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GS Paper 1: History,

TOPICS COVERED

29 January 2026

1. Finding his mark: Tully's books chronicled India on the move
अपना निशान ढूँढना: टली की किताबों ने भारत के बदलते स्वरूप को दर्ज किया

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Finding his mark: Tully's books chronicled India on the move

As readers mourn the passing of 'Two-lee Sahib', we read his books, 'No Full Stops in India' and others. The veteran journalist reported for the BBC between 1965 to 1994 on momentous events including the liberation of Bangladesh and the assassination of Indira Gandhi

CS I History

Suhasini Haidar

For decades, Mark Tully, the BBC correspondent in India, who made his home here, was the man who brought news of India, not only to his listeners in the U.K. and elsewhere, but to Indians themselves. This was not because there was any dearth of journalists, daily newspapers and periodicals in India that could chronicle the times, but because the state controlled the airwaves, both television and radio.

The BBC, available on shortwave radio, was one of the only alternatives to a nation obsessed with the news. Tully, who passed away on January 25, had lived in India as a child, and benefitted from the times he reported for the BBC (1965-1994), for a number of reasons. To begin with, those were times of momentous, nation-altering stories in the region he covered: Bangladesh's liberation, Pakistan Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's hanging, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the U.S.-Pakistan funding of the Mujahideen to defeat them.

Emergency, and after

In India, he covered the Emergency (he was expelled by PM Indira Gandhi for his reportage for more than a year before he returned); Mrs. Gandhi's assassination and the anti-Sikh riots; the assassination of former PM Rajiv Gandhi; the Babri Masjid demolition; and the liberalisation of the economy. It was a time when a foreign correspondent in the

subcontinent led a charmed existence – access everywhere, big stories to cover, an ease of conversation with the leadership at the top, and budgets that allowed, in fact, encouraged correspondents to “go to the ground”.

Those were also times when India was emerging out of a post-independence shell and slowly moving towards its economic potential, which made every colourful story, from a local wedding to the Kumbh mela, one of great curiosity to his viewers and listeners abroad.

Tully's work at the BBC ended when he resigned in 1994, but he never stopped chronicling India through his books, with a reporter's eye that was inquisitive, perceptive, and replete with dry humour. A telling quote appears at the beginning of his most celebrated work, *No Full Stops in India* (1991). “How do you cope with the poverty?” Tully said he was asked most frequently by visitors to India. “I don't have to. The poor do,” he replied, dismissing with his pithy response, the patronising attitude of many foreigners that Indians bristle at. While he never romanticised India's poor, Tully didn't make them an object of scorn or pity either.

Amritsar: Mrs. Gandhi's Last Battle (1985), that he co-authored with his BBC colleague Satish Jacob, is a granular account of the Punjab insurgency and the Indira Gandhi government's decision to storm the Golden Temple in Operation Blue Star. The authors began working on the book before Mrs. Gandhi was assassinated on October 31, 1984, and it

came out as violence, including the riots in Delhi, and the crackdown by security forces in Punjab still roiled the situation. However, the authors were able to capture a long-term perspective for readers, not just the anger of the moment. Most of Tully's other books are collections of essays, reflecting on the issues he covered, like caste struggles, Naxalism, corruption and 'Babus', Hindu-Muslim tensions, the political rise of Hindutva, insurgencies in Punjab and the Northeast, and Sati and dowry deaths. While many of the themes are clichéd, his treatment was descriptive, not prescriptive, and hence less likely to offend.

India, in his heart

Above all, Tully focused on an India on the move – as is evident from the titles of his works. *No Full Stops in India* (originally called 'The Defeat of a Congressman and Other Stories') was followed by *India in Slow Motion* (2002), written with his partner and fellow-journalist Gillian Wright. His other books include *India's Unending Journey*, *India: The Road Ahead and Non-Stop India*, *The Heart of India* and the quasi-fictional *Upcountry Tales: Once Upon a Time in The Heart of India* both focus on Uttar Pradesh, where he spent much of his time reporting. Criticism of Tully, including extreme versions of it, when he was chased by a mob outside the Babri Masjid calling for his death, centre on his reporting of only “negative” stories about India, but then that is the nature of

the news business. When asked in an interview for a 1992 *LA Times* profile entitled “The BBC's Battered Sahib”, he said, when you work as a journalist, you get “shot from all sides”.

Fly on the wall

Through all of his work Tully remains, in his words, “only a bloody journalist” – intrigued by the subjects of his reporting, but removed and dispassionate, as a fly on the wall. Where he deviates is in his obvious affection for the land he is adopted, and in his preference for an India that is less-polarised, that celebrates the values of secularism and inclusivity. While he hardly wrote any books about India post-2014, he was known to express his disappointment over government constraints on journalists, including raids on the BBC some years ago, as well as on the “spread of religious hatred”, but said that he remained optimistic that Indian traditions of pluralism would endure.

Fitting then, that at his funeral at a Delhi crematorium this week, Vedic chants mingled with ease to strains of the hymn “Abide with Me”. Recounting his childhood in the 1930s growing up in a British home in Kolkata, Tully has written about his English nanny, who scolded him when she found he was learning to count in Hindi, as she saw it as her responsibility to ensure her charge didn't ‘go native’. Nearly a century later, it is clear that the nanny failed brilliantly, to the immense benefit of his readers, who are today mourning the passing of “Two-lee Sahib”.

Finding his mark: Tully's books chronicled India on the move

अपना निशान ढूँढना: टली की किताबों ने भारत के बदलते स्वरूप को दर्ज किया

- As readers mourn the passing of 'Two-lee Sahib', we read his books, 'No Full Stops in India' and others.

जैसे ही पाठक 'Two-lee Sahib' के निधन पर शोक व्यक्त कर रहे हैं, हम उनकी किताबें, 'No Full Stops in India' और अन्य पढ़ते हैं।

- The veteran journalist reported for the BBC between 1965 to 1994 on momentous events including the liberation of Bangladesh and the assassination of Indira Gandhi.

वयोवृद्ध पत्रकार ने 1965 से 1994 के बीच BBC के लिए महत्वपूर्ण घटनाओं पर रिपोर्टिंग की, जिनमें बांग्लादेश का मुक्ति संग्राम और इंदिरा गांधी की हत्या शामिल हैं।



- To begin with, those were times of momentous, nation-altering stories in the region he covered: Bangladesh's liberation, Pakistan Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's hanging, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the U.S.-Pakistan funding of the Mujahideen to defeat them.

सबसे पहले, यह समय उनके द्वारा कवर किए गए क्षेत्र में महत्वपूर्ण, राष्ट्र-परिवर्तनकारी कहानियों का था: बांग्लादेश की मुक्ति, पाकिस्तान के प्रधानमंत्री जुल्फिकार अली भुट्टो का फाँसी, अफगानिस्तान में सोवियत आक्रमण और उन्हें हराने के लिए अमेरिका-पाकिस्तान द्वारा मुजाहिदीन को वित्तपोषित करना।

- Tully's work at the BBC ended when he resigned in 1994, but he never stopped chronicling India through his books, with a reporter's eye that was inquisitive, perceptive, and replete with dry humour.



Karnataka govt. in favour of declaring Tulu 2nd official language: Minister

GS I: Society

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The State government is in favour of declaring Tulu as Karnataka's second official language and a decision would be taken after studying the models adopted by West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh, Kannada and Culture Minister Shivaraj Tangadagi informed the Legislative Assembly on Wednesday.

Replying to a question by Congress member Ashok Rai, the Minister said an official team had visited West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh to study the second official language models followed in those States. However, the team is yet to submit its report. Once received, a meeting will be convened with Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to take a decision, he said. Andhra Pradesh has declared Urdu as its second official language, he added.

Members cutting across party lines from Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts urged the government to declare Tulu as the second official language of the State.

Pointing out that Tulu



Shivaraj Tangadagi

academies have been established and universities are offering courses in the language, Mr. Rai, who represents Puttur, said the State should accord official status to Tulu. Intervening, Speaker U.T. Khader also supported the demand and said the government should seriously consider the proposal.

'Has its own script'

Mr. Rai said Tulu has a history of over 3,000 years, has its own script, and is included in Google Translate. He added that the language is being researched by foreign universities.

The House witnessed lighter moments when Mr. Khader and other members from the region interacted in Tulu for a brief while.

BBC में टली का कार्य समाप्त हुआ जब उन्होंने 1994 में इस्तीफा दिया, लेकिन उन्होंने कभी भारत का विवरण अपनी किताबों के माध्यम से देना नहीं छोड़ा, अपनी संपादकीय दृष्टि के साथ जो जिज्ञासु, सूक्ष्मदर्शी और सूखी हास्यपूर्ण थी।

- A telling quote appears at the beginning of his most celebrated work, **No Full Stops in India (1991)**.

उनके सबसे प्रसिद्ध कार्य, **No Full Stops in India (1991)** की शुरुआत में एक प्रासंगिक उद्धरण दिखाई देता है।

Amritsar: Mrs. Gandhi's Last Battle (1985)
अमृतसर: श्रीमती गांधी की अंतिम लड़ाई (1985)

- He co-authored the book with his BBC colleague **Satish Jacob**, and it is a granular account of the Punjab insurgency and the Indira Gandhi government's decision to storm the Golden Temple in **Operation Bluestar**.

उन्होंने यह किताब अपने BBC सहयोगी सतीश जैकब के साथ सह-लेखक के रूप में लिखी, और यह पंजाब विद्रोह का विस्तृत विवरण और इंदिरा गांधी सरकार के ऑपरेशन ब्लू स्टार में स्वर्ण मंदिर पर छापा मारने के निर्णय का विवरण है।

- **No Full Stops in India** (originally called 'The Defeat of a Congressman and Other Stories') was followed by **India in Slow Motion (2002)**, written with his partner and fellow-journalist **Gillian Wright**.

No Full Stops in India (मूलतः 'The Defeat of a Congressman and Other Stories' कहा जाता था) के बाद **India in Slow Motion (2002)** आई, जिसे उनके साथी और सह-संवाददाता **Gillian Wright** के साथ लिखा गया।

- His other books include **India's Unending Journey**, **India: The Road Ahead** and **Non-Stop India**.

उनकी अन्य किताबों में **India's Unending Journey**, **India: The Road Ahead** और **Non-Stop India** शामिल हैं।

- **The Heart of India** and the quasi-fictional **Upcountry Tales: Once Upon a Time in The Heart of India** both focus on **Uttar Pradesh**, where he spent much of his time reporting.

The Heart of India और अर्ध-काल्पनिक **Upcountry Tales:**

Once Upon a Time in The Heart of India दोनों का केंद्र उत्तर प्रदेश है, जहाँ उन्होंने अपना अधिकांश समय रिपोर्टिंग में बिताया।

GS Paper 1: Society

TOPICS COVERED

29 January 2026

1. **Karnataka govt. in favour of declaring Tulu 2nd official language: Minister**
तुलु को दूसरी आधिकारिक भाषा घोषित करने के पक्ष में कर्नाटक सरकार: मंत्री

Karnataka govt. in favour of declaring Tulu 2nd official language: Minister

तुलु को दूसरी आधिकारिक भाषा घोषित करने के पक्ष में कर्नाटक सरकार: मंत्री

- The State government is in favour of declaring **Tulu** as **Karnataka's second official language** and a decision would be taken after studying the models adopted by **West Bengal** and **Andhra Pradesh**, **Kannada** and **Culture Minister Shivaraj Tangadagi** informed the



Legislative Assembly on Wednesday.

राज्य सरकार तुलु को कर्नाटक की दूसरी आधिकारिक भाषा घोषित करने के पक्ष में है और पश्चिम बंगाल तथा आंध्र प्रदेश द्वारा अपनाए गए मॉडलों का अध्ययन करने के बाद निर्णय लिया जाएगा, यह जानकारी कन्नड़ और संस्कृति मंत्री शिवराज तंगडगी ने बुधवार को विधानसभा में दी।

- Replying to a question by Congress member Ashok Rai, the Minister said an official team had visited West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh to study the second official language models followed in those States.

कांग्रेस सदस्य अशोक राय के प्रश्न का उत्तर देते हुए मंत्री ने कहा कि एक आधिकारिक टीम ने उन राज्यों में अपनाए गए दूसरी आधिकारिक भाषा के मॉडलों का अध्ययन करने के लिए पश्चिम बंगाल और आंध्र प्रदेश का दौरा किया है।

- Andhra Pradesh has declared Urdu as its second official language, he added. उन्होंने यह भी जोड़ा कि आंध्र प्रदेश ने उर्दू को अपनी दूसरी आधिकारिक भाषा घोषित किया है।
- Mr. Rai said Tulu has a history of over 3,000 years, has its own script, and is included in Google Translate. श्री राय ने कहा कि तुलु का इतिहास 3,000 वर्षों से अधिक पुराना है, इसकी अपनी लिपि है और यह गूगल ट्रांसलेट में भी शामिल है।



The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

- The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) is a forum of 121 countries that are not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc.
- It was founded to advance the interests of developing countries in the context of Cold War confrontation.
- After the United Nations, it is the largest grouping of states worldwide.

Origin of the Movement

Post-Korean War Background

- The movement originated in the aftermath of the Korean War, as an effort by some countries to counterbalance the rapid bi-polarization of the world during the Cold War.



- During this period, two major powers formed blocs and followed a policy to pull the rest of the world into their orbits.
- One bloc was the **pro-Soviet socialist bloc**, whose best-known alliance was the **Warsaw Pact**.
- The other bloc was the **pro-American capitalist group of countries**, many of which belonged to NATO.

Establishment of NAM (Belgrade, 1961)

Role of Bandung Conference (1955)

- In 1961, drawing on principles agreed at the **Bandung Conference of 1955**, the Non-Aligned Movement was formally established.

Founding Leaders

- NAM was established in **Belgrade, Yugoslavia**, through an initiative led by:
- **Josip Broz Tito** (Yugoslavia)
- **Jawaharlal Nehru** (India)
- **Kwame Nkrumah** (Ghana)
- **Sukarno** (Indonesia)
- **Gamal Abdel Nasser** (United Arab Republic)

GS Paper II: Polity,	
TOPICS COVERED	
	29 January 2026
1.	NHRC discusses rights violations during disability certificate re-verification एनएचआरसी ने दिव्यांगता प्रमाणपत्र पुनः सत्यापन के दौरान अधिकार उल्लंघनों पर चर्चा की
2.	66% sanitation workers in Central govt. from SC, ST, OBC groups: DoPT report केंद्रीय सरकार में 66% स्वच्छता कर्मचारी एससी, एसटी, ओबीसी वर्गों से: डीओपीटी रिपोर्ट
3.	Can the ED file writ petitions before Courts? क्या ED अदालतों में रिट याचिका दायर कर सकती है?



NHRC discusses rights violations during disability certificate re-verification

GS II: Polity

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Citing the human rights violations emerging from the re-verification or re-assessment of certificates of government employees with disabilities, Justice V. Ramasubramanian (retd.), Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission, on Wednesday, said that scrutiny should be done only in cases of a specific suspicion instead of mass re-verification of all employees with disability.

The recommendation of the NHRC Chief came during a core group meeting of the body following an advisory issued by the Centre on disability verification in government jobs/education.

Stating that it is understandable that the government's advisory and revised standard operating protocol (SOP) for handling disability verification in government jobs/education, issued in October 2025, was meant for applying prospectively only for the new applicants and not retrospectively to reassess all existing beneficiaries, he said applying the SOP retrospectively for all of them may have legal implications.

"Therefore, instead of



Therefore, instead of mass verification, the scrutiny should be limited to cases where there is a specific suspicion

JUSTICE V.
RAMASUBRAMANIAN (RETD.)
NHRC Chairperson

mass verification, the scrutiny should be limited to cases where there is a specific suspicion," he said.

'Chances of misuse'

He highlighted concerns that some eligible persons with disabilities might miss out on benefits, or that beneficiary legislation could be misused.

Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, NHRC member, said, "disability is not something that should be repeatedly proven. Repeated re-verification of persons with disabilities is causing anxiety, fear and insecurity, particularly about job continuity."

During the meeting, the NHRC members gave suggestions to ensure no injustice happens with employees with disabilities, which includes prohibition on blanket or mass medical reassessment of all government employees with disabilities. The NHRC members also suggested that government must

adopt UDID-based digital verification as the default mechanism, with medical reassessment only as an exception, based on clearly defined and evidence-based suspicion.

It is advised to incorporate safeguards in any verification exercise, including written reasons, opportunity to respond, time-bound decisions and a clear right to appeal along with protection from adverse service action during the process.

The NHRC also recommended adopting dignity-centred protocols during verification, including providing a reasonable accommodation, improved accessibility, digital options, and exemptions from redundant testing for permanent and irreversible disabilities.

Others recommendations include elimination of the need to re-issue certificates to the employees living with irreversible disabilities.

NHRC discusses rights violations during disability certificate re-verification एनएचआरसी ने दिव्यांगता प्रमाणपत्र पुनः सत्यापन के दौरान अधिकार उल्लंघनों पर चर्चा की

• Citing the human rights violations emerging from the re-verification or re-assessment of certificates of government employees with disabilities, Justice V. Ramasubramanian (retd.), Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission, on Wednesday, said that scrutiny should be done only in cases of a specific suspicion instead of mass re-verification of all employees with disability.

दिव्यांग सरकारी कर्मचारियों के प्रमाणपत्रों के पुनः सत्यापन या पुनर्मूल्यांकन से उत्पन्न हो रहे मानवाधिकार उल्लंघनों का हवाला देते हुए, न्यायमूर्ति वी. रामासुब्रमण्यम (सेवानिवृत्त), राष्ट्रीय मानवाधिकार आयोग के अध्यक्ष, ने बुधवार को कहा कि सभी दिव्यांग कर्मचारियों के सामूहिक पुनः सत्यापन के बजाय केवल विशिष्ट संदेह वाले मामलों में ही जांच की जानी चाहिए।

• The recommendation of the NHRC Chief came during a core group meeting of the body following an advisory issued by the Centre on disability verification in government jobs/education.

एनएचआरसी प्रमुख की यह सिफारिश सरकारी नौकरियों/शिक्षा में दिव्यांगता सत्यापन पर केंद्र द्वारा जारी परामर्श के बाद हुई संस्था की कोर ग्रुप बैठक के दौरान आई।

• Stating that it is understandable that the government's advisory and revised standard operating protocol (SOP) for handling disability verification in government jobs/education, issued in October



2025, was meant for applying **prospectively** only for the **new applicants** and not **retrospectively** to reassess all existing beneficiaries, he said applying the **SOP retrospectively** for all of them may have **legal implications**.

उन्होंने कहा कि **अक्टूबर 2025** में जारी **सरकारी परामर्श** और **संशोधित मानक संचालन प्रक्रिया (SOP)**, जो **सरकारी नौकरियों/शिक्षा** में **दिव्यांगता सत्यापन** से संबंधित है, को **नए आवेदकों** पर **भविष्यगत रूप से** लागू करने के लिए बनाया गया था, न कि सभी मौजूदा लाभार्थियों के **पूर्वव्यापी पुनर्मूल्यांकन** के लिए, और इसे सभी पर **पूर्वव्यापी रूप से** लागू करने से **कानूनी निहितार्थ** हो सकते हैं।

- “Therefore, instead of **mass verification**, the scrutiny should be limited to cases where there is a **specific suspicion**,” he said.
उन्होंने कहा, “इसलिए **सामूहिक सत्यापन** के बजाय जांच को केवल उन मामलों तक सीमित किया जाना चाहिए जहां **विशिष्ट संदेह** हो।”

‘Chances of misuse’ ‘दुरुपयोग की आशंकाएं’

- He highlighted concerns that some **eligible persons with disabilities** might miss out on **benefits**, or that **beneficiary legislation** could be **misused**.
उन्होंने चिंता जताई कि कुछ **पात्र दिव्यांग व्यक्ति लाभों** से वंचित हो सकते हैं, या **लाभकारी कानूनों** का **दुरुपयोग** हो सकता है।
- **Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, NHRC member**, said, “**disability is not something that should be repeatedly proven. Repeated re-verification of persons with disabilities is causing anxiety, fear and insecurity, particularly about job continuity.**”
विजया भारती सयानी, एनएचआरसी सदस्य, ने कहा, “**दिव्यांगता** ऐसी चीज नहीं है जिसे बार-बार साबित किया जाए। **दिव्यांग व्यक्तियों का बार-बार पुनः सत्यापन चिंता, भय और असुरक्षा** पैदा कर रहा है, विशेषकर **नौकरी की निरंतरता** को लेकर।”
- During the meeting, the **NHRC members** gave suggestions to ensure no injustice happens with **employees with disabilities**, which includes **prohibition on blanket or mass medical reassessment** of all **government employees with disabilities**.
बैठक के दौरान **एनएचआरसी सदस्यों** ने यह सुनिश्चित करने के लिए सुझाव दिए कि **दिव्यांग कर्मचारियों** के साथ कोई अन्याय न हो, जिसमें सभी **दिव्यांग सरकारी कर्मचारियों** के **सार्वभौमिक या सामूहिक चिकित्सीय पुनर्मूल्यांकन पर रोक** शामिल है।
- The **NHRC members** also suggested that the government must adopt **UDID-based digital verification** as the **default mechanism**, with **medical reassessment** only as an **exception**, based on clearly defined and **evidence-based suspicion**.
एनएचआरसी सदस्यों ने यह भी सुझाव दिया कि सरकार **यूडीआईडी-आधारित डिजिटल सत्यापन** को **डिफ़ॉल्ट तंत्र** के रूप में अपनाए, और **चिकित्सीय पुनर्मूल्यांकन** केवल **अपवाद** के रूप में, स्पष्ट रूप से परिभाषित और **साक्ष्य-आधारित संदेह** के आधार पर किया जाए।
- It is advised to incorporate **safeguards** in any **verification exercise**, including **written reasons, opportunity to respond, time-bound decisions** and a **clear right to appeal** along with **protection from adverse service action** during the process.
किसी भी **सत्यापन प्रक्रिया** में **सुरक्षा उपाय** शामिल करने की सलाह दी गई है, जिनमें **लिखित कारण, उत्तर देने का अवसर, समयबद्ध निर्णय और अपील का स्पष्ट अधिकार**, साथ ही प्रक्रिया के दौरान **प्रतिकूल सेवा कार्रवाई से संरक्षण** शामिल है।
- The **NHRC** also recommended adopting **dignity-centred protocols during verification, including providing reasonable accommodation, improved accessibility, digital options, and exemptions from redundant testing for permanent and irreversible disabilities.**
एनएचआरसी ने सत्यापन के दौरान **गरिमा-केंद्रित प्रोटोकॉल** अपनाने की भी सिफारिश की, जिसमें **उचित समायोजन, बेहतर पहुंच, डिजिटल विकल्प, और स्थायी एवं अपरिवर्तनीय दिव्यांगताओं** के लिए **अनावश्यक परीक्षण से छूट** शामिल है।
- Other recommendations include **elimination of the need to re-issue certificates** to the **employees living with irreversible disabilities**.
अन्य सिफारिशों में **अपरिवर्तनीय दिव्यांगताओं** के साथ जीवन यापन कर रहे **कर्मचारियों** के लिए **प्रमाणपत्रों को पुनः जारी करने की आवश्यकता समाप्त करना** शामिल है।



National Human Right Commission (NHRC)

- The **National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)** of India was established on **October 12, 1993**, under the **Protection of Human Rights Act (PHRA), 1993**, to promote and protect **human rights** in the country.

Composition and Eligibility Criteria

- The NHRC **comprises a Chairperson, five full-time Members, and seven deemed Members/Ex-officio Members.**
- Chairperson:** A person who has been a **Chief Justice of India or a Judge of the Supreme Court.**

Members:

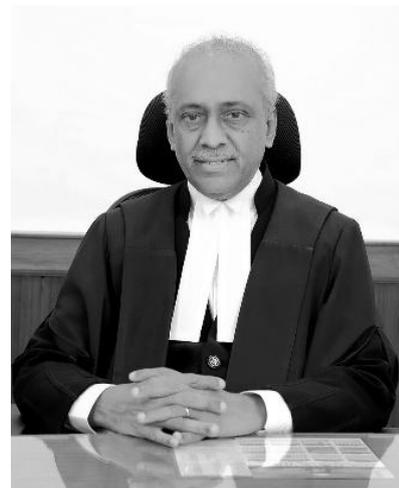
- One Member who is, or has been, a **Judge of the Supreme Court.**
- One Member who is, or has been, the **Chief Justice of a High Court.**
- Three Members, of whom at least **one shall be a woman**, to be appointed from among persons having **knowledge or practical experience in human rights.**

Deemed Members:

- The **Chairpersons** of national commissions for **Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Minorities, Women, Backward Classes, Child Rights**, and the **Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities** serve as **ex-officio Members.**

Tenure of NHRC Members

- The **Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Act, 2019** revised the tenure of the Chairperson and Members.
- They hold office for a term of **three years** or until attain the age of **seventy years**, whichever is earlier.
- They are **eligible for re-appointment.**



they

Recent Appointments

- On **December 30, 2024**, **Justice V. Ramasubramanian** assumed charge as the **Chairperson** of NHRC (As of May 2025).

Human Rights Bodies having legal backing

- National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)** is a statutory body responsible for the protection and promotion of human rights.
- National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR)** ensures that laws and policies are in consonance with the child rights perspective.



- **National Commission for Women (NCW)** works to protect the rights and legal entitlements of women.
- **National Commission for Minority Education (NCMCE)** is entrusted with safeguarding the educational rights of minorities.

Functions

- To observe and monitor the safeguards provided in the Constitution for the protection of marginalized sections of society.
- To enquire into complaints related to the deprivation of rights and the safeguards meant for the marginalized.
- To advise the Central or State Governments in formulating schemes for socio-economic development of the marginalized sections.
- To regularly report to the President on the working of constitutional and legal safeguards for marginalized sections.
- To promote research and encourage NGOs working in the field of human rights.
- To perform any other functions entrusted to them in relation to welfare, protection, and advancement of the marginalized.
- To spread human rights literacy among different sections of society and promote awareness.

PATRIOTIC IAS



66% sanitation workers in Central govt. from SC, ST, OBC groups: DoPT report

The report shows that among all Group A posts in Union Ministries and departments, 14.2% were held by SCs, 6.54% by STs, and 19.14% by OBCs; the report provides no data on EWS employees

GS II: Polity

Abhinav Lakshman
NEW DELHI

More than 66% of the Group C *safai karmacharis* (sanitation workers) employed in the Union government come from the Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC), show data on reservation in the annual report for 2024-25 from the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).

The report, released last week, showed that 14.2% of the Group A posts in the Union Ministries and departments were held by SCs, 6.54% by STs, and 19.14% by OBCs. DoPT regulations on direct recruitment to all groups of posts in the Union government require reserving 15% of seats for SCs, 7.5% for STs, 27% for OBCs, and 10% for Economically Weaker Sections.

The data in the 2024-25 report on the representation of SC, ST, and OBC employees in the Union government showed that in Group C (excluding sanitation

Taking count

The Personnel Ministry, in its latest report, has published the representation of SCs, STs and OBCs in the posts and services of the Union government, as per data received from 80 Ministries and departments



Group	Total no. of employees	SC	ST	OBC
A	1,19,178	16,920 (14.2%)	7,793 (6.54%)	22,807 (19.14%)
B	3,64,307	59,006 (16.20%)	27,789 (7.63%)	79,952 (21.95%)
C (excluding sanitation workers)	27,27,930	4,56,925 (16.75%)	2,43,872 (8.94%)	7,44,527 (27.29%)
C (sanitation workers)	40,737	14,971 (36.75%)	3,331 (8.18%)	8,614 (21.15%)
Total	32,52,152	5,47,822 (16.84%)	2,82,785 (8.7%)	8,55,900 (26.32%)

workers) posts, 16.75% were SCs, 8.94% STs, and 27.29% OBCs. In Group B posts, SCs comprised 16.2%, STs 7.63%, and OBCs 21.95%.

Overall, among the 32.52 lakh Union government employees across 80 Ministries and departments that the latest report accounted for, the representation of SCs was at 16.84%, STs 8.7%, and OBCs 26.32%. However, the report does not provide any data on the

representation of EWS employees.

The DoPT said that this data was for Central government employees as of January 1, 2024.

Data gap

This is the first time since its 2018-19 annual report that the DoPT has put out data on the representation of SCs, STs, and OBCs across most of its Ministries and departments.

In annual reports from

2019, the DoPT has been accounting for partial data on Union government employees, showing representation figures for a total of 19-20 lakh employees.

The DoPT said that this shortfall had been occurring because not all Ministries and Departments were able to provide the data in time.

Trend shift

Compared with the representation figures from 2018-19 for Union government employees, the last time when over 32 lakh employees were accounted for across 78 Ministries and Departments, the overall representation of SC staffers went down from 17.49% to 16.84%, that of ST staffers went up slightly from 8.47% to 8.94%, and that of OBC staffers saw the highest increase from 21.57% to 26.32%.

Across Groups A, B, and C, the highest increase in representation was seen among OBCs from the figures from 2018-19, while the representation of SC and ST groups remained the same.

66% sanitation workers in Central govt. from SC, ST, OBC groups: DoPT report केंद्रीय सरकार में 66% स्वच्छता कर्मचारी एससी, एसटी, ओबीसी वर्गों से: डीओपीटी रिपोर्ट

The report shows that among all Group A posts in Union Ministries and departments, 14.2% were held by SCs, 6.54% by STs, and 19.14% by OBCs; the report provides no data on EWS employees

रिपोर्ट के अनुसार, केंद्रीय मंत्रालयों और विभागों के सभी ग्रुप ए पदों में 14.2% एससी, 6.54% एसटी और 19.14% ओबीसी के पास थे; रिपोर्ट में ईडब्ल्यूएस कर्मचारियों पर कोई डेटा नहीं दिया गया है

- More than 66% of the Group C *safai karmacharis* (sanitation workers) employed in the Union government come from the Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), and Other Backward Classes (OBC), show data on reservation in the annual report for 2024-25 from the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT).
केंद्रीय सरकार में कार्यरत ग्रुप सी सफाई कर्मचारी (स्वच्छता कर्मचारी) में से 66% से अधिक अनुसूचित



जाति (एससी), अनुसूचित जनजाति (एसटी) और अन्य पिछड़ा वर्ग (ओबीसी) से आते हैं, यह जानकारी कार्मिक एवं प्रशिक्षण विभाग (डीओपीटी) की 2024-25 की वार्षिक रिपोर्ट में आरक्षण से संबंधित आंकड़ों में दी गई है।

- The report, released **last week**, showed that **14.2%** of the **Group A posts** in the **Union Ministries and departments** were held by **SCs**, **6.54%** by **STs**, and **19.14%** by **OBCs**. पिछले सप्ताह जारी की गई रिपोर्ट में बताया गया कि **केंद्रीय मंत्रालयों और विभागों के ग्रुप ए पदों में 14.2% एससी, 6.54% एसटी, और 19.14% ओबीसी के पास थे।**
- DoPT regulations on direct recruitment** to all groups of posts in the **Union government** require reserving **15%** of seats for **SCs**, **7.5%** for **STs**, **27%** for **OBCs**, and **10%** for **Economically Weaker Sections**. डीओपीटी के नियमों के अनुसार, **केंद्रीय सरकार में सभी पद समूहों में प्रत्यक्ष भर्ती के लिए एससी हेतु 15%, एसटी हेतु 7.5%, ओबीसी हेतु 27%, और आर्थिक रूप से कमजोर वर्ग हेतु 10% सीटें आरक्षित हैं।**
- The data in the **2024-25 report** on the representation of **SC, ST, and OBC employees** in the **Union government** showed that in **Group C (excluding sanitation workers)** posts, **16.75%** were **SCs**, **8.94%** **STs**, and **27.29%** **OBCs**. **2024-25 की रिपोर्ट में केंद्रीय सरकार में एससी, एसटी और ओबीसी कर्मचारियों के प्रतिनिधित्व के आंकड़ों के अनुसार, ग्रुप सी (स्वच्छता कर्मचारियों को छोड़कर) पदों में 16.75% एससी, 8.94% एसटी, और 27.29% ओबीसी थे।**
- In **Group B posts**, **SCs** comprised **16.2%**, **STs 7.63%**, and **OBCs 21.95%**. **ग्रुप बी पदों में एससी की हिस्सेदारी 16.2%, एसटी की 7.63%, और ओबीसी की 21.95% थी।**
- Overall, among the **32.52 lakh Union government employees** across **80 Ministries and departments** that the **latest report** accounted for, the representation of **SCs** was at **16.84%**, **STs 8.7%**, and **OBCs 26.32%**. **कुल मिलाकर, नवीनतम रिपोर्ट में शामिल 80 मंत्रालयों और विभागों के 32.52 लाख केंद्रीय सरकारी कर्मचारियों में एससी का प्रतिनिधित्व 16.84%, एसटी का 8.7%, और ओबीसी का 26.32% था।**
- However, the report does **not provide any data** on the representation of **EWS employees**. हालांकि, रिपोर्ट में **ईडब्ल्यूएस कर्मचारियों के प्रतिनिधित्व पर कोई डेटा उपलब्ध नहीं कराया गया है।**
- The **DoPT** said that this data was for **Central government employees** as of **January 1, 2024**. **डीओपीटी ने बताया कि यह डेटा 1 जनवरी 2024 की स्थिति के अनुसार केंद्रीय सरकारी कर्मचारियों का है।**

Data gap डेटा अंतर

- This is the **first time** since its **2018-19 annual report** that the **DoPT** has put out data on the representation of **SCs, STs, and OBCs** across most of its **Ministries and departments**. यह **2018-19 की वार्षिक रिपोर्ट के बाद पहली बार** है जब **डीओपीटी** ने अपने अधिकांश **मंत्रालयों और विभागों में एससी, एसटी और ओबीसी के प्रतिनिधित्व पर डेटा जारी किया है।**
- In annual reports from **2019**, the **DoPT** has been accounting for **partial data** on **Union government employees**, showing representation figures for a total of **19-20 lakh employees**. **2019 से जारी वार्षिक रिपोर्टों में डीओपीटी केवल आंशिक डेटा प्रस्तुत कर रहा था, जिसमें कुल 19-20 लाख कर्मचारियों के प्रतिनिधित्व के आंकड़े दिखाए गए थे।**
- The **DoPT** said that this **shortfall** had been occurring because not all **Ministries and Departments** were able to provide the data **in time**. **डीओपीटी ने कहा कि यह कमी इसलिए हो रही थी क्योंकि सभी मंत्रालय और विभाग समय पर डेटा उपलब्ध नहीं करा पाए।**

Trend shift रुझान में बदलाव

- Compared with the representation figures from **2018-19** for **Union government employees**, the last time when over **32 lakh employees** were accounted for across **78 Ministries and Departments**, the overall representation of **SC staffers** went down from **17.49% to 16.84%**. **2018-19 के केंद्रीय सरकारी कर्मचारियों के प्रतिनिधित्व आंकड़ों की तुलना में, जब 78 मंत्रालयों और**



विभागों में 32 लाख से अधिक कर्मचारियों को शामिल किया गया था, तब एससी कर्मचारियों का कुल प्रतिनिधित्व 17.49% से घटकर 16.84% हो गया।

- That of **ST staffers** went up slightly from **8.47% to 8.94%**, and that of **OBC staffers** saw the **highest increase from 21.57% to 26.32%**.

एसटी कर्मचारियों का प्रतिनिधित्व थोड़ा बढ़कर 8.47% से 8.94% हो गया, जबकि ओबीसी कर्मचारियों में सबसे अधिक वृद्धि 21.57% से 26.32% तक दर्ज की गई।

- Across **Groups A, B, and C**, the **highest increase** in representation was seen among **OBCs** from the figures from **2018-19**, while the representation of **SC and ST groups** remained the same.

ग्रुप ए, बी और सी में 2018-19 के आंकड़ों की तुलना में ओबीसी वर्ग में सबसे अधिक वृद्धि देखी गई, जबकि एससी और एसटी वर्गों का प्रतिनिधित्व लगभग समान रहा।

Can the ED file writ petitions before Courts?

What high-profile case is at the centre of the challenge against the Enforcement Directorate's jurisdiction? What has been the Kerala government's defence? Why is the outcome of this case significant for the balance of power between Central and State authorities in India?

ISS II Policy

EXPLAINER

Aaratrika Bhaumik

The story so far:

In January 20, the Supreme Court agreed to examine whether the Enforcement Directorate (ED) is entitled to invoke the writ jurisdiction of constitutional courts to seek relief. A Bench comprising Justices Dipankar Datta and Satish Chandra Sharma admitted separate petitions filed by the Kerala and Tamil Nadu governments challenging a Kerala High Court ruling that upheld the agency's right to do so. Taking note of the substantial question of law raised by the Opposition-led States, the Bench directed that the matter be listed for hearing after four weeks.

When can courts issue writs?

In India, the Supreme Court is vested with the power to issue prerogative writs under Article 32 of the Constitution, while High Courts exercise a similar jurisdiction under Article 226. These writs trace their origins to English common law, where they evolved as extraordinary remedies issued by the sovereign in situations where ordinary legal remedies were unavailable or ineffective.

The Constitution recognises five such writs – habeas corpus (to secure the release of a person from unlawful detention), mandamus (to compel a public authority to perform a statutory or public duty), prohibition (to restrain a lower court or tribunal from acting beyond its authority), certiorari (to quash an order of a lower court or tribunal for lack of jurisdiction or illegality), and quo warrant (to question the legality of a person's claim to a public office).

While Article 32 enables the Supreme Court to issue writs primarily for the enforcement of fundamental rights, Article 226 vests High Courts with broader authority, allowing them to issue writs not only for enforcing fundamental rights but also "for any other purpose", including the enforcement of legal rights and the review of administrative action. However, the grant of such writs is discretionary, and courts may decline relief where an effective alternative remedy is already available.

Further, under Article 361 of the Constitution, a writ of mandamus cannot be issued against the President or the Governor of a State with respect to the exercise and performance of the powers and duties of their office. A writ also does not ordinarily lie against private individuals or bodies, except in cases where the state is alleged to have acted in collusion with a private party in violation of constitutional or statutory provisions.

Why did Kerala approach the SC?

The dispute traces its origin to a September 26, 2025 ruling of a Division Bench of the Kerala High Court, which held that the ED, established by the Union government under Section 36 of the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (1999 Act) pursuant to a June 2000 notification, is a statutory body entitled to invoke the writ jurisdiction of High Courts under Article 226 of the Constitution.

The ruling arose from a writ petition filed by the ED challenging the Kerala government's decision to constitute a Commission of Inquiry (CoI) in connection with the diplomatic gold smuggling case. The case relates to the seizure of 30 kg of gold, valued at ₹4.82 crore, from diplomatic baggage arriving from the United Arab Emirates at the



In rage: A United Democratic Front protest march demanding Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan's resignation over the gold smuggling case in 2022. FILE PHOTO

Thiruvananthapuram International Airport on July 5, 2020. The National Investigation Agency subsequently registered a case under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1957, alongside parallel proceedings initiated by the ED under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA).

The case later emerged as a flashpoint between the Centre and the State after Swapna Prabha Suresh, the prime accused, released an audio clip alleging that ED officials had coerced her into implicating persons holding high office in the State. Similar allegations were subsequently made in a letter by a co-accused. Acting on these allegations, the Pinarayi Vijayan government had tasked the inquiry commission to probe if there was a conspiracy afoot against the State's leaders and, if so, to unearth the identity of those behind the plot.

The ED, thereafter, through its Deputy Director, approached the High Court challenging the CoI. It sought a writ of mandamus to call for the relevant records and a writ of certiorari to quash the notification on the ground that it was wholly without jurisdiction and contrary to law.

However, the Kerala government questioned the ED's locus to maintain a writ petition, contending that it is merely a department of the Union government and not a juristic person or body corporate capable of suing or being sued. It further argued that the agency's only available remedy lay under Article 131 of the Constitution, which vests the Supreme Court with exclusive jurisdiction to adjudicate disputes between the Centre and the States. To buttress its contention, the State also relied on the Supreme Court's 2003 ruling in *Chief Conservator of Forests, Government of Andhra Pradesh versus Collector*, which had deprecated the practice of Centre and State governments filing writ petitions against

each other before High Courts.

What did the High Court rule?

In August 2021, a single judge of the High Court rejected the State government's objection to the maintainability of the ED's writ petition, observing that ED officers exercise statutory powers and that the agency cannot be treated as merely a department of the Union government. The State's appeal against this decision was dismissed by a Division Bench in its September 2025 ruling. The Bench, comprising Justices Sushrut Arvind Dharmadhikari and Syam Kumar V.M., reiterated that the ED is a statutory body and that its officers are designated statutory authorities under Sections 48 and 49 of the PMLA. Rejecting the State's contention that the agency lacked juristic personality and the capacity to sue, the Bench observed that such an objection amounted to a "trivial defect" and was "a matter of form and not substance", which could not defeat the ED's statutory right to seek recourse under Article 226 of the Constitution.

What have Kerala and Tamil Nadu argued before the Supreme Court?

In its appeal before the top court, the Kerala government objected to the High Court's characterisation of its challenge to the maintainability of the ED's writ petition as a "trivial defect". It pointed out that the Supreme Court, in *Chief Conservator of Forests*, had held that the capacity of a legal entity – natural or artificial – to sue or be sued is a matter of considerable importance and that proceedings would fail if the necessary party lacked such capacity.

The State further contended that the Deputy Director of the ED, being only an officer and not a juristic person, lacked the locus to file a writ petition. "Hence, he also could not have filed a writ petition. Therefore, the finding of the High Court that the Deputy Director of Enforcement

has locus standi to institute the writ petition is erroneous... Neither the provisions of the 1999 Act nor the PMLA confer any legal personality on the ED so as to entitle it to be treated as a juristic person competent to sue," the petition stated. Tamil Nadu, supporting Kerala's challenge, submitted that it had been placed in nearly identical circumstances. It alleged that the ED had indulged in a "gross and blatant abuse of the process of law" by filing a writ petition before the Madras High Court in connection with proceedings relating to alleged illegal mining in the State. In a separate appeal before the Supreme Court, Tamil Nadu argued that the Kerala High Court's ruling had "emboldened the ED to venture a similar line of action" before the Madras High Court in its case.

What are the possible implications?

"It is contested whether the ED can be placed on the same footing as statutory bodies such as the Securities and Exchange Board of India or the Reserve Bank of India, which are juristic entities with perpetual succession and an express statutory capacity to sue and be sued", Alok Prasanna Kumar, co-founder of the Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy, told *The Hindu*. He noted that the ED is widely regarded as an instrumentality of the Union government, prosecuting cases on its behalf rather than functioning as an autonomous legal entity. Mr. Kumar further pointed out that the ED does not have any independent legal rights vis-à-vis State governments. "State governments do not owe any 'public duty' to the ED that could justify the issuance of a writ of mandamus or certiorari against them. At best, the allegation may be that a State has encroached upon the powers of the ED as an arm of the Union government. Such a claim would have to be pursued as a Centre-State dispute under Article 131 of the Constitution, over which the Supreme Court has exclusive jurisdiction", he said.

THE GIST

▼ In India, the Supreme Court is vested with the power to issue prerogative writs under Article 32 of the Constitution, while High Courts exercise a similar jurisdiction under Article 226.

▼ The Kerala government has questioned the ED's locus to maintain a writ petition, contending that it is merely a department of the Union government and not a juristic person or body corporate capable of suing or being sued.

▼ In August 2021, a single judge of the High Court rejected the State government's objection to the maintainability of the ED's writ petition, observing that ED officers exercise statutory powers and that the agency cannot be treated as merely a department of the Union government.



Can the ED file writ petitions before Courts? क्या ED अदालतों में रिट याचिका दायर कर सकती है?

- On **January 20**, the **Supreme Court** agreed to examine whether the **Enforcement Directorate (ED)** is entitled to invoke the **writ jurisdiction** of constitutional courts to seek relief.
20 जनवरी को, **सुप्रीम कोर्ट** ने यह जांचने के लिए सहमति दी कि क्या **एन्फोर्समेंट डायरेक्टरेट (ED)** को राहत मांगने के लिए संवैधानिक न्यायालयों के **रिट अधिकार क्षेत्र** का प्रयोग करने का अधिकार है।
- A Bench comprising **Justices Dipankar Datta and Satish Chandra Sharma** admitted separate petitions filed by the **Kerala and Tamil Nadu governments** challenging a **Kerala High Court ruling** that upheld the agency's right to do so.
न्यायमूर्ति दीपांकर दत्ता और सतीश चंद्र शर्मा की बेंच ने **केरल और तमिलनाडु सरकारों** द्वारा दायर अलग-अलग याचिकाओं को स्वीकार किया, जो **केरल उच्च न्यायालय के निर्णय** को चुनौती देती हैं, जिसने एजेंसी के अधिकार को बनाए रखा।
- Taking note of the **substantial question of law** raised by the **Opposition-ruled States**, the Bench directed that the matter be listed for hearing after **four weeks**.
विपक्ष-शासित राज्यों द्वारा उठाए गए **सैद्धांतिक कानून के महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न** को ध्यान में रखते हुए, बेंच ने निर्देश दिया कि मामले की सुनवाई **चार सप्ताह** बाद सूचीबद्ध की जाए।

When can courts issue writs? अदालतें कब रिट जारी कर सकती हैं?

- In India, the **Supreme Court** is vested with the power to issue **prerogative writs** under **Article 32 of the Constitution**, while **High Courts** exercise a similar jurisdiction under **Article 226**.
भारत में, **सुप्रीम कोर्ट** को संविधान के **अनुच्छेद 32** के तहत **विशेषाधिकार रिट** जारी करने का अधिकार प्राप्त है, जबकि **उच्च न्यायालय अनुच्छेद 226** के तहत समान अधिकार का प्रयोग करती हैं।
- The Constitution recognises **five such writs** —
संविधान पाँच ऐसे रिटों को मान्यता देता है —
 - Habeas corpus** (to secure the release of a person from unlawful detention)
हेबियस कॉर्पस (किसी व्यक्ति को **अवैध हिरासत** से मुक्त करने के लिए)
 - Mandamus** (to compel a public authority to perform a statutory or public duty)
मैडमस (किसी सार्वजनिक प्राधिकरण को **वैधानिक या सार्वजनिक कर्तव्य** निभाने के लिए बाध्य करने के लिए)
 - Prohibition** (to restrain a lower court or tribunal from acting beyond its authority)
प्रोहिबिशन (किसी निचली अदालत या न्यायाधिकरण को अपनी **अधिकार सीमा से परे कार्य करने से रोकने के लिए**)
 - Certiorari** (to quash an order of a lower court or tribunal for lack of jurisdiction or illegality)
सर्टियोरी (किसी निचली अदालत या न्यायाधिकरण के आदेश को **अधिकार क्षेत्र की कमी या अवैधता** के कारण रद्द करने के लिए)
 - Quo warrant** (to question the legality of a person's claim to a public office)
क्वो वारंटो (किसी व्यक्ति के **सार्वजनिक कार्यालय के दावे की वैधता** को चुनौती देने के लिए)
- However, the **grant of such writs is discretionary**, and courts may **decline relief** where an **effective alternative remedy** is already available.
हालांकि, ऐसे रिट का **अधिकार discretionary** है, और अदालतें **राहत देने से इनकार** कर सकती हैं यदि पहले से ही कोई **प्रभावी वैकल्पिक उपाय** उपलब्ध हो।
- Under **Article 361 of the Constitution**, a writ of **mandamus** cannot be issued against the **President or the Governor of a State** with respect to the exercise and performance of the powers and duties of their office.
संविधान के **अनुच्छेद 361** के तहत, **मैडमस रिट** **राष्ट्रपति** या किसी **राज्य के राज्यपाल** के खिलाफ उनके कार्यालय के **अधिकार और कर्तव्यों** के पालन के संबंध में जारी नहीं की जा सकती।
- A writ also does not ordinarily lie against **private individuals or bodies**, except in cases where the **state** is alleged to have acted in **collusion with a private party** in violation of **constitutional or statutory provisions**.



रिट आम तौर पर निजी व्यक्तियों या निकायों के खिलाफ नहीं होती, सिवाय उन मामलों में जहाँ आरोप है कि राज्य ने किसी निजी पार्टी के साथ मिलीभगत में संवैधानिक या वैधानिक प्रावधानों का उल्लंघन किया।

Why did Kerala approach the SC? केरल ने सुप्रीम कोर्ट से क्यों संपर्क किया?

- The dispute traces its origin to a **September 26, 2025** ruling of a **Division Bench of the Kerala High Court**, which held that the **ED**, established by the **Union government under Section 36 of the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 (1999 Act)** pursuant to a **June 2000 notification**, is a **statutory body** entitled to invoke the **writ jurisdiction of High Courts under Article 226 of the Constitution**.
विवाद की उत्पत्ति **26 सितंबर 2025** के केरल उच्च न्यायालय के डिविजन बेंच के निर्णय से हुई, जिसमें यह कहा गया कि **ED**, जिसे केंद्र सरकार द्वारा **विदेशी मुद्रा प्रबंधन अधिनियम, 1999 (1999 अधिनियम) के सेक्शन 36** के तहत **जून 2000 अधिसूचना** के अनुसार स्थापित किया गया, एक **वैधानिक संस्था** है और इसे संविधान के अनुच्छेद 226 के तहत उच्च न्यायालयों के रिट अधिकार क्षेत्र का प्रयोग करने का अधिकार है।
- The ruling arose from a **writ petition filed by the ED** challenging the **Kerala government's decision to constitute a Commission of Inquiry (CoI)** in connection with the **diplomatic gold smuggling case**.
यह निर्णय **ED** द्वारा दायर रिट याचिका से उत्पन्न हुआ, जिसमें केरल सरकार के निर्णय को चुनौती दी गई कि वह **कूटनीतिक सोने की तस्करी** मामले के संबंध में **जांच आयोग (CoI)** का गठन करे।
- The case relates to the **seizure of 30 kg of gold**, valued at **14.82 crore**, from **diplomatic baggage arriving from the United Arab Emirates at the Thiruvananthapuram International Airport on July 5, 2020**.
यह मामला **30 किलो सोने की जब्ती** से संबंधित है, जिसकी कीमत **14.82 करोड़** है, जिसे **संयुक्त अरब अमीरात से आने वाले कूटनीतिक सामान से 5 जुलाई 2020 को तिरुवनंतपुरम अंतर्राष्ट्रीय हवाई अड्डे** पर जब्त किया गया।
- The **National Investigation Agency** subsequently registered a case under the **Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967**, alongside parallel proceedings initiated by the **ED under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA)**.
इसके बाद **राष्ट्रीय जांच एजेंसी** ने **अवैध गतिविधियाँ (रोकथाम) अधिनियम, 1967** के तहत मामला दर्ज किया, साथ ही **ED** ने **मनी लॉन्ड्रिंग रोकथाम अधिनियम, 2002 (PMLA)** के तहत समानांतर कार्यवाही शुरू की।
- Similar allegations were subsequently made in a **letter by a co-accused**.
इसी प्रकार के आरोप बाद में **एक सह-अभियुक्त** द्वारा लिखे गए पत्र में भी किए गए।
- Acting on these allegations, the **Pinarayi Vijayan government** had tasked the **inquiry commission** to probe if there was a **conspiracy against the State's leaders** and, if so, to **unearth the identity of those behind the plot**.
इन आरोपों पर कार्रवाई करते हुए, **पिनारायी विजयन सरकार** ने **जांच आयोग** को यह जांचने का कार्य सौंपा कि क्या **राज्य के नेताओं के खिलाफ कोई साजिश** हो रही थी और यदि हां, तो **साजिश के पीछे किसकी पहचान** है उसे उजागर किया जाए।
- It sought a **writ of mandamus** to call for the relevant **records** and a **writ of certiorari** to **quash the notification** on the ground that it was **wholly without jurisdiction and contrary to law**.
इसने संबंधित **रिकॉर्ड्स** को बुलाने के लिए **मैडमस रिट** और **अधिसूचना को रद्द करने** के लिए **सर्टियोरी रिट** मांगी, यह आधार देते हुए कि यह **पूरी तरह से अधिकार क्षेत्र के बाहर और कानून के विपरीत** थी।
- However, the **Kerala government** questioned the **ED's locus** to maintain a **writ petition**, contending that it is merely a **department of the Union government** and not a **juristic person or body corporate capable of suing or being sued**.
हालांकि, **केरल सरकार** ने **ED की याचिका दायर करने की स्थिति** पर सवाल उठाया, यह दावा करते हुए कि यह केवल **केंद्र सरकार का विभाग** है और **कानूनी व्यक्ति या निगमित निकाय नहीं है जो मुकदमा कर सके या झेल सके**।
- It further argued that the agency's only available remedy lay under **Article 131 of the Constitution**, which vests the **Supreme Court** with **exclusive jurisdiction** to adjudicate disputes between the **Centre and the States**.



इसने आगे तर्क दिया कि एजेंसी का एकमात्र उपलब्ध उपाय संविधान के अनुच्छेद 131 के तहत है, जो सुप्रीम कोर्ट को केन्द्र और राज्यों के बीच विवादों का निर्णय लेने का विशेष अधिकार देता है।

- The Bench, comprising Justices Sushrut Arvind Dharmadhikari and Syam Kumar V.M., reiterated that the **ED is a statutory body and that its officers are designated statutory authorities under Sections 48 and 49 of the PMLA.**

इस बेंच में न्यायमूर्ति सुप्रत अरविंद धर्माधिकारी और श्याम कुमार V.M. शामिल थे, जिन्होंने दोहराया कि ED एक वैधानिक संस्था है और इसके अधिकारियों को PMLA की धारा 48 और 49 के तहत वैधानिक प्राधिकृत अधिकारी के रूप में नामित किया गया है।

- “It is contested whether the **ED can be placed on the same footing as statutory bodies such as the Securities and Exchange Board of India or the Reserve Bank of India**, which are **juristic entities with perpetual succession and an express statutory capacity to sue and be sued**,” Alok Prasanna Kumar, co-founder of the Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy, told **The Hindu**.

“यह विवादित है कि क्या ED को वैधानिक निकायों जैसे Securities and Exchange Board of India या Reserve Bank of India के समान रखा जा सकता है, जो कानूनी संस्थाएं हैं जिनकी स्थायी उत्तराधिकारिता है और स्पष्ट वैधानिक क्षमता रखती हैं मुकदमा करने और झेलने की,” Alok Prasanna Kumar, Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy के सह-संस्थापक, ने The Hindu को बताया।

- He noted that the **ED is widely regarded as an instrumentality of the Union government, prosecuting cases on its behalf rather than functioning as an autonomous legal entity.**

उन्होंने कहा कि ED को व्यापक रूप से केंद्र सरकार का उपकरण माना जाता है, जो इसके behalf पर मामले चला रही है, स्वायत्त कानूनी संस्था के रूप में कार्य नहीं कर रही।

- Mr. Kumar further pointed out that the **ED does not have any independent legal rights vis-à-vis State governments.**

श्री कुमार ने आगे कहा कि ED के पास राज्य सरकारों के संबंध में कोई स्वतंत्र कानूनी अधिकार नहीं हैं।

- “State governments do not owe any ‘public duty’ to the ED that could justify the issuance of a writ of mandamus or certiorari against them. At best, the allegation may be that a **State has encroached upon the powers of the ED as an arm of the Union government.** Such a claim would have to be pursued as a **Centre-State dispute under Article 131** of the Constitution, over which the **Supreme Court has exclusive jurisdiction**,” he said.

“राज्य सरकारों का ED के प्रति कोई ‘सार्वजनिक कर्तव्य’ नहीं है जो उनके खिलाफ मैडमस या सर्टियोरी रिट जारी करने का औचित्य दे सके। सर्वोत्तम, यह आरोप हो सकता है कि राज्य ने केंद्र सरकार के उपकरण के रूप में ED के अधिकारों में अतिक्रमण किया। ऐसे दावे को संविधान के अनुच्छेद 131 के तहत केंद्र-राज्य विवाद के रूप में आगे बढ़ाया जाना चाहिए, जिस पर सुप्रीम कोर्ट का विशेष अधिकार क्षेत्र है,” उन्होंने कहा।

GS Paper II: Governance,

TOPICS COVERED

29 January 2026

- Aircraft crashed during second landing bid in poor visibility**
कम दृश्यता में दूसरी बार लैंडिंग प्रयास के दौरान विमान दुर्घटनाग्रस्त



Aircraft crashed during second landing bid in poor visibility

Airstrip equipped only with rudimentary ATC set-up operated by a flying school despite frequent VIP movement; it lacks a dedicated meteorologist, instrument landing system, security and firefighting arrangements; AAIB is probing the crash

GS II: Governance

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

The pilots of the aircraft that crashed in Baramati in Pune district of Maharashtra on Wednesday were attempting a second landing in poor visibility at an airstrip that is primarily used for flight training despite frequent VIP movement. The facility has only a rudimentary air traffic control (ATC) operated by a flying school, and lacks a dedicated meteorologist and navigational aids to guide the pilots.

The Learjet 45 aircraft was preparing to land at about 8.18 a.m., and the pilots faced difficulty in sighting the runway, according to a detailed statement from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

ATC support at the facility is provided by either the students or instructors of one of the flying schools using it. The DGCA said they had said the visibility at the time of the crash was three kilometres. The pilots had aborted the first landing as the required visibility range for the airstrip is five kilometres.

Moments before their second attempt, the pilots

Air tragedies A list of politicians and prominent figures who were killed in air crashes



Homi Bhabha
The pioneering nuclear physicist died in a crash on January 24, 1966



Mohan Kumaramangalam
Union Minister died near the Palam airport on May 31, 1973



Sanjay Gandhi
Congress leader died near the Safdarjung airport on June 23, 1980



N.V.N. Somu
Union Minister passed away in Arunchal Pradesh on November 14, 1997



Madhavrao Scindia
Congress leader died en route to a rally in Kanpur on Sept. 30, 2001



G.M.C. Balayogi
Lok Sabha Speaker died in a chopper crash in Andhra Pradesh on March 3, 2002



Y.S. Rajashekhara Reddy
A.P. Chief Minister died on Sept. 2, 2009 in a chopper crash



General Bipin Rawat
CDS was killed in a crash near Coonoor on December 8, 2021



Vijay Rupani
Former Gujarat CM was among the 241 people who died on June 12, 2025



Ajit Pawar
Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister died in a plane crash on January 28, 2026

said the "runway is currently not in sight", and then reported again that the runway was visible, following which they were given a landing clearance. The ATC saw the aircraft in flames at 8.44 a.m.

The Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau is looking into the tragedy, and a team left for Baramati soon after the crash.

The pilot in-command, Captain Sumit Kapur, had over 15,000 hours of flying experience, and First Officer Shambhavi Pathak 1,500 hours.

The airstrip, owned by the Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation, is leased to the Red Bird Flying School and Carver Aviation for flight training. It is categorised as an "un-

controlled aerodrome" as it does not have typical airport infrastructure, including an ATC, and navigation equipment such as an instrument landing system, or security and firefighting arrangements.

Pilots have to rely on visual approach, or bare eyes, as there are no navigational aids that generate cues inside the cockpit to

maintain a certain alignment or direction. As the airport is beyond the Airport Authority of India's ATC coverage area, ATC support is provided by the staff of one of the flight training schools, which have only rudimentary infrastructure, a pilot who has trained at Baramati said.

At the time of the landing, the aircraft reportedly rolled left in an effort to line up with the runway, a move that may have caused a loss of lift or a stall, leading it to veer toward the sloping side of the runway, where it crashed on the spot, informed sources citing eyewitness accounts said.

The aircraft is owned by the Delhi-based charter company VSR Ventures Private Ltd., which has 17 aircraft. The DGCA, in a statement, said its last regulatory audit was in February 2025, and no serious findings were issued.

Another Learjet 45 of the company crashed in Mumbai in September 2023. Though there were no casualties, the aircraft was destroyed. The probe report has not been released. The injured First Officer remains paralysed from the waist down.

Aircraft crashed during second landing bid in poor visibility कम दृश्यता में दूसरी बार लैंडिंग प्रयास के दौरान विमान दुर्घटनाग्रस्त

Airstrip equipped only with rudimentary ATC set-up operated by a flying school despite frequent VIP movement; it lacks a dedicated meteorologist, instrument landing system, security and firefighting arrangements; AAIB is probing the crash
बार-बार वीआईपी आवागमन के बावजूद एयरस्ट्रिप पर केवल उड़ान प्रशिक्षण स्कूल द्वारा संचालित



प्रारंभिक एटीसी व्यवस्था है; इसमें समर्पित मौसम विज्ञानी, इंस्ट्रूमेंट लैंडिंग सिस्टम, सुरक्षा और अग्निशमन व्यवस्था का अभाव है; एएआईबी दुर्घटना की जांच कर रहा है

- The pilots of the aircraft that crashed in **Baramati** in **Pune district of Maharashtra** on **Wednesday** were attempting a **second landing in poor visibility** at an airstrip that is primarily used for **flight training** despite frequent **VIP movement**.
महाराष्ट्र के पुणे ज़िले के बारामती में बुधवार को दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हुए विमान के पायलट कम दृश्यता में दूसरी बार लैंडिंग का प्रयास कर रहे थे, ऐसे एयरस्ट्रिप पर जो मुख्य रूप से उड़ान प्रशिक्षण के लिए उपयोग होती है, भले ही वहां अक्सर वीआईपी आवागमन होता है।
- The facility has only a **rudimentary air traffic control (ATC)** operated by a **flying school**, and lacks a **dedicated meteorologist** and **navigational aids** to guide the pilots.
इस सुविधा में केवल उड़ान प्रशिक्षण स्कूल द्वारा संचालित एक प्रारंभिक हवाई यातायात नियंत्रण (एटीसी) है, और पायलटों का मार्गदर्शन करने के लिए समर्पित मौसम विज्ञानी और नेविगेशनल सहायता उपकरणों का अभाव है।
- Moments before their **second attempt**, the pilots said the “**runway is currently not in sight**”, and then reported again that the runway was visible, following which they were given a **landing clearance**.
दूसरे प्रयास से कुछ क्षण पहले, पायलटों ने कहा कि “रनवे फिलहाल दिखाई नहीं दे रहा है”, और फिर दोबारा बताया कि रनवे दिख रहा है, जिसके बाद उन्हें लैंडिंग क्लियरेंस दिया गया।
- The ATC saw the aircraft in **flames** at **8.44 a.m.**
एटीसी ने विमान को सुबह 8.44 बजे आग की लपटों में देखा।
- The **Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau** is looking into the tragedy, and a team left for **Baramati** soon after the crash.
विमान दुर्घटना जांच ब्यूरो इस त्रासदी की जांच कर रहा है, और दुर्घटना के तुरंत बाद एक टीम बारामती के लिए रवाना हुई।
- The **pilot-in-command, Captain Sumit Kapur**, had over **15,000 hours** of flying experience, and **First Officer Shambhavi Pathak 1,500 hours**.
कमांड पायलट कैप्टन सुमित कपूर के पास 15,000 घंटे से अधिक का उड़ान अनुभव था, और फर्स्ट ऑफिसर शांभवी पाठक के पास 1,500 घंटे का अनुभव था।
- The airstrip, owned by the **Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation**, is leased to the **Red Bird Flying School** and **Carver Aviation** for **flight training**.
यह एयरस्ट्रिप महाराष्ट्र औद्योगिक विकास निगम की स्वामित्व वाली है और रेड बर्ड फ्लाईंग स्कूल तथा कार्वर एविएशन को उड़ान प्रशिक्षण के लिए पट्टे पर दी गई है।
- It is categorised as an “**uncontrolled aerodrome**” as it does not have typical airport infrastructure, including an **ATC**, and navigation equipment such as an **instrument landing system**, or **security and firefighting arrangements**.
इसे “अनियंत्रित एयरोड्रोम” के रूप में वर्गीकृत किया गया है क्योंकि इसमें सामान्य हवाई अड्डा अवसंरचना नहीं है, जिसमें एटीसी, इंस्ट्रूमेंट लैंडिंग सिस्टम, या सुरक्षा और अग्निशमन व्यवस्था शामिल है।
- Pilots have to rely on **visual approach**, or **bare eyes**, as there are no navigational aids that generate cues inside the cockpit to maintain a certain **alignment or direction**.
पायलटों को दृश्य दृष्टिकोण या नंगी आंखों पर निर्भर रहना पड़ता है, क्योंकि कॉकपिट के भीतर संरेखण या दिशा बनाए रखने के लिए कोई नेविगेशनल संकेत उपलब्ध नहीं हैं।
- As the airport is beyond the **Airport Authority of India’s ATC coverage area**, ATC support is provided by the **staff of one of the flight training schools**, which have only **rudimentary infrastructure**, a pilot who has trained at **Baramati** said.
एक पायलट जिसने बारामती में प्रशिक्षण लिया है, ने कहा कि यह हवाई अड्डा भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण की एटीसी कवरेज सीमा से बाहर है, इसलिए एटीसी सहायता उड़ान प्रशिक्षण स्कूलों के स्टाफ द्वारा दी जाती है, जिनके पास केवल प्रारंभिक अवसंरचना है।
- At the time of the landing, the aircraft reportedly **rolled left** in an effort to **line up with the runway**, a move that may have caused a **loss of lift or a stall**, leading it to veer toward the **sloping side of the runway**, where it **crashed on the spot**, informed sources citing **eyewitness accounts** said.
सूत्रों ने प्रत्यक्षदर्शियों के हवाले से बताया कि लैंडिंग के समय विमान ने रनवे के साथ संरेखित होने के प्रयास में बाईं ओर झुकाव किया, जिससे संभवतः लिफ्ट की कमी या स्टॉल हुआ और विमान रनवे के ढलान वाले हिस्से की ओर मुड़ गया, जहां वह मौके पर ही दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो गया।



GS Paper II: International Relations	
TOPICS COVERED	29 January 2026
1.	India holds security dialogue with Saudi Arabia भारत ने सऊदी अरब के साथ सुरक्षा संवाद किया
2.	India, the beautiful — but first, India the functional भारत, सुंदर — लेकिन पहले, कार्यशील भारत
3.	The new logic of the Chinese economy चीनी अर्थव्यवस्था की नई तर्कशक्ति
4.	Amid the Ukraine war fallout, fearful Chechen women seek escape routes यूक्रेन युद्ध के प्रभाव के बीच, भयभीत चेचन महिलाएँ सुरक्षित निकलने के रास्ते तलाश रही हैं

India holds security dialogue with Saudi Arabia

GS II: IR
Kalol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

Days after signing a 'Letter of Intent' for a Strategic Defence Partnership with the United Arab Emirates, India on Wednesday held a security dialogue with Saudi Arabia. Indian and Saudi senior officials met in the capital Riyadh, where the two sides carried out a "comprehensive review of ongoing security cooperation" and discussed threats posed by terrorist groups globally and "in their respective regions".

The 3rd India-Saudi Arabia Security Working Group was co-chaired by Vinod Bahade, Joint Secretary (Counter Terrorism) in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), and Ahmed Al-Eissa, Director-General



Indian officials termed the meeting of the Security Working Group 'a good framework' on ongoing cooperation. @INDIANEMBRIYADH

of Legal Affairs and International Cooperation in the Ministry of Interior of Saudi Arabia. "Both sides shared views on enhancing cooperation in current and emerging challenges to counter-terrorism including countering extremism and radicalisation, combating financing of terrorism, preventing use of technology for terrorist purposes, nexus between transnational organised crimes and terrorism," the MEA said in a statement.

The officials also condemned the terrorist attack in Pahalgam of April

22, 2025, and the terror incident on November 10, 2025, near the Red Fort. Both sides discussed measures to enhance bilateral legal and judicial cooperation and law enforcement cooperation, the MEA said.

Indian officials described the meeting of the Security Working Group as 'a good framework of ongoing cooperation', emphasising that it is a continuing mechanism under the India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council (SPC). However, the dialogue has drawn attention as it came days after India and the UAE inked a 'Letter of Intent' for a Strategic Defence Partnership.

The UAE's relations with Saudi Arabia have nosedived over the past several

months because of diverging policies in Yemen. Neither Saudi Arabia nor the UAE has taken any formal measures against each other, but the two neighbours have been exchanging strong remarks lately over the situation in Yemen as well as in other parts of West Asia and North Africa such as Libya and Sudan. Saudi criticism has generally highlighted that the UAE has been trying to promote inimical forces in areas linked to Saudi strategic interests.

Both Saudi Arabia and the UAE are vital for India's energy security and investments, and are also major foreign remittance generators as they host a large number of Indian citizens working there as expatriates.

India holds security dialogue with Saudi Arabia भारत ने सऊदी अरब के साथ सुरक्षा संवाद किया

- Days after signing a 'Letter of Intent' for a **Strategic Defence Partnership** with the **United Arab Emirates**, India on **Wednesday** held a **security dialogue** with **Saudi Arabia**.
संयुक्त अरब अमीरात के साथ रणनीतिक रक्षा साझेदारी के लिए 'लेटर ऑफ इंटेंट' पर हस्ताक्षर करने के कुछ दिन बाद, भारत ने बुधवार को सऊदी अरब के साथ सुरक्षा संवाद किया।
- Indian and Saudi senior officials met in the capital **Riyadh**, where the two sides carried out a "**comprehensive review of ongoing security cooperation**" and discussed threats posed by **terrorist groups** globally and "**in their respective regions**".
भारतीय और सऊदी वरिष्ठ अधिकारी राजधानी **रियाद** में मिले, जहाँ दोनों पक्षों ने "चल रहे सुरक्षा सहयोग की व्यापक समीक्षा" की और वैश्विक स्तर पर तथा "अपने-अपने क्षेत्रों में" आतंकी समूहों से उत्पन्न खतरों पर चर्चा की।



- The 3rd India-Saudi Arabia Security Working Group was co-chaired by **Vinod Bahade**, Joint Secretary (Counter Terrorism) in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), and **Ahmed Al-Eissa**, Director-General of Legal Affairs and International Cooperation in the Ministry of Interior of Saudi Arabia.
तीसरे भारत-सऊदी अरब सुरक्षा कार्य समूह की सह-अध्यक्षता विदोद बहादे, संयुक्त सचिव (आतंकवाद निरोध), विदेश मंत्रालय (MEA) और अहमद अल-ईसा, कानूनी मामलों और अंतरराष्ट्रीय सहयोग के महानिदेशक, सऊदी अरब के गृह मंत्रालय ने की।
- “Both sides shared views on enhancing cooperation in current and emerging challenges to counter-terrorism including countering extremism and radicalisation, combating financing of terrorism, preventing use of technology for terrorist purposes, nexus between transnational organised crimes and terrorism,” the MEA said in a statement.
MEA ने एक बयान में कहा, “दोनों पक्षों ने आतंकवाद निरोध से जुड़ी वर्तमान और उभरती चुनौतियों पर सहयोग बढ़ाने, अतिवाद और कट्टरपंथ से निपटने, आतंकवाद के वित्तपोषण को रोकने, आतंकी उद्देश्यों के लिए प्रौद्योगिकी के उपयोग को रोकने और सीमापार संगठित अपराध तथा आतंकवाद के गठजोड़ पर विचार साझा किए।”
- Indian officials described the meeting of the Security Working Group as ‘a good framework of ongoing cooperation’, emphasising that it is a continuing mechanism under the **India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council (SPC)**.
भारतीय अधिकारियों ने सुरक्षा कार्य समूह की बैठक को ‘निरंतर सहयोग का एक अच्छा ढांचा’ बताया और कहा कि यह भारत-सऊदी अरब रणनीतिक साझेदारी परिषद (SPC) के तहत एक सतत तंत्र है।
- However, the dialogue has drawn attention as it came days after India and the UAE inked a ‘Letter of Intent’ for a Strategic Defence Partnership.
हालांकि, यह संवाद इसलिए ध्यान आकर्षित कर रहा है क्योंकि यह भारत और यूएई के बीच रणनीतिक रक्षा साझेदारी के लिए ‘लेटर ऑफ इंटेंट’ पर हस्ताक्षर के कुछ दिन बाद हुआ।
- The UAE’s relations with Saudi Arabia have nosedived over the past several months because of diverging policies in Yemen.
यमन में भिन्न नीतियों के कारण पिछले कुछ महीनों में यूएई और सऊदी अरब के संबंध खराब हुए हैं।
- Neither Saudi Arabia nor the UAE has taken any formal measures against each other, but the two neighbours have been exchanging strong remarks lately over the situation in Yemen as well as in other parts of West Asia and North Africa such as Libya and Sudan.
न तो सऊदी अरब और न ही यूएई ने एक-दूसरे के खिलाफ कोई औपचारिक कदम उठाया है, लेकिन यमन के साथ-साथ पश्चिम एशिया और उत्तरी अफ्रीका के अन्य हिस्सों जैसे लीबिया और सूडान की स्थिति को लेकर दोनों पड़ोसी देशों के बीच हाल के समय में कड़े बयान सामने आए हैं।
- Saudi criticism has generally highlighted that the UAE has been trying to promote inimical forces in areas linked to Saudi strategic interests.
सऊदी आलोचना में आम तौर पर यह रेखांकित किया गया है कि यूएई, सऊदी रणनीतिक हितों से जुड़े क्षेत्रों में शत्रुतापूर्ण ताकतों को बढ़ावा देने की कोशिश कर रहा है।
- Both Saudi Arabia and the UAE are vital for India’s energy security and investments, and are also major foreign remittance generators as they host a large number of Indian citizens working there as expatriates.
सऊदी अरब और यूएई दोनों भारत की ऊर्जा सुरक्षा और निवेश के लिए अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण हैं और विदेशी प्रेषण के प्रमुख स्रोत भी हैं, क्योंकि वहां प्रवासी के रूप में काम करने वाले भारतीय नागरिकों की बड़ी संख्या रहती है।



India, the beautiful — but first, India the functional

GS II: IR

India is a land of astonishing contrasts. It offers snow-capped peaks and sun-drenched beaches, ancient temples and cutting-edge tech parks, spiritual retreats and bustling bazaars. Yet, despite this kaleidoscope of experiences, India welcomed just 5.6 million foreign tourist arrivals till August 2025 — a modest figure for a country of 1.4 billion. Singapore, with a population smaller than Delhi's, drew 11.6 million by August 2025. Thailand earned over \$60 billion from tourism; India made barely a third of that.

These numbers are not just statistical curiosities. They reflect a deeper malaise in India's tourism strategy — one that demands urgent attention if we are to unlock the sector's full potential. Tourism is not merely about showcasing monuments or selling sunsets; it is about creating experiences that are seamless, safe, and memorable. And on that front, India has work to do.

Three main problems

India's problems can be summarised in three "T"s: image, infrastructure and 'India itself'. Let us analyse each. First, image: the perception of the country abroad. India's 'Incredible India' campaign is evocative, but branding alone cannot overcome the weight of negative headlines. Concerns about safety, especially for women, with many foreigners considering India to be unsafe for women travelling alone; scams; sanitation; and bureaucratic hassles often shape the global imagination more than our cultural richness. Tourists want to feel welcome, not wary. Singapore and Thailand have succeeded not just by being clean or affordable, but by being consistent in their messaging as safe, efficient, and, especially in Thailand's case, fun.

India's vastness makes a single narrative difficult, but that does not mean marketing the country is impossible. We must segment our appeal — Spiritual India, Adventure India, Luxury India — and market each with clarity and conviction to different audiences abroad. It is time for 'Incredible Indias', in the plural, to be sold to the world. The Buddhist circuit, the Ramayana circuit, even the cricketing circuit should all be marketed to appropriate foreign constituencies.

Infrastructure is the second problem area. The tourist experience begins the moment one lands. Airports, immigration counters, taxis, Wi-Fi — these are first impressions. A luxury hotel means little if the road outside is potholed and the signage indecipherable. Last-mile connectivity to remote destinations remains a challenge. Clean public toilets, reliable internet, and well-maintained heritage sites are foundational. Paradoxically, while India can be a budget

MOB



Shashi Tharoor

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

Until India addresses the fundamentals — image, infrastructure, and experience — it will remain a tantalising idea rather than a top-tier destination

destination, mid-range and luxury travel often comes at a premium, making the country less competitive than its Southeast Asian neighbours.

Then comes 'India itself'. The sheer scale can overwhelm the uninitiated. Crowds, noise, and a service culture that is not always tourist-friendly can cause frustration. Scammers, touts, beggars and sexual harassers exist, and they erode trust. The hospitality sector reportedly faces a 40% shortfall in trained staff, and many graduates prefer the predictability of office jobs to the unpredictability of guest relations. We need vocational training, multilingual guides, and a professional workforce that sees tourism not as a fallback, but as a calling.

Immigration, too, must evolve. While e-visas have helped, India still ranks behind many Asian countries on ease-of-travel indexes. A 'Visa on Arrival for the World' policy may sound ambitious, but it is worth exploring — though I am certain that would require a major transformation in the attitude of the Home Ministry. Stories of foreigners turned away at Indian airports because of past criticisms of the country do disproportionate damage. India is a large and confident nation; it can absorb dissent without rejecting the dissenter. We need to train immigration officers to be friendly and welcoming to foreigners. And as a nation, Indians need to accept criticism of policies as part of democratic discourse.

Fixing the deficit

Fixing India's tourism deficit therefore requires a multi-pronged strategy that addresses both perception and reality. First, rebrand and relaunch. Let us move beyond generic campaigns and build targeted narratives. Promote well-defined circuits — the Golden Triangle, the Himalayan trail, the coastal belt — with impeccable infrastructure and safety. Invest in digital storytelling: immersive virtual tours, influencer partnerships, and user-generated content that showcases India's magic through authentic lenses. If I were to write India's tourism tagline, I would say, 'Incredible Indias: Experience the Infinite'. 'Not just a place to visit, but a world to inhabit — spiritually, culturally, and emotionally.'

Second, build infrastructure that matches ambition. Encourage public-private partnerships to adopt and maintain heritage sites. Scale up the 'Adopt a Heritage' scheme for companies to renovate and maintain sites everywhere in India. Improve roads, rail, and sustainable transport to lesser-known gems. Launch a nationwide 'Clean Tourism' campaign with clean restrooms, signage, and waste management at every major destination. Make museums more digital, more interactive, less dusty and worn.

Third, prioritise safety and training. Expand the tourist police force, especially by hiring and training large numbers of women; ensure multilingual support; and crack down on scams and harassment. Create centralised apps for verified guides and transport. Invest in skill development — not just for five-star hotels, but for homestays, eco-lodges, and local artisans.

Fourth, streamline the visa process. Make e-visas faster, simpler, and more intuitive. Offer long-term multi-entry visas for frequent travellers. Reciprocity is the usual rule, but India can identify countries whose nationals are unlikely to pose any immigration risk, and make an exception to that rule. It is important to remove bureaucratic hurdles that deter rather than protect.

Fifth, promote sustainability and authenticity. Today's global traveller seeks eco-tourism and meaningful experiences. India must balance growth with preservation. That means regulating footfalls at fragile sites, promoting community-based tourism, and ensuring that development does not come at the cost of cultural or environmental degradation.

Economic opportunity, strategic imperative

Tourism must be a national priority. A World Tourism Organisation report notes investment on tourism creates multiple times more jobs than the same amounts spent on manufacturing. As automation reshapes industry, the differential will only increase. Tourism offers employment not just to more people, but particularly to the unskilled and semi-skilled — precisely the demographic that needs to be uplifted. In a region where youth unemployment can fuel unrest (as we have seen in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal), tourism is not just an economic opportunity; it is a strategic imperative. This is why it deserves to be supported by the government as a vital industry, with tax breaks and policy support.

The hospitality industry is a curator of India's image in the eyes of the world. It is a shame that the otherwise rightly hailed GST reforms have left the hospitality industry behind. The denial of input tax credit across the full range of hotels' revenue sources ironically means that they were better off at 12% GST than they now are at 5%. This must be fixed.

India has the history of Egypt, the natural beauty of New Zealand, and the cultural depth of a continent. But until we address the fundamentals — image, infrastructure, and experience — we will remain a tantalising idea rather than a top-tier destination.

India doesn't need to reinvent itself. It needs to refine itself. The world is waiting. Let us give it a reason to come — and to stay.

India, the beautiful — but first, India the functional

भारत, सुंदर — लेकिन पहले, कार्यशील भारत

- Yet, despite this **kaleidoscope of experiences**, India welcomed just **5.6 million foreign tourist arrivals till August 2025 — a modest figure for a country of 1.4 billion**. फिर भी, इस विविध अनुभवों के संसार के बावजूद, भारत ने अगस्त 2025 तक केवल 5.6 मिलियन विदेशी पर्यटकों का स्वागत किया — जो 1.4 अरब की आबादी वाले देश के लिए एक मामूली संख्या है।



- **Singapore**, with a population smaller than **Delhi's**, drew **11.6 million by August 2025**.
दिल्ली से कम आबादी वाला सिंगापुर, अगस्त 2025 तक 11.6 मिलियन पर्यटकों को आकर्षित कर सका।
- **Thailand earned over \$60 billion from tourism; India made barely a third of that.**
थाईलैंड ने पर्यटन से \$60 बिलियन से अधिक कमाए; भारत ने इसका मुश्किल से एक-तिहाई अर्जित किया।
- Tourism is not merely about **showcasing monuments** or **selling sunsets**; it is about **creating experiences that are seamless, safe, and memorable**.
पर्यटन केवल स्मारकों को दिखाने या सूर्यास्त बेचने तक सीमित नहीं है; यह सहज, सुरक्षित और यादगार अनुभव रचने के बारे में है।
- India's problems can be summarised in **three "I"s: image, infrastructure and 'India itself'**.
भारत की समस्याओं को तीन "I" में समेटा जा सकता है: इमेज, इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर और 'भारत स्वयं'।
- First, **image: the perception of the country abroad**.
पहली, इमेज: विदेशों में देश की धारणा।
- India's '**Incredible India**' campaign is **evocative**, but **branding alone cannot overcome the weight of negative headlines**.
भारत का 'इनक्रेडिबल इंडिया' अभियान प्रभावशाली है, लेकिन केवल ब्रांडिंग, नकारात्मक सुर्खियों के प्रभाव को दूर नहीं कर सकती।
- Concerns about **safety**, especially for **women**, with many foreigners considering India to be **unsafe for women travelling alone**; **scams**; **sanitation**; and **bureaucratic hassles** often shape the **global imagination** more than our **cultural richness**.
सुरक्षा, विशेषकर महिलाओं को लेकर चिंताएँ, जहाँ कई विदेशी भारत को अकेली महिला यात्रियों के लिए असुरक्षित मानते हैं; धोखाधड़ी, स्वच्छता, और नौकरशाही परेशानियाँ अक्सर हमारी सांस्कृतिक समृद्धि से अधिक वैश्विक धारणा को प्रभावित करती हैं।
- Tourists want to feel **welcome**, not **wary**.
पर्यटक स्वागत महसूस करना चाहते हैं, संदेह नहीं।
- **Singapore and Thailand** have succeeded not just by being **clean or affordable**, but by being **consistent** in their messaging as **safe, efficient, and, especially in Thailand's case, fun**.
सिंगापुर और थाईलैंड केवल स्वच्छ या किफ़ायती होने से नहीं, बल्कि सुरक्षित, कुशल और विशेष रूप से थाईलैंड के मामले में, मनोरंजक होने के अपने संदेश में निरंतरता के कारण सफल हुए हैं।
- **We must segment our appeal — Spiritual India, Adventure India, Luxury India — and market each with clarity and conviction to different audiences abroad**.
हमें अपनी अपील को विभाजित करना होगा — आध्यात्मिक भारत, साहसिक भारत, लक्ज़री भारत — और प्रत्येक को स्पष्टता और दृढ़ता के साथ विदेशी दर्शकों तक पहुँचाना होगा।
- It is time for '**Incredible Indias**', in the **plural**, to be sold to the world.
अब समय है कि 'इनक्रेडिबल इंडियाज़', बहुवचन में, दुनिया के सामने प्रस्तुत किए जाएँ।
- The **Buddhist circuit, the Ramayana circuit, even the cricketing circuit** should all be marketed to **appropriate foreign constituencies**.
बौद्ध सर्किट, रामायण सर्किट, यहाँ तक कि क्रिकेट सर्किट को भी उपयुक्त विदेशी वर्गों के लिए प्रचारित किया जाना चाहिए।
- **Infrastructure is the second problem area**.
इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर दूसरा समस्या क्षेत्र है।
- The **tourist experience** begins the moment one **lands**.
पर्यटक अनुभव उस क्षण से शुरू हो जाता है जब कोई देश में उतरता है।
- **Airports, immigration counters, taxis, Wi-Fi — these are first impressions**.
हवाई अड्डे, इमिग्रेशन काउंटर, टैक्सी, वाई-फाई — यही पहली छाप बनाते हैं।
- **A luxury hotel means little if the road outside is potholed and the signage indecipherable**.
यदि बाहर की सड़क गड्ढों से भरी हो और संकेतक अस्पष्ट हों, तो लक्ज़री होटल का महत्व कम हो जाता है।
- **Last-mile connectivity to remote destinations** remains a **challenge**.
दूरस्थ गंतव्यों तक लास्ट-माइल कनेक्टिविटी अब भी एक चुनौती बनी हुई है।
- **Clean public toilets, reliable internet, and well-maintained heritage sites** are **foundational**.
स्वच्छ सार्वजनिक शौचालय, विश्वसनीय इंटरनेट, और अच्छी तरह संरक्षित विरासत स्थल मूलभूत आवश्यकताएँ हैं।



Then comes 'India itself'

फिर आता है 'भारत स्वयं'

- The sheer **scale** can overwhelm the uninitiated. **Crowds, noise, and a service culture** that is not always tourist-friendly can cause frustration. विशाल पैमाना नए आगंतुकों को अभिभूत कर सकता है। भीड़, शोर, और ऐसी सेवा संस्कृति जो हमेशा पर्यटक-मित्रवत नहीं होती, निराशा पैदा कर सकती है।
- **Scammers, touts, beggars and sexual harassers** exist, and they erode trust. ठग, दलाल, भिखारी और यौन उत्पीड़क मौजूद हैं, और ये विश्वास को कमजोर करते हैं।
- The **hospitality sector** reportedly faces a **40% shortfall** in trained staff, and many graduates prefer the predictability of office jobs to the unpredictability of guest relations. मेहमाननवाजी क्षेत्र में प्रशिक्षित कर्मचारियों की 40% कमी बताई जाती है, और कई स्नातक कार्यालयी नौकरियों की भविष्यवाणी को अप्रत्याशित अतिथि संबंधों की तुलना में प्राथमिकता देते हैं।
- We need **vocational training, multilingual guides, and a professional workforce** that sees tourism not as a fallback, but as a calling. हमें व्यावसायिक प्रशिक्षण, बहुभाषी गाइड और एक पेशेवर कार्यबल की आवश्यकता है जो पर्यटन को केवल विकल्प नहीं बल्कि एक पेशा समझे।
- **Immigration**, too, must evolve. While **e-visas** have helped, India still ranks behind many Asian countries on **ease-of-travel indexes**. प्रवासन को भी विकसित होना चाहिए। जबकि ई-वीज़ा ने मदद की है, भारत अभी भी कई एशियाई देशों के पीछे है यात्रा-सुविधा सूचकांक में।
- A **'Visa on Arrival for the World'** policy may sound ambitious, but it is worth exploring — though I am certain that would require a major transformation in the attitude of the **Home Ministry**. 'विश्व के लिए आगमन पर वीज़ा' नीति महत्वाकांक्षी लग सकती है, लेकिन इसे अपनाने योग्य है — हालांकि मुझे यकीन है कि इसके लिए गृह मंत्रालय के रवैये में बड़ा परिवर्तन आवश्यक होगा।

The new logic of the Chinese economy

GS II: IR

As the global economic and trade order suffers a severe blow, the giant ship of the Chinese economy once again demonstrates its strong resilience, with its GDP exceeding 140 trillion yuan (approximately \$20 trillion) in 2025. This represents a year-on-year increase of 5%. China's contribution to global economic growth is expected to reach around 30%. This hard-won achievement has drawn significant global attention. I would like to share some views on several specific issues that Indian friends are concerned about.

What drives China's economic growth?

In 2025, China's economy moved forward, driven by consumption, exports, and investment, but its internal structure is undergoing a profound and positive transformation.

Domestic demand is the primary engine of China's growth. In 2025, final consumption expenditure contributed 52% to economic growth. Some people may conclude that China has "insufficient consumption" simply because the prices of Chinese goods and services are significantly lower than the global average. In fact, measured by internationally accepted standards of physical consumption, China ranks among the world's top countries in terms of total basic consumption. Among these, the average number of mobile phones owned per person is 1.28, which is among the world's leading levels. The average daily protein intake is 124.6 grams, which is higher than that of the U.S. and Japan. The average annual vegetable consumption is 109.8 kilogrammes, the highest in the world.

China's exports of goods and services demonstrated strong resilience, contributing 32.7% to economic growth and becoming a key booster. Despite an unfavourable international trade environment, "Made in China", especially high-tech products, were widely popular thanks to its complete industrial chain and continuously improving innovation capabilities, with high-tech



Xu Feihong
Chinese Ambassador
to India

It provides new opportunities for China-India cooperation

product exports growing by as much as 13.2% throughout the year. Exports to major markets such as ASEAN and the European Union maintained stable growth, effectively offsetting market fluctuations in other regions.

In contrast, gross capital formation contributed 15.3% to growth, which reveals that the Chinese economy is undergoing a difficult but necessary transformation of growth engines: from relying on investment and exports to a better model in which domestic consumption takes the lead, while export and innovation add impetus. Amid this transition, breakthroughs have been consistently achieved in cutting-edge fields such as AI, quantum technology, and brain-computer interfaces. The output of high-end manufacturing, including servers and industrial robots, has maintained rapid growth. Green industries such as renewable electricity and clean energy have flourished. These emerging drivers are clearly outlining the future course of the Chinese economy.

Why export production capacity?

China is not exporting "overcapacity," but rather high-quality production capacity and advanced solutions that are widely welcomed by developing countries. From the supply side, there is no "overcapacity" in China. In 2025, the capacity utilisation rate of China's above-designated-size industry stood at 74.4%, equivalent to that of the U.S. and the EU across all sectors. The global competitiveness of Chinese products stems from long-term, high-intensity R&D investment, robust domestic competition, and the most comprehensive industrial system, rather than subsidies or dumping.

From the demand side, the fundamental driving force behind the booming development of China's production capacity is the real demand from the global market. Many developing countries have enhanced their infrastructure, achieved energy transition and embarked on

industrialisation by introducing high-quality Chinese equipment and technology. As the American economist, Jeffrey Sachs, pointed out, the Western labeling of Chinese manufacturing as "overcapacity" is out of "jealousy."

Mitigating India's trade deficit with China

According to data from General Administration of Customs of China, China-India trade reached a historic high of \$155.6 billion in 2025. Many of the goods imported from China are raw materials and components that are much needed in India and that are conducive to India's economic development. This fully demonstrates the strong economic complementarity and great potential for cooperation between the two countries.

Meanwhile, India's exports to China have shown positive momentum, reaching \$19.7 billion in 2025 and marking a year-on-year increase of 9.7%. Notably, growth rates in the last two months of 2025 were particularly strong, reaching 90% and 67% respectively. China has never deliberately pursued a trade surplus and is willing not only to be the world's factory but also the world's market. China's tariff level remains low by international standards at 7.3%. The negative list for foreign investment access has been continuously shortened, and China's visa-free policy keeps expanding. In particular, the Central Economic Work Conference identified "expanding domestic demand" as the top priority for economic work in 2026. With a population of over 1.4 billion, including more than 400 million in the middle-income group, China offers huge opportunities for high-quality Indian products.

We welcome more Indian enterprises to leverage platforms such as the China International Import Expo to bring more premium Indian products to the Chinese market, transforming trade deficits into cooperative surpluses. By moving towards each other, we can share dividends of development and jointly create a brighter future for Asia.



The new logic of the Chinese economy चीनी अर्थव्यवस्था की नई तर्कशक्ति

China's Economic Resilience in 2025 2025 में चीन की आर्थिक लचीलापन

- As the **global economic and trade order** suffers a severe blow, the giant ship of the **Chinese economy** once again demonstrates its strong **resilience**, with its **GDP exceeding 140 trillion yuan (approximately \$20 trillion) in 2025**.
जैसे ही वैश्विक आर्थिक और व्यापार व्यवस्था को गंभीर झटका लगता है, चीनी अर्थव्यवस्था का विशाल जहाज एक बार फिर अपनी मजबूत लचीलापन दिखाता है, जिसमें 2025 में इसका **GDP 140 ट्रिलियन युआन (लगभग \$20 ट्रिलियन)** से अधिक है।
- This represents a **year-on-year increase of 5%**.
यह साल-दर-साल 5% की वृद्धि दर्शाता है।
- China's contribution to global economic growth is expected to reach around 30%**.
चीन का वैश्विक आर्थिक विकास में योगदान लगभग 30% पहुँचने की उम्मीद है।
- In 2025, final consumption expenditure contributed 52% to economic growth**.
2025 में, अंतिम उपभोग व्यय ने आर्थिक वृद्धि में 52% योगदान दिया।
- In contrast, **gross capital formation contributed 15.3% to growth**, which reveals that the Chinese economy is undergoing a **difficult but necessary transformation** of growth engines.
इसके विपरीत, **सकल पूंजी निर्माण ने वृद्धि में 15.3% योगदान दिया**, जो दर्शाता है कि चीनी अर्थव्यवस्था अपने वृद्धि इंजनों में एक **कठिन लेकिन आवश्यक परिवर्तन** से गुजर रही है।
- In 2025, the **capacity utilisation rate** of China's above-designated-size industry stood at **74.4%**, equivalent to that of the **U.S. and the EU** across all sectors.
2025 में, चीन की उच्च-आकार उद्योग क्षमता उपयोग दर **74.4%** थी, जो सभी क्षेत्रों में यू.एस. और ईयू के बराबर है।
- According to data from **General Administration of Customs of China, China-India trade reached a historic high of \$155.6 billion in 2025**.
चीन की सामान्य शिपिंग प्रशासन (General Administration of Customs) के आंकड़ों के अनुसार, **2025 में चीन-भारत व्यापार \$155.6 बिलियन के ऐतिहासिक उच्च स्तर तक पहुँच गया**।
- Many of the goods imported from China are **raw materials and components** that are much needed in India and are conducive to India's **economic development**.
चीन से आयात की गई कई वस्तुएँ **कच्चा माल और घटक** हैं, जो भारत में अत्यंत आवश्यक हैं और भारत के **आर्थिक विकास** के अनुकूल हैं।
- This fully demonstrates the strong **economic complementarity** and great **potential for cooperation** between the two countries.
यह दोनों देशों के बीच मजबूत **आर्थिक पूरकता** और बड़े **सहयोग की संभावना** को पूरी तरह दर्शाता है।
- Meanwhile, **India's exports to China have shown positive momentum, reaching \$19.7 billion in 2025 and marking a year-on-year increase of 9.7%**.
इस बीच, भारत के चीन के लिए निर्यात ने सकारात्मक रुझान दिखाया, जो **2025 में \$19.7 बिलियन तक पहुँच गया और साल-दर-साल 9.7% की वृद्धि दर्ज की**।
- Notably, growth rates in the last two months of 2025 were particularly strong, reaching **90% and 67%** respectively.
विशेष रूप से, 2025 के अंतिम दो महीनों में वृद्धि दर बहुत मजबूत रही, क्रमशः **90% और 67%** तक पहुँची।
- China has never deliberately pursued a trade surplus and is willing not only to be the world's factory but also the world's market**.
चीन ने कभी जानबूझकर **व्यापार अधिशेष** का पीछा नहीं किया और वह न केवल दुनिया की **फ़ैक्ट्री** बल्कि दुनिया का **बाज़ार** बनने के लिए तैयार है।
- China's tariff level remains low by international standards at 7.3%**.
अंतरराष्ट्रीय मानकों के अनुसार चीन का **शुल्क स्तर अभी भी कम है, 7.3%**।



- The **negative list** for foreign investment access has been continuously shortened, and China's **visa-free policy** keeps expanding.
विदेशी निवेश के लिए **नकारात्मक सूची** लगातार कम की गई है, और चीन की **वीजा-मुक्त नीति** लगातार बढ़ रही है।

Amid the Ukraine war fallout, fearful Chechen women seek escape routes

Facing hardening repression in Chechnya amid Russia's invasion of Ukraine, women flee violent families, fearing honour killings and forced returns; under Ramzan Kadyrov's rule, strict family codes override the law, while war-related trauma and forced recruitment fuel surge in domestic violence

GS II: IR

Agence France-Presse
EUROPE

Facing what activists say is a hardening of repression inside Chechnya amid Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Asil and Aishat, both young women, recently fled their violent families in search of safety.

Only Ms. Asil is alive today.

The Muslim-majority region in the North Caucasus mountains is one of the most conservative and closed in Russia. Women have few rights, and strict family codes and clan ties overrule the written law.

Strongman leader Ramzan Kadyrov is a crucial backer of President Vladimir Putin, pledging to keep the restive region loyal to Moscow in exchange for permission to run it as he sees fit.

He has sent thousands of men to fight on the front in Ukraine – a war that rights groups say has worsened conditions for women in Chechnya.

Ms. Asil, whose name has been changed for security reasons, and Aishat said they were beaten, insulted, and humiliated by relatives before they fled. When they tried to resist, they were accused of being possessed by the devil.

"The reasons for everything are the 'sheitan'," Ms. Asil said, referring to the Arabic word for devil.



Strongman leader Ramzan Kadyrov is a crucial backer of President Vladimir Putin, pledging to keep the restive region loyal to Moscow in exchange for permission to run it as he sees fit. AFP

In an interview last year after escaping, she said she still felt an "animal fear" of being tracked down, forcibly returned to Chechnya, and killed because, in the eyes of her relatives, she had dishonoured the family.

There have been several cases of Chechens who fled suffering that fate.

'Russian manners'

Aishat Baimuradova, 23, was found dead in an apartment in Yerevan, Armenia, in October after escaping Chechnya.

Police launched a murder investigation, but the two suspects have not been apprehended.

Before her death, Aishat had criticised Kadyrov's ultraconservative Islamic

policies under which women face strict controls on what they can wear, their education, work, and movement.

The Chechen leader in 2009 publicly warned that any woman who behaves promiscuously could be "killed by her brother".

Aishat said she was abused for years.

A friend, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Aishat had been raped as a child by her father and grandfather, and then by her husband, whom she married very young and had a child with.

The North Caucasus SOS (NCSOS) rights group helped Aishat to leave. After her death, audio messages from her recounting abuse by her husband

were published.

Aishat said he beat her and called her a "whore".

"I told him: why did you marry a woman if you hate women? Marry a man and divorce me," she said in a low, tired voice.

The message was recorded while she was still in Chechnya, before fleeing in early 2025.

After escaping, Aishat no longer wanted to keep a low profile.

Her hair newly dyed red and styled into a pixie cut, Aishat began posting workout sessions and showing off her muscular arms on social media. Pro-Kadyrov Chechens quickly made threats, accusing her of "Russifying", abandoning her Chechen dress, and behaving immodestly.

"They condemn me for my supposed Russian manners, but they kiss Russia's ass by supporting its war against Ukraine and participating in it. Where's the logic?" she posted on Telegram in September.

Mr. Kadyrov says the tens of thousands of Chechen fighters serving in Russia's army are fulfilling their "sacred duty".

Many were attracted by high salaries and bonuses, but the Memorial rights group said a "large number" were essentially forced to fight in Ukraine.

'State within a state'

Mr. Kadyrov, who has ruled Chechnya since 2007, says that tight security is necessary to stamp out the possibility of a jihadist resurgence.

Two wars against Russia in the 1990s killed tens of thousands and saw cities, including the capital Grozny, razed by Moscow's army.

In exchange for suppressing dissent, the Kremlin gave Kadyrov – whose father switched sides during one of the conflicts and was later assassinated – near-total control of Chechnya.

Rights groups describe the mountainous region of 1.5 million people as a "state within a state".

Independent reporting from inside is virtually impossible.

Over the past 15 years,

NGOs have confirmed more than 70 cases of honour killings in the Russian Caucasus, most in Chechnya.

Mr. Kadyrov denies accusations of human rights violations.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has worsened the plight of women, David Istevev from NCSOS said.

"We've seen a sharp rise in the number of requests. In fact, it's increased by a rate of dozens," he said.

'I wish they die'

Ms. Asil hides her background from strangers and has adopted a Western hairstyle to "blend in".

"It's also an act of defiance, because back home I was forbidden to cut my hair," she said.

She spoke of Aishat, whom she had never met. She seemed like a "strong" person who turned her "immense pain" into rebellion, Ms. Asil said.

"She had a sparkle in her, and those who extinguished it, those monsters, I wish that they die," she said, slamming her fist on the table.

But she still believes there are "good Chechen families" and hopes that one day – after the war and Mr. Kadyrov rule – women will have more rights.

For now, she focuses on her own little "achievements". "My life and my time are mine."

PK



Amid the Ukraine war fallout, fearful Chechen women seek escape routes यूक्रेन युद्ध के प्रभाव के बीच, भयभीत चेचन महिलाएँ सुरक्षित निकलने के रास्ते तलाश रही हैं

- Facing **hardening repression** in Chechnya amid **Russia's invasion of Ukraine**, women **flee violent families**, fearing **honour killings** and **forced returns**; under **Ramzan Kadyrov's rule**, **strict family codes overrule the law**, while **war-related trauma** and **forced recruitment** fuel surge in **domestic violence**
रूस के यूक्रेन आक्रमण के बीच चेचन्या में कठोर दमन का सामना करते हुए, महिलाएँ हिंसक परिवारों से भाग रही हैं, ऑनर किलिंग और जबरन वापसी के डर से; रमज़ान कादिरोव के शासन में कड़े पारिवारिक नियम कानून से ऊपर हैं, जबकि युद्धजनित आघात और जबरन भर्ती से घरेलू हिंसा में बढ़ोतरी हो रही है
- Facing what activists say is a **hardening of repression** inside Chechnya amid **Russia's invasion of Ukraine**, **Asil** and **Aishat**, both young women, recently **fled their violent families** in search of safety.
कार्यकर्ताओं के अनुसार रूस के यूक्रेन आक्रमण के बीच चेचन्या में दमन सख्त होने के कारण, दो युवा महिलाएँ **असील** और **ऐशात** हाल ही में सुरक्षा की तलाश में अपने हिंसक परिवारों से भाग गईं।
- Only **Ms. Asil** is alive today.
आज केवल **सुश्री असील** जीवित हैं।
- The **Muslim-majority region in the North Caucasus mountains** is one of the most **conservative and closed in Russia**.
नॉर्थ काकेशस पर्वतों में स्थित यह मुस्लिम-बहुल क्षेत्र रूस के सबसे रूढ़िवादी और बंद इलाकों में से एक है।
- **Women have few rights, and strict family codes and clan ties overrule the written law**.
महिलाओं के पास बहुत कम अधिकार हैं, और कड़े पारिवारिक नियम व कबीलाई रिश्ते लिखित कानून पर भारी पड़ते हैं।
- Strongman leader **Ramzan Kadyrov** is a crucial backer of President **Vladimir Putin**, pledging to keep the restive region loyal to **Moscow** in exchange for permission to run it as he sees fit.
सख्त नेता **रमज़ान कादिरोव**, राष्ट्रपति **व्लादिमीर पुतिन** के प्रमुख समर्थक हैं और **मॉस्को** के प्रति क्षेत्र की वफादारी के बदले इसे अपनी मर्जी से चलाने की अनुमति पाते हैं।
- He has sent **thousands of men** to fight on the front in **Ukraine** — a war that **rights groups** say has **worsened conditions for women in Chechnya**.
उन्होंने **हज़ारों पुरुषों** को यूक्रेन में मोर्चे पर लड़ने भेजा है — एक युद्ध जिसे **अधिकार समूहों** के अनुसार **चेचन्या में महिलाओं की स्थिति और खराब** हुई है।
- **Ms. Asil**, whose name has been changed for **security reasons**, and **Aishat** said they were **beaten, insulted, and humiliated** by relatives before they fled.
सुश्री असील, जिनका नाम **सुरक्षा कारणों** से बदला गया है, और **ऐशात** ने कहा कि भागने से पहले रिश्तेदारों ने उन्हें **पीटा, अपमानित किया और बेइज्जत** किया।
- When they tried to resist, they were accused of being **possessed by the devil**.
जब उन्होंने विरोध किया, तो उन पर **शैतान से ग्रस्त** होने का आरोप लगाया गया।
- "The reasons for everything are the **'sheitan'**," **Ms. Asil** said, referring to the **Arabic word for devil**.
सुश्री असील ने कहा, "हर चीज़ की वजह **'शैतान'** है," जो **अरबी में शैतान** शब्द है।
- In an interview last year after escaping, she said she still felt an **"animal fear"** of being **tracked down, forcibly returned to Chechnya**, and **killed** because, in the eyes of her relatives, she had **dishonoured the family**.
भागने के बाद पिछले साल दिए साक्षात्कार में उन्होंने कहा कि उन्हें आज भी **"जानवरों जैसा डर"** है कि उन्हें **ढूंढकर, जबरन चेचन्या वापस लाया जाएगा और मार दिया जाएगा**, क्योंकि रिश्तेदारों की नजर में उन्होंने **परिवार की इज़्ज़त पर धब्बा** लगाया है।
- There have been several cases of **Chechens who fled** suffering that fate.
चेचन्या से भागे लोगों के ऐसे कई मामले सामने आए हैं।

'Russian manners'
'रूसी तौर-तरीके'



- **Aishat Baimuradova**, 23, was found **dead** in an apartment in **Yerevan, Armenia**, in **October** after escaping **Chechnya**.
23 वर्षीय ऐशात बैमुरादोवा चेचन्या से भागने के बाद अक्टूबर में आर्मेनिया के येरेवन में एक अपार्टमेंट में मृत पाई गई।
- Police launched a **murder investigation**, but the **two suspects** have not been apprehended.
पुलिस ने हत्या की जांच शुरू की, लेकिन दो संदिग्ध अब तक पकड़े नहीं गए हैं।
- Before her death, **Aishat** had criticised **Kadyrov's ultra-conservative Islamic policies** under which women face strict controls on **dress, education, work, and movement**.
मृत्यु से पहले ऐशात ने कादिरोव की अति-रूढ़िवादी इस्लामी नीतियों की आलोचना की थी, जिनमें महिलाओं की पहनावे, शिक्षा, काम और आवाजाही पर कड़े नियंत्रण हैं।
- The **Chechen leader** in **2009** publicly warned that any woman who behaves promiscuously could be **"killed by her brother"**.
2009 में चेचन नेता ने सार्वजनिक रूप से चेतावनी दी थी कि कोई भी महिला यदि अश्लील व्यवहार करती है तो उसे "उसका भाई मार सकता है"।
- A friend, speaking on condition of **anonymity**, said **Aishat** had been **raped** as a child by her **father and grandfather**, and then by her **husband**, whom she married very young and had a child with.
गुमनामी की शर्त पर एक दोस्त ने कहा कि ऐशात का बचपन में पिता और दादा द्वारा बलात्कार हुआ, और बाद में उनके पति द्वारा, जिनसे उन्होंने कम उम्र में शादी की और एक बच्चा भी हुआ।
- The **North Caucasus SOS (NCSOS)** rights group helped **Aishat** to leave.
नॉर्थ काकेशस SOS (NCSOS) अधिकार समूह ने ऐशात को निकलने में मदद की।
- After her death, **audio messages** from her recounting abuse by her husband were published.
उनकी मृत्यु के बाद, पति द्वारा किए गए अत्याचार का विवरण देने वाले उनके ऑडियो संदेश प्रकाशित किए गए।
- **Aishat** said he beat her and called her a **"whore"**.
ऐशात ने कहा कि वह उन्हें पीटता था और "वेश्या" कहता था।
- "I told him: why did you marry a woman if you hate women? Marry a man and divorce me," she said in a low, tired voice.
उन्होंने थकी हुई धीमी आवाज़ में कहा, "मैंने उससे कहा: अगर तुम्हें औरतों से नफरत है तो शादी क्यों की? किसी आदमी से शादी करो और मुझे तलाक दो।"
- The message was recorded while she was still in **Chechnya**, before fleeing in **early 2025**.
यह संदेश **2025 की शुरुआत** में भागने से पहले, जब वह चेचन्या में थीं, रिकॉर्ड किया गया था।
- After escaping, **Aishat** no longer wanted to keep a **low profile**.
भागने के बाद ऐशात ने गुमनाम रहना नहीं चाहा।
- Her hair newly dyed **red** and styled into a **pixie cut**, **Aishat** began posting **workout sessions** and showing off her **muscular arms** on **social media**.
बालों को लाल रंग में रंगकर पिक्सी कट करवाने के बाद, ऐशात ने सोशल मीडिया पर वर्कआउट सत्र और अपनी मजबूत बाँहें दिखानी शुरू कीं।
- Pro-Kadyrov **Chechens** quickly made **threats**, accusing her of **"Russifying"**, abandoning **Chechen dress**, and behaving **immodestly**.
कादिरोव समर्थक चेचनों ने जल्दी ही धमकियाँ दीं, उन पर "रूसीकरण", चेचन पहनावा छोड़ने और अशालीन व्यवहार का आरोप लगाया।
- "They condemn me for my supposed **Russian manners**, but they kiss **Russia's ass** by supporting its war against **Ukraine** and participating in it. Where's the logic?" she posted on **Telegram** in **September**.
उन्होंने सितंबर में टेलीग्राम पर लिखा, "वे मेरे कथित रूसी तौर-तरीकों की निंदा करते हैं, लेकिन यूक्रेन के खिलाफ रूस के युद्ध का समर्थन कर और उसमें भाग लेकर रूस की चापलूसी करते हैं। तर्क कहाँ है?"
- Mr. **Kadyrov** says the **tens of thousands of Chechen fighters** serving in **Russia's army** are fulfilling their **"sacred duty"**.
कादिरोव कहते हैं कि रूस की सेना में सेवा दे रहे दसियों हज़ार चेचन लड़ाके अपना "पवित्र कर्तव्य" निभा रहे हैं।
- Many were attracted by **high salaries and bonuses**, but the **Memorial** rights group said a **"large number"** were essentially **forced** to fight in **Ukraine**.
कई लोग उच्च वेतन और बोनस से आकर्षित हुए, लेकिन मेमोरियल अधिकार समूह ने कहा कि "बड़ी संख्या" में लोगों को जबरन यूक्रेन में लड़ने भेजा गया।



GS Paper III: Economy,	
TOPICS COVERED	29 January 2026
1.	Mature and pragmatic परिपक्व और व्यावहारिक
2.	IIP growth quickens to 26-month high of 7.8% in Dec. 2025 दिसंबर 2025 में आईआईपी वृद्धि 26 महीने के उच्च स्तर 7.8% पर पहुंची
3.	EU FTA puts India on a level-playing field: Darpan Jain ईयू एफटीए भारत को समान प्रतिस्पर्धी स्थिति में रखता है: दर्पण जैन
4.	Voice AI is the final frontier in a country like India: Nilekani भारत जैसे देश में वॉयस एआई अंतिम सीमा है: नीलकणी

PATRIOTIC IAS



Mature and pragmatic

India did well to negotiate a fair deal with the European Union

GS III: Economy MCB

The free trade agreement (FTA) between India and the European Union (EU) is significant not just on account of the sizes of the economies involved, but also because it showcases Indian negotiators' skill and maturity when dealing with a powerful counterparty. India has managed to negotiate favourable terms in each of the previous eight FTAs of the last four years or so, but those were with much smaller economies or groupings. For context, the other eight FTAs together accounted for about 16% of India's total trade in 2024-25, while the EU itself accounted for nearly 12%. Under the latest deal, the EU will drop tariffs on 99.5% of the items that India exports, with most going down to zero immediately upon implementation. India has given tariff concessions on 97.5% of Europe's exports. Both sides did well to address issues that were previously intractable. India ensured that strategic agricultural sectors and dairy were excluded from the deal. The EU too managed to exclude several of its sensitive agricultural sectors. What stood out was how the two sides arrived at a workable solution on automobiles. It had been disagreements over auto and auto parts that had derailed negotiations in 2013. The quota-based system now arrived at not only protects India's domestic manufacturers at the lower end of the price band, but also provides a big opportunity for Europe's luxury carmakers. Similarly, the quota-based wine tariffs not only give French wine-makers an opportunity – a fervent demand on their part – but also provide protections to India's burgeoning domestic industry. Such a mature and pragmatic approach to persistent hindrances is the way large economies must negotiate with each other. This is further illustrated by the mobility, defence, and technology agreements that were signed separately.

That said, there are some concerns. India could not negotiate any concessions under the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM). At the moment, this tariff applies to only six products, but is designed to include all industrial goods in some years. The upside is that CBAM applies to all countries equally, and India has done well to negotiate a deal wherein any concession granted to a third country would automatically apply to it as well. Second, if India is to attract foreign investors looking to take advantage of a cheaper export route to Europe, it will have to quickly implement reforms that encourage large-scale manufacturing. Finally, with the FTA document to be translated into 27 European languages before it can be cleared by each country and finally the European Parliament, actual implementation will likely take a while. India must push for as speedy a clearing process as possible. Otherwise, the gains so painstakingly bargained for will be too late to offset the U.S. tariff pain.

को भी बड़ा अवसर देती है।

- This is further illustrated by the **mobility, defence, and technology agreements** that were **signed separately**.

यह बात **मोबिलिटी, रक्षा और प्रौद्योगिकी समझौतों** से और स्पष्ट होती है, जिन्हें **अलग-अलग हस्ताक्षरित** किया गया।

- That said, there are **some concerns**. इसके बावजूद, **कुछ चिंताएँ** बनी हुई हैं।
- India could not negotiate any concessions under the **Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM)**.

भारत **कार्बन बॉर्डर एडजस्टमेंट मैकेनिज़म (CBAM)** के तहत कोई रियायत हासिल नहीं कर सका।

Mature and pragmatic परिपक्व और व्यावहारिक

India has managed to negotiate **favourable terms** in each of the **previous eight FTAs of the last four years or so**, but those were with **much smaller economies or groupings**.

भारत ने पिछले चार वर्षों में हुए पिछले आठ FTA में **अनुकूल शर्तें** हासिल की हैं, लेकिन वे **काफी छोटी अर्थव्यवस्थाओं या समूहों** के साथ थे।

For context, the other **eight FTAs together accounted for about 16% of India's total trade in 2024-25**, while the **EU itself accounted for nearly 12%**.

संदर्भ के लिए, अन्य आठ FTA मिलकर 2024-25 में भारत के कुल व्यापार का लगभग 16% थे, जबकि केवल EU का हिस्सा लगभग 12% था।

Under the **latest deal**, the **EU will drop tariffs on 99.5% of the items that India exports**, with most going down to **zero immediately upon implementation**.

नवीनतम समझौते के तहत, **EU भारत के निर्यातित 99.5% वस्तुओं पर शुल्क घटाएगा**, जिनमें से अधिकांश लागू होते ही शून्य हो जाएंगे।

India has given **tariff concessions on 97.5% of Europe's exports**.

भारत ने **यूरोप के निर्यात के 97.5% पर शुल्क रियायतें** दी हैं।

Both sides did well to address issues that were previously **intractable**.

दोनों पक्षों ने उन मुद्दों को सुलझाने में अच्छा प्रदर्शन किया जो पहले **असमाधेय** थे।

India ensured that **strategic agricultural sectors and dairy were excluded from the deal**.

भारत ने यह सुनिश्चित किया कि **रणनीतिक कृषि क्षेत्र और डेयरी को समझौते से बाहर रखा जाए**।

The **EU too managed to exclude several of its sensitive agricultural sectors**.

EU ने भी अपने **कई संवेदनशील कृषि क्षेत्रों** को बाहर रखने में सफलता पाई।

What stood out was how the two sides arrived at a **workable solution on automobiles**.

जो बात सबसे अलग दिखी, वह थी **ऑटोमोबाइल क्षेत्र** पर दोनों पक्षों द्वारा निकाला गया **व्यावहारिक समाधान**।

It had been **disagreements over auto and auto parts that had derailed negotiations in 2013**.

ऑटो और ऑटो पार्ट्स पर असहमति ने ही 2013 में वार्ताओं को पटरी से उतार दिया था।

The **quota-based system** now arrived at not only **protects India's domestic manufacturers at the lower end of the price band**, but also provides a **big opportunity for Europe's luxury carmakers**.

अब अपनाई गई **कोटा-आधारित प्रणाली** न केवल **कम कीमत वर्ग में भारतीय घरेलू निर्माताओं** की रक्षा करती है, बल्कि **यूरोप के लक्ज़री कार निर्माताओं**



- At the moment, this **tariff applies to only six products**, but is designed to include **all industrial goods in some years**.
फिलहाल यह **शुल्क केवल छह उत्पादों** पर लागू होता है, लेकिन आने वाले वर्षों में इसे **सभी औद्योगिक वस्तुओं** तक विस्तारित करने की योजना है।
- The **upside is that CBAM applies to all countries equally**, and India has done well to negotiate a deal wherein **any concession granted to a third country would automatically apply to it as well**.
सकारात्मक पहलू यह है कि **CBAM सभी देशों पर समान रूप से लागू होता है**, और भारत ने ऐसा प्रावधान सुनिश्चित किया है कि **किसी तीसरे देश को दी गई कोई भी रियायत स्वतः भारत पर भी लागू होगी**।
- Second, if India is to attract **foreign investors** looking to take advantage of a **cheaper export route to Europe**, it will have to **quickly implement reforms** that encourage **large-scale manufacturing**.
दूसरा, यदि भारत **यूरोप के लिए सस्ते निर्यात मार्ग** का लाभ उठाने वाले **विदेशी निवेशकों** को आकर्षित करना चाहता है, तो उसे **बड़े पैमाने के विनिर्माण** को प्रोत्साहित करने वाले **सुधार शीघ्र लागू** करने होंगे।
- Finally, with the **FTA document to be translated into 27 European languages** before it can be cleared by **each country and finally the European Parliament**, **actual implementation will likely take a while**.
अंततः, **FTA दस्तावेज़ को 27 यूरोपीय भाषाओं में अनुवादित** किए जाने और फिर **प्रत्येक देश तथा अंत में यूरोपीय संसद** से

EU FTA puts India on a level-playing field: Darpan Jain

GS III: Economy

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

The free trade agreement (FTA) between India and the EU puts India on a level-playing field with a number of its competitors in a number of labour-intensive sectors such as tex-

tiles, apparel, leather goods, footwear, engineering goods, and marine products, India's chief negotiator on the FTA Darpan Jain explained on Wednesday.

In addition, while emphasising that the overall FTA will benefit all States in India, Mr. Jain also high-

lighted several sectoral benefits to States such as Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, and West Bengal.

"Duty-free access from an earlier duty of up to 12% in textiles, apparel and

clothing provides a level playing field for exporters and boosts India's competitiveness in the EU vis-a-vis competitors such as Bangladesh, Vietnam, and Turkey, which enjoy duty-free or preferential access under EU trade agreements," Mr. Jain said.

In the engineering sector, the chief negotiator said, India would gain a competitive edge over its competitors such as China, the U.K., the U.S., Vietnam, and Turkiye as India has managed to secure "preferential access" and reduced tariffs.

EU FTA puts India on a level-playing field: Darpan Jain ईयू एफटीए भारत को समान प्रतिस्पर्धी स्थिति में रखता है: दर्पण जैन

- The **free trade agreement (FTA)** between **India** and the **EU** puts India on a **level-playing field** with a number of its competitors in a number of **labour-intensive sectors** such as **textiles, apparel, leather goods, footwear, engineering goods, and marine products**, India's **chief negotiator on the FTA Darpan Jain** explained on Wednesday.
भारत और यूरोपीय संघ (EU) के बीच **मुक्त व्यापार समझौता (FTA)** भारत को **वस्त्र, परिधान, चमड़ा उत्पाद, जूते, इंजीनियरिंग वस्तुएँ, और समुद्री उत्पादों** जैसे कई **श्रम-प्रधान क्षेत्रों** में अपने कई प्रतिस्पर्धियों के साथ **समान प्रतिस्पर्धी स्थिति** में रखता है, यह बात भारत के **एफटीए के मुख्य वार्ताकार दर्पण जैन** ने बुधवार को स्पष्ट की।
- In addition, while emphasising that the overall **FTA** will benefit **all States in India**, Mr. Jain also highlighted several **sectoral benefits** to States such as **Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha, and West Bengal**.
इसके अतिरिक्त, यह रेखांकित करते हुए कि समग्र **एफटीए** से **भारत के सभी राज्यों** को लाभ होगा, श्री जैन ने **तमिलनाडु, आंध्र प्रदेश, कर्नाटक, केरल, गुजरात, महाराष्ट्र, राजस्थान, उत्तर प्रदेश, बिहार, ओडिशा, और पश्चिम बंगाल** जैसे राज्यों के लिए कई **क्षेत्रीय लाभों** को भी उजागर किया।
- "**Duty-free access** from an earlier duty of up to **12%** in **textiles, apparel and clothing** provides a **level playing field** for exporters and boosts India's **competitiveness** in the EU vis-a-vis competitors such as **Bangladesh, Vietnam, and Turkey**, which enjoy duty-free or preferential access under EU trade agreements," Mr. Jain said.



श्री जैन ने कहा, “वस्त्र, परिधान और कपड़ों में पहले की 12% तक की शुल्क दर से शुल्क-मुक्त पहुंच मिलने से निर्यातकों को समान प्रतिस्पर्धी अवसर मिलता है और बांग्लादेश, वियतनाम, और तुर्की जैसे प्रतिस्पर्धियों के मुकाबले, जिन्हें ईयू व्यापार समझौतों के तहत शुल्क-मुक्त या वरीयतापूर्ण पहुंच प्राप्त है, भारत की प्रतिस्पर्धात्मकता बढ़ती है।”

- In the **engineering sector**, the chief negotiator said, India would gain a **competitive edge** over its competitors such as **China**, the **U.K.**, the **U.S.**, **Vietnam**, and **Turkiye** as India has managed to secure “**preferential access**” and reduced **tariffs**.

इंजीनियरिंग क्षेत्र में, मुख्य वार्ताकार ने कहा कि भारत चीन, यू.के., यू.एस., वियतनाम, और तुर्किये जैसे अपने प्रतिस्पर्धियों पर प्रतिस्पर्धात्मक बढ़त हासिल करेगा, क्योंकि भारत ने “वरीयतापूर्ण पहुंच” और कम शुल्क सुनिश्चित करने में सफलता पाई है।

PATRIOTIC IAS



Voice AI is the final frontier in a country like India: Nilekani

GS III: Economy

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Voice AI, technology enabling machines to understand, process and generate human speech, is the final frontier in a country like India, where it can have a massive impact on population, Nandan Nilekani, co-founder and non-executive chairman of Infosys said here.

He was speaking at a fireside chat with Vishal Dhupar, MD, South Asia, NVIDIA at an event themed around voice AI, which also showcased the country's best Indic language voice AI deployments.

Tracing the country's AI journey so far, he said, the country started supporting multiple languages, through translation, some five years ago.

"Now, it's about voice, which is a whole new frontier due to variations, dialects and code-switching between languages," said Mr. Nilekani.

India is set to become a global leader in population-scale voice AI, with far-reaching implications for language technology,



Nandan Nilekani

governance and everyday life, said Mr. Nilekani who is also co-founder of EkStep Foundation, a non-profit organisation he set up with Rohini Nilekani and Shankar Maruwada with a view to creating literacy and numeracy opportunities for 200 million children in the country with the help of open-source digital infrastructure.

"Frugal design with population-scale infrastructure should be the mantra for all AI firms to create a real impact. It is a global requirement and India can do that in 22 languages, it will have global applications," he stated.

Successful voice AI deployments in Indian languages were likely to come up over the next few years.

non-profit organisation he set up with Rohini Nilekani and Shankar Maruwada with a view to creating literacy and numeracy opportunities for 200 million children in the country with the help of open-source digital infrastructure.

श्री नीलकणी ने कहा कि भारत जनसंख्या-स्तर के वॉयस एआई में वैश्विक नेता बनने की ओर अग्रसर है, जिसके भाषा प्रौद्योगिकी, शासन और दैनिक जीवन पर दूरगामी प्रभाव होंगे; वे एकस्टेप फाउंडेशन के भी सह-संस्थापक हैं, जो एक गैर-लाभकारी संगठन है, जिसे उन्होंने रोहिणी नीलकणी और शंकर मरुवाड़ा के साथ ओपन-सोर्स डिजिटल अवसररचना की मदद से देश के 200 मिलियन बच्चों के लिए साक्षरता और संख्यात्मक कौशल के अवसर बनाने के उद्देश्य से स्थापित किया।

Voice AI is the final frontier in a country like India: Nilekani

भारत जैसे देश में वॉयस एआई अंतिम सीमा है: नीलकणी

Voice AI, technology enabling machines to understand, process and generate human speech, is the final frontier in a country like India, where it can have a massive impact on population, Nandan Nilekani, co-founder and non-executive chairman of Infosys said here.

वॉयस एआई, वह तकनीक जो मशीनों को मानव भाषण को समझने, संसाधित करने और उत्पन्न करने में सक्षम बनाती है, भारत जैसे देश में अंतिम सीमा है, जहाँ इसका जनसंख्या पर व्यापक प्रभाव हो सकता है, यह बात इन्फोसिस के सह-संस्थापक और गैर-कार्यकारी अध्यक्ष नंदन नीलकणी ने यहाँ कही।

He was speaking at a fireside chat with Vishal Dhupar, MD, South Asia, NVIDIA at an event themed around voice AI, which also showcased the country's best Indic language voice AI deployments.

वह वॉयस एआई विषयक एक कार्यक्रम में एनवीडिया के दक्षिण एशिया के एमडी विशाल धूपर के साथ फायरसाइड चैट में बोल रहे थे, जिसमें देश के सर्वश्रेष्ठ भारतीय भाषाओं के वॉयस एआई अनुप्रयोगों को भी प्रदर्शित किया गया।

Tracing the country's AI journey so far, he said, the country started supporting multiple languages, through translation, some five years ago.

देश की अब तक की एआई यात्रा का उल्लेख करते हुए उन्होंने कहा कि देश ने अनुवाद के माध्यम से कई भाषाओं का समर्थन लगभग पाँच वर्ष पहले शुरू किया था।

"Now, it's about voice, which is a whole new frontier due to variations, dialects and code-switching between languages," said Mr. Nilekani.

श्री नीलकणी ने कहा, "अब बात वॉयस की है, जो भिन्नताओं, बोलियों और भाषाओं के बीच कोड-स्विचिंग के कारण एक बिल्कुल नई सीमा है।"

India is set to become a global leader in population-scale voice AI, with far-reaching implications for language technology, governance and everyday life, said Mr. Nilekani who is also co-founder of EkStep Foundation, a



- “Frugal design with population-scale infrastructure should be the mantra for all AI firms to create a real impact. It is a global requirement and India can do that in 22 languages, it will have global applications,” he stated.
उन्होंने कहा, “जनसंख्या-स्तर की अवसंरचना के साथ कम लागत वाला डिज़ाइन सभी एआई कंपनियों के लिए वास्तविक प्रभाव पैदा करने का मंत्र होना चाहिए। यह एक वैश्विक आवश्यकता है और भारत इसे 22 भाषाओं में कर सकता है, जिसका वैश्विक उपयोग होगा।”
- Successful voice AI deployments in Indian languages were likely to come up over the next few years.
भारतीय भाषाओं में सफल वॉयस एआई अनुप्रयोग आने वाले कुछ वर्षों में सामने आने की संभावना है।

GS Paper III: S&T,	
TOPICS COVERED	29 January 2026
1.	Can international patent law handle a permanent presence in space? क्या अंतरराष्ट्रीय पेटेंट कानून अंतरिक्ष में स्थायी उपस्थिति को संभाल सकता है?
2.	Study detects elusive helium gas leaks with sound waves अध्ययन दुर्लभ हीलियम गैस रिसाव को ध्वनि तरंगों की सहायता से पहचानता है
3.	Plan for India’s own communication satellite भारत के अपने संचार उपग्रह की योजना
4.	The Doomsday Clock shows the danger, but not a way-out for the world डूमसडे क्लॉक खतरे को दिखाती है, लेकिन दुनिया के लिए कोई रास्ता नहीं बताती



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Visual: Name this moon, which Voyager 2 found to be geologically active, a surprising find for a body whose surface temperature is around -235° C. The spacecraft spotted plumes erupting from the surface and spewing dust and nitrogen up to 8 km into the moon's atmosphere. NASA

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The temperature is around -235° C. The spacecraft spotted plumes erupting from the surface and spewing dust and nitrogen up to 8 km into the moon's atmosphere.



Can international patent law handle a permanent presence in space?

Patent law rests on the principle of territoriality: patent holders have exclusive rights within specific jurisdictions, and authorities assess infringement based on locations; innovations on earth take place within areas subject to singular legal authority, but unbounded outer space destabilises this logic

GS III: S&T

Shrawani Shagun

Space stations, lunar bases, and Mars missions have moved from humans' imagination to engineering reality. In these environments, innovation emerges through collaboration rather than isolation.

Living on the moon or Mars will depend on continuous technological innovation, including on systems that extract water, generate energy and recycle waste and which can adapt to harsh and unpredictable conditions. Innovation in space is the condition for survival, and isn't optional.

Longer habitation means shared habitats, shared infrastructure, and multinational crews working together over extended periods. Scientists, engineers, and technicians from different jurisdictions have to collaborate closely, refining technologies in real time as operational needs evolve.

And when such innovation takes place beyond Earth, a simple question arises: who owns it? Which patent system governs an invention created in a place where no state may claim sovereignty?

These questions expose a growing mismatch between the realities of sustainable human presence in space and intellectual property law, which remains built around territorial boundaries that space itself does not recognise.

Territorial foundations

Patent law rests on the principle of territoriality. Exclusive rights are granted to patent holders within specific jurisdictions, and authorities assess infringement by locating where acts such as making, using or selling have occurred. On the earth, this framework works because innovation takes place within geographically bounded spaces subject to a singular legal authority.

Outer space destabilises this logic. International space law prohibits national sovereignty over celestial bodies yet it allows states to retain jurisdiction and control over objects registered under their authority in space. Article VIII of the Outer Space Treaty and the Registration Convention together stipulate that legal jurisdiction attaches to the state of registry of a space object, not to the physical location where activities occur.

In practice, this means an invention developed aboard a registered space object – e.g. a national space station – is treated as having occurred within the legal territory of the registering state (i.e. that nation), even when the activity takes place on the moon or in orbit. This jurisdiction-by-registration approach has become the default mechanism through which spacefaring states have extended domestic patent law into outer space.

The International Space Station (ISS) demonstrates how this model can function in a tightly controlled setting. It consists of multiple modules, each provided by a participating country. Article 21 of the ISS Intergovernmental Agreement allocates jurisdiction module by module, treating each segment as the territory of its partner state for purposes including intellectual property. Because the ISS is a static, carefully segmented facility, this arrangement has remained workable.

However, this presumes clear structural boundaries, stable installations, and nationally identifiable zones of



Ownership question: An artist's illustration of a future Artemis Base Camp operated by NASA. NASA

activity. Permanently inhabited lunar or planetary bases may not operate in such conditions. Consider a lunar settlement extracting water ice near the moon's south pole. One team operates autonomous drilling robots, another refines extraction algorithms using shared data, while life-support engineers adapt the process to local power and temperature constraints. The components can be built on the earth, the software updated remotely, and robots operate across multiple platforms. When such a system is incrementally refined by multinational teams on shared infrastructure, it's not clear where the legally relevant act of invention occurs or which jurisdiction should govern it.

In these settings, the territorial anchors that patent law depends on become weaker. Identical technological activity may fall within patent jurisdiction or outside it entirely, depending solely on registration choices rather than on substantive contribution, operational control or the location of innovation. In such contexts, registration no longer reflects how innovation actually occurs.

Non-appropriation principle

These challenges intersect with the foundational principles of international space law. Article I of the Outer Space Treaty frames outer space as a domain to be explored and used for the benefit of all humankind. Article II reinforces this vision by prohibiting any form of national appropriation of celestial bodies, including the moon.

While patents don't amount to territorial claims, they do confer exclusive control over technologies that may be essential for survival or exploration in space. In permanently inhabited environments, where access to water and energy could depend on patented

International space law prohibits national sovereignty over celestial bodies yet it allows states to retain jurisdiction and control over objects registered under their authority in space

technologies, such exclusivity carries real structural consequences.

This raises an unresolved question: at what point does patent-based exclusivity begin to operate as *de facto* exclusion in a domain that international law insists must remain accessible?

The concern is that fragmented enforcement driven solely by registration could indirectly constrain the freedom to explore and use space. If access to a patented life-support process or resource-extraction technique depends on the registry of a particular platform, operators on other platforms may be legally barred from using or modifying technologies essential to survival or mission continuity, even in non-competitive settings.

Article 5 of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property is concerned with the doctrine of temporary presence. It limits patent enforcement in the public interest to ensure patented articles in transit are not treated as infringing. On the earth, this provision preserves freedom of transport across borders.

Whether this doctrine applies to space objects, however, remains unclear. Does temporary presence cover patented equipment launched through foreign territory, docked at multinational space stations or operated onboard platforms registered to another state? No treaty or authoritative interpretation provides an

answer.

Registration-based jurisdiction also creates powerful incentives for strategic behaviour. Technologies can be developed in states with strong patent protection but deployed onboard space objects registered in jurisdictions with weaker enforcement, allowing innovation to slip beyond the reach of the legal system that enabled it.

This is not unlike the use of flags of convenience in maritime operations – and it risks hollowing out patent protection through regulatory arbitrage rather than genuine innovation.

Further, while more than 110 states are parties to the Outer Space Treaty, only a few shape how registration interacts with patent law, producing a system that is global in form but uneven in practice. Operational coordination mechanisms, such as those under the NASA Artemis Accords, could reduce interference. But coordination is also not jurisdiction, meaning they can't resolve questions of ownership and enforcement in permanently inhabited space environments.

The challenge of patent protection in outer space is not a marginal legal puzzle. It reflects a structural mismatch between legal regimes designed for territorially bounded activity and environments defined by shared infrastructure and jurisdictional fragmentation.

International institutions have begun to acknowledge these tensions, and proposals for specialised space-related IP mechanisms are emerging. But coordination remains limited and uneven. Most states remain rule-takers rather than rule-makers in the evolving legal architecture of space innovation.

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Can international patent law handle a permanent presence in space? क्या अंतरराष्ट्रीय पेटेंट कानून अंतरिक्ष में स्थायी उपस्थिति को संभाल सकता है?

- Living on the moon or Mars will depend on **continuous technological innovation**, including on systems that **extract water, generate energy and recycle waste** and which can adapt to **harsh and unpredictable conditions**.

चंद्रमा या मंगल पर जीवन निरंतर तकनीकी नवाचार पर निर्भर करेगा, जिसमें पानी निकालने, ऊर्जा उत्पन्न करने और कचरे के पुनर्चक्रण की प्रणालियाँ शामिल हैं, जो कठोर और अप्रत्याशित परिस्थितियों के अनुसार ढल सकें।

- Patent law rests on the principle of territoriality.**

पेटेंट कानून क्षेत्रीयता के सिद्धांत पर आधारित है।

- Exclusive rights are granted to patent holders within specific jurisdictions, and authorities assess infringement by locating where acts such as making, using or selling have occurred.**

विशेष अधिकार पेटेंट धारकों को विशिष्ट अधिकार क्षेत्रों में दिए जाते हैं, और प्राधिकरण उल्लंघन का आकलन यह देखकर करते हैं कि निर्माण, उपयोग या विक्रय जैसे कार्य कहाँ हुए।

- Article VIII of the Outer Space Treaty and the Registration Convention** together stipulate that **legal jurisdiction** attaches to the **state of registry** of a **space object**, not to the **physical location** where activities occur.

आउटर स्पेस संधि का अनुच्छेद VIII और पंजीकरण अभिसमय मिलकर यह निर्धारित करते हैं कि कानूनी अधिकार क्षेत्र अंतरिक्ष वस्तु के पंजीकरण राज्य से जुड़ा होता है, न कि उस भौतिक स्थान से जहाँ गतिविधियाँ होती हैं।

- In practice, this means an **invention developed aboard a registered space object** — e.g. a **national space station** — is treated as having occurred within the **legal territory** of the **registering state** (i.e. that nation), even when the activity takes place on the **moon or in orbit**.

व्यवहार में इसका अर्थ है कि किसी पंजीकृत अंतरिक्ष वस्तु — जैसे राष्ट्रीय अंतरिक्ष स्टेशन — पर विकसित आविष्कार को पंजीकरण करने वाले राज्य के कानूनी क्षेत्र में घटित माना जाता है, भले ही गतिविधि चंद्रमा पर या कक्षा में हुई हो।

- This **jurisdiction-by-registration approach** has become the **default mechanism** through which **spacefaring states** have extended **domestic patent law** into **outer space**.

यह पंजीकरण-आधारित अधिकार क्षेत्र दृष्टिकोण वह डिफ़ॉल्ट तंत्र बन गया है, जिसके माध्यम से अंतरिक्षगामी राज्यों ने घरेलू पेटेंट कानून को बाह्य अंतरिक्ष तक विस्तारित किया है।

- The **International Space Station (ISS)** demonstrates how this model can function in a **tightly controlled setting**.

अंतरराष्ट्रीय अंतरिक्ष स्टेशन (ISS) दिखाता है कि यह मॉडल कड़े रूप से नियंत्रित वातावरण में कैसे कार्य कर सकता है।

- It consists of **multiple modules**, each provided by a **participating country**.

इसमें कई मॉड्यूल हैं, जिनमें से प्रत्येक किसी भागीदार देश द्वारा प्रदान किया गया है।

- Article 21 of the ISS Intergovernmental Agreement** allocates **jurisdiction module by module**, treating each **segment** as the **territory** of its partner state for purposes including **intellectual property**.

ISS अंतरसरकारी समझौते का अनुच्छेद 21 मॉड्यूल-दर-मॉड्यूल अधिकार क्षेत्र निर्धारित करता है, और बौद्धिक संपदा सहित उद्देश्यों के लिए प्रत्येक खंड को उसके साझेदार राज्य का क्षेत्र मानता है।



Study detects elusive helium gas leaks with sound waves

GS III: S&T

Vasudevan Mukunth

Helium is famous for making balloons float, voices squeak, and as a critical resource for MRI machines and aerospace engineering. Helium is expensive and scarce, finding leaks quickly is essential, but that's easier said than done because helium is also chemically inert and sensors, which usually rely on chemical reactors, have a tough time detecting it.

In a new study, researchers from Nanjing University in China have reported a sensor that uses sound waves instead of chemistry to 'hear' helium leaks. The study paper was published in the December 2025 issue of *Applied Physics Letters*.

Most gas sensors work like a sponge that reacts when it touches a particular liquid. They work by absorbing gas or using chemical reactions to change an electrical signal. Since helium is chemically stable, it doesn't react with these sensitive coatings. And while existing methods like mass spectrometry

The study saw researchers use sensors that can trap sound using a particular geometric pattern called a Kagome lattice

can detect helium, they're often bulky and expensive.

In the new study, the researchers took a different approach. They designed a sensor based on acoustic topological materials. These are structures that can trap sound using a particular geometric pattern called a Kagome lattice.

The Kagome lattice is made of interlaced triangles and hexagons. In their specific design, the researchers used rigid cylinders connected by small tubes, creating an effect called topological corner states. Essentially, sound waves introduced into the structure get trapped at the three corners of the triangle and are unable to escape into the middle or from the sides. Sound travels at different speeds through different gases. When helium leaks into the sensor and mixes with the air inside, it changes the speed at which sound waves travel through the tubes. This change in speed changes the frequency (or pitch) of the trapped sound at the corners. So by measuring this shift in frequency, the sensor can instantly calculate the concentration of helium present.

The acoustic approach offers several advantages over traditional chemical sensors. Because it doesn't rely on delicate chemical coatings, the sensor is incredibly tough. It works well in temperatures ranging from a comfortable 26° C to a freezing -34° C. It also ignores changes in humidity and thus doesn't need to be constantly recalibrated like other sensors. The topological nature of the sensor means its ability to trap sound is very stable. The researchers found that they could drill large holes in the sides of the cylinders to let gas in faster and the sound trap still worked well. This means the sensor can detect leaks rapidly as the gas doesn't have to seep in slowly.

And because the sensor is a triangle with three distinct corners, it can do more than just say whether helium is present in the air. By comparing the timing of the signals at each of the three corners, the sensor can triangulate the direction the gas is coming from. If the frequency shifts at corner 1 before corner 3, for instance, it would mean the leak is closer to corner 1.

According to the research, this device could make it much easier and cheaper to protect valuable helium supplies in industries ranging from medicine to space exploration. (mukunth.v@thehindu.co.in)

Study detects elusive helium gas leaks with sound waves

अध्ययन दुर्लभ हीलियम गैस रिसाव को ध्वनि तरंगों की सहायता से पहचानता है

• Helium is famous for making balloons float, voices squeak, and as a critical resource for MRI machines and aerospace engineering.

हीलियम गुब्बारों को तैराने, आवाज़ को पतली बनाने, और MRI मशीनों व एयरोस्पेस इंजीनियरिंग के लिए एक महत्वपूर्ण संसाधन के रूप में प्रसिद्ध है।

• Helium is expensive and scarce, finding leaks quickly is essential, but that's easier said than done because helium is also chemically inert and sensors, which usually rely on chemical reactors, have a tough time detecting it.

हीलियम महंगा और दुर्लभ है, इसलिए लीक को जल्दी ढूँढना आवश्यक है, लेकिन यह आसान नहीं है क्योंकि हीलियम रासायनिक रूप से निष्क्रिय होता है और सेंसर, जो सामान्यतः रासायनिक अभिक्रियाओं पर निर्भर करते हैं, इसे पहचानने में कठिनाई महसूस करते हैं।

• In a new study, researchers from Nanjing University in China have reported a sensor that uses sound waves instead of chemistry to 'hear' helium leaks.

एक नए अध्ययन में, चीन की नानजिंग यूनिवर्सिटी के शोधकर्ताओं ने एक सेंसर की रिपोर्ट दी है जो रसायन विज्ञान की बजाय ध्वनि तरंगों का उपयोग करके हीलियम

लीक को 'सुन' सकता है।

- The study paper was published in the December 2025 issue of *Applied Physics Letters*. यह शोध पत्र *Applied Physics Letters* के दिसंबर 2025 अंक में प्रकाशित हुआ था।
- Most gas sensors work like a sponge that reacts when it touches a particular liquid. अधिकांश गैस सेंसर एक स्पंज की तरह काम करते हैं जो किसी विशेष तरल के संपर्क में आने पर प्रतिक्रिया करता है।
- They work by absorbing gas or using chemical reactions to change an electrical signal. वे गैस को अवशोषित करके या रासायनिक अभिक्रियाओं के माध्यम से विद्युत संकेत को बदलकर काम करते हैं।
- These are structures that can trap sound using a particular geometric pattern called a Kagome lattice.

ये ऐसी संरचनाएँ हैं जो Kagome lattice नामक विशेष ज्यामितीय पैटर्न का उपयोग करके ध्वनि को फँसा सकती हैं।



- The **Kagome lattice** is made of **interlaced triangles and hexagons**.
Kagome lattice आपस में जुड़े त्रिकोणों और षट्भुजों से बना होता है।
- Essentially, **sound waves** introduced into the structure get **trapped at the three corners of the triangle** and are unable to escape into the **middle** or from the **sides**.
मूल रूप से, संरचना में प्रवेश करने वाली ध्वनि तरंगें त्रिकोण के तीन कोनों में फँस जाती हैं और बीच या किनारों से बाहर नहीं निकल पातीं।
- **Sound travels at different speeds through different gases**.
ध्वनि विभिन्न गैसों में अलग-अलग गति से यात्रा करती है।
- **When helium leaks into the sensor and mixes with the air inside, it changes the speed at which sound waves travel through the tubes**.
जब हीलियम लीक होकर सेंसर में प्रवेश करता है और अंदर की हवा के साथ मिल जाता है, तो यह ट्यूबों में ध्वनि तरंगों की गति को बदल देता है।

Plan for India's own communication satellite

GS III: S&T

Madras, Jan. 28: Prof. U. R. Rao, Director, ISRO Satellite Systems Project, Bangalore said here to-day that the Department of Space had plans for the design and development of an Indian-made communications satellite. It was now on the drawing board and could be launched with the French launch vehicle, "Ariane". It would be suitably positioned to cover the entire subcontinent. The time frame for launch is around 1980.

Disclosing this at a two-day seminar on "space communication" organised by the Electronic Engineers' Association, College of Engineering, Guindy, Prof. Rao said another major programme which had already taken off the ground was the design and development of a small satellite called Rohini weighing about 40 kgs. This would be utilised, along with the Indian Launch Vehicle SLV-3, for initially conducting technological experiments and subsequently for more meaningful scientific and application experiments. The first such satellite is expected to be launched in late 1978.

Closely following the successful launching of Aryabhata was an ongoing plan for the development of an Earth Observation Satellite (SEO) that would yield data relevant to the areas of hydrology and meteorology, he said. Explaining developments in space technology, Prof. Rao referred to the important role that satellites could play in national development.

‘रोहिणी’ नामक छोटे उपग्रह का डिजाइन और विकास है।

- This would be utilised, along with the **Indian Launch Vehicle SLV-3**, for initially conducting **technological experiments** and subsequently for more meaningful **scientific and application experiments**.
इसे भारतीय प्रक्षेपण यान SLV-3 के साथ मिलकर पहले प्रौद्योगिकीय प्रयोगों के लिए और बाद में अधिक सार्थक वैज्ञानिक तथा अनुप्रयोगात्मक प्रयोगों के लिए उपयोग किया जाएगा।
- The **first such satellite** is expected to be launched in **late 1978**.
पहले ऐसे उपग्रह के 1978 के अंत में प्रक्षेपित होने की उम्मीद है।
- **Closely following the successful launching of Aryabhata** was an ongoing plan for the development of an **Earth Observation Satellite (SEO)** that would yield data relevant to the areas of **hydrology and meteorology**, he said.

Plan for India's own communication satellite भारत के अपने संचार उपग्रह की योजना

- Madras, Jan. 28: Prof. U. R. Rao, Director, ISRO Satellite Systems Project, Bangalore said here to-day that the **Department of Space** had plans for the design and development of an **Indian-made communications satellite**.
मद्रास, 28 जनवरी: प्रो. यू. आर. राव, निदेशक, इसरो सैटेलाइट सिस्टम्स प्रोजेक्ट, बेंगलुरु ने आज यहाँ कहा कि अंतरिक्ष विभाग के पास भारतीय निर्मित संचार उपग्रह के डिजाइन और विकास की योजनाएं हैं।

- It was now on the **drawing board** and could be launched with the **French launch vehicle, "Ariane"**.
यह अब ड्राइंग बोर्ड पर है और इसे फ्रेंच लांचर यान, "एरियन" से प्रक्षेपित किया जा सकता है।

- It would be suitably positioned to cover the **entire subcontinent**.
इसे पूरे उपमहाद्वीप को कवर करने के लिए उपयुक्त रूप से स्थापित किया जाएगा।

- The **time frame** for launch is around **1980**.
प्रक्षेपण का समय-सीमा लगभग 1980 है।

- Disclosing this at a **two-day seminar** on "space communication" organised by the **Electronic Engineers' Association, College of Engineering, Guindy**, Prof. Rao said another major programme which had already taken off the ground was the **design and development of a small satellite called Rohini** weighing about **40 kgs**.
इलेक्ट्रॉनिक इंजीनियर्स एसोसिएशन, कॉलेज ऑफ इंजीनियरिंग, गिंडी द्वारा आयोजित "स्पेस कम्युनिकेशन" पर दो-दिवसीय सेमिनार में इसका खुलासा करते हुए प्रो. राव ने कहा कि एक अन्य प्रमुख कार्यक्रम, जो पहले ही धरातल पर आ चुका है, लगभग 40 किलोग्राम वजन



आर्यभट्ट के सफल प्रक्षेपण के तुरंत बाद **पृथ्वी अवलोकन उपग्रह (SEO)** के विकास की एक चल रही योजना है, जो **जलविज्ञान और मौसम विज्ञान** से संबंधित आंकड़े प्रदान करेगी, उन्होंने कहा।

- Explaining developments in **space technology**, Prof. Rao referred to the important role that **satellites** could play in **national development**.

अंतरिक्ष प्रौद्योगिकी में हो रहे विकास की व्याख्या करते हुए प्रो. राव ने **राष्ट्रीय विकास में उपग्रहों की महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका का उल्लेख** किया।

The Doomsday Clock shows the danger, but not a way-out for the world

CSIR IAS
Vasudevan Mukunth

On January 27, the **Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists** moved its **Doomsday Clock** to 85 seconds to midnight, the closest it has been to the metaphorical point of global catastrophe. The Doomsday Clock is historically significant because it transformed the abstract, technical threat of nuclear war into a universally understood symbol of urgency. Since the so-called **Chicago group of scientists** involved in the **Manhattan Project** created it in 1947, the clock has bridged the gap between scientific experts and the general public, forcing the world to confront the reality of potential self-destruction through a simple visual metaphor.

As the **Bulletin** has

moved the clock's hands back and forth, but mostly forth, their movements have validated major **arms control treaties** or condemned dangerous escalations like the **hydrogen bomb**. And in the last eight decades it has become a cornerstone of the cultural framework that treats **nuclear weapons** and **climate change** as existential, rather than just political, problems.

But for all the ease with which the clock has raised alarms – thanks in no small part to its iconic design by the American artist **Martyl Langsdorf** – the clock has also failed to put out the fires. This is because the clock banks on the idea that if you show people a sufficiently frightening picture of their future, they will demand

change. But history is clear that this strategy is flawed: while the clock has successfully branded the apocalypse, it has failed to overcome the political gridlock that actually drives the arms race.

That said, perhaps its most significant achievement is to set the agenda. Before the clock, nuclear strategy was a secret language spoken only by generals and physicists. The **Bulletin** changed that by creating a symbol everyone could understand, one of the number of minutes to midnight. This was clever because it forced the media to talk about nuclear risk every single year. When the U.S. and the Soviet Union signed major arms control treaties in the late 1980s and when the Copenhagen



The **Doomsday Clock**, set at 85 seconds to midnight, is displayed during a news conference on January 23, in Washington, AP.

Summit concluded in 2009 with the 2° C climate goal, the clock moved backwards, giving people a clear way to see that diplomacy was working.

Unfortunately for the clock, constant fear often leads to paralysis, an effect psychologists call **psychic numbing**. When the clock

stayed at two minutes to midnight for decades or hovered at 90 seconds as it did recently, its shock value wore off. Instead of rushing to fix the problem, people get used to living on the edge of destruction. Keeping the alert level so high for so long unintentionally normalised the ve-

ry danger the **Bulletin** wished to eliminate. It's understandable: if it's always the end of the world, people stop believing the end is actually coming.

Equally understandably, the clock hasn't been able to change the behaviour of national governments. The scientists behind the clock have appealed to securing the safety of the human race – what could be more important? – but governments have increasingly cared only about the safety of their own borders. And these goals often clash. For instance when India and Pakistan tested nuclear weapons in 1998, the **Clock** moved forward to condemn them, yet that condemnation meant nothing to the leaders in New Delhi or Islamabad, who be-

lieved they needed the weapons to survive. Even the current setting of 85 seconds to midnight is proof of this restriction: the fact that we're closer to doom now than at any point in the Cold War suggests the people with the power to launch the missiles have ignored the clock's warnings.

Too many threats

The clock's effectiveness was further complicated when the **Bulletin** decided to include climate change and disruptive technologies in its calculations. To be sure, this decision was scientifically sound but it also muddled the message. Whenever the clock moved before, everyone knew it was about nuclear bombs. Today its moves are a mix of nuclear ten-

sion, rising temperatures, mis- and dis-information risks, biological threats, and so on. The clock is an example of science communication in action yet its attempts to account for all possible threats, even if they're all equally real, undermines the people's ability to understand what to demand from their leaders. A politician can claim they're addressing the clock's warning by passing a climate bill even as the government builds more nuclear weapons.

The **Doomsday Clock** is ultimately a good diagnostic tool, just not a cure. It banks on shame and reason in a world that, more signs by the day indicated, runs on fear and power. It tells us exactly what time it is but it's silent on how we can stop the ticking.

The Doomsday Clock shows the danger, but not a way-out for the world डूमसडे क्लॉक खतरे को दिखाती है, लेकिन दुनिया के लिए कोई रास्ता नहीं बताती

- On **January 27**, the **Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists** moved its **Doomsday Clock** to **85 seconds to midnight**, the closest it has been to the metaphorical point of **global catastrophe**.

27 जनवरी को बुलेटिन ऑफ द एटॉमिक साइंटिस्ट्स ने डूमसडे क्लॉक को आधी रात से 85 सेकंड पहले कर दिया, जो वैश्विक तबाही के रूपक बिंदु के सबसे करीब है।

- The **Doomsday Clock** is historically significant because it transformed the abstract, technical threat of **nuclear war** into a universally understood symbol of urgency.

डूमसडे क्लॉक ऐतिहासिक रूप से महत्वपूर्ण है क्योंकि इसने परमाणु युद्ध के अमूर्त और तकनीकी खतरे को एक सार्वभौमिक रूप से समझे जाने वाले आपातकालीन प्रतीक में बदल दिया।

- Since the so-called **Chicago group of scientists** involved in the **Manhattan Project** created it in **1947**, the clock has bridged the gap between scientific experts and the general public, forcing the world to confront the reality of potential self-destruction through a simple visual metaphor.

1947 में मैनहैटन प्रोजेक्ट से जुड़े तथाकथित शिकागो समूह के वैज्ञानिकों द्वारा बनाए जाने के बाद से, इस घड़ी ने वैज्ञानिक विशेषज्ञों और आम जनता के बीच की दूरी को पाट दिया और एक सरल दृश्य रूपक के माध्यम से संभावित आत्म-विनाश की वास्तविकता से दुनिया को रूबरू कराया।

- As the **Bulletin** has moved the clock's hands back and forth, but mostly forth, their movements have validated major **arms control treaties** or condemned dangerous escalations like the **hydrogen bomb**.

जैसे-जैसे बुलेटिन ने घड़ी की सुइयों को आगे-पीछे किया, लेकिन अधिकतर आगे बढ़ाया, इन परिवर्तनों ने प्रमुख हथियार नियंत्रण संधियों को मान्यता दी या हाइड्रोजन बम जैसी खतरनाक बढ़ोतरी की निंदा की।

- And in the last **eight decades** it has become a cornerstone of the cultural framework that treats **nuclear weapons** and **climate change** as existential, rather than just political, problems.

पिछले आठ दशकों में यह उस सांस्कृतिक ढांचे की आधारशिला बन गई है जो परमाणु हथियारों और जलवायु परिवर्तन को केवल राजनीतिक नहीं बल्कि अस्तित्वगत समस्याओं के रूप में देखता है।



- But for all the ease with which the clock has raised alarms — thanks in no small part to its iconic design by the American artist **Martyl Langsdorf** — the clock has also failed to put out the fires.
लेकिन जितनी आसानी से इस घड़ी ने चेतावनी दी — जिसका श्रेय काफी हद तक अमेरिकी कलाकार **मार्टिल लैंग्सडॉर्फ** के प्रतीकात्मक डिज़ाइन को जाता है — उतनी ही यह आग बुझाने में असफल भी रही है।
- This is because the clock banks on the idea that if you show people a sufficiently frightening picture of their future, they will demand change.
ऐसा इसलिए है क्योंकि यह घड़ी इस विचार पर निर्भर करती है कि अगर लोगों को उनके भविष्य की एक पर्याप्त डरावनी तस्वीर दिखाई जाए, तो वे बदलाव की मांग करेंगे।
- But history is clear that this strategy is flawed: while the clock has successfully branded the apocalypse, it has failed to overcome the **political gridlock** that actually drives the **arms race**.
लेकिन इतिहास स्पष्ट है कि यह रणनीति त्रुटिपूर्ण है: घड़ी ने सर्वनाश की छवि तो सफलतापूर्वक बनाई, लेकिन **राजनीतिक जड़ता** को दूर करने में असफल रही, जो वास्तव में **हथियारों की दौड़** को आगे बढ़ाती है।
- That said, perhaps its most significant achievement is to **set the agenda**.
फिर भी, शायद इसकी सबसे बड़ी उपलब्धि **एजेंडा तय करना** है।
- Before the clock, **nuclear strategy** was a secret language spoken only by generals and physicists.
घड़ी से पहले, **परमाणु रणनीति** एक गुप्त भाषा थी जिसे केवल जनरल और भौतिक विज्ञानी ही समझते थे।
- The **Bulletin** changed that by creating a symbol everyone could understand, one of the number of minutes to midnight.
बुलेटिन ने इसे बदल दिया, आधी रात तक बचे मिनटों के प्रतीक के जरिए, जिसे हर कोई समझ सकता था।
- This was clever because it forced the **media** to talk about **nuclear risk** every single year.
यह चतुराई भरा कदम था क्योंकि इसने **मीडिया** को हर साल **परमाणु जोखिम** पर बात करने के लिए मजबूर किया।
- **When the U.S. and the Soviet Union signed major arms control treaties in the late 1980s and when the Copenhagen Summit concluded in 2009 with the 2°C climate goal, the clock moved backwards, giving people a clear way to see that diplomacy was working.**
जब **1980 के दशक** के अंत में **अमेरिका** और **सोवियत संघ** ने प्रमुख **हथियार नियंत्रण संधियाँ** कीं और जब **2009 में कोपेनहेगन शिखर सम्मेलन 2°C जलवायु लक्ष्य** के साथ समाप्त हुआ, तब घड़ी पीछे गई और लोगों को स्पष्ट रूप से दिखा कि कूटनीति काम कर रही है।
- Unfortunately for the clock, constant fear often leads to paralysis, an effect psychologists call **psychic numbing**.
दुर्भाग्य से, लगातार भय अक्सर जड़ता की ओर ले जाता है, जिसे मनोवैज्ञानिक **साइकिक नंबिंग** कहते हैं।
- When the clock stayed at **two minutes to midnight** for decades or hovered at **90 seconds** as it did recently, its shock value wore off.
जब घड़ी दशकों तक **आधी रात से दो मिनट** पर रही या हाल ही में **90 सेकंड** पर अटकी रही, तो उसका झटका देने वाला प्रभाव खत्म हो गया।
- Instead of rushing to fix the problem, people get used to living on the edge of destruction. समस्या को तुरंत ठीक करने के बजाय, लोग विनाश के कगार पर जीने के आदी हो जाते हैं।
- Keeping the alert level so high for so long unintentionally normalised the very danger the **Bulletin** wished to eliminate.
इतने लंबे समय तक चेतावनी स्तर को ऊँचा बनाए रखने से अनजाने में वही खतरा सामान्य हो गया जिसे **बुलेटिन** खत्म करना चाहता था।
- It's understandable: if it's always the end of the world, people stop believing the end is actually coming.
यह समझ में आता है: अगर हमेशा दुनिया के अंत की बात हो, तो लोग मानना बंद कर देते हैं कि अंत सच में आने वाला है।
- Equally understandably, the clock hasn't been able to change the behaviour of **national governments**.
उतनी ही सहजता से, यह घड़ी **राष्ट्रीय सरकारों** के व्यवहार को बदलने में भी असफल रही है।
- The scientists behind the clock have appealed to securing the safety of the **human race** — what could be more important? — but governments have increasingly cared only about the safety of their own borders.



घड़ी के पीछे के वैज्ञानिकों ने **मानव जाति** की सुरक्षा की अपील की — इससे अधिक महत्वपूर्ण क्या हो सकता है? — लेकिन सरकारें लगातार केवल अपनी सीमाओं की सुरक्षा की परवाह करती रही हैं।

- And these goals often clash.
और ये लक्ष्य अक्सर टकराते हैं।
- For instance when **India** and **Pakistan** tested **nuclear weapons** in **1998**, the Clock moved forward to condemn them, yet that condemnation meant nothing to the leaders in **New Delhi** or **Islamabad**, who believed they needed the weapons to survive.
उदाहरण के लिए, जब **1998** में **भारत** और **पाकिस्तान** ने **परमाणु हथियारों** का परीक्षण किया, तो घड़ी आगे बढ़ी, लेकिन यह निंदा **नई दिल्ली** या **इस्लामाबाद** के नेताओं के लिए कोई मायने नहीं रखती थी, जिन्हें लगा कि जीवित रहने के लिए ये हथियार ज़रूरी हैं।
- Even the current setting of **85 seconds to midnight** is proof of this restriction.
यहाँ तक कि **आधी रात से 85 सेकंड** की मौजूदा स्थिति भी इसी सीमा का प्रमाण है।
- The fact that we're closer to doom now than at any point in the **Cold War** suggests the people with the power to launch the missiles have ignored the clock's warnings.
यह तथ्य कि हम अब **शीत युद्ध** के किसी भी दौर से अधिक विनाश के करीब हैं, बताता है कि मिसाइल लॉन्च करने की शक्ति रखने वालों ने घड़ी की चेतावनियों को नज़रअंदाज़ किया है।

Too many threats बहुत सारे खतरे

- The clock's effectiveness was further complicated when the **Bulletin** decided to include **climate change** and **disruptive technologies** in its calculations.
घड़ी की प्रभावशीलता और जटिल हो गई जब **बुलेटिन** ने अपनी गणना में **जलवायु परिवर्तन** और **विघटनकारी तकनीकों** को शामिल किया।
- To be sure, this decision was scientifically sound but it also muddled the message.
निश्चित रूप से, यह निर्णय वैज्ञानिक रूप से सही था, लेकिन इससे संदेश भ्रमित भी हो गया।
- Whenever the clock moved before, everyone knew it was about **nuclear bombs**.
पहले जब भी घड़ी आगे-पीछे होती थी, सब जानते थे कि यह **परमाणु बमों** के बारे में है।
- **Today its moves are a mix of nuclear tension, rising temperatures, mis- and dis-information risks, biological threats,** and so on.
आज इसके बदलाव **परमाणु तनाव**, बढ़ते तापमान, **गलत और भ्रामक सूचना के खतरे**, **जैविक खतरों** आदि का मिश्रण हैं।
- The clock is an example of **science communication** in action yet its attempts to account for all possible threats undermines the people's ability to understand what to demand from their leaders.
यह घड़ी **वैज्ञानिक संचार** का एक उदाहरण है, फिर भी सभी संभावित खतरों को शामिल करने का प्रयास लोगों की यह समझ कमजोर करता है कि उन्हें अपने नेताओं से क्या मांग करनी चाहिए।
- A politician can claim they're addressing the clock's warning by passing a **climate bill** even as the government builds more **nuclear weapons**.
कोई राजनेता **जलवायु विधेयक** पारित कर घड़ी की चेतावनी पर काम करने का दावा कर सकता है, जबकि सरकार और अधिक **परमाणु हथियार** बना रही हो।
- The **Doomsday Clock** is ultimately a good **diagnostic tool**, just not a cure.
अंततः **डूमसडे क्लॉक** एक अच्छा **नैदानिक उपकरण** है, लेकिन इलाज नहीं।
- It banks on **shame and reason** in a world that, more signs by the day indicated, runs on **fear and power**.
यह **शर्म और तर्क** पर निर्भर करती है, जबकि दुनिया, जैसा कि रोज़ बढ़ते संकेत बताते हैं, **डर और शक्ति** पर चलती है।
- It tells us exactly what time it is but it's silent on how we can stop the ticking.
यह हमें ठीक-ठीक बताती है कि समय क्या हो रहा है, लेकिन यह नहीं बताती कि टिक-टिक को कैसे रोका जाए।