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1.	Phenom Alcaraz completes career Slam अलकाराज़ ने करियर स्लैम पूरा किया

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Phenom Alcaraz completes career Slam

The Spaniard surpasses compatriot Nadal as the youngest to achieve the rare feat in the Open era and denies the 38-year-old Djokovic a chance to win a record 25th Major crown; the top seed takes control of the contest after the 10-time champion clinches the opening set

PCS [redacted]

AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Agence France-Presse
MELBOURNE

Carlos Alcaraz swept past Novak Djokovic to win his first Australian Open on Sunday and become the youngest man to complete a career Grand Slam, denying the Serbian great an unprecedented 25th Major.

The Spaniard was imperious after a slow start in dismissing the 38-year-old, 2-6, 6-2, 6-3, 7-5 on Rod Laver Arena to claim a seventh Slam title and cement himself as undisputed World No. 1.

In doing so, he became the youngest man in the Open era to win all four Majors, adding to his two titles each from Wimbledon and the French and US Opens.

At 22, he surpassed legendary countryman Rafael Nadal – in the crowd to witness the feat – who was two years older when he did the same.

"It's an honour to be here in Melbourne every year," said Alcaraz. "Job finished. Four out of four complete."

It was a first defeat for Djokovic in a Melbourne final, having won all 10 previously, leaving him still searching for a landmark 25th Major to better Australia's Margaret Court, who was also watching on centre court.

After battling through five sets in the semifinals, both showed few signs of fatigue in another gladiatorial contest.

They opened with comfortable holds before a double fault and netted forehand presented the first break point chance for Djokovic at 2-1. Alcaraz saved it, but the aggressive fourth seed kept pressing and converted on his third, then consolidated for a 4-1 lead.

He claimed the set in 33 minutes after a ninth unforced error from the top seed, having dominated the big moments.

It was vintage Djokovic, but Alcaraz came storming back, upping the tempo to break for 2-1 in the second set.

Djokovic put drops in his eyes and began rubbing them, unable to tame a now rampant Alcaraz who broke again for 5-2.

There were some sensational rallies that had the crowd on their feet in set three, which went with serve until Djokovic slapped a forehand wide under pressure to slip 2-3 behind. He gamely saved four set points at 3-5 but with his energy levels dropping was unable to save a fifth as the Spaniard took control.

On the back foot, Djokovic then saved six break points in an 11-minute opening service game in set four to stay alive and kept fighting hard. But Alcaraz ground him down and pounced as Djokovic served to stay in the match to seal a maiden triumph in Melbourne.

Day 15 in numbers

1 Alcaraz (22y 258d) is the youngest man to complete the Career Grand Slam, and the sixth man to achieve the feat (after Laver, Agassi, Federer, Nadal and Djokovic)

1 The Spaniard is now the youngest man to win seven Majors, breaking Borg's record who won his seventh Slam just days after turning 23

2 Djokovic is 16-4 in Major finals after winning the first set. Two of those defeats have come against Alcaraz (Wimbledon 2023 and Australian Open 2026)

2 Alcaraz is the second Spaniard to win the Melbourne crown after his childhood idol Nadal (2009, 2022)

3 Alcaraz has beaten Djokovic in all three Major finals they contested

9 Alcaraz and Sinner have won the last nine Grand Slams, matching the dominance of Djokovic and Nadal (Roland-Garros 2010-2012) and trailing only the 11 by Nadal and Federer (Roland-Garros 2005 to US Open 2007)

25 Since the inaugural ATP Tour season in 1990, Alcaraz (86) has taken the fewest tournaments to win 25 titles

Alcaraz and Djokovic have the biggest age gap (15y 349d) among men's finalists at the Melbourne Major

COMPILED BY ANIRUDH VELAMURI

Phenom Alcaraz completes career Slam
अलकाराज़ ने करियर स्लैम पूरा किया

The Spaniard surpasses compatriot Nadal as the youngest to achieve the rare feat in the Open era and denies the 38-year-old Djokovic a chance to win a record 25th Major crown; the top seed takes control of the contest after the 10-time champion clinches the opening set

स्पेनिश खिलाड़ी ने ओपन युग में यह दुर्लभ उपलब्धि हासिल करने वाले सबसे युवा खिलाड़ी के रूप में अपने हमवतन नडाल को पीछे छोड़ दिया और 38 वर्षीय जोकोविच को रिकॉर्ड 25वें मेजर खिताब का मौका नहीं दिया; 10 बार के चैंपियन के शुरुआती सेट जीतने के बाद टॉप सीड ने मुकाबले पर नियंत्रण कर लिया।

- **Carlos Alcaraz** swept past Novak Djokovic to win his **first Australian Open** on Sunday and become the youngest man to complete a career Grand Slam, denying the Serbian great an unprecedented 25th Major.
  कार्लोस अलकाराज़ ने रविवार को **नोवाक जोकोविच** को हराकर अपना पहला **ऑस्ट्रेलियन ओपन** जीता और **करियर ग्रैंड स्लैम** पूरा करने वाले सबसे युवा पुरुष बन गए, जिससे सर्बियाई दिग्गज को अभूतपूर्व **25वां मेजर** नहीं मिल सका।
- The **Spaniard** was imperious after a slow start in dismissing the 38-year-old, 2-6, 6-2, 6-3, 7-5 on Rod Laver Arena to claim a seventh Slam title and cement himself as undisputed World No. 1.
  धीमी शुरुआत के बाद स्पेनिश खिलाड़ी शानदार रहा और **38 वर्षीय** को **रॉड लेवर एरीना** पर **2-6, 6-2, 6-3, 7-5** से हराकर अपना **सातवां स्लैम खिताब** जीता और खुद को निर्विवाद **वर्ल्ड नंबर 1** के रूप में स्थापित किया।
- In doing so, he became the youngest man in the Open era to win all four Majors, adding to his two titles each from Wimbledon and the French and US Opens.
  ऐसा करते हुए वह ओपन युग में **चारों मेजर** जीतने वाला सबसे युवा पुरुष बना, जिसमें उसके **विंबलडन** से दो और **फ्रेंच** व **यूएस ओपन** से दो-दो खिताब शामिल हैं।
- At 22, he surpassed legendary countryman Rafael Nadal — in the crowd to witness the feat — who was two years older when he did the same.

22 वर्ष की उम्र में उसने महान हमवतन **राफेल नडाल** को पीछे छोड़ा — जो उपलब्धि देखने के लिए भीड़ में मौजूद थे — जिन्होंने यह काम दो साल अधिक उम्र में किया था।

- "It's an honour to be here in Melbourne every year," said Alcaraz.
  अलकाराज़ ने कहा, "हर साल **मेलबर्न** में यहां होना सम्मान की बात है।"
- It was a first defeat for Djokovic in a Melbourne final, having won all 10 previously, leaving him still searching for a landmark 25th Major to better Australia's Margaret Court, who was also watching on centre court.
  यह मेलबर्न फाइनल में जोकोविच की पहली हार थी, उन्होंने पहले के सभी **10** फाइनल जीते थे, जिससे वह अब भी ऑस्ट्रेलिया की **मार्गरेट कोर्ट** (जो सेंटर कोर्ट पर देख रही थीं) से आगे निकलने के लिए **25वें मेजर** की तलाश में हैं।

PM Modi renames Adampur airport after Guru Ravidas

GS I: History

The Hindu Bureau
JALANDHAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday renamed the Adampur airport in Punjab's Jalandhar district as 'Sri Guru Ravidas Ji' Airport and virtually inaugurated the civil terminal building at Halwara Airport in Ludhiana.

Mr. Modi visited 'Dera Sach Khand Ballan' at Ballan village on 'Ravidas Jayanti' on the occasion of the 649th birth anniversary of Guru Ravidas, the revered saint and social reformer. The Prime Minister met Sant Niranjan Dass, the head of Dera Sach Khand Ballan, who was recently conferred the Padma Shri.

"It is a matter of immense honour and pride that today, on the auspicious occasion of Sant Ravidass Jayanti, it has been decided that the Adampur Airport will now onwards be known as Shri Guru Ravidass Maharaj Ji Airport," he said, adding "It was a very special feeling to be at Dera Sachkhand Ballan on the Jayanti of Shri Guru Ravidass Maharaj Ji."

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister highlighted how Punjab is set to play a key role in India's newly signed trade deal with Europe. This deal, he said, will open up European markets for Punjab's hosiery, sports goods, and other industries. Mr. Modi urged Punjab's business leaders to focus on producing high-quality Indian products for international buyers, reap the optimum benefits of the deal.

Mr. Modi said the inauguration of a terminal building at the Halwara Airport is a moment of immense joy for the people of Punjab, especially Ludhiana and surrounding areas. "Ludhiana is a vital industrial and commercial hub in northern India and the government is working tirelessly to improve air connectivity for this city, reflecting in the ongoing works for a modern airport," he added.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann reiterated his demand to the Government of India to name the airport after martyr Shaheed Kartar Singh Sarabha, calling it a fitting tribute to one of the youngest icons of India's freedom struggle.

PM Modi renames Adampur airport after Guru Ravidas

पीएम मोदी ने आदमपुर हवाई अड्डे का नाम गुरु रविदास के नाम पर रखा

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday renamed the Adampur airport in Punjab's Jalandhar district as 'Sri Guru Ravidas Ji' Airport and virtually inaugurated the civil terminal building at Halwara Airport in Ludhiana.

प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने रविवार को पंजाब के जालंधर ज़िले में स्थित आदमपुर हवाई अड्डे का नाम बदलकर 'श्री गुरु रविदास जी' एयरपोर्ट रखा और लुधियाना के हलवाड़ा हवाई अड्डे पर सिविल टर्मिनल भवन का वर्चुअल उद्घाटन किया।

- Mr. Modi visited 'Dera Sach Khand Ballan' at Ballan village on 'Ravidas Jayanti' on the occasion of the 649th birth anniversary of Guru Ravidas, the revered saint and social reformer.

श्री **मोदी** ने पूज्य संत और सामाजिक सुधारक **गुरु रविदास** की **649वीं जयंती** के अवसर पर '**रविदास जयंती**' पर **बल्लां गांव** में '**डेरा सच खंड बल्लां**' का दौरा किया।

- The Prime Minister met Sant Niranjan Dass, the head of Dera Sach Khand Ballan, who was recently conferred the Padma Shri.
  प्रधानमंत्री ने 'डेरा सच खंड बल्लां' के प्रमुख **संत निरंजन दास** से मुलाकात की, जिन्हें हाल ही में **पद्म श्री** से सम्मानित किया गया था।
- "It is a matter of immense honour and pride that today, on the auspicious occasion of Sant Ravidass Jayanti, it has been decided that the Adampur Airport will now onwards be known as Shri Guru Ravidass Maharaj Ji Airport," he said, adding "It was a very special feeling to be at Dera Sachkhand Ballan on the Jayanti of Shri Guru Ravidass Maharaj Ji."
  उन्होंने कहा, "यह अत्यंत सम्मान और गर्व की बात है कि आज **संत रविदास जयंती** के शुभ अवसर पर यह निर्णय लिया गया है कि **आदमपुर एयरपोर्ट** अब से **श्री गुरु रविदास महाराज जी एयरपोर्ट** के नाम से जाना जाएगा," और जोड़ा, "**श्री गुरु रविदास महाराज जी** की जयंती पर **डेरा सचखंड बल्लां** में होना बहुत विशेष अनुभूति थी।"
- Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister highlighted how Punjab is set to play a key role in India's newly signed trade deal with Europe.
  सभा को संबोधित करते हुए प्रधानमंत्री ने बताया कि **यूरोप** के साथ भारत के नव हस्ताक्षरित **व्यापार समझौते** में **पंजाब** की अहम भूमिका होने जा रही है।
- This deal, he said, will open up European markets for Punjab's hosiery, sports goods, and other industries.
  उन्होंने कहा कि यह समझौता **पंजाब** के **होज़ियरी**, **स्पोर्ट्स गुड्स**, और अन्य उद्योगों के लिए **यूरोपीय बाजारों** को खोलेगा।
- Mr. Modi urged Punjab's business leaders to focus on producing high-quality Indian products for international buyers, reap the optimum beneflts of the deal.
  श्री **मोदी** ने पंजाब के व्यापार नेताओं से आग्रह किया कि वे अंतरराष्ट्रीय खरीदारों के लिए **उच्च गुणवत्ता वाले भारतीय उत्पाद** बनाने पर ध्यान दें और समझौते का **अधिकतम लाभ** उठाएं।
- Mr. Modi said the inauguration of a terminal building at the Halwara Airport is a moment of immense joy for the people of Punjab, especially Ludhiana and surrounding areas.
  श्री **मोदी** ने कहा कि **हलवाड़ा हवाई अड्डे** पर टर्मिनल भवन का उद्घाटन **पंजाब**, विशेषकर **लुधियाना** और आसपास के क्षेत्रों के लोगों के लिए अत्यंत खुशी का क्षण है।

Ravidas / Raidas (15th–16th Century CE)

• **Ravidas** (also spelled **Raidas**) was an Indian **mystic poet-saint** associated with the **Bhakti movement**.
• He is remembered as:
• a **devotional poet**
• a **social reform-oriented spiritual figure**
• an important voice against **social discrimination**, especially **caste-based divisions**

Bhakti Movement Setting

• The Bhakti movement (especially from **13th–17th century** CE) emphasised:
• **personal devotion** to God (bhakti) rather than ritualism alone
• **spiritual equality** of all humans
• criticism of social evils like **untouchability**, rigid caste boundaries, and inequality
• Ravidas fits within this broad tradition as a saint who expressed devotion along with **social ethics**.

• The **biographical details of Ravidas are uncertain and contested** due to:
• limited contemporary records
• dependence on hagiographies and later traditions
• Many scholars place him broadly in the **15th to 16th century CE**.

Commonly Cited Birth Year

• Some traditions/scholars suggest **1433 CE** as a birth year, but it is **not universally accepted**.

Social Teaching

• Ravidas taught removal of **social divisions** such as:
• **caste discrimination**
• **gender inequality**
• He promoted **unity** in society through the idea that spiritual worth is not determined by birth.

Spiritual Teaching

• His devotion stressed:
• **inner purity**
• **personal spiritual freedom**
• devotion-based connection with the divine, open to all communities

Nature of His Works

• Ravidas composed **devotional verses (bhakti poetry)**.
• His poetry is remembered for:
• simple language
• intense devotion
• ethical and social messaging

Inclusion in Sikh Scripture

• Ravidas's devotional verses were included in the **Guru Granth Sahib**.
• In Sikh tradition, he is honoured as a **Bhagat** (saint-poet whose compositions were included).

Ravidas in Dadu Panthi Tradition

Panch Vani

• The **Panch Vani** (Dadu Panthi tradition) includes **numerous poems** attributed to Ravidas.
• This shows that Ravidas's influence extended across multiple devotional communities, not limited to one sect.

Difference in Status: Bhagat vs Guru

- **Mainstream Sikh view:** Ravidas is a **Bhagat**.
- **Ravidassia view:** Ravidas is revered as **Guru Ravidas** (Guru status, central authority).

GS Paper III: Economy	
1.	Kerala urged to go beyond hard infra in accessibility, put AI to good use केरल से कहा गया कि सुलभता में हार्ड इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर से आगे बढ़े, AI का अच्छा उपयोग करे
2.	Inclusive tourism is a right, not a privilege: N. Ram समावेशी पर्यटन अधिकार है, विशेषाधिकार नहीं: एन. राम
3.	

Kerala urged to go beyond hard infra in accessibility, put AI to good use

Suman Billa, Additional Secretary and Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, says the State needs to develop a truly world-class model that offers differently abled visitors a seamless experience. People should be sensitised to the need, equipped with necessary skills, he adds

GS III: Economy

M.P. Praveen
KOCHI

Suman Billa, Additional Secretary and Director General, Union Ministry of Tourism, and K. Biju, Secretary, Kerala Tourism, and moderator S. Anandan, Resident Editor, Kerala, *The Hindu*, at a session at the Kerala for All conclave, organised by Kerala Tourism and The HIndu, in Kochi on Sunday. THULASI KAKKAT

Kerala should focus on a few destinations, build standards that match the best in the world, infuse technology, and partner with stakeholders to create a world-class accessibility model, said Suman Billa, Additional Secretary and Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

He was speaking at the session 'Vision Kerala for All: Shaping the Future of Kerala Tourism' at the two-day conclave 'Kerala for All - Tourism Without Barriers', jointly organised by Kerala Tourism and The Hindu Group, in Kochi on Sunday.

Mr. Billa said that although every project of the Central and State governments has accessibility provisions written into it, implementation is not happening. He stressed the need to think about accessibility beyond hard infrastructure and to incorporate assistive technologies powered by artificial intelligence. He also emphasised the importance of building a culture of accessibility at the school level so that youngsters are socially sensitised.

"What characterises Kerala society are virtues such as compassion and equality, with social mobilisation at its core. The Kerala psyche is hardwired to implement universal accessibility. Kerala has made progress in this field, but much more needs to be done. Accessibility should be integrated into policy, and infrastructure must be built with accessibility as part of every project. Kerala needs to develop a truly world-class model that offers differently-abled visitors a seamless experience," Mr. Billa said.

Calls for a movement

Supporting Kerala's image as an inclusive and accessibility-friendly destination, Mr. Biju said the effort must go beyond tourism sites and destinations where the entire society embrace it. "Just like Responsible Tourism, accessibility should become a movement across the State. People everywhere must be sensitised, equipped with the necessary skills, and supported with the right infrastructure so that Kerala emerges as one of the best States in terms of universal accessibility, a model we can showcase to the world," he said.

Highlighting Kerala's compassionate society and strong grassroots participation, Mr. Biju emphasised the need for a policy-led initiative rather than a project-led approach.

"There is no point in making just one or two rooms differently-abled friendly. Every room and every space, including parks, heritage sites, beaches, backwaters, and houseboats, must be planned to ensure they are disabled-friendly and accessible," he added.

K. Biju, Secretary, Kerala Tourism, was the other participant. S. Anandan, Resident Editor, Kerala, *The Hindu*, moderated the session.

Earlier, addressing the inaugural session, Mr. Billa said if Kerala could set a new model in inclusive and accessible tourism, it would become a global model for reference. "There is no State is better placed than Kerala to implement inclusive and accessible tourism," said Mr. Billa.

Considering the fact that those with special abilities are repeated visitors to the same destinations and stay longer, it is not a matter of social concern alone, but the accessible design should be undertaken from a commercial point of view too, he said.

Kerala urged to go beyond hard infra in accessibility, put AI to good use

केरल से कहा गया कि सुलभता में हार्ड इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर से आगे बढ़े, AI का अच्छा उपयोग करे

Suman Billa, Additional Secretary and Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, says the State needs to develop a truly world-class model that ofiers difierently abled visitors a seamless experience.
सुमन बिल्ला, अतिरिक्त सचिव और महानिदेशक, पर्यटन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, ने कहा कि राज्य को एक वास्तव में विश्व-स्तरीय मॉडल विकसित करने की आवश्यकता है जो दिव्यांग आगंतुकों को निर्बाध अनुभव प्रदान करे।

- People should be sensitised to the need, equipped with necessary skills, he adds
  लोगों को इस आवश्यकता के प्रति **संवेदनशील** किया जाना चाहिए, आवश्यक **कौशल** से लैस किया जाना चाहिए, उन्होंने जोड़ा।
- Kerala should focus on a few destinations, build standards that match the best in the world, infuse technology, and partner with stakeholders to create a world-class accessibility model, said Suman Billa, Additional Secretary and Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.
  केरल को कुछ गंतव्यों पर ध्यान देना चाहिए, दुनिया के सर्वश्रेष्ठ के अनुरूप **मानक** बनाना चाहिए, **तकनीक** का समावेश करना चाहिए, और हितधारकों के साथ साझेदारी कर **विश्व-स्तरीय सुलभता मॉडल** तैयार करना चाहिए, ऐसा **सुमन बिल्ला** (अतिरिक्त सचिव एवं महानिदेशक, पर्यटन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार) ने कहा।
- He was speaking at the session 'Vision Kerala for All: Shaping the Future of Kerala Tourism' at the two-day conclave 'Kerala for All – Tourism Without Barriers', jointly organised by Kerala Tourism and The Hindu Group, in Kochi on Sunday.
  वह रविवार को **कोच्चि** में **केरल टूरिज्म** और **द हिंदू ग्रुप** द्वारा संयुक्त रूप से आयोजित दो दिवसीय कॉन्क्लेव '**Kerala for All – Tourism Without Barriers**' में सत्र '**Vision Kerala for All: Shaping the Future of Kerala Tourism**' में बोल रहे थे।
- Mr. Billa said that although every project of the Central and State governments has accessibility provisions written into it, implementation is not happening.
  श्री **बिल्ला** ने कहा कि हालांकि **केंद्र** और **राज्य सरकारों** की हर परियोजना में **सुलभता प्रावधान** लिखे होते हैं, लेकिन **कार्यान्वयन** नहीं हो रहा है।
- He stressed the need to think about accessibility beyond hard infrastructure and to incorporate assistive technologies powered by artiflcial intelligence.
  उन्होंने **हार्ड इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर** से आगे जाकर **सुलभता** पर सोचने और **कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता (AI)** से संचालित **सहायक तकनीकों** को शामिल करने की आवश्यकता पर जोर दिया।
- He also emphasised the importance of building a culture of accessibility at the school level so that youngsters are socially sensitised.
  उन्होंने स्कूल स्तर पर **सुलभता की संस्कृति** विकसित करने के महत्व पर भी जोर दिया ताकि युवा **सामाजिक रूप से संवेदनशील** बनें।
- "What characterises Kerala society are virtues such as compassion and equality, with social mobilisation at its core.
  "केरल समाज की विशेषता **करुणा** और **समानता** जैसे गुण हैं, जिसके केंद्र में **सामाजिक लामबंदी** है।
- The Kerala psyche is hardwired to implement universal accessibility.
  केरल की मानसिकता **सार्वभौमिक सुलभता** लागू करने के लिए स्वाभाविक रूप से तैयार है।
- Kerala has made progress in this fleld, but much more needs to be done.
  केरल ने इस क्षेत्र में प्रगति की है, लेकिन अभी और बहुत कुछ किया जाना बाकी है।
- Accessibility should be integrated into policy, and infrastructure must be built with accessibility as part of every project.

सुलभता को **नीति** में एकीकृत किया जाना चाहिए, और बुनियादी ढांचे का निर्माण इस प्रकार होना चाहिए कि हर परियोजना में सुलभता शामिल हो।

- Kerala needs to develop a truly world-class model that o□ers di□erently-abled visitors a seamless experience," Mr. Billa said.
  "केरल को एक वास्तव में **विश्व-स्तरीय मॉडल** विकसित करना होगा जो **दिव्यांग** आगंतुकों को **निर्बाध अनुभव** दे," श्री बिल्ला ने कहा।

Calls for a movement
एक आंदोलन की मांग

- Supporting Kerala's image as an inclusive and accessibility-friendly destination, Mr. Biju said the e□ort must go beyond tourism sites and destinations where the entire society embrace it.
  केरल की छवि को **समावेशी** और **सुलभता-अनुकूल** गंतव्य के रूप में समर्थन देते हुए, श्री **बीजू** ने कहा कि प्रयास पर्यटन स्थलों और गंतव्यों से आगे जाना चाहिए ताकि पूरा समाज इसे अपनाए।
- "Just like Responsible Tourism, accessibility should become a movement across the State.
  "जैसे **Responsible Tourism**, वैसे ही **सुलभता** पूरे राज्य में एक **आंदोलन** बननी चाहिए।
- People everywhere must be sensitised, equipped with the necessary skills, and supported with the right infrastructure so that Kerala emerges as one of the best States in terms of universal accessibility, a model we can showcase to the world," he said.
  उन्होंने कहा, "हर जगह लोगों को **संवेदनशील** किया जाना चाहिए, आवश्यक **कौशल** दिए जाने चाहिए, और सही **इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर** से समर्थन किया जाना चाहिए ताकि केरल **सार्वभौमिक सुलभता** के मामले में सर्वश्रेष्ठ राज्यों में से एक बने, एक ऐसा मॉडल जिसे हम दुनिया को दिखा सकें।"
- Highlighting Kerala's compassionate society and strong grassroots participation, Mr. Biju emphasised the need for a policy-led initiative rather than a project-led approach.
  केरल के **करुणामय समाज** और मजबूत **ग्रासरूट भागीदारी** को रेखांकित करते हुए श्री **बीजू** ने परियोजना-आधारित दृष्टिकोण के बजाय **नीति-आधारित पहल** की आवश्यकता पर जोर दिया।
- "There is no point in making just one or two rooms di□erently-abled friendly.
  "केवल एक या दो कमरे **दिव्यांग-अनुकूल** बनाने का कोई अर्थ नहीं है।
- Every room and every space, including parks, heritage sites, beaches, backwaters, and houseboats, must be planned to ensure they are disabled-friendly and accessible," he added.
  उन्होंने जोड़ा, "हर कमरा और हर स्थान, जिसमें **पार्क**, **हेरिटेज साइट्स**, **बीच**, **बैकवॉटर्स**, और **हाउसबोट** शामिल हैं, इस प्रकार नियोजित होना चाहिए कि वे **दिव्यांग-अनुकूल** और **सुलभ** हों।"
- K. Biju, Secretary, Kerala Tourism, was the other participant.
  के. बीजू, सचिव, **केरल टूरिज्म**, अन्य प्रतिभागी थे।
- S. Anandan, Resident Editor, Kerala, The Hindu, moderated the session.
  एस. आनंदन, रेजिडेंट एडिटर, केरल, **द हिंदू**, ने सत्र का संचालन किया।
- Earlier, addressing the inaugural session, Mr. Billa said if Kerala could set a new model in inclusive and accessible tourism, it would become a global model for reference.
  इससे पहले उद्घाटन सत्र को संबोधित करते हुए श्री **बिल्ला** ने कहा कि यदि केरल **समावेशी** और **सुलभ पर्यटन** में नया मॉडल स्थापित कर सके, तो वह संदर्भ के लिए **वैश्विक मॉडल** बन जाएगा।
- "There is no State is better placed than Kerala to implement inclusive and accessible tourism," said Mr. Billa.
  श्री **बिल्ला** ने कहा, "**समावेशी** और **सुलभ पर्यटन** लागू करने के लिए **केरल** से बेहतर कोई राज्य नहीं है।"
- Considering the fact that those with special abilities are repeated visitors to the same destinations and stay longer, it is not a matter of social concern alone, but the accessible design should be undertaken from a commercial point of view too, he said
  उन्होंने कहा कि इस तथ्य को देखते हुए कि **विशेष क्षमताओं** वाले लोग वही गंतव्य बार-बार आते हैं और अधिक

समय तक ठहरते हैं, यह केवल सामाजिक चिंता का विषय नहीं है, बल्कि **सुलभ डिज़ाइन** को **व्यावसायिक दृष्टिकोण** से भी अपनाया जाना चाहिए।

Inclusive tourism is a right, not a privilege: N. Ram

GS III: Economy

M.P. Praveen
KOCHI

"Kerala is a fort that resists divisive influences particularly those trying to polarise society on the basis of religion," N. Ram, Director, The Hindu Group, has said. He was delivering the keynote address during the inauguration of 'Kerala For All - Tourism Without Barriers', a two-day conclave organised jointly by Kerala Tourism and The Hindu Group, on Sunday.

"The idea behind 'Kerala for All' reflects a model that combines strong social indicators with an ethos of openness, dignity and welfare governance. There are some political forces in this country, I don't want to name them, that try to disturb this. But Kerala in a sense is a fort that resists such divisive influences, particularly those trying to polarise society on the basis of religion, sometimes based on caste but mainly religion," Mr. Ram said.

'Most socially advanced State'

Kerala is one of India's most socially advanced States. "In fact, I would say it is India's most socially advanced State. Not because of high per capita income, although that is also growing, but because of its long-standing commitment to human development, social justice and inclusive public policy," said Mr. Ram.

Over the long term, social development in Kerala has been shaped by land reform, social reform movements, and progressive politics. The idea of 'Kerala for All' extends beyond welfare into a broader culture of inclusion. And while we saw the distressing phenomenon of migrant workers during the pandemic walk long distances in various parts of India, Kerala stood as a model of how to handle such crisis situations, he said.

"The State has welcomed migrant workers from other States who contribute significantly to construction, services and industry. And the LDF government led by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan set an example to all of India by calling these migrant workers guest workers. They are treated as residents of Kerala," Mr. Ram said.

Inclusive and accessible tourism should be treated as a right of all tourists and not something that is given as charity or as a special privilege, he said. "Kerala Tourism deserves commendation for its tremendous effort to make Kerala a place for all with inclusive and accessible tourism. *The Hindu* is privileged that that we are in this partnership with the government of Kerala and with Kerala tourism in particular. This is a good start and I hope there'll be consolidation of these efforts," said Mr. Ram.

Inclusive tourism is a right, not a privilege: N. Ram

समावेशी पर्यटन अधिकार है, विशेषाधिकार नहीं: एन. राम

"Kerala is a fort that resists divisive infiuences particularly those trying to polarise society on the basis of religion," N. Ram, Director, The Hindu Group, has said.

"केरल एक ऐसा किला है जो विभाजनकारी प्रभावों का विरोध करता है, खासकर उन लोगों का जो धर्म के आधार पर समाज को ध्रुवीकृत करने की कोशिश करते हैं," द हिंदू ग्रुप के निदेशक एन. राम ने कहा।

- He was delivering the keynote address during the inauguration of 'Kerala For All – Tourism Without Barriers', a two-day conclave organised jointly by Kerala Tourism and The Hindu Group, on Sunday.

वह रविवार को **केरल टूरिज्म** और **द हिंदू ग्रुप** द्वारा संयुक्त रूप से आयोजित दो दिवसीय कॉन्क्लेव '**Kerala For All – Tourism Without Barriers**' के उद्घाटन के दौरान **मुख्य भाषण** दे रहे थे।

- "The idea behind 'Kerala for All' reflects a model that combines strong social indicators with an ethos of openness, dignity and welfare governance.

"'**Kerala for All**' के पीछे की अवधारणा एक ऐसे मॉडल को दर्शाती है जो मजबूत **सामाजिक संकेतकों** को **खुलापन**, **गरिमा**, और **कल्याणकारी शासन** की भावना के साथ जोड़ता है।

- There are some political forces in this country, I don't want to name them, that try to disturb this.

इस देश में कुछ **राजनीतिक शक्तियां** हैं, मैं उनका नाम नहीं लेना चाहता, जो इसे बाधित करने की कोशिश करती हैं।

- But Kerala in a sense is a fort that resists such divisive infiuences, particularly those trying to polarise society on the basis of religion, sometimes based on caste but mainly religion," Mr. Ram said.

लेकिन केरल एक अर्थ में ऐसा **किला** है जो ऐसे **विभाजनकारी प्रभावों** का विरोध करता है, खासकर उन प्रभावों का जो समाज को **धर्म** के आधार पर ध्रुवीकृत करने की कोशिश करते हैं, कभी-कभी **जाति** के आधार पर लेकिन मुख्यतः **धर्म** पर," श्री **राम** ने कहा।

‘Most socially advanced State’
‘सबसे अधिक सामाजिक रूप से उन्नत राज्य’

- Kerala is one of India’s most socially advanced States.
  केरल भारत के सबसे अधिक **सामाजिक रूप से उन्नत राज्यों** में से एक है।
- “In fact, I would say it is India’s most socially advanced State.
  “वास्तव में, मैं कहूंगा कि यह भारत का सबसे अधिक **सामाजिक रूप से उन्नत राज्य** है।
- Not because of high per capita income, although that is also growing, but because of its long-standing commitment to human development, social justice and inclusive public policy,” said Mr. Ram.
  श्री **राम** ने कहा, यह उच्च **प्रति व्यक्ति आय** के कारण नहीं है, हालांकि वह भी बढ़ रही है, बल्कि **मानव विकास**, **सामाजिक न्याय**, और **समावेशी सार्वजनिक नीति** के प्रति इसकी दीर्घकालिक प्रतिबद्धता के कारण है।”
- Over the long term, social development in Kerala has been shaped by land reform, social reform movements, and progressive politics.
  लंबी अवधि में, केरल में सामाजिक विकास को **भूमि सुधार**, **सामाजिक सुधार आंदोलनों**, और **प्रगतिशील राजनीति** ने आकार दिया है।
- The idea of ‘Kerala for All’ extends beyond welfare into a broader culture of inclusion.
  ‘**Kerala for All**’ की अवधारणा कल्याण से आगे बढ़कर **समावेशन** की व्यापक संस्कृति तक जाती है।
- And while we saw the distressing phenomenon of migrant workers during the pandemic walk long distances in various parts of India, Kerala stood as a model of how to handle such crisis situations, he said.
  और जब हमने महामारी के दौरान भारत के विभिन्न हिस्सों में **प्रवासी श्रमिकों** को लंबी दूरी तक पैदल चलते हुए कष्टदायक दृश्य देखा, तब केरल ऐसे **संकट** की स्थितियों से निपटने का एक **मॉडल** बनकर खड़ा रहा, उन्होंने कहा।
- “The State has welcomed migrant workers from other States who contribute signiflcantly to construction, services and industry.
  “राज्य ने अन्य राज्यों से आए **प्रवासी श्रमिकों** का स्वागत किया है जो **निर्माण**, **सेवाओं**, और **उद्योग** में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान देते हैं।
- And the LDF government led by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan set an example to all of India by calling these migrant workers guest workers.
  और **मुख्यमंत्री पिनराई विजयन** के नेतृत्व वाली **LDF सरकार** ने इन प्रवासी श्रमिकों को **गेस्ट वर्कर्स** कहकर पूरे भारत के लिए एक उदाहरण प्रस्तुत किया।
- They are treated as residents of Kerala,” Mr. Ram said.
  “उन्हें केरल के **निवासियों** की तरह माना जाता है,” श्री **राम** ने कहा।
- Inclusive and accessible tourism should be treated as a right of all tourists and not something that is given as charity or as a special privilege, he said.
  उन्होंने कहा कि **समावेशी** और **सुलभ पर्यटन** को सभी पर्यटकों का **अधिकार** माना जाना चाहिए, न कि इसे दान के रूप में या किसी विशेष **विशेषाधिकार** के रूप में दिया जाए।
- “Kerala Tourism deserves commendation for its tremendous e□ort to make Kerala a place for all with inclusive and accessible tourism.
  “केरल टूरिज्म** समावेशी और सुलभ पर्यटन के माध्यम से केरल को सभी के लिए स्थान बनाने के अपने अत्यंत प्रयास के लिए प्रशंसा का पात्र है।
- The Hindu is privileged that that we are in this partnership with the government of Kerala and with Kerala tourism in particular.
  द हिंदू को यह सौभाग्य प्राप्त है कि हम **केरल सरकार** और विशेष रूप से **केरल टूरिज्म** के साथ इस साझेदारी में हैं।
- This is a good start and I hope there’ll be consolidation of these e□orts,” said Mr. Ram
  “यह एक अच्छी शुरुआत है और मुझे आशा है कि इन प्रयासों का **सुदृढ़ीकरण** होगा,” श्री **राम** ने कहा

Vying for gender-inclusive tourism

GS III: Economy

Hiran Unnikrishnan
KOCHI

Sikha Surendran, Director, Kerala Tourism; Preeja Rajan, State Coordinator, UN Women; Monolita Chatterjee, architect; Soity Banerjee, travel & food journalist; and moderator Saraswathy Nagarajan at the conclave in Kochi on Sunday. THULASI KAKKAT

Asserting that Kerala is perhaps the only State in the world willing to openly acknowledge shortcomings in the gender inclusivity of its tourism destinations, Sikha Surendran, Director, Kerala Tourism, said the State is working on a comprehensive project to address all such barriers in the near future.

"Kerala Tourism is keen on removing all forms of barriers at destinations for people of all genders and age groups, in consultation with stakeholders," she said, drawing a loud round of applause from the audience.

Ms. Surendran was addressing the session titled Gender Inclusivity at the Heart of Tourism as part of the Kerala for All conclave, jointly organised by Kerala Tourism and *The Hindu*.

Preeja Rajan, State Coordinator of UN Women, said women should not only be able to visit destinations but also be visibly represented there.

"The presence of more women in tourism spaces helps enhance the sense of safety among women travellers," she noted.

Monolita Chatterjee, urban designer and architect, said public spaces in India are often designed without considering different types of bodies.

'Simple design changes'

"The real issue is that barriers are not properly understood. Many of these could be addressed through simple design decisions," she said.

Soity Banerjee, Responsible Tourism strategist, raised concerns about the safety of women employed in the tourism sector, highlighting last-mile connectivity as a major challenge. "Poor connectivity forces many women to retreat after sundown," she said.

Responding to the concern, Ms. Surendran pointed out that Kerala has made significant strides in this area by providing behavioural training to cab drivers. She also spoke of plans by the Tourism department to expand a network of women-run toilets for women travellers. "The government will provide incentives for operating such facilities, which will go a long way in addressing these concerns," she said.

Vying for gender-inclusive tourism
जेंडर-समावेशी पर्यटन के लिए प्रयास

Asserting that Kerala is perhaps the only State in the world willing to openly acknowledge shortcomings in the gender inclusivity of its tourism destinations, Sikha Surendran, Director, Kerala Tourism, said the State is working on a comprehensive project to address all such barriers in the near future.
यह कहते हुए कि केरल संभवतः दुनिया का एकमात्र राज्य है जो अपने पर्यटन स्थलों में जेंडर समावेशन की कमियों को खुलकर स्वीकार करने के लिए तैयार है, केरल टूरिज्म की निदेशक सिखा सुरेंद्रन ने कहा कि राज्य निकट भविष्य में ऐसी सभी बाधाओं को दूर करने के लिए एक व्यापक परियोजना पर काम कर रहा है।

- "Kerala Tourism is keen on removing all forms of barriers at destinations for people of all genders and age groups, in consultation with stakeholders," she said, drawing a loud round of applause from the audience.
  उन्होंने कहा, "**केरल टूरिज्म** सभी **लिंगों** और **आयु वर्गों** के लोगों के लिए पर्यटन स्थलों पर सभी प्रकार की बाधाओं को हटाने के लिए हितधारकों के साथ परामर्श कर उत्सुक है," जिस पर दर्शकों ने जोरदार तालियों के साथ प्रतिक्रिया दी।
- Ms. Surendran was addressing the session titled Gender Inclusivity at the Heart of Tourism as part of the Kerala for All conclave, jointly organised by Kerala Tourism and The Hindu.
  सुश्री **सुरेंद्रन** '**Kerala for All**' कॉन्क्लेव के तहत '**Gender Inclusivity at the Heart of Tourism**' शीर्षक सत्र को संबोधित कर रही थीं, जिसे **केरल टूरिज्म** और **द हिंदू** ने संयुक्त रूप से आयोजित किया था।

- Preeja Rajan, State Coordinator of UN Women, said women should not only be able to visit destinations but also be visibly represented there.
  UN Women की राज्य समन्वयक **प्रीजा राजन** ने कहा कि महिलाओं को केवल पर्यटन स्थलों पर जाना ही नहीं चाहिए बल्कि वहाँ **दृश्य रूप से प्रतिनिधित्व** भी होना चाहिए।
- "The presence of more women in tourism spaces helps enhance the sense of safety among women travellers," she noted.
  उन्होंने कहा, "पर्यटन स्थलों/स्पेस में अधिक **महिलाओं की उपस्थिति** महिला यात्रियों में **सुरक्षा की भावना** बढ़ाने में मदद करती है।"
- Monolita Chatterjee, urban designer and architect, said public spaces in India are often designed without considering di erent types of bodies.
  अर्बन डिजाइनर और आर्किटेक्ट **मोनोलिता चटर्जी** ने कहा कि भारत में सार्वजनिक स्थान अक्सर **विभिन्न प्रकार के शरीर** (body types) को ध्यान में रखे बिना डिजाइन किए जाते हैं।

'Simple design changes'
'**सरल डिजाइन परिवर्तन**'

- "The real issue is that barriers are not properly understood.
  उन्होंने कहा, "वास्तविक समस्या यह है कि **बाधाओं** को सही तरीके से समझा नहीं जाता।
- Many of these could be addressed through simple design decisions," she said.
  उन्होंने कहा, "इनमें से कई समस्याओं को **सरल डिजाइन निर्णयों** के माध्यम से हल किया जा सकता है।"
- Soity Banerjee, Responsible Tourism strategist, raised concerns about the safety of women employed in the tourism sector, highlighting last-mile connectivity as a major challenge.
  Responsible Tourism रणनीतिकार **सोइटी बनर्जी** ने पर्यटन क्षेत्र में कार्यरत महिलाओं की **सुरक्षा** पर चिंता जताई और **लास्ट-माइल कनेक्टिविटी** को बड़ी चुनौती बताया।
- "Poor connectivity forces many women to retreat after sundown," she said.
  उन्होंने कहा, "कमजोर कनेक्टिविटी कई महिलाओं को **सूर्यास्त के बाद** पीछे हटने/लौटने को मजबूर करती है।"
- Responding to the concern, Ms. Surendran pointed out that Kerala has made significant strides in this area by providing behavioural training to cab drivers.
  इस चिंता के जवाब में सुश्री **सुरेंद्रन** ने कहा कि केरल ने **कैब ड्राइवरों** को **व्यवहारिक प्रशिक्षण** देकर इस क्षेत्र में महत्वपूर्ण प्रगति की है।
- She also spoke of plans by the Tourism department to expand a network of women-run toilets for women travellers.
  उन्होंने **पर्यटन विभाग** की योजना का भी उल्लेख किया कि महिला यात्रियों के लिए **महिला-प्रबंधित शौचालयों** के नेटवर्क का विस्तार किया जाएगा।
- "The government will provide incentives for operating such facilities, which will go a long way in addressing these concerns," she said
  उन्होंने कहा, "सरकार ऐसी सुविधाओं के संचालन के लिए **प्रोत्साहन** देगी, जो इन चिंताओं को दूर करने में काफी मदद करेगा।"

GS Paper III: Economy, (Budget)	
TOPICS COVERED	**02 February 2026**
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2.	**Debating Budget 2026 as turning point or tinkering** **बजट 2026 पर बहस: क्या यह एक निर्णायक मोड़ है या केवल मामूली बदलाव?**
3.	**Budget 2026 bets big on industrial growth** **बजट 2026 ने औद्योगिक विकास पर बड़ा दांव लगाया**
4.	**Building on a tax gamble that did not pay off** **कर-संबंधी जोखिमपूर्ण दांव पर आगे बढ़ना, जो सफल नहीं हुआ**
5.	**Pushing welfare towards the States** **कल्याणकारी व्यय को राज्यों की ओर बढ़ाना**

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Credible, creditable

The Budget chose prudence over adventurism, and multipronged measures over Big Bang reforms

Where Budget 2025 was largely dominated by the income-tax rate and slab relaxations, Budget 2026 has done away with Big Bang measures. Instead, its scattershot approach, through various sectoral and issue-based measures, when taken together, is aimed at propelling India's growth over the medium term. Given the level of geoeconomic and geopolitical uncertainties that the Indian economy faces, this diffused approach is likely a more effective policy than targeted Big Bang announcements would be. This is not the time for further disruption. Budget 2026 contains announcements for the manufacturing sector, various services sectors, as well as particular provisions to help labour-intensive sectors such as textiles and leather. In terms of manufacturing, the Budget includes measures covering seven well thought-out areas: biopharma, semiconductors, electronics, rare earths, chemicals, capital goods and textiles. Semiconductor and electronics manufacturing are the few sectors that have gained from the government's existing PLI schemes. The India Semiconductor Mission 2.0 and the increased allocation under the Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme are appropriate follow-ups to this. These are sectors where India needs to become globally competitive. The Biopharma SHAKTI scheme is aimed at making India a global biopharma manufacturing hub with an allocation of ₹10,000 crore over the next five years. Pharmaceuticals, already a sector that India does well in, are exempt from the U.S.'s 50% tariffs. It is also important to support those sectors that are currently hit by those same tariffs. The National Export Promotion Mission announced in the last Budget was implemented only by December 2025, nine months into the financial year. The Centre should ensure that this Budget's integrated programme for the textiles sector does not face similar delays. Also, the various measures aimed at creating 'Champion MSMEs', providing them equity, liquidity, and professional support, must be implemented quickly. MSMEs account for 48.6% of India's exports, and the EU FTA, even if it is implemented soon, will not kick in quick enough to offset the ongoing pain caused by the U.S. tariffs. The services sector, too, stands to benefit from Budget 2026. The high-powered 'education to employment and enterprise' standing committee, announced by the Finance Minister, should get off the ground soon. The focus on health care and medical tourism, where India is already developing strengths, is a good start. In keeping with the Budget's multipronged approach, the Centre has sought to cater to the election-bound States this year through several smaller announcements – such as dedicated rare earth corridors to benefit Odisha, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, a Coconut Promotion Scheme for Kerala, an integrated East Coast Industrial Corridor for West Bengal, and the first of the new national waterways to begin in Odisha – rather than through the consolidated packages of the past.

As for the Centre's finances, Budget 2026 offers a mix of expenditure enthusiasm and revenue sobriety. The capital expenditure push, especially with regard to infrastructure creation, has continued, perhaps in reaction to the realisation that current conditions do not encourage private investment. Overall, capital expenditure is set to grow to ₹12.2 lakh crore in 2026-27, amounting to 4.4% of GDP, the highest in at least the last 10 years. This includes the announcement of dedicated freight corridors and training institutes for the manpower needed. These rail corridors are also to be supplemented by a Coastal Cargo Promotion Scheme to incentivise increasing the share of inland waterways and coastal shipping. It is noteworthy that the Centre has revised downwards its capital expenditure for 2025-26 to ₹10.9 lakh crore from the ₹11.2 lakh crore initially budgeted. It remains to be seen if this year's target will be met, but even coming close will provide a substantial fillip to the economy. On the revenue front, the Centre did not announce any major tax cuts for individuals or corporations. In 2019 and 2025, respectively, corporations and individuals received substantial tax relief. To announce more would have put undue stress on central finances at a time when its expenditure commitments – known and anticipated – are substantial. However, while direct taxes have largely received procedural improvements, the Budget has included a slew of indirect tax relaxations for the promotion of marine, leather and textile products exports, and speeding up India's energy transition. The tax revenue projections are largely sober. Corporate tax revenue is projected to grow nearly 14% over the Budget estimates of 2025-26. This is broadly in line with the revised estimates for 2025-26 coming in 12.4% higher than the actuals of the previous year. Income-tax revenue has been budgeted to grow 1.9% over the BE of 2025-26 – an expected outcome following last Budget's substantial rate relaxations. Gross GST revenue has been projected to contract 13.5% in 2026-27, a reflection of the September 2025 rate rationalisation and the end of the Compensation Cess. Taken together, the Centre's fiscal deficit has been projected at 4.3% of GDP in 2026-27, down from 4.4% estimated for 2025-26. While the Centre's fiscal consolidation path since the COVID-19 pandemic has been admirable, continued aggression in reducing the deficit deserves some questioning. Even the Economic Survey argued for some fiscal flexibility for the Centre given the geoeconomic and geopolitical conditions. Overall, Budget 2026 may disappoint those looking for massive tax relief or subsidies, but is nevertheless a credible and creditable effort.

Credible, creditable

विश्वसनीय, श्रेयस्कर

- The Budget chose **prudence** over **adventurism**, and **multipronged measures** over **Big Bang reforms**
  बजट ने **साहसिकता** के बजाय **सावधानी** को चुना, और **अचानक/क्रांतिकारी सुधारों** के बजाय **बहुआयामी उपायों** को अपनाया

- **Where Budget 2025 was largely dominated by the income-tax rate and slab relaxations, Budget 2026 has done away with Big Bang measures.**
  जहाँ **बजट 2025** मुख्यतः **आयकर दर** और **स्लैब में छूट** से प्रभावित था, वहीं **बजट 2026** ने **बिग बैंग उपायों** को समाप्त कर दिया है।
- Instead, its scattershot approach, through various sectoral and issue-based measures, when taken together, is aimed at propelling India's growth over the medium term.
  इसके बजाय, विभिन्न **क्षेत्रवार** और **मुद्दावार उपायों** के माध्यम से इसका बिखरा हुआ दृष्टिकोण, जब समग्र रूप से देखा जाता है, तो **मध्यम अवधि** में भारत की **वृद्धि** को आगे बढ़ाने के उद्देश्य से है।
- Given the level of geoeconomic and geopolitical uncertainties that the Indian economy faces, this diffused approach is likely a more effective policy than targeted Big Bang announcements would be.
  भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था के सामने मौजूद **भू-आर्थिक** और **भू-राजनीतिक अनिश्चितताओं** को देखते हुए, यह **विस्तारित दृष्टिकोण** लक्षित **बिग बैंग घोषणाओं** की तुलना में अधिक प्रभावी नीति हो सकता है।
- This is not the time for further disruption.
  यह आगे और **अधिक अव्यवस्था** का समय नहीं है।
- Budget 2026 contains announcements for the manufacturing sector, various services sectors, as well as particular provisions to help labour-intensive sectors such as textiles and leather.
  बजट 2026 में **विनिर्माण क्षेत्र**, विभिन्न **सेवा क्षेत्रों**, तथा **श्रम-प्रधान क्षेत्रों** जैसे **वस्त्र** और **चमड़ा** की सहायता हेतु विशेष प्रावधानों की घोषणाएँ शामिल हैं।
- In terms of manufacturing, the Budget includes measures covering seven well thoughtout areas: biopharma, semiconductors, electronics, rare earths, chemicals, capital goods and textiles.
  विनिर्माण के संदर्भ में, बजट में सात सुविचारित क्षेत्रों को कवर करने वाले उपाय शामिल हैं: **जैव-फार्मा**, **अर्धचालक**, **इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स**, **दुर्लभ मृदा**, **रसायन**, **पूंजीगत वस्तुएँ** और **वस्त्र**।
- Semiconductor and electronics manufacturing are the few sectors that have gained from the government's existing PLI schemes.
  अर्धचालक और **इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स विनिर्माण** वे कुछ क्षेत्र हैं जिन्हें सरकार की मौजूदा **उत्पादन-आधारित प्रोत्साहन योजनाओं** से लाभ मिला है।
- The India Semiconductor Mission 2.0 and the increased allocation under the Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme are appropriate follow-ups to this.
  भारत अर्धचालक मिशन 2.0 और **इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स घटक विनिर्माण योजना** के तहत बढ़ा हुआ **आवंटन** इसके उचित अनुवर्ती कदम हैं।
- These are sectors where India needs to become globally competitive.
  ये ऐसे क्षेत्र हैं जहाँ भारत को **वैश्विक स्तर पर प्रतिस्पर्धी** बनना आवश्यक है।
- The **Biopharma SHAKTI scheme** is aimed at making India a global biopharma manufacturing hub with an allocation of **₹10,000 crore** over the next **five years.**
  बायोफार्मा शक्ति योजना का उद्देश्य भारत को वैश्विक **जैव-फार्मा विनिर्माण केंद्र** बनाना है, जिसके लिए अगले **पाँच वर्षों** में **₹10,000 करोड़** का **आवंटन** किया गया है।
- Pharmaceuticals, already a sector that India does well in, are exempt from the U.S.'s **50% tariffs.**
  औषधि उद्योग, जो पहले से भारत का मजबूत क्षेत्र है, को अमेरिका के **50% शुल्क** से **छूट** प्राप्त है।

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- It is also important to support those sectors that are currently hit by those same tariffs.
  उन क्षेत्रों का समर्थन करना भी महत्वपूर्ण है जो वर्तमान में उन्हीं **शुल्कों** से प्रभावित हैं।
- The **National Export Promotion Mission** announced in the last Budget was implemented only by **December 2025**, nine months into the financial year.
  पिछले बजट में घोषित **राष्ट्रीय निर्यात प्रोत्साहन मिशन** को केवल **दिसंबर 2025** तक लागू किया गया, यानी वित्तीय वर्ष के **नौ महीने** बाद।
- The Centre should ensure that this Budget's integrated programme for the textiles sector does not face similar delays.
  केंद्र को सुनिश्चित करना चाहिए कि इस बजट का **वस्त्र क्षेत्र** के लिए **एकीकृत कार्यक्रम** इसी प्रकार की **देरी** का सामना न करे।
- Also, the various measures aimed at creating **'Champion MSMEs',** providing them equity, liquidity, and professional support, must be implemented quickly.
  साथ ही, '**चैंपियन सूक्ष्म, लघु और मध्यम उद्यम**' बनाने, उन्हें **पूँजी**, **तरलता**, और **पेशेवर समर्थन** देने हेतु विभिन्न उपायों को तेजी से लागू किया जाना चाहिए।
- MSMEs account for **48.6%** of India's exports, and the EU FTA, even if it is implemented soon, will not kick in quick enough to offset the ongoing pain caused by the U.S. tariffs.
  सूक्ष्म, लघु और मध्यम उद्यम भारत के निर्यात का **48.6%** योगदान देते हैं, और **यूरोपीय संघ मुक्त व्यापार समझौता**, भले ही जल्द लागू हो जाए, अमेरिका के **शुल्क** से हो रहे नुकसान की भरपाई के लिए पर्याप्त तेजी से प्रभावी नहीं होगा।
- The services sector, too, stands to benefit from Budget 2026.
  सेवा क्षेत्र भी **बजट 2026** से लाभान्वित होने की स्थिति में है।
- The **high-powered 'education to employment and enterprise' standing committee, announced by the Finance Minister**, should get off the ground soon.
  वित्त मंत्री द्वारा घोषित उच्चस्तरीय **शिक्षा से रोजगार और उद्यम** स्थायी समिति को जल्द ही कार्य प्रारंभ करना चाहिए।
- The focus on health care and medical tourism, where India is already developing strengths, is a good start.
  स्वास्थ्य देखभाल और **चिकित्सा पर्यटन** पर फोकस, जहाँ भारत पहले से अपनी **ताकत** विकसित कर रहा है, एक अच्छी शुरुआत है।
- In keeping with the Budget's multipronged approach, the Centre has sought to cater to the election-bound States this year through several smaller announcements — such as dedicated rare earth corridors to benefit Odisha, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, a Coconut Promotion Scheme for Kerala, an integrated East Coast Industrial Corridor for West Bengal, and the first of the new national waterways to begin in Odisha — rather than through the consolidated packages of the past.
  बजट के **बहु-आयामी दृष्टिकोण** के अनुरूप, केंद्र ने इस वर्ष चुनाव वाले राज्यों के लिए बड़े समेकित पैकेज की बजाय कई छोटे-छोटे ऐलानों के माध्यम से कदम उठाए हैं — जैसे **ओडिशा, केरल, आंध्र प्रदेश और तमिलनाडु** को लाभ देने हेतु **दुर्लभ मृदा गलियारे**, **केरल** के लिए **नारियल प्रोत्साहन योजना**, **पश्चिम बंगाल** के लिए **एकीकृत पूर्वी तट औद्योगिक गलियारा**, तथा **ओडिशा** में शुरू होने वाला नए **राष्ट्रीय जलमार्गों** में से पहला — जो कि पहले के समेकित पैकेजों के बजाय अपनाया गया तरीका है।

Centre's finances in Budget 2026
बजट 2026 में केंद्र के वित्त

- As for the Centre's finances, Budget **2026** off-ers a mix of **expenditure enthusiasm** and **revenue sobriety**.
  केंद्र के वित्त के संदर्भ में, बजट **2026** में **व्यय उत्साह** और **राजस्व संयम** का मिश्रण प्रस्तुत किया गया है।
- The **capital expenditure push**, especially with regard to **infrastructure creation**, has continued, perhaps in reaction to the realisation that current conditions do not encourage

private investment.
पूंजीगत व्यय को बढ़ावा, विशेष रूप से **अवसंरचना निर्माण** के संदर्भ में, जारी रहा है, संभवतः इस समझ के कारण कि वर्तमान परिस्थितियाँ **निजी निवेश** को प्रोत्साहित नहीं करतीं।

- Overall, **capital expenditure** is set to grow to **₹12.2 lakh crore** in **2026-27**, amounting to **4.4% of GDP**, the **highest** in at least the last **10 years**.
  कुल मिलाकर, **पूंजीगत व्यय 2026-27** में बढ़कर **₹12.2 लाख करोड़** होने वाला है, जो **GDP का 4.4%** है, और कम से कम पिछले **10 वर्षों** में **सबसे अधिक** है।
- This includes the announcement of **dedicated freight corridors** and **training institutes** for the manpower needed.
  इसमें **समर्पित माल ढुलाई गलियारों** और आवश्यक जनशक्ति के लिए **प्रशिक्षण संस्थानों** की घोषणा भी शामिल है।
- These rail corridors are also to be supplemented by a **Coastal Cargo Promotion Scheme** to incentivise increasing the share of **inland waterways** and **coastal shipping**.
  इन रेल गलियारों को **Coastal Cargo Promotion Scheme** द्वारा भी पूरक किया जाएगा ताकि **अंतर्देशीय जलमार्गों** और **तटीय शिपिंग** के हिस्से को बढ़ाने हेतु प्रोत्साहन दिया जा सके।
- It is noteworthy that the Centre has revised downwards its **capital expenditure** for **2025-26** to **₹10.9 lakh crore** from the **₹11.2 lakh crore** initially budgeted.
  यह उल्लेखनीय है कि केंद्र ने **2025-26** के लिए अपने **पूंजीगत व्यय** को प्रारंभिक बजट **₹11.2 लाख करोड़** से घटाकर **₹10.9 लाख करोड़** कर दिया है।
- It remains to be seen if this year's target will be met, but even coming close will provide a substantial fillip to the economy.
  यह देखना बाकी है कि इस वर्ष का लक्ष्य पूरा होगा या नहीं, लेकिन इसके निकट भी पहुँचना अर्थव्यवस्था को पर्याप्त **प्रोत्साहन** देगा।
- On the revenue front, the Centre did not announce any major **tax cuts** for individuals or corporations.
  राजस्व के मोर्चे पर, केंद्र ने व्यक्तियों या कंपनियों के लिए कोई बड़ा **कर कटौती** घोषित नहीं किया।
- In **2019** and **2025**, respectively, corporations and individuals received substantial **tax relief**.
  क्रमशः **2019** और **2025** में कंपनियों और व्यक्तियों को पर्याप्त **कर राहत** मिली थी।
- To announce more would have put undue stress on central finances at a time when its **expenditure commitments** — known and anticipated — are substantial.
  और अधिक घोषित करना केंद्रीय वित्त पर अनावश्यक दबाव डालता, ऐसे समय में जब इसके **व्यय दायित्व** — ज्ञात और अपेक्षित — काफी बड़े हैं।
- However, while **direct taxes** have largely received procedural improvements, the Budget has included a slew of **indirect tax relaxations** for the promotion of **marine**, **leather** and **textile products exports**, and speeding up India's **energy transition**.
  हालाँकि **प्रत्यक्ष करों** में अधिकांशतः प्रक्रियात्मक सुधार किए गए हैं, फिर भी बजट में **अप्रत्यक्ष कर रियायतों** की एक श्रृंखला शामिल की गई है ताकि **समुद्री**, **चमड़ा** और **वस्त्र उत्पादों के निर्यात** को बढ़ावा दिया जा सके, और भारत के **ऊर्जा संक्रमण** को तेज किया जा सके।
- The tax revenue projections are largely sober.
  कर राजस्व के अनुमान कुल मिलाकर संयमित हैं।
- **Corporate tax revenue** is projected to grow nearly **14%** over the Budget estimates of **2025-26**.
  कॉर्पोरेट कर राजस्व के **2025-26** के बजट अनुमान की तुलना में लगभग **14%** बढ़ने का अनुमान है।
- This is broadly in line with the revised estimates for **2025-26** coming in **12.4%** higher than the actuals of the previous year.
  यह **2025-26** के संशोधित अनुमानों के अनुरूप है, जो पिछले वर्ष के वास्तविक आँकड़ों से **12.4%** अधिक रहे।
- **Income-tax revenue** has been budgeted to grow **1.9%** over the BE of **2025-26** — an expected outcome following last Budget's substantial rate relaxations.

आयकर राजस्व को **2025-26** के बजट अनुमान (BE) से **1.9%** बढ़ने के रूप में बजट में रखा गया है — जो पिछले बजट में बड़ी दर रियायतों के बाद अपेक्षित परिणाम है।

- Gross **GST revenue** has been projected to contract **13.5%** in **2026-27**, a reflection of the **September 2025** rate rationalisation and the end of the **Compensation Cess**.
  2026-27 में सकल **GST राजस्व** के **13.5%** घटने का अनुमान है, जो **सितंबर 2025** की दरों के युक्तिकरण और **Compensation Cess** की समाप्ति का प्रतिबिंब है।
- Taken together, the Centre's fiscal deficit has been projected at **4.3% of GDP** in **2026-27**, down from **4.4%** estimated for **2025-26**.
  समग्र रूप से, केंद्र का **राजकोषीय घाटा 2026-27** में **GDP का 4.3%** अनुमानित किया गया है, जो **2025-26** के **4.4%** अनुमान से कम है।
- While the Centre's fiscal consolidation path since the **COVID-19** pandemic has been admirable, continued aggression in reducing the deficit deserves some questioning.
  हालाँकि **COVID-19** महामारी के बाद केंद्र का **राजकोषीय समेकन** मार्ग प्रशंसनीय रहा है, फिर भी घाटा घटाने में लगातार आक्रामकता पर कुछ सवाल उठते हैं।
- Even the **Economic Survey** argued for some fiscal flexibility for the Centre given the **geoeconomic** and **geopolitical** conditions.
  यहाँ तक कि **आर्थिक सर्वेक्षण** ने भी **भू-आर्थिक** और **भू-राजनीतिक** परिस्थितियों को देखते हुए केंद्र के लिए कुछ **राजकोषीय लचीलापन** रखने का तर्क दिया।

Overall, Budget **2026** may disappoint those looking for massive **tax relief** or **subsidies**, but is nevertheless a **credible and creditable effort**.
कुल मिलाकर, बजट **2026** उन लोगों को निराश कर सकता है जो बड़े पैमाने पर **कर राहत** या **सब्सिडी** की अपेक्षा कर रहे थे, लेकिन फिर भी यह एक **विश्वसनीय और सराहनीय प्रयास** है।

Debating Budget 2026 as turning point or tinkering

GS III: Economy: Budget

MQB

As is widely understood, the annual Budget is a political document responding to short to medium-term economic challenges. Formally, it is an annual revenue and expenditure statement outlining the government's priorities. As with any financial statement, the fine print matters the most, not obvious from the media headlines. Yet, it is useful to read the Budget closely to glean the broad direction of economic policy, especially as there are no other long-term policy documents or explicit economic targets in the public domain to locate the annual Budget.

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Setting to the Budget

The proximate context of the Budget is the recent eruption of geopolitical turmoil triggered during the second term of the Donald Trump presidency in the United States. Many political and economic arrangements – or, the rules and norms of international relations that have been in place since the fall of the Berlin Wall – are now upended. India's long-term economic and security arrangements with Russia are under threat. Mr. Trump's steep tariffs on India's labour-intensive goods have dashed hopes of a closer economic relationship with the U.S. In response, India is seeking closer ties with the European Union in the form of "mother of all" free trade agreement (FTA), though its details are still unclear. India's import dependence on China continues despite the policy efforts taken, since 2020, to correct this. Diplomatic relations remain strained. For instance, China has imposed restrictions on the exports of critical minerals, tunnel boring machines and the services of skilled workers for the electric vehicle (EV) industry.

Budget 2026-27 needs to be read in this context. Unlike previously, this Budget highlights the urgency of strengthening domestic manufacturing. It also aims to streamline import duties and procedures in order to reduce imports and achieve self-reliance, and to speed up exports.

Factually speaking, the Indian manufacturing sector has not performed satisfactorily for a while now, despite headline GDP growth of 6.5% to 7% annually in real terms (net of inflation). India has deindustrialised prematurely; the share of manufacturing in GDP has declined or, at best, has remained constant. Manufacturing employment in total employment has also declined. The official GDP numbers for manufacturing seem overstated due to infirmities in estimation. Alternative figures, based on the more reliable Annual Survey of Industries (ASI), based on time-tested production accounts of factories, show distinctly slower output growth rates. With very modest growth in fixed investment (or gross fixed capital formation), industrial capacity has eroded during the last decade.

> Budget 2026-27 needs to be read in the context of much geopolitical turmoil

Rising import dependence for most capital and intermediate goods is a reason for modest industrial performance. An inverted duty structure wherein intermediate goods face higher tariffs than final goods seems to be responsible for the poor industrial investments. Policy initiatives such as 'Make in India' (2014), Aatma Nirbhar Bharat (or Self-Reliant India Movement) in 2020 and Production Linked Incentives (2021) seem to have largely failed to dent India's rising import dependence in manufactured goods despite some widely applauded successes in mobile phone assembly (with high import content, best exemplified by Apple iPhone exports).

Hence, the Budget aims to tackle domestic vulnerabilities.

The tariff modifications seem to correct for the inverted duty structures (IDS) by reducing basic customs duties on capital and intermediate goods in order to encourage domestic value addition. Likewise, rationalising procedures at points of entry of goods would perhaps reduce delays, thus improving ease of production and exports.

Focus on electronics, the China factor

The Budget makes substantial provision for augmenting the production of electronics parts and sub-assemblies, which form the single largest product-group of dependence on China. The same holds for rare earth materials (used in the production of EVs and electronic goods) – a choke point as the Economic Survey recently and rightly highlighted. To tackle it, the Budget proposes to create a dedicated rare earths corridor running through "mineral-rich States of Odisha, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu ... to promote mining, processing, research and manufacturing". Similar to encouraging the production of lithium-ion cells for battery storage, the Budget proposes to extend the tax exemption on capital goods to produce these items.

Policymakers perceive India's trade integration has to begin with labour-intensive goods. Now, with the Trump tariffs on India's exports, there is an acute need to enhance the productivity of such goods to overcome these tariffs and ensure diversification away from the U.S. In line with this view, the Budget has laid emphasis on promoting new Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) clusters, modernising the old or "legacy" clusters (about 120 of them), and providing financial assistance to MSMEs to tap the capital market. In principle, these measures are welcome.

However, the Budget seems to fall short in efforts to boost fixed investment. To augment industrial capabilities, India needs to encourage investments in high-tech industries. Such technologies are mostly proprietary items of multinational corporations that often come bundled with foreign direct investment (FDI). In recent years, net FDI, as a ratio of GDP, has become practically zero. The Budget seems to make little effort to correct for the decline in foreign high-tech investments. Geopolitical uncertainties perhaps make it difficult to attract such technology-intensive investments, at least for now.

While the government is committed to promoting exports, the Budget has permitted firms located in special economic zones (SEZs) to sell a part of their output in domestic territory. This seems regressive. The government should tackle their hurdles to augment exports, rather than choose the softer option of allowing sales in the domestic market.

A silence on Centre-State fiscal issues

The Budget, which has been presented in a difficult global context, seems well-intentioned to tackle import dependence in domestic manufacturing to attain greater self-reliance. However, considering the uncertainties, the Budget seems silent on many difficult issues. Centre-State fiscal issues have also been overlooked, considering the impending implementation of the recommendations of the Sixteenth Finance Commission. Whether the proposed measures would yield desired results to reverse India's industrial decline and import dependence (especially on China, a strategic threat) would depend on the specifics of the proposals (which we have not seen) and how they are implemented.

Debating Budget 2026 as turning point or tinkering
बजट 2026 पर बहस: क्या यह एक निर्णायक मोड़ है या केवल मामूली बदलाव?

- Many political and economic arrangements — or, the rules and norms of international relations that have been in place since the fall of the **Berlin Wall** — are now upended.
  कई राजनीतिक और आर्थिक व्यवस्थाएँ — अर्थात अंतरराष्ट्रीय संबंधों के वे नियम और मानदंड जो **बर्लिन दीवार** के पतन के बाद से लागू थे — अब उलट-पुलट हो गए हैं।
- India's long-term economic and security arrangements with **Russia** are under threat.
  रूस के साथ भारत की दीर्घकालिक आर्थिक और सुरक्षा व्यवस्थाएँ खतरे में हैं।
- For instance, China has imposed restrictions on the exports of **critical minerals**, **tunnel boring machines** and the services of **skilled workers** for the **electric vehicle (EV) industry**.
  उदाहरण के लिए, चीन ने **महत्वपूर्ण खनिजों**, **टनल बोरिंग मशीनों** और **इलेक्ट्रिक वाहन (EV) उद्योग** के लिए **कुशल श्रमिकों** की सेवाओं के निर्यात पर प्रतिबंध लगाए हैं।
- India has **deindustrialised prematurely**; the share of **manufacturing in GDP** has declined or, at best, has remained constant.
  भारत का **समय से पहले औद्योगिक ह्रास (deindustrialisation)** हुआ है; **GDP में विनिर्माण का हिस्सा** घटा है या अधिकतम स्थिति में स्थिर रहा है।

- Manufacturing employment in total employment has also declined.
  कुल रोजगार में विनिर्माण रोजगार का हिस्सा भी घटा है।
- Policy initiatives such as '**Make in India**' (**2014**), **Aatma Nirbhar Bharat** (or **Self-Reliant India Movement**) in **2020** and **Production Linked Incentives** (**2021**) seem to have largely failed to dent India's rising import dependence in manufactured goods despite some widely applauded successes in **mobile phone assembly** (with high import content, best exemplified by **Apple iPhone exports**).
  '**मेक इन इंडिया**' (2014), **आत्मनिर्भर भारत** (या **Self-Reliant India Movement**) **2020** में और **Production Linked Incentives** (2021) जैसी नीतिगत पहलें, **मोबाइल फोन असेंबली** में कुछ व्यापक रूप से सराही गई सफलताओं के बावजूद (उच्च आयात सामग्री के साथ, जिसका सर्वोत्तम उदाहरण **Apple iPhone exports** है), विनिर्मित वस्तुओं में भारत की बढ़ती आयात निर्भरता को काफी हद तक कम करने में विफल रही प्रतीत होती हैं।
- Hence, the Budget aims to tackle domestic vulnerabilities.
  अतः, बजट का उद्देश्य घरेलू कमजोरियों से निपटना है।
- The tariff modifications seem to correct for the inverted duty structures (**IDS**) by reducing basic customs duties on capital and intermediate goods in order to encourage domestic value addition.
  टैरिफ संशोधन **उलटी शुल्क संरचना (IDS)** को सुधारने हेतु प्रतीत होते हैं, जिसमें घरेलू मूल्य संवर्धन को प्रोत्साहित करने के लिए पूंजी और मध्यवर्ती वस्तुओं पर **मूल सीमा शुल्क** घटाया गया है।
- Similar to encouraging the production of **lithium-ion cells** for battery storage, the Budget proposes to extend the **tax exemption** on capital goods to produce these items.
  बैटरी भंडारण हेतु **lithium-ion cells** के उत्पादन को प्रोत्साहित करने की तरह, बजट इन वस्तुओं के उत्पादन के लिए पूंजीगत वस्तुओं पर **कर छूट** बढ़ाने का प्रस्ताव करता है।
- Policymakers perceive India's trade integration has to begin with **labour-intensive goods**.
  नीतिनिर्माता मानते हैं कि भारत का व्यापार एकीकरण **श्रम-प्रधान वस्तुओं** से शुरू होना चाहिए।
- Now, with the Trump tariffs on India's exports, there is an acute need to enhance the productivity of such goods to overcome these tariffs and ensure diversification away from the **U.S.**
  अब, भारत के निर्यात पर ट्रम्प टैरिफ के साथ, इन टैरिफों को पार करने और **अमेरिका** से दूर विविधीकरण सुनिश्चित करने के लिए ऐसी वस्तुओं की उत्पादकता बढ़ाने की तीव्र आवश्यकता है।
- In line with this view, the Budget has laid emphasis on promoting new **Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) clusters**, modernising the old or "**legacy**" clusters (about **120** of them), and providing financial assistance to **MSMEs** to tap the capital market.
  इसी दृष्टिकोण के अनुरूप, बजट ने नए **Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) clusters** को बढ़ावा देने, पुराने या "**legacy**" क्लस्टर्स (लगभग **120**) का आधुनिकीकरण करने, और **MSMEs** को पूंजी बाजार तक पहुँचने हेतु वित्तीय सहायता प्रदान करने पर जोर दिया है।
- In principle, these measures are welcome.
  सिद्धांततः, ये उपाय स्वागतयोग्य हैं।
- However, the Budget seems to fall short in efforts to boost **fixed investment.**
  हालाँकि, बजट **स्थिर निवेश (fixed investment)** को बढ़ाने के प्रयासों में कमज़ोर प्रतीत होता है।
- To augment industrial capabilities, India needs to encourage investments in **high-tech industries**.
  औद्योगिक क्षमताओं को बढ़ाने के लिए, भारत को **हाई-टेक उद्योगों** में निवेश को प्रोत्साहित करने की आवश्यकता है।
- Such technologies are mostly **proprietary items** of **multinational corporations** that often come bundled with **foreign direct investment (FDI)**.
  ऐसी तकनीकें प्रायः **बहुराष्ट्रीय कंपनियों** की **स्वामित्व वाली (proprietary)** वस्तुएँ होती हैं, जो अक्सर **प्रत्यक्ष विदेशी निवेश (FDI)** के साथ जुड़ी होती हैं।

- In recent years, net **FDI**, as a ratio of **GDP**, has become practically **zero**.
  हाल के वर्षों में, **GDP** के अनुपात में शुद्ध **FDI** लगभग **शून्य** हो गया है।
- The Budget seems to make little effort to correct for the decline in foreign **high-tech investments**.
  बजट विदेशी **हाई-टेक निवेश** में आई गिरावट को सुधारने के लिए बहुत कम प्रयास करता हुआ दिखता है।

Budget 2026 bets big on industrial growth

GS III: Economy: Budget

MQB [redacted]

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Budget 2026-27 comes at a time when the economy is experiencing a rare goldilocks period of high economic growth and low inflation. The Indian economy has become the fourth largest, overtaking Japan, retaining its tag of being one of the fastest growing economies. Beneath the headline numbers lie some inherent challenges, which could be amplified by the uncertainty emanating from the geopolitical crises and tariff wars, and have the potential to hinder long-term growth. A fine balance between optimism and realistic assessment is needed at this juncture to sustain growth and enhance welfare. The Budget attempts this with a slew of long- and short-term measures. It lays out a grand vision, skips specificities and maintains continuity over short-term policy stimuli.

The raise in the capex target to ₹12.2 lakh crore for FY27 from ₹11.2 lakh crore earmarked for the current fiscal signals continuity in maintaining growth primarily fuelled by public infrastructure expenditure. Reaffirming a commitment to fiscal consolidation while continuing to prioritise capital spending to support growth, the fiscal deficit target has been set at 4.3% of GDP for 2026-27.

Sticking to fiscal prudence

The Budget shows that the overarching macro policy objective is to stick to fiscal prudence as the proposed numbers seem to be on the path of targeting the debt-to-GDP ratio of 50% in the midterm though it would be at 55.6% this year. Fiscal deficit involves a gross borrowing of ₹17.2 trillion and a net borrowing of ₹11.7 trillion.

Though the net outflow from the market is the same, the gross borrowing is higher than last year. Growth in nominal GDP has been assumed to be above 10%, which appears more realistic. When we assume growth of 6.8%-7.2% in real GDP, as in the Economic Survey, inflation will be at 2.9%-3.2% in terms of the GDP deflator. This tends to indicate an average CPI inflation of closer to 4%-plus in the year ahead. These numbers will change when the new series of GDP is published.

However, there may not be too much room for further rate cuts in this scenario, given the larger borrowing programme.

> The Budget has a slew of long- and short-term measures with a view to maintaining continuity over short-term policy stimuli

Support for frontier sectors

Marking a stark departure from earlier Budgets, the focus on the manufacturing sector was right in the beginning of the Finance Minister's Budget speech. There is a concerted attempt to push industrial growth by targeting the emerging, legacy and the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) including the khadi and handicrafts sectors.

The expansion of support for seven strategic and frontier manufacturing sectors, which includes semiconductors, electronics components, biopharma, chemicals, capital goods and textiles, is an intent to move beyond Production Linked Incentives. The Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme outlay was increased to ₹40,000 crore, while the India Semiconductor Mission 2.0 was announced to deepen domestic chip manufacturing and reduce reliance on vulnerable global supply chains.

The Budget also announced ₹10,000 crore for a new container manufacturing scheme and reinforced the logistics backbone that is critical to export competitiveness through major freight corridors and transport investments. It also responded to disruptions caused by the tariff conflict between China and the United States, which has tightened access to critical minerals, most of which are inputs for electronics, defence equipment, electric vehicles and renewable energy systems.

Measures are addressed towards the export sectors hit by higher U.S. duties, particularly textiles, leather and seafood. The announcements related to MSMEs signal a shift toward a structural strengthening of financing. The proposed ₹10,000 crore small and medium enterprises (SME) Growth Fund is expected to complement bank credit by addressing the equity gap for scalable enterprises.

The Budget sprang some surprises. First, despite the huge gap between intention and execution of disinvestments, there is an expectation of revenue realisation from disinvestments. The target for last year was ₹47,000 crore of which only ₹8,768 crore was realised. Second, it laid out a proposal for global cloud service providers such as Microsoft, Google and Amazon to use more Indian data centres, promising zero tax until 2047 on global cloud services provided by them through an Indian entity and from an Indian data centre. Twenty-two years of tax concession is one of the longest ever. Third, despite the low employment elasticity of the services sector, it anticipates higher employment generation in this sector. This seems contradictory as we see Artificial Intelligence and other technologies pushing jobs out of segments within services. Fourth, the push for more data centres does not seem to be backed by more thrust on power generation, as these centres consume more power.

Finally, though the Economic Survey pointed out the paradox in the system, that is a very good economy coexisting with a rather volatile rupee, the Budget maintains a silence on this.

The gaps

Though the Budget starts with a thrust on the manufacturing sector, it needs to be complemented with a comprehensive industrial policy. Otherwise, these announcements would remain disjointed parts of a larger package. The focus on industrial growth also need sustained domestic demand, on which there is little discussion. The effective capital expenditure for 2025-26 was budgeted at ₹15,48,282 crore but the actual has only been ₹14,03,906 crore. This shortfall affects the assumed multipliers and demand generation thereof. As external demand is volatile, domestic employment and income growth are crucial for expansion of the manufacturing sector. This has the potential of turning out to be the weak link especially during a period of price rise. Ensuring this would be the challenge for 2026-27, for which we need to run a marathon and a sprint at the same time

The views expressed are personal

Budget 2026 bets big on industrial growth
बजट 2026 ने औद्योगिक विकास पर बड़ा दांव लगाया

- Budget **2026-27** comes at a time when the economy is experiencing a rare **goldilocks period** of high economic growth and low inflation.
  बजट **2026-27** ऐसे समय में आया है जब अर्थव्यवस्था उच्च आर्थिक वृद्धि और कम मुद्रास्फीति के दुर्लभ **goldilocks period** का अनुभव कर रही है।
- **Middle Pleistocene epoch**, approximately **800,000 to 300,000 years ago**. This phase overlaps with the evolution of **Homo heidelbergensis** and early **Homo sapiens**.
- The Indian economy has become the **fourth largest**, overtaking **Japan**, retaining its tag of being one of the **fastest growing economies**.
  भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था **चौथी सबसे बड़ी** बन गई है, **जापान** को पीछे छोड़ते हुए, और दुनिया की **सबसे तेज़ बढ़ती अर्थव्यवस्थाओं** में से एक का दर्जा बनाए हुए है।

- The Budget shows that the overarching macro policy objective is to stick to **fiscal prudence** as the proposed numbers seem to be on the path of targeting the **debt-to-GDP ratio of 50%** in the midterm though it would be at **55.6%** this year.
  बजट दर्शाता है कि व्यापक मैक्रो नीति उद्देश्य **राजकोषीय सावधानी** पर टिके रहना है, क्योंकि प्रस्तावित

आँकड़े मध्यम अवधि में **debt-to-GDP ratio 50%** के लक्ष्य की दिशा में प्रतीत होते हैं, हालांकि यह इस वर्ष **55.6%** होगा।

- Fiscal deficit involves a gross borrowing of **₹17.2 trillion** and a net borrowing of **₹11.7 trillion**.
  राजकोषीय घाटे में **₹17.2 ट्रिलियन** का सकल उधार और **₹11.7 ट्रिलियन** का शुद्ध उधार शामिल है।

- The Budget also announced **₹10,000 crore** for a new container manufacturing scheme and reinforced the logistics backbone that is critical to export competitiveness through major freight corridors and transport investments.
  बजट ने नए कंटेनर विनिर्माण योजना के लिए **₹10,000 करोड़** की घोषणा भी की और प्रमुख माल ढुलाई गलियारों तथा परिवहन निवेशों के माध्यम से निर्यात प्रतिस्पर्धात्मकता के लिए महत्वपूर्ण लॉजिस्टिक्स आधार को मजबूत किया।
- The proposed **₹10,000 crore** small and medium enterprises (**SME**) **Growth Fund** is expected to complement bank credit by addressing the **equity gap** for scalable enterprises.
  प्रस्तावित **₹10,000 करोड़** का small and medium enterprises (**SME**) **Growth Fund**, विस्तार योग्य उद्यमों के लिए **equity gap** को संबोधित करके बैंक ऋण का पूरक बनने की उम्मीद है।
- The Budget sprang some surprises.
  बजट ने कुछ आश्चर्य प्रस्तुत किए।
- First, despite the huge gap between intention and execution of **disinvestments**, there is an expectation of **revenue realisation** from disinvestments.
  पहला, **disinvestments** के इरादे और क्रियान्वयन के बीच बड़े अंतर के बावजूद, disinvestments से **राजस्व प्राप्ति** की अपेक्षा की गई है।
- The target for last year was **₹47,000 crore** of which only **₹8,768 crore** was realised.
  पिछले वर्ष का लक्ष्य **₹47,000 करोड़** था, जिसमें से केवल **₹8,768 करोड़** ही प्राप्त हुआ।
- Second, it laid out a proposal for global cloud service providers such as **Microsoft**, **Google** and **Amazon** to use more Indian data centres, promising **zero tax** until **2047** on global cloud services provided by them through an Indian entity and from an Indian data centre.
  दूसरा, **Microsoft**, **Google** और **Amazon** जैसे वैश्विक क्लाउड सेवा प्रदाताओं के लिए अधिक भारतीय डेटा सेंटर उपयोग करने का प्रस्ताव रखा गया, और भारतीय इकाई के माध्यम से तथा भारतीय डेटा सेंटर से दी गई वैश्विक क्लाउड सेवाओं पर **2047** तक **zero tax** का वादा किया गया।
- **Twenty-two years** of tax concession is one of the longest ever.
  22 वर्षों की कर रियायत अब तक की सबसे लंबी रियायतों में से एक है।
- Third, despite the low **employment elasticity** of the services sector, it anticipates higher employment generation in this sector.
  तीसरा, सेवा क्षेत्र की कम **employment elasticity** के बावजूद, यह इस क्षेत्र में अधिक रोजगार सृजन की अपेक्षा करता है।
- This seems contradictory as we see **Artificial Intelligence** and other technologies pushing jobs out of segments within services.
  यह विरोधाभासी प्रतीत होता है क्योंकि हम देखते हैं कि **Artificial Intelligence** और अन्य तकनीकें सेवाओं के भीतर कुछ हिस्सों से नौकरियों को बाहर कर रही हैं।
- Fourth, the push for more data centres does not seem to be backed by more thrust on power generation, as these centres consume more power.
  चौथा, अधिक डेटा सेंटरों के लिए जोर, बिजली उत्पादन पर अधिक बल से समर्थित नहीं दिखता, क्योंकि ये सेंटर अधिक बिजली खपत करते हैं।
- Finally, though the **Economic Survey** pointed out the paradox in the system, that is a very good economy coexisting with a rather volatile **rupee**, the Budget maintains a silence on this.
  अंततः, यद्यपि **Economic Survey** ने प्रणाली के उस विरोधाभास की ओर संकेत किया कि एक बहुत अच्छी अर्थव्यवस्था के साथ एक अपेक्षाकृत अस्थिर **रुपया** भी मौजूद है, बजट इस पर मौन बनाए रखता है।

The gaps
कमियाँ / अंतराल

- Though the Budget starts with a thrust on the **manufacturing sector**, it needs to be complemented with a comprehensive **industrial policy**.
  हालाँकि बजट **विनिर्माण क्षेत्र** पर जोर के साथ शुरू होता है, लेकिन इसे एक व्यापक **औद्योगिक नीति** से पूरक किया जाना आवश्यक है।
- Otherwise, these announcements would remain disjointed parts of a larger package.
  अन्यथा, ये घोषणाएँ एक बड़े पैकेज के असंबद्ध हिस्से बनी रहेंगी।
- The focus on industrial growth also need sustained **domestic demand**, on which there is little discussion.
  औद्योगिक वृद्धि पर फोकस के लिए निरंतर **घरेलू मांग** की भी आवश्यकता है, जिस पर बहुत कम चर्चा है।
- The effective capital expenditure for **2025-26** was budgeted at **₹15,48,282 crore** but the actual has only been **₹14,03,906 crore**.
  2025-26 के लिए प्रभावी पूंजीगत व्यय **₹15,48,282 करोड़** बजट किया गया था, लेकिन वास्तविक केवल **₹14,03,906 करोड़** रहा है।
- This shortfall affects the assumed **multipliers** and demand generation thereof.
  यह कमी माने गए **multipliers** और उससे होने वाली मांग सृजन को प्रभावित करती है।
- As external demand is volatile, domestic **employment** and **income growth** are crucial for expansion of the manufacturing sector.
  चूँकि बाह्य मांग अस्थिर रहती है, इसलिए विनिर्माण क्षेत्र के विस्तार हेतु घरेलू **रोजगार** और **आय वृद्धि** अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण हैं।
- This has the potential of turning out to be the weak link especially during a period of **price rise**.
  यह विशेष रूप से **मूल्य वृद्धि** की अवधि में कमजोर कड़ी साबित होने की संभावना रखता है।

- Ensuring this would be the challenge for **2026-27**, for which we need to run a marathon and a sprint at the same time.
  इसे सुनिश्चित करना **2026-27** के लिए चुनौती होगा, जिसके लिए हमें एक साथ मैराथन और स्प्रिंट दोनों दौड़ने की जरूरत है।

Building on a tax gamble that did not pay off

The government should have gone back to the drawing board if its existing strategies were not working

GS III: Economy: Budget

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One interesting thing about the Budget is that people usually do not do a reality check vis-a-vis the previous Budget because the current one takes centre stage. Since Budget 2026-27 is quite run of the mill, it will not be out of place to start with the last Budget.

If there is one thing you would recall about Budget 2025-26, it was the big-ticket announcement of an unprecedented tax cut for the "middle class". The government assumed that despite the tax cut, income tax revenues would go up because of higher compliance and rise in middle-class incomes. But did that happen?

Looking back

As we had argued last year in these columns, the tax gamble may not pay off and it has not. Income tax revenues have fallen woefully short of the estimated 14.38 lakh crore. In the Revised Estimate (RE), the collection is 13.12 lakh crore, so a shortfall of 1.26 lakh crore. Add to that a similar shortfall of 1.31 lakh crore in GST collections. But for a marginally better than expected performance from corporate tax, union and excise duties, the shortfall in the overall gross tax revenue would have been much higher than 1.92 lakh crore (tax part of the chart).

To be sure, this shortfall in itself could be dismissed as a mistake in expectations. But when expenditures are linked to tax collections (which they strictly are under the rules of fiscal deficit targets), the matter is far more serious. When spending is directly tied to revenue collections, a shortfall of this magnitude inevitably results in sharp expenditure cuts. Not surprisingly, there has almost been an across-the-board cut in expenditure (expenditure part of the chart). Even the much-touted capital expenditure (capex) saw a cut, as did agriculture, education, health, rural as well as urban development. A mistake in the government's expectations cost the poor their income, their employment, their education and, their health.

Not for 2026

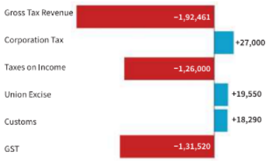
Budget 2026-27 needs to evaluated in light of this. This is going to be an uncertain year, both politically and economically. India is precariously placed between a current account surplus with the U.S. but a deficit with China. If its exports gets affected as a result of President Donald Trump's tariff war, without its imports countering the fall, the external situation for India may actually worsen. The Economic Survey at least acknowledged this possibility, although with a low probability of 10%. In a fundamentally uncertain world that we currently find ourselves in, you don't want to take refuge in probability theory.

The Budget seems to have taken this probability a little too literally. It has been planned as if we are still in 2025 and such a worsening of the external sector may not happen. If the external demand actually worsens, it is important for the government to focus on domestic demand as well, at least as plan B. A run-of-the-mill Budget like this one would have been fine in normal times but not this year. The focus remains on fiscal prudence, capex, supply-side measures for employment, and credit guarantees to MSMEs, much like the previous Budget or the ones before. Despite the same macroeconomic approach in earlier Budgets, employment numbers, particularly among the youth, have not been encouraging at all. Corporate investment has not been either. Should not the government have gone back to the drawing board if their existing strategies were not working? And yet what we got is more of the same. This lack of imagination comes from a blinkered vision of how the economy works. Supply-side measures work only when complemented with demand, not on their own.

Let us again take the case of public capex as a demand measure. All capex are not the same. Capex in agriculture or health or education is not the same as capex in highways. The first creates jobs along with boosting demand. Now in a world where you don't pit one capex against the other, this would not have been an issue. But if capex in infrastructure comes at the cost of capex in the form of development expenditures, and that too in an economy where gainful employment is limited, there is a serious problem. We keep boasting about our demographic dividend, which is going to peak in 2030, but we have lost most of it already with a high unemployment rate among the youth. For women, particularly in the urban areas, it is even worse.

A whopping shortfall in tax revenue

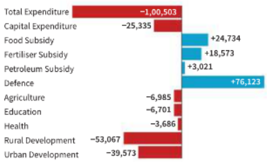
Revised estimate (RE) minus budget estimates (BE) of Budget 2025–26 (in crores ₹)



Source: Union Budget documents 2026-27

Expenditure shortfall

Revised estimate (RE) minus budget estimates (BE) of Budget 2025-26 (in crore ₹)



Source: Union Budget documents 2026-27

Missing targets

What could the Budget have done instead? First, it should have kept its hawkish fiscal stance in abeyance, especially for an uncertain year such as this. It should have prioritised employment intensive development expenditure, and welfare expenditure, which also have a multi-round demand generating capacity. And second, this was perhaps the year to take the pollution bull by the horn. People were on the streets of Delhi demanding action. For the first time, it became a political issue. We needed a war on pollution but it does not even find a mention, let alone allocation. It is an opportunity lost.

Building on a tax gamble that did not pay off
कर-संबंधी जोखिमपूर्ण दांव पर आगे बढ़ना, जो सफल नहीं हुआ

- The government should have gone back to the **drawing board** if its existing **strategies** were not working
  सरकार को, यदि उसकी मौजूदा **रणनीतियाँ** काम नहीं कर रही थीं, तो **नई योजना/नई रूपरेखा** के साथ फिर से शुरुआत करनी चाहिए थी

- One interesting thing about the **Budget** is that people usually do not do a **reality check** vis-a-vis the previous Budget because the current one takes centre stage.
  बजट की एक दिलचस्प बात यह है कि लोग आमतौर पर पिछले बजट के संदर्भ में **reality check** नहीं करते क्योंकि वर्तमान बजट ही केंद्र में आ जाता है।
- Since Budget **2026-27** is quite run of the mill, it will not be out of place to start with the last Budget.
  चूँकि बजट **2026-27** काफी सामान्य है, इसलिए पिछले बजट से शुरुआत करना अनुचित नहीं होगा।
- If there is one thing you would recall about Budget **2025-26**, it was the big-ticket announcement of an unprecedented **tax cut** for the "**middle class**".
  यदि बजट **2025-26** की एक बात याद रहे, तो वह "**मिडिल क्लास**" के लिए अभूतपूर्व **कर कटौती** की बड़ी घोषणा थी।
- The government assumed that despite the tax cut, **income tax revenues** would go up because of higher compliance and rise in middle-class incomes.
  सरकार ने माना कि कर कटौती के बावजूद, अधिक अनुपालन और मिडिल क्लास की आय बढ़ने से **आयकर राजस्व** बढ़ जाएगा।
- But did that happen?
  लेकिन क्या ऐसा हुआ?

Looking back
पीछे मुड़कर देखें

- As we had argued last year in these columns, the tax gamble may not pay ofi and it has not.
  जैसा कि हमने पिछले वर्ष इन कॉलमों में तर्क दिया था, यह कर दांव सफल नहीं होगा और वह सफल नहीं हुआ।
- Income tax revenues have fallen woefully short of the estimated **14.38 lakh crore**.
  आयकर राजस्व अनुमानित **14.38 लाख करोड़** से बहुत कम रहा है।
- In the Revised Estimate (**RE**), the collection is **13.12 lakh crore**, so a shortfall of **1.26 lakh crore**.
  संशोधित अनुमान (**RE**) में संग्रह **13.12 लाख करोड़** है, यानी **1.26 लाख करोड़** की कमी।
- Add to that a similar shortfall of **1.31 lakh crore** in **GST** collections.
  इसमें **GST** संग्रह में **1.31 लाख करोड़** की समान कमी भी जोड़ें।
- But for a marginally better than expected performance from **corporate tax**, **union and excise duties**, the shortfall in the overall gross tax revenue would have been much higher than **1.92 lakh crore** (tax part of the chart).
  यदि **कॉर्पोरेट टैक्स**, **यूनियन और एक्साइज ड्यूटी** से अपेक्षा से थोड़ा बेहतर प्रदर्शन न होता, तो कुल सकल कर राजस्व में कमी **1.92 लाख करोड़** से कहीं अधिक होती (चार्ट का टैक्स भाग)।
- To be sure, this shortfall in itself could be dismissed as a mistake in expectations.
  निश्चित रूप से, इस कमी को अपेक्षाओं में गलती कहकर खारिज किया जा सकता है।
- But when expenditures are linked to tax collections (which they strictly are under the rules of fiscal deficit targets), the matter is far more serious.

लेकिन जब व्यय कर संग्रह से जुड़े हों (जो राजकोषीय घाटा लक्ष्यों के नियमों के तहत सख्ती से जुड़े होते हैं), तो मामला कहीं अधिक गंभीर हो जाता है।

- When spending is directly tied to revenue collections, a shortfall of this magnitude inevitably results in sharp expenditure cuts.
  जब खर्च सीधे राजस्व संग्रह से जुड़ा हो, तो इतनी बड़ी कमी अनिवार्य रूप से तेज व्यय कटौती का कारण बनती है।
- Not surprisingly, there has almost been an across-the-board cut in expenditure (expenditure part of the chart).
  आश्चर्य नहीं कि व्यय में लगभग हर क्षेत्र में कटौती हुई है (चार्ट का व्यय भाग)।
- Even the much-touted **capital expenditure (capex)** saw a cut, as did **agriculture**, **education**, **health**, **rural** as well as **urban development**.
  यहाँ तक कि बहुप्रचारित **पूंजीगत व्यय (capex)** में भी कटौती हुई, साथ ही **कृषि**, **शिक्षा**, **स्वास्थ्य**, **ग्रामीण** तथा **शहरी विकास** में भी।
- A mistake in the government's expectations cost the poor their income, their employment, their education and, their health.
  सरकार की अपेक्षाओं में हुई गलती ने गरीबों की आय, रोजगार, शिक्षा और स्वास्थ्य पर असर डाला।

Not for 2026
2026 के लिए नहीं

- Budget **2026-27** needs to evaluated in light of this.
  बजट **2026-27** का मूल्यांकन इसी पृष्ठभूमि में किया जाना चाहिए।
- This is going to be an uncertain year, both politically and economically.
  यह वर्ष राजनीतिक और आर्थिक—दोनों रूप से अनिश्चित रहने वाला है।
- India is precariously placed between a current account surplus with the **U.S.** but a deflcit with **China**.
  भारत एक नाज़ुक स्थिति में है—**अमेरिका** के साथ चालू खाते में अधिशेष, लेकिन **चीन** के साथ घाटा।
- If its exports gets aflected as a result of President **Donald Trump's tarifi war**, without its imports countering the fall, the external situation for India may actually worsen.
  यदि राष्ट्रपति **डोनाल्ड ट्रम्प के टैरिफ युद्ध** के कारण भारत के निर्यात प्रभावित होते हैं, और आयात उस गिरावट की भरपाई नहीं करते, तो भारत की बाहरी स्थिति वास्तव में बिगड़ सकती है।
- The **Economic Survey** at least acknowledged this possibility, although with a low probability of **10%**.
  Economic Survey ने कम से कम इस संभावना को स्वीकार किया, हालांकि **10%** की कम संभावना के साथ।
- In a fundamentally uncertain world that we currently flnd ourselves in, you don't want to take refuge in **probability theory**.
  जिस मूलतः अनिश्चित दुनिया में हम आज हैं, उसमें आप **probability theory** का सहारा नहीं लेना चाहेंगे।
- The Budget seems to have taken this probability a little too literally.
  बजट ने इस संभावना को कुछ अधिक ही शाब्दिक रूप से ले लिया प्रतीत होता है।
- It has been planned as if we are still in **2025** and such a worsening of the external sector may not happen.
  इसे ऐसे योजनाबद्ध किया गया है मानो हम अभी भी **2025** में हों और बाह्य क्षेत्र की ऐसी बिगड़ती स्थिति शायद न हो।
- If the external demand actually worsens, it is important for the government to focus on **domestic demand** as well, at least as plan B.
  यदि बाह्य मांग वास्तव में बिगड़ती है, तो सरकार के लिए **घरेलू मांग** पर भी ध्यान देना महत्वपूर्ण है, कम से कम **plan B** के रूप में।

- A run-of-the-mill Budget like this one would have been fine in normal times but not this year.
  ऐसा सामान्य-सा बजट सामान्य समय में ठीक होता, लेकिन इस वर्ष नहीं।
- The focus remains on **fiscal prudence**, **capex**, supply-side measures for employment, and **credit guarantees to MSMEs**, much like the previous Budget or the ones before.
  फोकस अब भी **राजकोषीय सावधानी**, **capex**, रोजगार हेतु supply-side उपायों, और **MSMEs को क्रेडिट गारंटी** पर बना हुआ है, ठीक पिछले बजट या उससे पहले के बजटों जैसा।
- Despite the same macroeconomic approach in earlier Budgets, employment numbers, particularly among the **youth**, have not been encouraging at all.
  पहले के बजटों में भी यही मैक्रोइकोनॉमिक दृष्टिकोण रहा है, फिर भी रोजगार के आँकड़े, खासकर **युवाओं** में, बिल्कुल उत्साहजनक नहीं रहे हैं।
- Corporate investment has not been either.
  कॉर्पोरेट निवेश भी नहीं बढ़ा है।
- Should not the government have gone back to the drawing board if their existing strategies were not working?
  यदि मौजूदा रणनीतियाँ काम नहीं कर रहीं थीं, तो क्या सरकार को फिर से नए सिरे से योजना नहीं बनानी चाहिए थी?
- And yet what we got is more of the same.
  और फिर भी हमें वही पुराने उपायों का दोहराव ही मिला।
- This lack of imagination comes from a blinkered vision of how the economy works.
  कल्पनाशीलता की यह कमी अर्थव्यवस्था के काम करने के तरीके को लेकर एक संकीर्ण दृष्टि से आती है।
- Supply-side measures work only when complemented with demand, not on their own.
  Supply-side उपाय तभी काम करते हैं जब उन्हें मांग के साथ पूरक किया जाए, अकेले नहीं।
- Let us again take the case of public **capex** as a demand measure.
  आइए मांग उपाय के रूप में सार्वजनिक **capex** का उदाहरण फिर लें।
- All capex are not the same.
  सभी capex एक जैसे नहीं होते।
- Capex in **agriculture** or **health** or **education** is not the same as capex in **highways**.
  कृषि, **स्वास्थ्य** या **शिक्षा** में capex, **हाइवे** में capex जैसा नहीं होता।
- The first creates jobs along with boosting demand.
  पहला, मांग बढ़ाने के साथ-साथ रोजगार भी पैदा करता है।
- Now in a world where you don't pit one capex against the other, this would not have been an issue.
  अब यदि ऐसी दुनिया होती जहाँ एक capex को दूसरे के खिलाफ नहीं रखा जाता, तो यह समस्या नहीं होती।
- But if capex in **infrastructure** comes at the cost of capex in the form of development expenditures, and that too in an economy where gainful employment is limited, there is a serious problem.
  लेकिन यदि **इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर** में capex विकास व्यय के रूप में capex की कीमत पर आता है, और वह भी ऐसी अर्थव्यवस्था में जहाँ लाभकारी रोजगार सीमित है, तो यह गंभीर समस्या है।
- We keep boasting about our **demographic dividend**, which is going to peak in **2030**, but we have lost most of it already with a high unemployment rate among the youth.
  हम अपने **demographic dividend** पर लगातार गर्व करते हैं, जो **2030** में चरम पर होगा, लेकिन युवाओं में उच्च बेरोजगारी दर के साथ हम इसका बड़ा हिस्सा पहले ही खो चुके हैं।
- For women, particularly in the urban areas, it is even worse.
  महिलाओं के लिए, विशेषकर शहरी क्षेत्रों में, स्थिति और भी खराब है।

Missing targets
लक्ष्यों की कमी

- What could the Budget have done instead?
  इसके बजाय बजट क्या कर सकता था?
- First, it should have kept its hawkish fiscal stance in abeyance, especially for an uncertain year such as this.
  पहला, इसे अपनी कड़ी (hawkish) राजकोषीय नीति को स्थगित रखना चाहिए था, विशेषकर इस जैसे अनिश्चित वर्ष में।
- It should have prioritised employment intensive development expenditure, and welfare expenditure, which also have a multi-round demand generating capacity.
  इसे रोजगार-गहन विकास व्यय और कल्याणकारी व्यय को प्राथमिकता देनी चाहिए थी, जिनमें बहु-चरणीय मांग सृजन क्षमता भी होती है।
- And second, this was perhaps the year to take the pollution bull by the horn.
  और दूसरा, संभवतः यह वर्ष था कि प्रदूषण की समस्या को सीधे और निर्णायक रूप से पकड़ा जाए।
- People were on the streets of **Delhi** demanding action.
  लोग कार्रवाई की मांग करते हुए **दिल्ली** की सड़कों पर थे।
- For the first time, it became a political issue.
  पहली बार यह एक राजनीतिक मुद्दा बन गया।
- We needed a war on pollution but it does not even find a mention, let alone allocation.
  हमें प्रदूषण के खिलाफ एक युद्ध की जरूरत थी, लेकिन इसका उल्लेख तक नहीं है, आवंटन तो दूर की बात है।

It is an opportunity lost.
यह एक खोया हुआ अवसर है।

Pushing welfare towards the States

The arena of welfare spending has now shifted to the States, while the Centre continues to drive the agenda by legislating and setting norms

GS III: Economy: Budget

MQB

Dipa Sinha
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Budget 2026-27 for the social sector is unusual, as it does not contain any new flagship schemes, which had become par for the course.

Low allocations and spending

However, the neglect of the sector in actual allocations continues. Schemes targeted at the most vulnerable sections of the population – children, pregnant women, the aged, single women and the disabled – such as the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) providing social security pensions; SAMARTHYA, which includes maternity entitlements; PALNA for creches; PM POSHAN, which provides mid-day meals in schools; and Saksham Anganwadi, for young children have for long received low allocations, often declining in real terms. This year too, the trend continues, with allocations increasing between 0.2% (NSAP) to 5.2% (Saksham Anganwadi) in nominal terms. Further, for all these schemes, revised estimates (RE) for 2025-26 are lower than budget estimates (BE), indicating that even what is budgeted is not spent.

The story remains the same for bigger sectors such as health and education, where 2026-27 BE allocations increase by only 6.4% and 8.3% over 2025-26 BE. Even these minimal increases need to be taken with a pinch of salt as 2025-26 RE for both sectors fall below BE (by 3.7% and 5.2%).

The RE for 2025-26 are lower than what was initially allocated across the board for most social sector heads. The largest declines are in Urban Development (41%), Rural Development (20%), Development of the North-East (24%), and Social Welfare (17%). Schemes which were hyped in previous budget announcements see poor spending. For instance, allocation for the Jal Jeevan Mission has fallen from ₹67,000 crore in the 2025-26 BE to just ₹17,000 crore in the RE. The 2025-26 BE for PMAY-Grameen was ₹54,832 crore and PMAY-Urban was ₹19,794 crore. The RE for these schemes is much lower at ₹32,500 crore and ₹7,500 crore, respectively; yet, the allocations in Budget 2026-27 are once again around the same amounts as the previous year.

Students eat lunch under the mid-day meal scheme, in Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

As a share of total expenditure, allocations to these sectors and schemes remain around the same. Overall, centrally sponsored schemes (CSS) show significant underspending, with total allocations falling from ₹5,41,850 crore in the 2025-26 BE to ₹4,20,078 crore in the RE (the 2026-27 BE stands at ₹5,48,798 crore).

Misplaced focus

The emphasis on capex to reduce slackness in the economy continues, with over ₹12 lakh crore being allocated this time. A thorough assessment of its efficacy in creating employment or crowding in private investment is still missing. The challenges facing the Indian economy remain the same – lack of gainful employment opportunities (especially for the educated youth), a stunted structural transformation, low productivity and hence low wages and incomes, resulting in poor purchasing power. Addressing these requires more sustained policy interventions and the Budget alone cannot do much.

Yet, the priorities signalled by the Budget remain unchanged, focusing entirely on supply-side measures in the hope of a market response. While this has not happened so far, the relevance of education, nutrition, health and social security for economic policy, and hence budgets, remains unacknowledged.

Shifting the burden

A trend in the social sector that Budget 2026-27 consolidates is that spending on welfare is increasingly in the domain of State governments. Following the 2015 reforms, cost-sharing norms were changed for most CSS, with greater spending shifted to States. While some major schemes continued to be entirely centrally sponsored, with the repealing of the MGNREGA and the introduction of the VB-G RAM G, that too has now changed drastically. The allocation of over ₹96,000 crore for VB-G RAM G in this Budget, for instance, would only fructify if the States put in around ₹56,000 crore (with the new cost-sharing ratio of 60:40). Therefore, to get a true understanding of welfare spending in the country, a granular analysis of State budgets is required.

Do the States have the wherewithal to spend? While the burden of spending is increasing, the Centre's support to the States is declining. The States' share in total tax revenue receipts is only around 34%, much less than the Finance Commission-recommended 41%, because of the increasing prevalence of cesses and surcharges in the Centre's revenue receipts. The Finance Commission's grants to States have also declined slightly from ₹1,32,767 crore in the 2025-26 BE to ₹1,29,397 crore in the 2026-27 BE.

The arena of welfare spending has now shifted to the States, while the Centre continues to drive the agenda by legislating and setting norms. How are States balancing their own priorities with the requirements of spending on central schemes? And what are the implications for people's access to social services? These are the questions we should be asking.

Pushing welfare towards the States
कल्याणकारी व्यय को राज्यों की ओर बढ़ाना

- The arena of **welfare spending** has now shifted to the **States**, while the **Centre** continues to drive the agenda by **legislating** and **setting norms**
  कल्याणकारी खर्च का क्षेत्र अब **राज्यों** की ओर स्थानांतरित हो गया है, जबकि **केंद्र** अब भी **कानून बनाकर** और **मानदंड तय करके** एजेंडा तय कर रहा है

- Budget **2026-27** for the social sector is unusual, as it does not contain any new **flagship schemes**, which had become par for the course.
  सामाजिक क्षेत्र के लिए बजट **2026-27** असामान्य है, क्योंकि इसमें कोई नई **फ्लैगशिप योजनाएँ** नहीं हैं, जो अब सामान्य बात बन गई थी।

Low allocations and spending
कम आवंटन और खर्च

- However, the neglect of the sector in actual allocations continues.
  हालाँकि, वास्तविक आवंटन में इस क्षेत्र की उपेक्षा जारी है।
- Schemes targeted at the most vulnerable sections of the population — children, pregnant women, the aged, single women and the disabled — such as the **National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)** providing social security pensions; **SAMARTHYA**, which includes maternity entitlements; **PALNA** for creches; **PM POSHAN**, which provides mid-day meals in schools; and **Saksham Anganwadi**, for young children have for long received low allocations, often declining in real terms.
  सबसे कमजोर वर्गों—बच्चों, गर्भवती महिलाओं, बुज़ुर्गों, एकल महिलाओं और दिव्यांगों—के लिए लक्षित योजनाएँ जैसे सामाजिक सुरक्षा पेंशन देने वाला **National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)**; मातृत्व अधिकारों सहित **SAMARTHYA**; क्रेच हेतु **PALNA**; स्कूलों में मिड-डे मील देने वाला **PM POSHAN**; तथा छोटे बच्चों हेतु **Saksham Anganwadi** को लंबे समय से कम आवंटन मिलता रहा है, जो वास्तविक रूप से अक्सर घटता रहा है।
- This year too, the trend continues, with allocations increasing between **0.2% (NSAP)** to **5.2% (Saksham Anganwadi)** in nominal terms.
  इस वर्ष भी यही प्रवृत्ति जारी है, जहाँ नाममात्र रूप में आवंटन **0.2% (NSAP)** से **5.2% (Saksham Anganwadi)** तक ही बढ़ा है।
- Further, for all these schemes, revised estimates (**RE**) for **2025-26** are lower than budget estimates (**BE**), indicating that even what is budgeted is not spent.
  इसके अलावा, इन सभी योजनाओं के लिए **2025-26** के संशोधित अनुमान (**RE**), बजट अनुमान (**BE**) से कम हैं, जो दर्शाता है कि जो बजट में रखा गया है, वह भी खर्च नहीं होता।
- The story remains the same for bigger sectors such as **health** and **education**, where **2026–27 BE** allocations increase by only **6.4%** and **8.3%** over **2025–26 BE**.
  स्वास्थ्य और **शिक्षा** जैसे बड़े क्षेत्रों में भी स्थिति वही है, जहाँ **2026–27 BE** आवंटन, **2025–26 BE** की तुलना में केवल **6.4%** और **8.3%** बढ़ता है।
- Even these minimal increases need to be taken with a pinch of salt as **2025–26 RE** for both sectors fall below **BE** (by **3.7%** and **5.2%**).
  इन न्यूनतम बढ़ोतरी को भी संदेह के साथ लेना चाहिए क्योंकि दोनों क्षेत्रों के **2025–26 RE**, **BE** से कम हैं (क्रमशः **3.7%** और **5.2%** से)।
- The **RE for 2025-26** are lower than what was initially allocated across the board for most social sector heads.
  2025-26 के **RE**, अधिकांश सामाजिक क्षेत्र मदों में प्रारंभिक आवंटन से कुल मिलाकर कम हैं।
- The largest declines are in **Urban Development (41%)**, **Rural Development (20%)**, **Development of the North-East (24%)**, and **Social Welfare (17%)**.

सबसे बड़ी गिरावट **Urban Development (41%)**, **Rural Development (20%)**, **Development of the North-East (24%)**, और **Social Welfare (17%)** में है।

- Schemes which were hyped in previous budget announcements see poor spending.
  पिछले बजट भाषणों में जिन योजनाओं को बहुत प्रचारित किया गया था, उनमें खर्च खराब दिखाई देता है।
- For instance, allocation for the **Jal Jeevan Mission** has fallen from **₹67,000 crore** in the **2025–26 BE** to just **₹17,000 crore** in the **RE**.
  उदाहरण के लिए, **Jal Jeevan Mission** का आवंटन **2025–26 BE** में **₹67,000 करोड़** से घटकर **RE** में केवल **₹17,000 करोड़** रह गया है।
- The **2025-26 BE** for **PMAY-Grameen** was **₹54,832 crore** and **PMAY-Urban** was **₹19,794 crore**.
  PMAY-Grameen के लिए **2025-26 BE ₹54,832 करोड़** था और **PMAY-Urban** के लिए **₹19,794 करोड़** था।
- The **RE** for these schemes is much lower at **₹32,500 crore** and **₹7,500 crore**, respectively; yet, the allocations in Budget **2026-27** are once again around the same amounts as the previous year.
  इन योजनाओं के लिए **RE** क्रमशः **₹32,500 करोड़** और **₹7,500 करोड़** तक बहुत कम है; फिर भी बजट **2026-27** में आवंटन एक बार फिर पिछले वर्ष के आसपास ही रखा गया है।
- As a share of total expenditure, allocations to these sectors and schemes remain around the same.
  कुल व्यय के हिस्से के रूप में, इन क्षेत्रों और योजनाओं को आवंटन लगभग समान ही बना हुआ है।
- Overall, centrally sponsored schemes (**CSS**) show significant underspending, with total allocations falling from **₹5,41,850 crore** in the **2025–26 BE** to **₹4,20,078 crore** in the **RE** (the **2026–27 BE** stands at **₹5,48,798 crore**).
  कुल मिलाकर, केंद्र प्रायोजित योजनाएँ (**CSS**) उल्लेखनीय कम-खर्च दिखाती हैं, जहाँ कुल आवंटन **2025–26 BE** में **₹5,41,850 करोड़** से घटकर **RE** में **₹4,20,078 करोड़** रह गया है (जबकि **2026–27 BE ₹5,48,798 करोड़** है)।

Misplaced focus
गलत/भटका हुआ फोकस

- The emphasis on **capex** to reduce slackness in the economy continues, with over **₹12 lakh crore** being allocated this time.
  अर्थव्यवस्था में सुस्ती कम करने हेतु **capex** पर जोर जारी है, और इस बार **₹12 लाख करोड़** से अधिक आवंटित किए गए हैं।
- A thorough assessment of its e□cacy in creating **employment** or crowding in private investment is still missing.
  रोजगार सृजन या निजी निवेश को आकर्षित करने में इसकी प्रभावशीलता का समग्र आकलन अब भी अनुपस्थित है।
- The challenges facing the Indian economy remain the same — lack of gainful **employment opportunities** (especially for the educated youth), a stunted structural transformation, low productivity and hence low wages and incomes, resulting in poor purchasing power.
  भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था के सामने चुनौतियाँ वही बनी हुई हैं—लाभकारी **रोजगार अवसरों** की कमी (विशेषकर शिक्षित युवाओं के लिए), अवरुद्ध संरचनात्मक परिवर्तन, कम उत्पादकता और इसलिए कम वेतन व आय, जिसके परिणामस्वरूप क्रय शक्ति कमजोर होती है।
- Addressing these requires more sustained policy interventions and the Budget alone cannot do much.
  इन्हें सुलझाने के लिए अधिक निरंतर नीतिगत हस्तक्षेप चाहिए और अकेला बजट बहुत कुछ नहीं कर सकता।
- Yet, the priorities signalled by the Budget remain unchanged, focusing entirely on supply-side measures in the hope of a market response.

फिर भी, बजट द्वारा संकेतित प्राथमिकताएँ अपरिवर्तित हैं, और बाजार प्रतिक्रिया की उम्मीद में पूरी तरह supply-side उपायों पर केंद्रित हैं।

- While this has not happened so far, the relevance of **education**, **nutrition**, **health** and **social security** for economic policy, and hence budgets, remains unacknowledged.
  जबकि अब तक ऐसा नहीं हुआ है, आर्थिक नीति और इसलिए बजट के लिए **शिक्षा**, **पोषण**, **स्वास्थ्य** और **सामाजिक सुरक्षा** की प्रासंगिकता अब भी स्वीकार नहीं की गई है।

Shifting the burden
बोझ का स्थानांतरण

- A trend in the social sector that Budget **2026-27** consolidates is that spending on welfare is increasingly in the domain of **State governments**.
  सामाजिक क्षेत्र में एक प्रवृत्ति जिसे बजट **2026-27** मजबूत करता है, यह है कि कल्याण पर खर्च बढ़ते हुए **राज्य सरकारों** के दायरे में जा रहा है।
- Following the **2015 reforms**, cost-sharing norms were changed for most **CSS**, with greater spending shifted to States.
  2015 सुधारों के बाद, अधिकांश **CSS** के लिए लागत-साझेदारी मानदंड बदले गए, जिससे अधिक खर्च राज्यों पर स्थानांतरित हुआ।
- While some major schemes continued to be entirely centrally sponsored, with the repealing of the **MGNREGA** and the introduction of the **VB-G RAM G**, that too has now changed drastically.
  हालाँकि कुछ प्रमुख योजनाएँ पूरी तरह केंद्र प्रायोजित बनी रहीं, लेकिन **MGNREGA** को हटाने और **VB-G RAM G** के आरंभ के साथ, वह भी अब काफी बदल गया है।
- The allocation of over **₹96,000 crore** for **VB-G RAM G** in this Budget, for instance, would only fructify if the States put in around **₹56,000 crore** (with the new cost-sharing ratio of **60:40**).
  उदाहरण के लिए, इस बजट में **VB-G RAM G** के लिए **₹96,000 करोड़** से अधिक का आवंटन तभी फलित होगा जब राज्य लगभग **₹56,000 करोड़** लगाएँ (नई लागत-साझेदारी अनुपात **60:40** के साथ)।
- Therefore, to get a true understanding of welfare spending in the country, a granular analysis of **State budgets** is required.
  अतः, देश में कल्याणकारी खर्च की सही समझ के लिए **राज्य बजटों** का सूक्ष्म विश्लेषण आवश्यक है।
- Do the States have the wherewithal to spend?
  क्या राज्यों के पास खर्च करने की क्षमता है?
- While the burden of spending is increasing, the Centre's support to the States is declining.
  जबकि खर्च का बोझ बढ़ रहा है, राज्यों को केंद्र का समर्थन घट रहा है।
- The States' share in total tax revenue receipts is only around **34%**, much less than the Finance Commission–recommended **41%**, because of the increasing prevalence of **cesses** and **surcharges** in the Centre's revenue receipts.
  कुल कर राजस्व प्राप्तियों में राज्यों का हिस्सा केवल लगभग **34%** है, जो वित्त आयोग द्वारा अनुशंसित **41%** से काफी कम है, क्योंकि केंद्र की राजस्व प्राप्तियों में **cesses** और **surcharges** का प्रचलन बढ़ रहा है।
- The Finance Commission's grants to States have also declined slightly from **₹1,32,767 crore** in the **2025-26 BE** to **₹1,29,397 crore** in the **2026-27 BE**.
  राज्यों को वित्त आयोग के अनुदान भी **2025-26 BE** के **₹1,32,767 करोड़** से घटकर **2026-27 BE** में **₹1,29,397 करोड़** हो गए हैं।
- The arena of welfare spending has now shifted to the States, while the Centre continues to drive the agenda by legislating and setting norms.
  कल्याणकारी खर्च का क्षेत्र अब राज्यों की ओर शिफ्ट हो गया है, जबकि केंद्र कानून बनाकर और मानदंड तय करके एजेंडा चलाता रहता है।

- How are States balancing their own priorities with the requirements of spending on central schemes?
  राज्य अपनी प्राथमिकताओं को केंद्रीय योजनाओं पर खर्च की आवश्यकताओं के साथ कैसे संतुलित कर रहे हैं?
- And what are the implications for people's access to social services?
  और सामाजिक सेवाओं तक लोगों की पहुँच पर इसके क्या प्रभाव होंगे?

These are the questions we should be asking.
ये वे प्रश्न हैं जो हमें पूछने चाहिए।

What the new fiscal rule means for growth and spending

Deficit reduction in FY27 is driven largely by cuts in development expenditure, particularly in the rural and agricultural sectors

GS III: Economy: Budget

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The direction of fiscal policy is influenced by the nature of fiscal policy rules. The present fiscal policy rule of the Union government is informed by what can be termed as sound finance rules, where the government typically aims to meet a given borrowing target. While India has been largely following sound finance rules since the implementation of the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act, 2003, there have been two modifications since the last year.

First, in contrast to the FRBM Act, where the fiscal deficit-GDP ratio acted as the primary policy target, it is the debt-GDP ratio which appears as the primary policy target in the new policy rule. Second, the targeted level of debt-GDP ratio in the new rule stands at around 50%, which the government proposes to meet by 2031. The new rule allows the government to sustain higher debt-GDP ratio as compared to the level suggested in the FRBM Act (40%).

There are at least two implications of the present variant of sound finance rule for this year's Budget. First, since the present level of debt-GDP ratio stands above the targeted level, the government has aimed to reduce its debt-ratio by reducing the primary deficits and fiscal deficits from 0.8% and 4.4% in FY 2026 to 0.7% and 4.3% respectively in FY 2027. The fiscal consolidation strategy is similar to one pursued since FY 2022.

Second, the new target of debt-GDP ratio has provided greater fiscal space to the government as compared to the FRBM Act. While both the primary and the fiscal deficits have been reduced for FY27, the magnitude by which they have been reduced is less severe compared to the period since FY22.

A farmer walks past his wheat and sugarcane field on the outskirts of Amritsar. AFP

Meeting the fiscal target

Any reduction in primary deficits and fiscal deficits requires the government to reduce its expenditures as compared to the non-debt receipts. The Budget Estimate (BE) of FY27 indicates a fall in the government's share of non-debt receipts in GDP to 9.3% as compared to 9.5% in FY26. This is largely on account of the fall in the share of indirect taxes and GST, both of which indicate a decline by 0.3% points in FY27 as compared to FY26.

Amid lower non-debt receipts, the reduction in deficits in FY27 is brought about by a more than proportionate fall in the share of total expenditure in GDP. As compared to 13.9% in FY26, the BE of expenditure-GDP ratio indicates a decline in FY27 to 13.6%. While the capital expenditure-GDP ratio remains roughly at the same level (3.1%), the reduction in expenditure ratio is brought about by the reduction in revenue expenditure. This trend is similar to the previous years, where the government has aimed to change the composition of expenditures in favour of capital expenditure on account of its high multiplier value.

The burden of adjustment of this reduction in total expenditures has fallen on development expenditures. The latter is the sum of government expenditures on the social sector and economic services. The Annual Financial Statement indicates a reduction in the BE of the share of development expenditures in GDP to 5.7% in FY27 as compared to 6.1% in FY26. The reduction in the share of development expenditures is largely on account of a similar fall in the expenditures on rural development and agriculture and allied activities, the share of which indicates a decline to 1.2% in FY27 as compared to 1.5% in FY 26. The fall in rural development expenditures was on account of sharp fall in the expenditures in the revenue account of rural employment.

In short, the stimulating positive effect of the reduction in the GST and the indirect taxes on demand has been completely nullified by the adverse demand effect from the reduction in the agricultural and rural expenditures.

While the recent changes in the fiscal rules by the government are welcome, the continuity of fiscal consolidation strategy brings about at least two key concerns.

Two concerns

The first concern relates to stimulus for investments in an uncertain global economy. The investment-capital ratio of the corporate sector in the recent period has remained low in the midst of low global demand and exports. The present fiscal strategy hardly provides any stimulating role to corporate investments.

The second concern involves the distribution question in India's growth process. The burden of adjustment of the fiscal consolidation strategy of the government has been largely borne by the development and agricultural expenditures in the recent period. This is in contrast to the corporate tax-GDP ratio, the level of which remains largely the same as the pre-covid level. While meeting its debt targets, the present fiscal strategy has largely bypassed these two challenges.

What the new fiscal rule means for growth and spending
नए राजकोषीय नियम का विकास और खर्च पर क्या अर्थ है

- **Deficit reduction** in **FY27** is driven largely by cuts in **development expenditure**, particularly in the **rural** and **agricultural sectors**
  वित्त वर्ष 27 में **घाटा कम करना** मुख्यतः **विकास व्यय** में कटौती से प्रेरित है, विशेषकर **ग्रामीण** और **कृषि क्षेत्रों** में

- The direction of fiscal policy is influenced by the nature of fiscal policy rules.
  राजकोषीय नीति की दिशा राजकोषीय नीति नियमों की प्रकृति से प्रभावित होती है।
- The present fiscal policy rule of the Union government is informed by what can be termed as **sound finance rules**, where the government typically aims to meet a given borrowing target.
  केंद्र सरकार का वर्तमान राजकोषीय नीति नियम जिसे **sound finance rules** कहा जा सकता है, उससे निर्देशित है, जहाँ सरकार आमतौर पर एक निश्चित उधारी लक्ष्य को पूरा करने का प्रयास करती है।
- While India has been largely following sound finance rules since the implementation of the **Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act, 2003**, there have been **two modifications** since the last year.
  Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act, 2003 के लागू होने के बाद से भारत बड़े पैमाने पर sound finance rules का पालन करता रहा है, लेकिन पिछले वर्ष से **दो संशोधन** हुए हैं।
- First, in contrast to the **FRBM Act**, where the fiscal deficit-GDP ratio acted as the primary policy target, it is the **debt-GDP ratio** which appears as the primary policy target in the new

policy rule.
पहला, **FRBM Act** के विपरीत, जहाँ राजकोषीय घाटा-GDP अनुपात प्राथमिक नीतिगत लक्ष्य था, नए नीति नियम में **debt-GDP ratio** प्राथमिक नीतिगत लक्ष्य के रूप में दिखाई देता है।

- Second, the targeted level of debtGDP ratio in the new rule stands at around **50%**, which the government proposes to meet by **2031**.
  दूसरा, नए नियम में debt-GDP ratio का लक्षित स्तर लगभग **50%** है, जिसे सरकार **2031** तक प्राप्त करने का प्रस्ताव करती है।
- The new rule allows the government to sustain higher debt-GDP ratio as compared to the level suggested in the **FRBM Act (40%)**.
  नया नियम सरकार को **FRBM Act (40%)** में सुझाए गए स्तर की तुलना में अधिक debt-GDP ratio बनाए रखने की अनुमति देता है।
- There are at least two implications of the present variant of sound flnance rule for this year's Budget.
  इस वर्ष के बजट के लिए sound flnance rule के वर्तमान स्वरूप के कम से कम दो निहितार्थ हैं।
- First, since the present level of debt-GDP ratio stands above the targeted level, the government has aimed to reduce its debt-ratio by reducing the **primary deflcits** and flscal deflcits from **0.8%** and **4.4%** in **FY 2026** to **0.7%** and **4.3%** respectively in **FY 2027**.
  पहला, चूँकि debt-GDP ratio का वर्तमान स्तर लक्षित स्तर से ऊपर है, सरकार ने **FY 2026** में **0.8%** और **4.4%** से **FY 2027** में क्रमशः **0.7%** और **4.3%** तक **primary deflcits** तथा राजकोषीय घाटे को घटाकर debt-ratio कम करने का लक्ष्य रखा है।
- The flscal consolidation strategy is similar to one pursued since **FY 2022**.
  राजकोषीय समेकन रणनीति **FY 2022** से अपनाई जा रही रणनीति के समान है।
- Second, the new target of debtGDP ratio has provided greater flscal space to the government as compared to the **FRBM Act**.
  दूसरा, debt-GDP ratio का नया लक्ष्य **FRBM Act** की तुलना में सरकार को अधिक राजकोषीय स्पेस प्रदान करता है।
- While both the primary and the flscal deflcits have been reduced for **FY27**, the magnitude by which they have been reduced is less severe compared to the period since **FY22**.
  हालाँकि **FY27** के लिए primary और राजकोषीय घाटे दोनों घटाए गए हैं, लेकिन **FY22** के बाद की अवधि की तुलना में इनकी कटौती की तीव्रता कम है।

Meeting the fiscal target
राजकोषीय लक्ष्य को प्राप्त करना

- Any reduction in primary deflcits and flscal deflcits requires the government to reduce its expenditures as compared to the non-debt receipts.
  primary deflcits और राजकोषीय घाटे में किसी भी कमी के लिए सरकार को non-debt receipts की तुलना में अपने व्यय को घटाना आवश्यक होता है।
- The Budget Estimate (**BE**) of **FY27** indicates a fall in the government's share of non-debt receipts in GDP to **9.3%** as compared to **9.5%** in **FY26**.
  FY27 के Budget Estimate (**BE**) से संकेत मिलता है कि GDP में सरकार के non-debt receipts का हिस्सा **FY26** के **9.5%** की तुलना में घटकर **9.3%** रह जाएगा।
- This is largely on account of the fall in the share of **indirect taxes** and **GST**, both of which indicate a decline by **0.3%** points in **FY27** as compared to **FY26**.
  यह मुख्यतः **indirect taxes** और **GST** के हिस्से में गिरावट के कारण है, जिन दोनों में **FY26** की तुलना में **FY27** में **0.3%** अंकों की कमी का संकेत मिलता है।
- Amid lower **non-debt receipts**, the reduction in deflcits in **FY27** is brought about by a more than proportionate fall in the share of total expenditure in GDP.

कम **non-debt receipts** के बीच, **FY27** में घाटों में कमी GDP में कुल व्यय के हिस्से में अनुपात से अधिक गिरावट के कारण लाई गई है।

- As compared to **13.9%** in **FY26**, the **BE** of expenditure-GDP ratio indicates a decline in **FY27** to **13.6%**.
  FY26 में **13.9%** की तुलना में, व्यय-GDP अनुपात के **BE** से **FY27** में **13.6%** तक गिरावट का संकेत मिलता है।
- While the capital expenditure-GDP ratio remains roughly at the same level (**3.1%**), the reduction in expenditure ratio is brought about by the reduction in **revenue expenditure**.
  जबकि पूंजीगत व्यय-GDP अनुपात लगभग समान स्तर (**3.1%**) पर बना रहता है, व्यय अनुपात में कमी **राजस्व व्यय** में कटौती से लाई गई है।
- This trend is similar to the previous years, where the government has aimed to change the composition of expenditures in favour of **capital expenditure** on account of its high multiplier value.
  यह प्रवृत्ति पिछले वर्षों जैसी ही है, जहाँ सरकार ने उच्च **multiplier value** के कारण व्यय संरचना को **पूंजीगत व्यय** के पक्ष में बदलने का लक्ष्य रखा है।
- The burden of adjustment of this reduction in total expenditures has fallen on **development expenditures**.
  कुल व्यय में इस कटौती के समायोजन का बोझ **development expenditures** पर पड़ा है।
- The latter is the sum of government expenditures on the **social sector** and **economic services**.
  यह (development expenditures) **सामाजिक क्षेत्र** और **आर्थिक सेवाओं** पर सरकारी व्यय का कुल योग है।
- The Annual Financial Statement indicates a reduction in the **BE** of the share of development expenditures in GDP to **5.7%** in **FY27** as compared to **6.1%** in **FY26**.
  Annual Financial Statement के अनुसार GDP में development expenditures के हिस्से का **BE**, **FY26** के **6.1%** की तुलना में **FY27** में घटकर **5.7%** हो जाता है।
- The reduction in the share of development expenditures is largely on account of a similar fall in the expenditures on **rural development** and **agriculture and allied activities**, the share of which indicates a decline to **1.2%** in **FY27** as compared to **1.5%** in **FY 26**.
  development expenditures के हिस्से में कमी मुख्यतः **rural development** तथा **agriculture and allied activities** पर व्यय में समान गिरावट के कारण है, जिनका हिस्सा **FY26** के **1.5%** की तुलना में **FY27** में घटकर **1.2%** होने का संकेत देता है।
- The fall in rural development expenditures was on account of sharp fall in the expenditures in the revenue account of **rural employment**.
  rural development व्यय में गिरावट **rural employment** के revenue account में व्यय में तेज गिरावट के कारण हुई।
- In short, the stimulating positive efiect of the reduction in the **GST** and the **indirect taxes** on demand has been completely nulli-fled by the adverse demand efiect from the reduction in the agricultural and rural expenditures.
  संक्षेप में, मांग पर **GST** और **indirect taxes** में कटौती का सकारात्मक प्रोत्साहन प्रभाव, कृषि और ग्रामीण व्यय में कटौती से उत्पन्न नकारात्मक मांग प्रभाव द्वारा पूरी तरह निष्प्रभावी हो गया है।
- While the recent changes in the flscal rules by the government are welcome, the continuity of flscal consolidation strategy brings about at least **two key concerns**.
  हालाँकि सरकार द्वारा राजकोषीय नियमों में हालिया बदलाव स्वागतयोग्य हैं, लेकिन राजकोषीय समेकन रणनीति की निरंतरता कम से कम **दो प्रमुख चिंताएँ** उत्पन्न करती है।

Two concerns
दो चिंताएँ

- The flrst concern relates to stimulus for investments in an uncertain global economy.
  पहली चिंता अनिश्चित वैश्विक अर्थव्यवस्था में निवेश के लिए प्रोत्साहन से जुड़ी है।
- The investment-capital ratio of the corporate sector in the recent period has remained low in the midst of low global demand and exports.
  हाल की अवधि में कम वैश्विक मांग और निर्यात के बीच कॉर्पोरेट क्षेत्र का investment-capital ratio कम बना हुआ है।
- The present flscal strategy hardly provides any stimulating role to corporate investments.
  वर्तमान राजकोषीय रणनीति कॉर्पोरेट निवेशों को प्रोत्साहित करने में लगभग कोई भूमिका नहीं निभाती।
- The second concern involves the distribution question in India's growth process.
  दूसरी चिंता भारत की वृद्धि प्रक्रिया में वितरण (distribution) के प्रश्न से जुड़ी है।
- The burden of adjustment of the flscal consolidation strategy of the government has been largely borne by the development and agricultural expenditures in the recent period.
  हाल की अवधि में सरकार की राजकोषीय समेकन रणनीति के समायोजन का बोझ मुख्यतः development और कृषि व्यय ने उठाया है।
- This is in contrast to the **corporate tax-GDP ratio**, the level of which remains largely the same as the **pre-covid** level.
  यह **corporate tax-GDP ratio** के विपरीत है, जिसका स्तर अधिकांशतः **pre-covid** स्तर जैसा ही बना हुआ है।

While meeting its debt targets, the present flscal strategy has largely bypassed these two challenges.
अपने debt targets को पूरा करते हुए, वर्तमान राजकोषीय रणनीति ने इन दोनों चुनौतियों को काफी हद तक दरकिनार कर दिया है।

GS Paper III: S&T,	
TOPICS COVERED	02 February 2026
1.	From field to screen: the changing landscape of ecology research क्षेत्र से स्क्रीन तक: पारिस्थितिकी अनुसंधान का बदलता परिदृश्य
2.	Waste-to-energy (WtE) कचरे से ऊर्जा (WtE)

From field to screen: the changing landscape of ecology research

The physical presence of ecologists and biologists in forests is no longer required to conduct fieldwork; the point of knowledge production is now being transformed into *in silico* work, which is carried out through computers and AI systems, it helps produce results faster than long-term field studies, yet crucial challenges remain

GS III: S&T

Biju Dharmapalan

For centuries, ecology and biology have been built on muddy boots, mosquito bites and long days spent in forests, wetlands and oceans. Fieldwork was not just a method; it was an identity. To be an ecologist meant to be outdoors, immersed in nature, observing life in its raw, unpredictable complexity. But the age of artificial intelligence is quietly – and decisively – redrawing this relationship. Today, fieldwork is increasingly transforming into *in silico* work, carried out on computer screens, powered by algorithms, sensors, and automated systems.

The shift is neither accidental nor trivial. It is driven by an unprecedented explosion of data. More than a billion natural history specimens have been digitised globally, many linked with genetic information. Citizen scientists upload millions of observations to platforms such as iNaturalist, while satellites, drones, camera traps, acoustic sensors, and environmental DNA samplers stream data continuously from land, sea, and air. AI systems now classify species, track migration, model distributions, and even predict ecological futures – which are all tasks that once demanded years of painstaking field observations.

Screen ecology

In this context, the romantic ideal of physically walking through forests to document biodiversity begins to look inefficient, even unnecessary. Why trek through dense jungles, risking logistics, health and carbon emissions, when sophisticated robotic cameras can sit silently for years, capturing images day and night? Why manually count insects when AI-enabled camera traps can identify thousands of species automatically? And why rely on sporadic human visits when sensors never sleep?

Robotic and automated systems do offer clear advantages. They reduce human disturbance to sensitive habitats. They can operate in extreme or inaccessible environments – including the deep ocean and from amid dense canopies – and where human presence is limited or dangerous. They generate standardised, high-resolution data across vast spatial and temporal scales, something no individual researcher could ever achieve. In many cases, insisting on physical presence may add little scientific value while consuming time and resources better spent analysing the data.

Indeed, the very idea that ecological understanding must come from direct bodily immersion is being challenged. Some of the most influential ecological insights of recent years have emerged from computer-based analyses rather than hands-on field studies. Researchers studying flowering times, invasive species or insect declines increasingly work indoors, writing code rather than field notes.

Robotic and automated systems generate standardised, high-resolution data across vast spatial and temporal scales, something no individual researcher could ever achieve. SIBOREY SEAN/UNSPLASH

From this perspective, physically going to a forest can appear almost irrelevant. Forests today are already saturated with technologies: camera traps fixed to trees, microphones recording soundscapes, drones scanning canopies, satellites tracking phenology from space. AI does not merely supplement fieldwork but replaces large parts of it. The forest, in effect, comes to the scientist as streams of data. What matters is not where the scientist stands but how intelligently she is able to interpret the data.

Not without discomfort

There is also a pragmatic argument. Modern academic careers reward speed and publication volume. *In silico* research driven by data often produces results faster than long-term field studies. In a competitive environment, spending years inside a forest may be career-limiting compared with analysing global datasets from a laptop. The incentives of science increasingly favour algorithms rather than adventures.

Yet to be sure this transformation is not without discomfort. Many ecologists worry about an extinction of experience, i.e. a gradual loss of direct engagement with nature that could erode ecological intuition, contextual understanding and ethical responsibility. They argue that algorithms trained without deep field knowledge risk bias and misinterpretation. Data after all are not neutral: they reflect how, where, and why they were collected.

As ecological research enters this new phase, the challenge is to ensure that *in silico* science remains grounded in ecological realities, ethical responsibility and conservation goals

But even these concerns must be weighed against reality. Ecology, like physics or genomics, has reached a level of complexity that demands specialisation. Not every physicist builds detectors and not every biologist needs to chase animals through forests. Expecting all ecologists to be field naturalists may be nostalgic rather than rational. As the field matures, its exponents must consider division of labour more seriously and sensitively.

Science, *in silico*

Moreover, the idea that physical presence automatically guarantees better understanding is itself questionable. Human observation is limited, subjective, and intermittent. Robotic cameras don't tire, and they don't forget or notice selectively.

AI systems can also reveal patterns that are invisible to the naked eye, uncovering relationships across scales that fieldwork alone could never capture. In this sense, *in silico* ecology need not be the retreat from reality that many make it out to be a way for human researchers to perceive more.

This does not mean that forests, wetlands or reefs have become scientifically irrelevant – only that scientists no longer need to be physically present to study them, traversing the dangers involved in it. The point of knowledge production has shifted. Nature is increasingly mediated through technology and scientific understanding can now emerge from synthesis rather than sensory immersion.

The future is in turn not a simple choice between boots on the ground and laptops but rather an opportunity to redefine what 'fieldwork' could mean. A camera trap bolted to a tree is as much a field instrument as a notebook once was. A machine-learning model trained on millions of observations is as much a lens on nature as a pair of binoculars. In the AI world, the forest still matters; it's just that it no longer demands our constant physical presence.

And as ecological research enters this new phase, the challenge is not to mourn the decline of traditional fieldwork but to ensure that *in silico* science remains grounded in ecological realities, ethical responsibility and conservation goals.

The mud may be gone from our boots but the responsibility to understand and protect the living world remains firmly under our feet, even if those feet now rest under a desk.

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THE GIST

- Fieldwork is increasingly transforming into *in silico* work, carried out on computer screens, powered by algorithms, sensors, and automated systems
- Robotic and automated systems reduce human disturbance to sensitive habitats. They can operate in extreme or inaccessible environments and places where human presence is limited or dangerous
- *In silico* research driven by data often produces results faster than long-term field studies
- Many ecologists worry about an extinction of experience, i.e. a gradual loss of direct engagement with nature that could erode ecological intuition, contextual understanding and ethical responsibility. They argue that algorithms trained without deep field knowledge risk bias and misinterpretation

From field to screen: the changing landscape of ecology research

क्षेत्र से स्क्रीन तक: पारिस्थितिकी अनुसंधान का बदलता परिदृश्य

- Today, fieldwork is increasingly transforming into **in silico** work, carried out on computer screens, powered by **algorithms**, **sensors**, and automated systems.
  आज, फील्डवर्क तेजी से **कंप्यूटर आधारित** कार्य में बदल रहा है, जो कंप्यूटर स्क्रीन पर किया जाता है और **कलन विधि**, **संवेदी उपकरण**, तथा स्वचालित प्रणालियों द्वारा संचालित होता है।
- The shift is neither accidental nor trivial.
  यह बदलाव न तो आकस्मिक है और न ही मामूली।
- It is driven by an unprecedented explosion of **data**.
  यह **आँकड़ों** के अभूतपूर्व विस्फोट द्वारा संचालित है।
- More than a **billion** natural history specimens have been digitised globally, many linked with **genetic information**.

वैश्विक स्तर पर **एक अरब** से अधिक प्राकृतिक इतिहास के नमूनों को डिजिटाइज़ किया गया है, जिनमें से कई **आनुवंशिक जानकारी** से जुड़े हैं।

- Citizen scientists upload **millions** of observations to platforms such as **iNaturalist**, while satellites, drones, camera traps, acoustic sensors, and environmental DNA samplers stream data continuously from land, sea, and air.
  नागरिक वैज्ञानिक **लाखों** अवलोकन प्लेटफॉर्मों पर अपलोड करते हैं, जबकि उपग्रह, ड्रोन, कैमरा ट्रैप, ध्वनिक सेंसर और पर्यावरणीय डीएनए सैंपलर भूमि, समुद्र और वायु से लगातार डेटा भेजते रहते हैं।
- **AI systems** now classify species, track migration, model distributions, and even predict ecological futures — which are all tasks that once demanded years of painstaking field observations.
  कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता प्रणालियाँ अब प्रजातियों का वर्गीकरण करती हैं, प्रवासन को ट्रैक करती हैं, वितरण का मॉडल बनाती हैं, और यहाँ तक कि पारिस्थितिक भविष्य की भविष्यवाणी भी करती हैं — ये सभी कार्य पहले वर्षों के कठिन फील्ड अवलोकनों की माँग करते थे।

Screen ecology
स्क्रीन पारिस्थितिकी

- In this context, the romantic ideal of physically walking through forests to document biodiversity begins to look inefficient, even unnecessary.
  इस संदर्भ में, जैवविविधता दर्ज करने के लिए जंगलों में शारीरिक रूप से चलने का रोमांटिक आदर्श अक्षम, यहाँ तक कि अनावश्यक भी लगने लगता है।
- Why trek through dense jungles, risking logistics, health and **carbon emissions**, when sophisticated robotic cameras can sit silently for years, capturing images day and night?
  जब उन्नत रोबोटिक कैमरे वर्षों तक चुपचाप बैठे रहकर दिन-रात तस्वीरें ले सकते हैं, तो लॉजिस्टिक्स, स्वास्थ्य और **कार्बन उत्सर्जन** का जोखिम उठाकर घने जंगलों में क्यों जाया जाए?
- Why manually count insects when **AI-enabled camera traps** can identify thousands of species automatically?
  जब **कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता सक्षम कैमरा ट्रैप** हजारों प्रजातियों की स्वचालित पहचान कर सकते हैं, तो कीड़ों की गिनती हाथ से क्यों की जाए?
- And why rely on sporadic human visits when sensors never sleep?
  और जब सेंसर कभी नहीं सोते, तो अनियमित मानव यात्राओं पर क्यों निर्भर रहा जाए?
- Robotic and automated systems do offer clear advantages.
  रोबोटिक और स्वचालित प्रणालियाँ वास्तव में स्पष्ट लाभ प्रदान करती हैं।
- They reduce human disturbance to sensitive habitats.
  वे संवेदनशील आवासों में मानव-जनित व्यवधान को कम करती हैं।
- They can operate in extreme or inaccessible environments — including the deep ocean and from amid dense canopies — and where human presence is limited or dangerous.
  वे अत्यधिक या दुर्गम वातावरणों में काम कर सकती हैं — जिनमें गहरा महासागर और घने वृक्ष-छत्रों के बीच का क्षेत्र शामिल है — जहाँ मानव उपस्थिति सीमित या खतरनाक होती है।
- They generate standardised, high-resolution data across vast spatial and temporal scales, something no individual researcher could ever achieve.
  वे विशाल स्थानिक और कालिक पैमानों पर मानकीकृत, उच्च-रिज़ॉल्यूशन डेटा उत्पन्न करती हैं, जो कोई भी एकल शोधकर्ता कभी हासिल नहीं कर सकता।
- Some of the most influential ecological insights of recent years have emerged from computer-based analyses rather than hands-on field studies.
  हाल के वर्षों की कुछ सबसे प्रभावशाली पारिस्थितिक समझ कंप्यूटर आधारित विश्लेषणों से सामने आई है, न कि प्रत्यक्ष फील्ड अध्ययन से।
- Researchers studying flowering times, invasive species or insect declines increasingly work indoors, writing code rather than field notes.

फूलने के समय, आक्रामक प्रजातियों या कीटों की कमी का अध्ययन करने वाले शोधकर्ता अब अधिकतर अंदर रहकर काम करते हैं, और फील्ड नोट्स की बजाय कोड लिखते हैं।

- From this perspective, physically going to a forest can appear almost irrelevant.
  इस दृष्टिकोण से, जंगल में शारीरिक रूप से जाना लगभग अप्रासंगिक लग सकता है।
- Forests today are already saturated with technologies: camera traps fixed to trees, microphones recording soundscapes, drones scanning canopies, satellites tracking phenology from space.
  आज जंगल पहले से ही तकनीकों से भर चुके हैं: पेड़ों पर लगे कैमरा ट्रैप, ध्वनि-दृश्यों को रिकॉर्ड करने वाले माइक्रोफोन, छत्रों को स्कैन करने वाले ड्रोन, और अंतरिक्ष से ऋतु-चक्र को ट्रैक करने वाले उपग्रह।
- In a competitive environment, spending years inside a forest may be career-limiting compared with analysing global datasets from a laptop.
  प्रतिस्पर्धी वातावरण में, जंगल के भीतर वर्षों बिताना लैपटॉप पर वैश्विक डेटा-समूहों का विश्लेषण करने की तुलना में करियर को सीमित करने वाला हो सकता है।
- The incentives of science increasingly favour algorithms rather than adventures.
  विज्ञान के प्रोत्साहन अब रोमांच की बजाय **कलन विधियों** के पक्ष में अधिक होते जा रहे हैं।
- Yet to be sure this transformation is not without discomfort.
  फिर भी यह सुनिश्चित है कि यह बदलाव असहजता से रहित नहीं है।
- Many ecologists worry about an extinction of experience, i.e. a gradual loss of direct engagement with nature that could erode ecological intuition, contextual understanding and ethical responsibility.
  कई पारिस्थितिकीविद **अनुभव के लुप्त होने** को लेकर चिंतित हैं, अर्थात् प्रकृति के साथ प्रत्यक्ष जुड़ाव का धीरे-धीरे कम होना, जो पारिस्थितिक अंतर्ज्ञान, संदर्भगत समझ और नैतिक जिम्मेदारी को कमजोर कर सकता है।
- They argue that algorithms trained without deep field knowledge risk bias and misinterpretation.
  वे तर्क देते हैं कि गहरे फील्ड ज्ञान के बिना प्रशिक्षित कलन विधियों में पक्षपात और गलत व्याख्या का जोखिम रहता है।
- Data after all are not neutral: they reflect how, where, and why they were collected.
  आखिरकार आँकड़े तटस्थ नहीं होते वे इस बात को दर्शाते हैं कि उन्हें कैसे, कहाँ और क्यों एकत्र किया गया।
- But even these concerns must be weighed against reality.
  लेकिन इन चिंताओं को भी वास्तविकता के साथ तौलना होगा।
- AI systems can also reveal patterns that are invisible to the naked eye, uncovering relationships across scales that fieldwork alone could never capture.
  कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता प्रणालियाँ ऐसे पैटर्न भी उजागर कर सकती हैं जो नग्न आँखों से दिखाई नहीं देते, और विभिन्न पैमानों पर ऐसे संबंध खोज सकती हैं जिन्हें अकेला फील्डवर्क कभी पकड़ नहीं सकता।

What is waste-to-energy?

GS III: S&T

Q

A: Waste-to-energy (WtE) is a technology to convert non-recyclable waste materials into usable fuel, typically heat or electricity. A common method is incineration in which trash is burned at a high temperature to boil the water off, creating steam that turns a turbine to generate power. Other methods include gasification, which uses a large quantity of heat with little oxygen to turn waste into gas, and anaerobic digestion, where bacteria break down organic waste to produce biogas.

The impact of WtE on the environment involves both benefits and drawbacks and is a subject of ongoing debate. Waste reduction facilities can reduce the volume of waste by around 90%, significantly extending the life of existing landfills and reducing the need for new ones. By diverting organic waste from landfills, WtE can also prevent the release of methane, a potent greenhouse gas, into the atmosphere.

On the flip side, burning waste releases carbon dioxide and — especially in poorly controlled environments — pollutants like dioxins, furans, and heavy metals. Some contemporary facilities use advanced scrubbing and filtration systems to trap these toxins. Critics have also argued that WtE may discourage more sustainable practices like recycling and composting by creating a constant demand for trash.

A view of a waste-to-energy plant at Bidadi, near Bengaluru. RAVICHANDRAN N.

India currently has at least 21 WtE plants in operation and 133 biogas facilities. The plants come under the purview of the Solid Waste Management Rules 2026, which mandate waste segregation and encourage refuse-derived fuel (RDF) in order to reduce the burden on landfills.

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Waste-to-energy (WtE)
कचरे से ऊर्जा (WtE)

- Waste-to-energy (WtE) is a technology to convert **non-recyclable waste materials** into usable fuel, typically **heat** or **electricity**.
  कचरे से ऊर्जा एक ऐसी तकनीक है जो **गैर-पुनर्चक्रण योग्य कचरा सामग्री** को उपयोगी ईंधन में बदलती है, आमतौर पर **ऊष्मा** या **बिजली**।
- A common method is **incineration** in which trash is burned at a **high temperature** to boil the water off, creating steam that turns a turbine to generate power.

एक सामान्य विधि **दहन** है जिसमें कचरे को **उच्च तापमान** पर जलाकर पानी उबाला जाता है, जिससे भाप बनती है जो टरबाइन घुमाकर बिजली पैदा करती है।

- Other methods include **gasification**, which uses a large quantity of heat with little oxygen to turn waste into gas, and **anaerobic digestion**, where bacteria break down organic waste to produce **biogas**.

  अन्य विधियों में **गैसीकरण** शामिल है, जिसमें कम ऑक्सीजन के साथ अधिक ऊष्मा का उपयोग करके कचरे को गैस में बदला जाता है, तथा **अवायवीय अपघटन** जिसमें जीवाणु जैविक कचरे को तोड़कर **बायोगैस** बनाते हैं।
- The impact of WtE on the environment involves both benefits and drawbacks and is a subject of ongoing debate.

  पर्यावरण पर WtE का प्रभाव लाभ और हानि दोनों से जुड़ा है और यह निरंतर बहस का विषय है।
- Waste reduction facilities can reduce the volume of waste by around **90%**, significantly extending the life of existing landfills and reducing the need for new ones.

  कचरा घटाने वाली सुविधाएँ कचरे की मात्रा को लगभग **90%** तक कम कर सकती हैं, जिससे मौजूदा लैंडफिल की आयु काफी बढ़ती है और नए लैंडफिल की जरूरत घटती है।
- By diverting organic waste from landfills, WtE can also prevent the release of **methane**, a potent greenhouse gas, into the atmosphere.

  लैंडफिल से जैविक कचरा हटाकर WtE **मीथेन** जैसी शक्तिशाली ग्रीनहाउस गैस के वायुमंडल में उत्सर्जन को रोक सकता है।
- On the flip side, burning waste releases **carbon dioxide** and — especially in poorly controlled environments — pollutants like **dioxins**, **furans**, and **heavy metals**.

  दूसरी ओर, कचरा जलाने से **कार्बन डाइऑक्साइड** निकलती है और विशेषकर कमजोर नियंत्रण वाले वातावरण में **डाइऑक्सिन**, **फ्यूरान** और **भारी धातु** जैसे प्रदूषक भी निकलते हैं।
- Some contemporary facilities use advanced **scrubbing** and **filtration systems** to trap these toxins.

  कुछ आधुनिक सुविधाएँ इन विषैले तत्वों को पकड़ने के लिए उन्नत **स्क्रबिंग** और **निस्पंदन प्रणालियाँ** उपयोग करती हैं।
- Critics have also argued that WtE may discourage more sustainable practices like **recycling** and **composting** by creating a constant demand for trash.

  आलोचकों ने यह भी तर्क दिया है कि WtE कचरे की निरंतर मांग बनाकर **पुनर्चक्रण** और **कम्पोस्टिंग** जैसी अधिक टिकाऊ प्रथाओं को हतोत्साहित कर सकता है।
- India currently has at least **21 WtE plants** in operation and **133 biogas facilities**.

  भारत में वर्तमान में कम से कम **21 WtE संयंत्र** संचालन में हैं और **133 बायोगैस सुविधाएँ** हैं।

- The plants come under the purview of the **Solid Waste Management Rules 2026**, which mandate **waste segregation** and encourage **refuse-derived fuel (RDF)** in order to reduce the burden on landfills.

  ये संयंत्र **ठोस अपशिष्ट प्रबंधन नियम 2026** के अंतर्गत आते हैं, जो **कचरा पृथक्करण** को अनिवार्य करते हैं और लैंडफिल पर बोझ कम करने हेतु **कचरे से निर्मित ईंधन (RDF)** को प्रोत्साहित करते हैं।