fossil fuel and agrobusiness lobbies.

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Not just forests: why grasslands also belong in national climate plans

सिर्फ जंगल ही नहीं: राष्ट्रीय जलवायु योजनाओं में घास के मैदानों को भी क्यों शामिल किया जाना चाहिए



The United Nations has declared 2026 to be the 'International Year for Rangelands and Pastoralists'

- Their letter, published in **Science**, asserted that **even though savannahs are potentially better carbon sinks**, forests have hogged the limelight in global climate negotiations
Science में प्रकाशित उनके पत्र में यह कहा गया कि यद्यपि **सवाना क्षेत्र** संभावित रूप से बेहतर **कार्बन सिंक** हैं, फिर भी वैश्विक जलवायु वार्ताओं में **वनों** ने ही अधिक ध्यान आकर्षित किया है
- The **UNFCCC COP30 climate talks took place over the course of 10 days in the city of Belém in Brazil**, and it had a major focus on **forests**
- Early on at the conference, the announcement of the **Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF)** was exciting to most attendees
सम्मेलन की शुरुआत में ही **ट्रॉपिकल फॉरेस्ट फॉरएवर फ़ैसिलिटी (TFFF)** की घोषणा अधिकांश प्रतिभागियों के लिए उत्साहजनक थी
- With commitments of **multi-million-dollar funds** from different countries, the **TFFF was established to fund countries to keep tropical forests intact**
विभिन्न देशों से मिले **मल्टी-मिलियन-डॉलर फंड** की प्रतिबद्धताओं के साथ, **TFFF** की स्थापना देशों को **उष्णकटिबंधीय वनों को सुरक्षित रखने** के लिए वित्तपोषित करने हेतु की गई
- COP30**, which ended with a lack of any **concrete roadmap** to protect the climate, also signalled a glaring disparity in a global climate action agenda that has continued to favour **forests alone**
- "Everyone is facing the effects of **climate change**, but the **desert people** are facing some of the harshest effects," said **Samantha Murray**, an **Ilka/Wongutha/Nyoongar indigenous person** and the **CEO of Indigenous Desert Alliance (IDA)**
समांथा मरे, जो एक **इल्का/वोंगुथा/न्योंगार** आदिवासी व्यक्ति और **इंडिजिनस डेज़र्ट एलायंस (IDA)** की **सीईओ** हैं, ने कहा, "हर कोई **जलवायु परिवर्तन** के प्रभावों का सामना कर रहा है, लेकिन **रेगिस्तानी समुदाय** सबसे कठोर प्रभाव झेल रहे हैं"
- "It is getting **hotter**, and it is getting **harder to live here**"
"यहाँ **गर्मी बढ़ती** जा रही है, और यहाँ **रहना और कठिन** होता जा रहा है"
- The **IDA is a network of indigenous community rangers** that works to protect and manage the vast **desert grasslands** that make up more than a **third of Australia's landmass**
IDA आदिवासी समुदाय रेंजर्स का एक नेटवर्क है, जो विशाल **रेगिस्तानी घासभूमियों** की रक्षा और प्रबंधन के लिए कार्य करता है, जो **ऑस्ट्रेलिया के कुल भूभाग के एक तिहाई से अधिक** हिस्से का निर्माण करती हैं

Just beginning
अभी शुरुआत ही है

- Grasslands are one of the most threatened ecosystems in the world**
घासभूमि दुनिया की सबसे अधिक **खतरे में पड़ी पारिस्थितिकी प्रणालियों** में से एक हैं
- The biome has suffered rapid **habitat loss** due to **agriculture**, conversion to **forests and plantations**, the spread of **invasive species**, and the extraction of **fossil fuels**
इस बायोम को **कृषि**, **वनों और बागानों में परिवर्तन**, **आक्रामक प्रजातियों** के फैलाव और **जीवाश्म ईंधन** के दोहन के कारण तेज़ी से **आवासीय क्षति** का सामना करना पड़ा है
- In addition, **many governments have suppressed indigenous and local land management techniques** such as **controlled fires and grazing**, leaving forest land to burn during **wildfires** with greater intensity and to release more **carbon** into the atmosphere as forests degrade
इसके अलावा, कई सरकारों ने **नियंत्रित आग और चराई** जैसी **आदिवासी और स्थानीय भूमि प्रबंधन तकनीकों** को दबा दिया है, जिससे **जंगल की आग** के दौरान वन अधिक तीव्रता से जलते हैं और वनों के क्षरण के साथ वातावरण में अधिक **कार्बन** छोड़ते हैं



- Today, the **desert grasslands of Australia** are reeling under the effects of **dry spells and flash floods** induced by **climate change**
आज, ऑस्ट्रेलिया की रेगिस्तानी घासभूमियाँ जलवायु परिवर्तन से उत्पन्न सूखे दौर और अचानक बाढ़ के प्रभावों से जूझ रही हैं
- These consequences are playing out in tandem with those of the **buffel grass (Cenchrus ciliaris)**, an **invasive species** of grass that hasn't only replaced **native grass** but which also **burns with higher intensity**
ये परिणाम **बफेल घास (Cenchrus ciliaris)** के प्रभावों के साथ-साथ सामने आ रहे हैं, जो एक **आक्रामक प्रजाति** है और जिसने न केवल **देशी घास** को प्रतिस्थापित किया है बल्कि यह **अधिक तीव्रता** से जलती भी है
- Organisations like the **IDA** have been at the forefront of bringing more attention to the **desert grasslands of Australia**
- **Brazil** is home to one of the world's most **biodiverse savannahs**, called the **cerrado**
ब्राज़ील दुनिया के सबसे अधिक **जैव-विविध सवाना क्षेत्रों** में से एक **सेराडो** का घर है
- Home to **eight of the 12 water systems of Brazil**, including major river systems like the **Sao Francisco** and the **Tocantins**, the **cerrado** is stressed
सेराडो, जो **ब्राज़ील की 12 में से 8 जल प्रणालियों** का घर है, जिनमें **साओ फ्रांसिस्को** और **टोकैंटिन्स** जैसी प्रमुख नदी प्रणालियाँ शामिल हैं, आज दबाव में है
- In fact the **cerrado grasslands** face **twice as much range loss** due to **human activities** as well as **climate change** compared to the **Amazon rainforests** in the country
- The **cerrado** today faces multiple pressures from growing **agricultural expansion**, **mining**, **fire suppression**, **disenfranchisement of communities' rights to their land**, and **public policies that protect agribusiness over ecosystems**.
आज **सेराडो** बढ़ते **कृषि विस्तार**, **खनन**, **आग को दबाने की नीतियों**, **समुदायों के भूमि अधिकारों के हनन**, और ऐसी **सार्वजनिक नीतियों** से कई दबावों का सामना कर रहा है, जो **पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र** की तुलना में **एग्रीबिज़नेस** की रक्षा करती हैं।
- In addition, **70% of Brazil's agricultural toxic wastes** are dumped in this biome, **endangering the ecology** as well as the **people** that live there.
इसके अलावा, **ब्राज़ील के कृषि विषैले कचरे का 70%** इसी बायोम में डाला जाता है, जिससे **पारिस्थितिकी** और वहाँ रहने वाले **लोगों** दोनों को खतरा होता है।
- "We can still choose another path. First, by **officially recognising territorial rights** and **secure demarcations for Indigenous peoples and Quilombolas (Afro-descendent communities in Brazil)**," **Dandara** said, highlighting that protecting the **cerrado** is also a **social justice issue**.
डंडारा ने कहा, "हम अभी भी दूसरा रास्ता चुन सकते हैं। सबसे पहले, **आदिवासी लोगों और किलोबोलास (ब्राज़ील में अफ्रो-वंशज समुदायों)** के लिए **क्षेत्रीय अधिकारों की आधिकारिक मान्यता** और सुरक्षित **सीमांकन** के माध्यम से," यह रेखांकित करते हुए कि **सेराडो** की रक्षा एक **सामाजिक न्याय का मुद्दा** भी है।
- "We need to ensure the implementation of **inclusive public policies** that integrate the participation of **traditional communities** in the management of **natural resources**."
"हमें ऐसी **समावेशी सार्वजनिक नीतियों** के क्रियान्वयन को सुनिश्चित करना होगा, जो **प्राकृतिक संसाधनों** के प्रबंधन में **पारंपरिक समुदायों** की भागीदारी को एकीकृत करें।"
- Bridging these narratives from the **side events** to the **negotiating rooms of the COP** is a long road.
साइड इवेंट्स से लेकर **COP के वार्ता कक्षों** तक इन विमर्शों को जोड़ना एक लंबा रास्ता है।
- By design, the **UNFCCC COP** focuses almost exclusively on conversations around **managing carbon**, while **biodiversity** and **land degradation** largely remain the talking points for the **U.N. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** and the **U.N. Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD)**.
डिज़ाइन के अनुसार, **UNFCCC COP** लगभग पूरी तरह **कार्बन प्रबंधन** पर केंद्रित रहता है, जबकि **जैव-विविधता** और **भूमि क्षरण** मुख्यतः **संयुक्त राष्ट्र जैव विविधता अभिसमय (CBD)** और **संयुक्त राष्ट्र मरुस्थलीकरण से निपटने का अभिसमय (CCD)** के एजेंडे में रहते हैं।
- To their credit, however, the **CBD** and the **CCD** have made better efforts to recognise **grasslands** in their programmes.
हालाँकि, **CBD** और **CCD** ने अपने कार्यक्रमों में **घासभूमियों** को मान्यता देने के लिए बेहतर प्रयास किए हैं।
- For example, at the **UNCCD COP16 conference in Saudi Arabia**, there were efforts to highlight the importance of **grasslands and rangelands** in achieving **land degradation neutrality**.



उदाहरण के तौर पर, सऊदी अरब में आयोजित UNCCD COP16 सम्मेलन में भूमि क्षरण तटस्थता हासिल करने में घासभूमियों और रेंजलैंड्स के महत्व को उजागर करने के प्रयास किए गए।

- Through **resolution L15**, the **UNCCD COP** officially recognised that **rangelands** are complex **socio-ecological systems** and called on its parties to “**prioritise policies and investments**” and to “**improve tenure security in rangelands**”.
- In **1992**, the formation of the **three Rio Conventions** marked a historic first step in bridging the gap between the **UNCBD**, the **UNFCCC**, and the **UNCCD**, and from there a mechanism to cooperate on goals to address **climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation** together
1992 में तीन रियो कन्वेंशनों का गठन **UNCBD**, **UNFCCC** और **UNCCD** के बीच की खाई को पाटने की दिशा में एक ऐतिहासिक पहला कदम था, जिससे **जलवायु परिवर्तन, जैव विविधता हास और भूमि क्षरण** से निपटने के लिए साझा तंत्र विकसित हुआ
- **COP30** also saw the active participation of organisations such as the **World Wide Fund for Nature** and the **International Union for the Conservation of Nature** on the matter of these **overlooked biomes**
- In its **policy recommendation**, the report stated that **grasslands should be considered in “an integrated manner across all three Rio Conventions to break silos and maximise effectiveness”**
अपनी नीति सिफारिश में रिपोर्ट ने कहा कि घासभूमियों को “तीनों रियो कन्वेंशनों में एकीकृत रूप से देखा जाना चाहिए ताकि अलगाव तोड़ा जा सके और प्रभावशीलता बढ़ाई जा सके”
- The report also stated that **grasslands must be recognised in the country-specific nationally determined contributions (NDCs)**, which are national climate action plans that outline a **country’s commitment to reducing emissions under the Paris Agreement**
रिपोर्ट में यह भी कहा गया कि घासभूमियों को **देश-विशिष्ट राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर निर्धारित योगदान (NDCs)** में मान्यता दी जानी चाहिए, जो **पेरिस समझौते** के तहत **उत्सर्जन घटाने** के लिए देशों की प्रतिबद्धता दर्शाते हैं

Small step for India

भारत के लिए छोटा लेकिन अहम कदम

- According to a **white paper** released by the **Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE)**, Bengaluru, at the **UNFCCC COP16 in Saudi Arabia**, **grasslands in India come under the purview of 18 Ministries**, each with competing interests and policy goals
बेंगलुरु स्थित **अशोका ट्रस्ट फॉर रिसर्च इन इकोलॉजी एंड द एनवायरनमेंट (ATREE)** द्वारा सऊदी अरब में **UNFCCC COP16** के दौरान जारी एक श्वेत पत्र के अनुसार, भारत में घासभूमियाँ **18 मंत्रालयों** के अधिकार क्षेत्र में आती हैं, जिनके हित और नीतिगत लक्ष्य अक्सर परस्पर प्रतिस्पर्धी होते हैं
- While the **Union Environment Ministry** considers grasslands for **afforestation** purposes, the **Ministry of Rural Development** publishes the “**wasteland atlas of India**” that often includes grasslands deemed available for **conversion to other uses**
- In fact, **one of India’s eight NDCs is “to create an additional carbon sink of 2.5 to 3 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent through additional forest and tree cover by 2030”**
- In a similar vein, a **policy brief** shared by a group of researchers from **Brazil** urged the **UNFCCC to “adopt the Ecosystem-Based Approach as an immediate pathway” to conserve and sustainably manage “open ecosystems” as adaptation actions**, enabling their inclusion in **Brazil’s NDCs**
इसी प्रकार, **ब्राज़ील** के शोधकर्ताओं के एक समूह द्वारा साझा किए गए एक नीति संक्षेप में **UNFCCC** से आग्रह किया गया कि वह “**इकोसिस्टम-आधारित दृष्टिकोण को तात्कालिक मार्ग के रूप में अपनाए**” ताकि “**खुले पारिस्थितिकी तंत्रों**” का संरक्षण और सतत प्रबंधन किया जा सके और उन्हें **ब्राज़ील के NDCs** में शामिल किया जा सके
- Recognising the importance of **grasslands** as unique ecosystems worthy of attention, valuing **their potential for carbon sequestration and ecosystem services**, integrating grassland protection in **countrywide NDCs**, all while **giving local communities the rights to their land and management practices are essential first steps in mainstreaming the protection and sustenance of grasslands worldwide**



- All these goals can be achieved if the parties to the U.N. uphold the values of **multilateralism** and prioritise **science and civil society** over the **fossil fuel and agribusiness lobbies**

GS Paper III: IS

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- Chief of Army Staff highlights modern warfare in UAE talk**
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Chief of Army Staff highlights modern warfare in UAE talk

GS III: IS: Defence

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Chief of the Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi, on Tuesday addressed officers of the UAE National Defence College (NDC) during his ongoing official visit to the United Arab Emirates.

In his address, General Dwivedi highlighted the evolving global security landscape and the changing character of modern conflicts, underscoring the growing importance of technology in contemporary warfare.

He emphasised the critical leadership role of senior military officers and stressed the need for collaborative engagements, including strong bilateral and multilateral defence cooperation between India, the UAE and other regional partners, to achieve symbiotic outcomes and advance regional and global peace and security.

Training convergence

As part of the visit, General Dwivedi also interacted with Major General Staff Yousef Maayouf Saeed Al Hallami, Commander, UAE Land Forces. The discussions focused on enhancing positive military engagement, training



Upendra Dwivedi

convergence, and advancing bilateral defence cooperation between India and the UAE.

In another key engagement, General Dwivedi met the Ambassador of India to the UAE, Deepak Mittal.

The discussions centred on further strengthening India-UAE bilateral cooperation, with emphasis on military diplomacy, defence engagement, and deepening strategic ties between the two nations.

Following the visit to the UAE, Gen. Dwivedi will visit Sri Lanka from January 7 to 8. On arrival, the COAS will be accorded a Guard of Honour by the Sri Lanka Army. General Dwivedi will also pay homage at the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) War Memorial, honouring the sacrifice of Indian soldiers.

Chief of Army Staff highlights modern warfare in UAE talk

सेना प्रमुख ने यूएई में वार्ता के दौरान आधुनिक युद्ध पर प्रकाश डाला

- The Chief of the Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi, on Tuesday addressed officers of the UAE National Defence College (NDC) during his ongoing official visit to the United Arab Emirates.

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यूएई की यात्रा के बाद जनरल द्विवेदी 7 से 8 जनवरी तक श्रीलंका का दौरा करेंगे। आगमन पर सीओएस को श्रीलंका सेना द्वारा गार्ड ऑफ ऑनर प्रदान किया जाएगा।

- General Dwivedi will also pay homage at the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) War Memorial, honouring the sacrifice of Indian soldiers.

जनरल द्विवेदी इंडियन पीस कीपिंग फोर्स (IPKF) युद्ध स्मारक पर भी श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करेंगे, जहाँ भारतीय सैनिकों के बलिदान को सम्मानित किया जाएगा।