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U.P. Budget Session: Opposition disrupts Governor's Address

PCS

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Budget Session began on Monday on a stormy note, with Samajwadi Party (SP) legislators staging a protest, highlighting issues such as the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, UGC regulations, inflation, and unemployment.

The uproar began when Governor Anandiben Patel began her address in the House even as the Opposition leaders shouted slogans including "Governor go back".

After Ms Patel's speech, Finance Minister Suresh Khanna presented the Economic Survey, outlining an investment-led growth strategy to position the State as a $1 trillion economy. This is the first time the State has presented a review before tabling the Bud...

Hitting out at the government, Bahujan Samaj Party president Mayawati said people from all sections of society are distressed due to the Adityanath government's poor policies.

U.P. Budget Session: Opposition disrupts Governor's Address
उत्तर प्रदेश बजट सत्र: विपक्ष ने राज्यपाल के अभिभाषण में व्यवधान डाला

- Uttar Pradesh Budget Session began on Monday on a stormy note, with **Samajwadi Party (SP)** legislators staging a protest, highlighting issues such as the **special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls**, **UGC regulations**, **inflation**, and **unemployment**.
  उत्तर प्रदेश का बजट सत्र सोमवार को हंगामेदार शुरुआत के साथ शुरू हुआ, जिसमें **समाजवादी पार्टी (SP)** के विधायकों ने विरोध प्रदर्शन किया और **निर्वाचक नामावलियों के विशेष गहन पुनरीक्षण (SIR)**, **UGC विनियम**, **महंगाई** और **बेरोज़गारी** जैसे मुद्दों को उठाया।

- The uproar began when **Governor Anandiben Patel** began her address in the House even as the Opposition leaders shouted slogans including **"Governor go back"**.
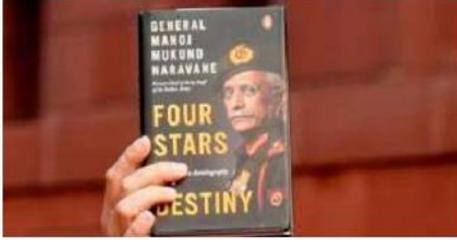 हंगामा तब शुरू हुआ जब **राज्यपाल आनंदीबेन पटेल** ने सदन में अपना अभिभाषण शुरू किया, जबकि विपक्षी नेता "**Governor go back**" जैसे नारे लगा रहे थे।

- After Ms Patel's speech, **Finance Minister Suresh Khanna** presented the **Economic Survey**, outlining an **investment-led growth strategy** to position the State as a **$1 trillion economy**.
  सुश्री पटेल के भाषण के बाद, **वित्त मंत्री सुरेश खन्ना** ने **आर्थिक सर्वेक्षण** प्रस्तुत किया, जिसमें राज्य को **$1 ट्रिलियन अर्थव्यवस्था** के रूप में स्थापित करने के लिए **निवेश-आधारित विकास रणनीति** की रूपरेखा दी गई।

- This is the **first time** the State has presented a review before tabling the **Budget Session**.
  यह **पहली बार** है जब राज्य ने **बजट सत्र** पेश करने से पहले एक समीक्षा प्रस्तुत की है।

- Speaking to reporters, **Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath** said he hoped for **constructive discussions** to ensure **smooth functioning of the House**.
  पत्रकारों से बात करते हुए, **मुख्यमंत्री योगी आदित्यनाथ** ने कहा कि वह **रचनात्मक चर्चाओं** की उम्मीद करते हैं ताकि **सदन का सुचारु संचालन** सुनिश्चित किया जा सके।

- "If any member has to raise any issue, then they can hold a **dialogue**, because the government believes in **dialogue** to resolve problems."
  "यदि किसी सदस्य को कोई मुद्दा उठाना है, तो वे **संवाद** कर सकते हैं, क्योंकि सरकार समस्याओं के समाधान के लिए **संवाद** में विश्वास करती है।"

- Hitting out at the government, **Bahujan Samaj Party** president **Mayawati** said people from **all sections of society** are distressed due to the **Adityanath government's poor policies**.
  सरकार पर निशाना साधते हुए, **बहुजन समाज पार्टी** की अध्यक्ष **मायावती** ने कहा कि **समाज के सभी वर्गों** के लोग **आदित्यनाथ सरकार की खराब नीतियों** के कारण परेशान हैं।

Delhi Police to investigate leak of Naravane's book
दिल्ली पुलिस नरवणे की पुस्तक के लीक की जांच करेगी

- The **Delhi Police** on **Monday** took cognisance of a **pre-print copy** of the controversial book **Four Stars of Destiny**, authored by **General Manoj Naravane (retd)**, being circulated **online**.

 दिल्ली पुलिस ने सोमवार को जनरल मनोज नरवणे (सेवानिवृत्त) द्वारा लिखित विवादित पुस्तक **फोर स्टार्स ऑफ़ डेस्टिनी** की प्री-प्रिंट प्रति के **ऑनलाइन** प्रसार का संज्ञान लिया।

- The **Special Cell** has registered a **case** and taken up **investigation** into the purported **leak** of the copy.

 स्पेशल सेल ने कथित **लीक** को लेकर **मामला दर्ज** कर जांच शुरू कर दी है।

- It was also reported that necessary **clearance for publication** of the book was yet to be received from the **relevant authorities**.

 यह भी बताया गया कि पुस्तक के **प्रकाशन की आवश्यक अनुमति** अभी **संबंधित प्राधिकरणों** से प्राप्त नहीं हुई है।

- In a separate statement, **Penguin Random House India** said the book has **not gone into publication** and **no copies** have been **published, distributed, or sold**.

 एक अलग बयान में **पेंगुइन रैंडम हाउस इंडिया** ने कहा कि पुस्तक का **प्रकाशन नहीं हुआ है** और इसकी **कोई भी प्रति प्रकाशित, वितरित या बेची नहीं गई** है।

- The publisher added that it "shall be exercising **remedies available in law** against the **illegal and unauthorised dissemination** of the book".

 प्रकाशक ने यह भी कहा कि वह पुस्तक के **अवैध और अनधिकृत प्रसार** के खिलाफ **कानून में उपलब्ध उपायों** का उपयोग करेगा।

Thailand's ruling party readies for coalition talks after election win
चुनावी जीत के बाद थाईलैंड की सत्तारूढ़ पार्टी गठबंधन वार्ता की तैयारी में

- Thailand faced a **realignment of conservative politics** on **Monday** after Prime Minister **Anutin Charnvirakul's Bhumjaithai Party** won a **stronger-than-expected general election victory**, with **coalition talks** to start in the **coming days**.

 प्रधानमंत्री **अनुतिन चार्नवीराकुल की भूमजैथाई पार्टी** की **अपेक्षा से अधिक मजबूत आम चुनावी जीत** के बाद **सोमवार** को थाईलैंड में **रूढ़िवादी राजनीति का पुनर्संयोजन** देखने को मिला, और **आने वाले दिनों** में **गठबंधन वार्ता** शुरू होने वाली है।

- With **94% of votes counted**, **Bhumjaithai** was way ahead of its rivals, securing **192 of the 500 seats**.

 94% मतों की गिनती के साथ, **भूमजैथाई** अपने प्रतिद्वंद्वियों से काफी आगे रही और **500 में से 192 सीटें** हासिल कीं।

GS Paper 1: Geography	
TOPICS COVERED	**10 February 2026**
1.	**SC rejects plea against curbs on prayer at Madurai dargah** मदुरै दरगाह में नमाज़ पर प्रतिबंध के खिलाफ याचिका को SC ने खारिज किया

SC rejects plea against curbs on prayer at Madurai dargah

Petition challenges Madras HC order restricting namaz at Thirupparankundram hill dargah in Madurai district to Ramzan and Bakrid days; top court says it won't interfere with the HC order
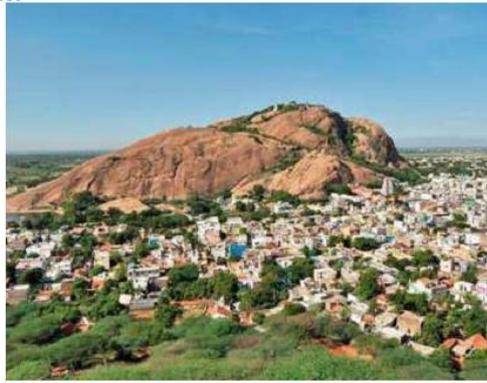
GS I: Geography: Mapping

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The petition challenged the High Court's finding that the practice of offering namaz was only of a 'recent origin'. FILE PHOTO

The Supreme Court, on Monday, refused to entertain a challenge to Madras High Court orders restricting the conduct of prayer, including namaz, at Nellithoppu area of the Sikkandar Badhusha Avuliya Dargah, located atop the Thirupparankundram hill in Madurai district of Tamil Nadu, to Ramzan and Bakrid festival days alone.

Appearing before a Bench headed by Justice Aravind Kumar, advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for petitioner Imam Hussain, said the High Court's finding that "Mohammedans could be permitted to offer their prayers in Neilithoppu area during Ramzan and Bakrid festival days alone... without disturbing the traditional footsteps which lead to Kasi Vishwanathar Temple" had crossed the "constitutional boundary".

The petition said the High Court had merely endorsed a peace committee understanding with regard to performance of namaz at Nellithoppu during Ramzan and Bakrid.

"The High Court took this situational compromise meant to avert law and order issues and elevated it into a permanent judicial rule that prayer should be confined to Ramzan and Bakrid alone. It is submitted that a temporary understanding reached in an administrative meeting cannot crystallise into a Constitutional ceiling on religious practice," Mr. Bhushan argued.

He submitted from the petition that the High Court, without pointing to any specific statutory authority, dictated the occasions on which namaz, an "essential religious practice", could be observed.

The petition challenged the High Court's finding that the practice of offering namaz was only of a "recent origin".

"Neither Article 25 (freedom of religion) nor settled Constitutional jurisprudence required proof for 'recognised essential religious practice' from time-immemorial as a condition precedent for protection. It is submitted that the only requirement is to determine whether the practice/ritual is bona fide, religious in character, and not prohibited by law," the petition countered.

The High Court, the plea challenged, had concluded that a large number of persons offering namaz and prayers would obstruct the pathway leading to the Kasi Viswanathar Temple and encroach upon other portions of the temple premises, thereby resulting in a violation of a civil court decree passed over a century ago on August 25,1923.

The October 10, 2025 order was passed by a third judge after a Division of the High Court gave a split view on June 24, 2025 regarding the restrictions on the offering of namaz.

The petition, which was dismissed after a short hearing, submitted in the apex court that the limitation placed by the High Court through its October 10 decision on the offering of the "well-recognised essential religious practice of Islam, namely namaz, to only two occasions in a year at the Nellithoppu area owned by the Dargah/Mosque Committee, even though believers offer namaz every day" was arbitrary and contrary to the breadth of Article 25, which protects the continuous practice and manifestation of faith".

"We do not propose to interfere with the impugned order without expressing any opinion with regard to the rights of the parties, the Special Leave Petition stands dismissed," the Supreme Court order said.

The petitioner said that he was a regular worshipper at the Hazarath Sultan Sikkandar Badhusha Avuliya Dargah and the adjoining prayer space at Neliithoppu. The High Court orders, he alleged, had effectively barred him from offering namaz at the Nelithoppu area.

"By confining prayer at Neilithoppu area to two festival days, the High Court order of October 10 impermissibly abridges equality before law by disproportionately burdening one community. It violates dignity and personal liberty by compelling adherents to suppress their religious identity except on designated days...," the petition said.

SC rejects plea against curbs on prayer at Madurai dargah
मदुरै दरगाह में नमाज़ पर प्रतिबंध के खिलाफ याचिका को SC ने खारिज किया

- SC rejects plea against curbs on prayer at Madurai dargah
  मदुरै दरगाह में नमाज़ पर प्रतिबंध के खिलाफ याचिका को SC ने खारिज किया

- Petition challenges **Madras High Court** order restricting **namaz** at **Thirupparankundram hill dargah** in **Madurai district** to **Ramzan** and **Bakrid** days; top court says it won't interfere with the **HC order**.
  याचिका में **मद्रास हाईकोर्ट** के उस आदेश को चुनौती दी गई है, जिसमें **मदुरै ज़िले** के **तिरुप्परंकुंद्रम पहाड़ी दरगाह** में **नमाज़** को केवल **रमज़ान** और **बकरीद** के दिनों तक सीमित किया गया है; शीर्ष अदालत ने कहा कि वह **HC आदेश** में हस्तक्षेप नहीं करेगी।

- The **Supreme Court**, on **Monday**, refused to entertain a challenge to **Madras High Court orders** restricting the conduct of prayer, including namaz, at **Nellithoppu area** of the **Sikkandar Badhusha Avuliya Dargah**, located atop the **Thirupparankundram hill** in **Madurai district of Tamil Nadu**, to **Ramzan** and **Bakrid** festival days alone.
  सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने **सोमवार** को मद्रास हाईकोर्ट के उन आदेशों को चुनौती देने से इनकार कर दिया, जिनमें **तमिलनाडु के मदुरै ज़िले** के **तिरुप्परंकुंद्रम पहाड़ी** पर स्थित **सिकंदर बदुशा अवुलिया दरगाह** के **नेल्लीथोप्पु क्षेत्र** में नमाज़ सहित प्रार्थना को केवल **रमज़ान** और **बकरीद** के त्योहारों तक सीमित किया गया है।

- Appearing before a Bench headed by **Justice Aravind Kumar**, advocate **Prashant Bhushan**, appearing for petitioner **Imam Hussain**, said the High Court's finding that "Mohammedans could be permitted to offer their prayers in Neilithoppu area during Ramzan and Bakrid festival days alone… without disturbing the traditional footsteps which lead to **Kasi Vishwanathar Temple**" had crossed the **"constitutional boundary"**.
  न्यायमूर्ति अरविंद कुमार की अध्यक्षता वाली पीठ के समक्ष पेश होते हुए, याचिकाकर्ता **इमाम हुसैन** की ओर से अधिवक्ता **प्रशांत भूषण** ने कहा कि हाईकोर्ट का यह निष्कर्ष कि "मुसलमानों को केवल रमज़ान और बकरीद के दिनों में नेल्लीथोप्पु क्षेत्र में प्रार्थना की अनुमति दी जा सकती है… ताकि **काशी विश्वनाथर मंदिर** की ओर जाने वाले पारंपरिक मार्ग में बाधा न आए", **"संवैधानिक सीमा"** का उल्लंघन करता है।

- The petition said the High Court had merely endorsed a **peace committee understanding** with regard to performance of namaz at **Nellithoppu** during **Ramzan** and **Bakrid**.
  याचिका में कहा गया कि हाईकोर्ट ने केवल **रमज़ान** और **बकरीद** के दौरान **नेल्लीथोप्पु** में नमाज़ को लेकर बनी **शांति समिति की समझ** को ही स्वीकार किया है।

- "The High Court took this **situational compromise** meant to avert **law and order** issues and elevated it into a **permanent judicial rule** that prayer should be confined to Ramzan and Bakrid alone. It is submitted that a **temporary understanding** reached in an **administrative meeting** cannot crystallise into a **Constitutional ceiling** on religious practice," Mr. **Bhushan** argued.
  भूषण ने तर्क दिया कि हाईकोर्ट ने **कानून-व्यवस्था** की समस्या से बचने के लिए बने इस **परिस्थितिजन्य समझौते** को एक **स्थायी न्यायिक नियम** में बदल दिया कि प्रार्थना केवल रमज़ान और बकरीद तक सीमित रहे। यह प्रस्तुत किया गया कि किसी **प्रशासनिक बैठक** में बनी **अस्थायी समझ** धार्मिक आचरण पर **संवैधानिक सीमा** में परिवर्तित नहीं हो सकती।

- He submitted from the petition that the High Court, without pointing to any **specific statutory authority**, dictated the occasions on which namaz, an **"essential religious practice"**, could be observed.
  उन्होंने याचिका के माध्यम से कहा कि हाईकोर्ट ने किसी **विशिष्ट वैधानिक प्राधिकरण** का उल्लेख किए बिना यह तय कर दिया कि नमाज़, जो एक **"अनिवार्य धार्मिक आचरण"** है, किन अवसरों पर की जा सकती है।

- The petition challenged the High Court's finding that the practice of offering namaz was only of a **"recent origin"**.
  याचिका में हाईकोर्ट के इस निष्कर्ष को चुनौती दी गई कि नमाज़ अदा करने की प्रथा केवल **"हाल की उत्पत्ति"** की है।

- "Neither **Article 25 (freedom of religion)** nor settled **Constitutional jurisprudence** required proof for 'recognised essential religious practice' from **time immemorial** as a condition precedent for protection. It is submitted that the only requirement is to determine whether the practice/ritual is **bona fide**, religious in character, and **not prohibited by law**," the petition countered.
  याचिका में कहा गया कि न तो **अनुच्छेद 25 (धर्म की स्वतंत्रता)** और न ही स्थापित **संवैधानिक न्यायशास्त्र** यह मांग करता है कि किसी **मान्यता प्राप्त अनिवार्य धार्मिक प्रथा** के लिए **अनादि काल** से चले आ रहे होने का प्रमाण आवश्यक हो। केवल यह देखना ज़रूरी है कि वह प्रथा **सद्भावनापूर्ण**, धार्मिक स्वरूप की हो और **कानून द्वारा निषिद्ध न हो।**

- The High Court, the plea challenged, had concluded that a **large number of persons** offering namaz and prayers would obstruct the pathway leading to the **Kasi Viswanathar Temple** and encroach upon other portions of the temple premises, thereby resulting in a violation of a **civil court decree** passed over a **century ago** on **August 25, 1923**.

  याचिका में चुनौती दी गई कि हाईकोर्ट ने यह निष्कर्ष निकाला था कि बड़ी संख्या में लोगों द्वारा नमाज़ और प्रार्थना करने से **काशी विश्वनाथर मंदिर** की ओर जाने वाला मार्ग अवरुद्ध होगा और मंदिर परिसर के अन्य हिस्सों पर अतिक्रमण होगा, जिससे **25 अगस्त 1923** को पारित **एक सदी से अधिक पुराने सिविल कोर्ट के डिक्री** का उल्लंघन होगा।

- The **October 10, 2025** order was passed by a **third judge** after a **Division Bench** of the High Court gave a **split view** on **June 24, 2025** regarding the restrictions on the offering of namaz.

  10 अक्टूबर 2025 का आदेश एक **तीसरे न्यायाधीश** द्वारा पारित किया गया, जब हाईकोर्ट की **डिवीज़न बेंच** ने **24 जून 2025** को नमाज़ पर प्रतिबंध को लेकर **विभाजित मत** दिया था।

- The petition, which was dismissed after a **short hearing**, submitted in the **apex court** that the limitation placed by the High Court through its **October 10 decision** on the offering of the **"well-recognised essential religious practice of Islam, namely namaz,"** to only **two occasions in a year** at the **Nellithoppu area** owned by the **Dargah/Mosque Committee**, even though believers offer namaz **every day**, was **arbitrary** and contrary to the **breadth of Article 25**, which protects the **continuous practice and manifestation of faith**.

  संक्षिप्त सुनवाई के बाद खारिज की गई याचिका में **शीर्ष अदालत** में कहा गया कि हाईकोर्ट के **10 अक्टूबर** के निर्णय द्वारा **इस्लाम की सुविख्यात अनिवार्य धार्मिक प्रथा, अर्थात नमाज़,** को दरगाह/मस्जिद समिति के स्वामित्व वाले **नेल्लीथोप्पु क्षेत्र** में केवल **साल में दो अवसरों** तक सीमित करना, जबकि आस्थावान **प्रतिदिन** नमाज़ पढ़ते हैं, **मनमाना** है और **अनुच्छेद 25** की उस व्यापकता के विरुद्ध है जो **आस्था के निरंतर अभ्यास और अभिव्यक्ति** की रक्षा करता है।

- "We do not propose to interfere with the **impugned order** without expressing any opinion with regard to the **rights of the parties**, the **Special Leave Petition** stands dismissed," the **Supreme Court order** said.

  सुप्रीम कोर्ट के आदेश में कहा गया, "हम **विवादित आदेश** में हस्तक्षेप करने का प्रस्ताव नहीं रखते और पक्षकारों के **अधिकारों** पर कोई राय व्यक्त किए बिना **विशेष अनुमति याचिका** को खारिज किया जाता है।"

- The petitioner said that he was a **regular worshipper** at the **Hazarath Sultan Sikkandar Badhusha Avuliya Dargah** and the adjoining prayer space at **Neliithoppu**.

  याचिकाकर्ता ने कहा कि वह **हज़रत सुल्तान सिकंदर बदुशा अवुलिया दरगाह** और उससे सटे **नेल्लीथोप्पु** के प्रार्थना स्थल पर **नियमित उपासक** है।

- The High Court orders, he alleged, had effectively barred him from offering namaz at the **Neliithoppu area**.

  उनका आरोप है कि हाईकोर्ट के आदेशों ने उन्हें **नेल्लीथोप्पु क्षेत्र** में नमाज़ अदा करने से प्रभावी रूप से रोक दिया है।

- "By confining prayer at **Neilithoppu area** to **two festival days**, the **High Court order of October 10** impermissibly abridges **equality before law** by disproportionately burdening **one community**. It violates **dignity and personal liberty** by compelling adherents to suppress their **religious identity** except on designated days...," the petition said.

  याचिका में कहा गया कि **नेल्लीथोप्पु क्षेत्र** में प्रार्थना को केवल **दो त्योहारों** तक सीमित करके, **10 अक्टूबर** का हाईकोर्ट आदेश **कानून के समक्ष समानता** को अस्वीकार्य रूप से सीमित करता है और **एक समुदाय** पर असमान बोझ डालता है। यह **गरिमा और व्यक्तिगत स्वतंत्रता** का उल्लंघन करता है क्योंकि यह अनुयायियों को निर्धारित दिनों के अलावा अपनी **धार्मिक पहचान** दबाने के लिए बाध्य करता है।

GS Paper II: Polity,	
TOPICS COVERED	**10 February 2026**
1.	**Opposition considering no-confidence motion to remove LS Speaker Birla** लोकसभा अध्यक्ष बिरला को हटाने के लिए विपक्ष अविश्वास प्रस्ताव पर विचार कर रहा है
2.	**Bonded labour continues despite 50 years of its abolition** उन्मूलन के 50 वर्ष बाद भी बंधुआ मज़दूरी जारी
3.	**DMK's Tiruchi Siva moves notice against Piyush Goyal** डीएमके के तिरुची शिवा ने पीयूष गोयल के खिलाफ नोटिस दिया

4.	**What is the current controversy around Form 7?** **फॉर्म 7 के आसपास वर्तमान विवाद क्या है?**

Opposition considering no-confidence motion to remove LS Speaker Birla

GS II: Polity: Parliament

Sandeep Phukan
NEW DELHI

Opposition parties belonging to the INDIA bloc are considering moving a no-confidence motion against Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, accusing him of acting in a partisan manner and denying Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi the opportunity to speak during the debate on the Motions of Thanks to the President for her Address to the joint sitting.

The move is based on the suspension of eight Opposition MPs from the Lok Sabha, the alleged failure to initiate action against BJP MP Nishikant Dubey for objectionable remarks against former Prime Ministers and the "unsubstantiated" charges against women MPs.

Reacting to reports of a possible resolution, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said that while the Opposition is free to bring such a motion in a parliamentary democracy, it lacks the numbers to carry it through. "They can bring [the no confidence motion], but the issue is they [the Opposition] have insulted the institution of the Honourable Speaker. They climbed onto the table of the Chair, table of officers and stormed the Speaker's chamber," he said.

Under Article 94(c) of the Constitution, a Lok Sabha member may give a written notice of intention to move a resolution for the removal of the Speaker to the Secretary-General, with at least 14 days' notice.

Over 100 MPs, including those from the Congress, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and Samajwadi Party, are said to have signed such a notice, said a source. However, Congress MP K. C. Venugopal said, "I can't comment on reports. Wait for action." Separately, women Congress MPs, including Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, wrote to Mr. Birla, alleging that the ruling party forced him to make "false, baseless and defamatory allegations" against them.

Parliamentary logjam
Efforts to break the parliamentary logjam continued, with a delegation of senior Opposition leaders, including Mr. Gandhi, calling on Mr. Birla to convey their grievance that the House is being "run one-sided".

When Mr. Birla told them that it was their right to bring a notice against him, the Opposition leaders said that they wanted the House to function, but insisted on his action on four specific points. Mr. Gandhi was accompanied by Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, Trinamool Congress leader Abhishek Banerjee, and DMK MP T.R. Baalu when they met the Speaker. The Trinamool wants to raise the issue of the SIR, while the SP plans to discuss the alleged vandalisation of the statue of Malwa queen Ahilyabai Holkar.

However, the stand-off between the Union Government and the Opposition continued, with proceedings in the Lok Sabha remaining paralysed on Monday. A discussion on the Budget, which was listed for the day, could not be taken up due to repeated disruptions. Mr. Gandhi wanted to raise a few issues before his colleague Shashi Tharoor could speak on the Budget but he was not allowed, leading to protests and adjournments.

Later, speaking to press-persons, Mr. Gandhi said the government did not want a discussion on the Budget as it was worried about questions on the Indo-U.S. trade deal and its impact on farmers. He also listed out four issues, including his not being allowed to quote from an article based on excerpts from former Army chief M.M. Naravane's unpublished memoir, that reportedly showed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's indecisiveness during the 2020 India-China conflict.

Voicing out: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with suspended party MPs staging a protest at Parliament, in New Delhi on Monday. PTI

Opposition considering लोकसभा अध्यक्ष बिरला को हटाने के लिए विपक्ष अविश्वास प्रस्ताव पर no-confidence motion to remove LS Speaker Birla विचार कर रहा है

• Opposition considering no-confidence motion to remove LS Speaker Birla
लोकसभा अध्यक्ष बिरला को हटाने के लिए विपक्ष अविश्वास प्रस्ताव पर विचार कर रहा है

• Opposition parties belonging to the **INDIA bloc** are considering moving a **no-confidence motion** against **Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla**, accusing him of acting in a **partisan manner** and denying **Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi** the opportunity to speak during the debate on the **Motions of Thanks** to the **President** for her **Address to the joint sitting**.
इंडिया ब्लॉक से संबंधित विपक्षी दल **लोकसभा अध्यक्ष ओम बिरला** के खिलाफ **अविश्वास प्रस्ताव** लाने पर विचार कर रहे हैं, उन पर **पक्षपातपूर्ण तरीके** से काम करने और **विपक्ष के नेता राहुल गांधी** को संयुक्त सत्र में राष्ट्रपति के **अभिभाषण** पर **धन्यवाद प्रस्ताव** की बहस के दौरान बोलने का अवसर न देने का आरोप लगाते हुए।

• The move is based on the **suspension of eight Opposition MPs** from the **Lok Sabha**, the alleged failure to initiate action against **BJP MP Nishikant Dubey** for **objectionable remarks** against **former Prime Ministers** and the **"unsubstantiated" charges** against **women MPs**.
यह कदम **लोकसभा** से **आठ विपक्षी सांसदों के निलंबन**, **पूर्व प्रधानमंत्रियों** के खिलाफ **आपत्तिजनक टिप्पणियों** के लिए **भाजपा सांसद निशिकांत दुबे** के खिलाफ कार्रवाई शुरू करने में कथित विफलता और **महिला सांसदों** के खिलाफ **"बेबुनियाद" आरोपों** पर आधारित है।

• Reacting to reports of a possible resolution, **Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju** said that while the Opposition is free to bring such a motion in a **parliamentary democracy**, it lacks the numbers to carry it through.
संभावित प्रस्ताव की खबरों पर प्रतिक्रिया देते हुए **संसदीय कार्य मंत्री किरेन रिजिजू** ने कहा कि **संसदीय**

लोकतंत्र में विपक्ष को ऐसा प्रस्ताव लाने की स्वतंत्रता है, लेकिन इसे पारित कराने के लिए उसके पास संख्या बल नहीं है।

- "They can bring [the **no-confidence motion**], but the issue is they [the Opposition] have insulted the institution of the **Honourable Speaker**. They climbed onto the **table of the Chair**, **table of officers** and stormed the **Speaker's chamber**," he said.

  उन्होंने कहा, "वे [**अविश्वास प्रस्ताव**] ला सकते हैं, लेकिन मुद्दा यह है कि उन्होंने **माननीय अध्यक्ष** की संस्था का अपमान किया है। वे **अध्यक्ष की मेज, अधिकारियों की मेज** पर चढ़ गए और **अध्यक्ष के कक्ष** में घुस गए।"

- Under **Article 94(c) of the Constitution**, a **Lok Sabha member** may give a **written notice** of intention to move a resolution for the **removal of the Speaker** to the **Secretary-General**, with at least **14 days' notice**.

  संविधान के अनुच्छेद 94(ग) के तहत, कोई **लोकसभा सदस्य अध्यक्ष को हटाने** के लिए प्रस्ताव लाने की मंशा की **लिखित सूचना महासचिव** को कम से कम **14 दिन** पहले दे सकता है।

- Over **100 MPs**, including those from the **Congress**, **Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam** and **Samajwadi Party**, are said to have signed such a notice, said a source.

  एक स्रोत ने कहा कि **कांग्रेस, द्रविड़ मुनेत्र कड़गम** और **समाजवादी पार्टी** सहित **100 से अधिक सांसदों** ने ऐसी सूचना पर हस्ताक्षर किए हैं।

- However, **Congress MP K. C. Venugopal** said, "I can't comment on reports. **Wait for action**."

  हालांकि, **कांग्रेस सांसद के. सी. वेणुगोपाल** ने कहा, "मैं रिपोर्टों पर टिप्पणी नहीं कर सकता। **कार्रवाई का इंतज़ार करें।**"

- Separately, **women Congress MPs**, including **Priyanka Gandhi Vadra**, wrote to **Mr. Birla**, alleging that the **ruling party** forced him to make **"false, baseless and defamatory allegations"** against them.

  अलग से, **प्रियंका गांधी वाड़ा** सहित **महिला कांग्रेस सांसदों** ने **श्री बिरला** को पत्र लिखकर आरोप लगाया कि **सत्तारूढ़ दल** ने उनके खिलाफ **"झूठे, निराधार और मानहानिकारक आरोप"** लगाने के लिए उन्हें मजबूर किया।

Parliamentary logjam
संसदीय गतिरोध

- Efforts to break the **parliamentary logjam** continued, with a delegation of senior Opposition leaders, including **Mr. Gandhi**, calling on **Mr. Birla** to convey their grievance that the House was being **"run one-sided"**.

  संसदीय गतिरोध तोड़ने के प्रयास जारी रहे, जिसमें **श्री गांधी** सहित वरिष्ठ विपक्षी नेताओं के एक प्रतिनिधिमंडल ने **श्री बिरला** से मुलाकात कर यह शिकायत रखी कि सदन **"एकतरफा चलाया जा रहा है"**।

- When **Mr. Birla** told them that it was their right to bring a notice against him, the Opposition leaders said that they wanted the **House to function**, but insisted on his action on **four specific points**.

  जब **श्री बिरला** ने उनसे कहा कि उनके खिलाफ नोटिस लाना उनका अधिकार है, तो विपक्षी नेताओं ने कहा कि वे **सदन का संचालन** चाहते हैं, लेकिन **चार विशिष्ट बिंदुओं** पर उनकी कार्रवाई पर ज़ोर दिया।

- **Mr. Gandhi** was accompanied by **Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav**, **Trinamool Congress leader Abhishek Banerjee**, and **DMK MP T. R. Baalu** when they met the **Speaker**.

  अध्यक्ष से मुलाकात के दौरान **श्री गांधी** के साथ **समाजवादी पार्टी प्रमुख अखिलेश यादव, तृणमूल कांग्रेस नेता अभिषेक बनर्जी** और **डीएमके सांसद टी. आर. बालू** मौजूद थे।

- The **Trinamool** wants to raise the issue of the **SIR**, while the **SP** plans to discuss the alleged **vandalisation of the statue of Malwa queen Ahilyabai Holkar**.

  तृणमूल एसआईआर का मुद्दा उठाना चाहती है, जबकि **सपा मालवा की रानी अहिल्याबाई होलकर** की प्रतिमा के कथित **तोड़फोड़** के मुद्दे पर चर्चा करने की योजना बना रही है।

- However, the **stand-off** between the **Union Government** and the **Opposition** continued, with proceedings in the **Lok Sabha** remaining **paralysed** on **Monday**.

  हालांकि, **केंद्र सरकार** और **विपक्ष** के बीच **टकराव** जारी रहा, और **सोमवार** को **लोकसभा** की कार्यवाही **ठप** रही।

- A discussion on the **Budget**, which was listed for the day, could not be taken up due to repeated **disruptions**.

  दिन के लिए सूचीबद्ध **बजट** पर चर्चा बार-बार की **व्यवधानों** के कारण नहीं हो सकी।

- **Mr. Gandhi** wanted to raise a few issues before his colleague **Shashi Tharoor** could speak on the **Budget** but he was not allowed, leading to **protests and adjournments**.

  श्री गांधी अपने सहयोगी **शशि थरूर** के **बजट** पर बोलने से पहले कुछ मुद्दे उठाना चाहते थे, लेकिन उन्हें अनुमति नहीं दी गई, जिससे **प्रदर्शन और स्थगन** हुए।

- Later, speaking to presspersons, **Mr. Gandhi** said the **government** did not want a discussion on the **Budget** as it was worried about questions on the **Indo-U.S. trade deal** and its **impact on farmers**.

  बाद में पत्रकारों से बात करते हुए **श्री गांधी** ने कहा कि **सरकार बजट** पर चर्चा नहीं चाहती क्योंकि उसे **भारत-अमेरिका व्यापार समझौते** और उसके **किसानों पर प्रभाव** से जुड़े सवालों की चिंता है।

- He also listed out **four issues**, including his not being allowed to quote from an **article** based on excerpts from **former Army chief M. M. Naravane's unpublished memoir**, which reportedly showed **Prime Minister Narendra Modi's indecisiveness** during the **2020 India-China conflict**.

  उन्होंने **चार मुद्दों** की भी सूची दी, जिनमें **पूर्व सेना प्रमुख एम. एम. नरवणे** के **अप्रकाशित संस्मरण** के अंशों पर आधारित एक **लेख** से उद्धरण देने की अनुमति न मिलना शामिल है, जिसमें कथित तौर पर **2020 भारत-चीन संघर्ष** के दौरान **प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी की अनिर्णयता** दिखाई गई थी।

Bonded labour continues despite 50 years of its abolition

GS II: Polity: FR

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

When the nation was observing 50 years of the enactment of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act on February 9, Chamru Majhi, his wife and three children were rescued from a brick kiln in Aranghata, Nadia district, West Bengal. It was a joint effort by several departments, including the officers of the Taherpur police station, and the District Legal Services Authority Secretary.

The brick kiln is located in a remote area surrounded by fields and waterbodies and employs mostly migrant workers from Bihar and Jharkhand. An FIR was registered after the rescue operation.

Hailing from Hussainabad Sheikhpura in Bihar, the Majhi family was

A 2020 report estimated that West Bengal has around 11,000 brick kilns employing nearly 8 lakh workers. FILE PHOTO

trapped in second-generation bonded labour for the past 17 years. The family was held under an advance bondage system after accepting ₹35,000 from a labour contractor, forcing all family members, including the three minor children, to work in the kiln.

Jharkhand and Odisha. In March 2025, 28 children were rescued from two brick kilns in South 24 Parganas district.

Low wages, long hours
A 2020 report estimated that West Bengal has around 11,000 brick kilns employing nearly eight lakh workers. The study documented low daily wages, long working hours, restrictions on workers leaving kiln premises, and limited access to health care and maternity benefits. A total of 76 bonded labourers were rescued from restaurants, sweet shops, tea gardens, and makhana processing units between 2023 and January 2026 in Bengal.

The rescue is a reflection of the status of bonded labour in West Bengal, which remains both as a source of and destination for bonded labour. Several brick kilns and other small industrial units act as a destination for bonded labour, particularly for those from Bihar,

Between 2019 and 2024, 143 people from West Bengal were rescued in four separate operations from

jewellery manufacturing units in Chennai – of which 60 were rescued in September 2019, 22 in February 2023, 54 in July 2023 and seven in November 2024. All the survivors were issued bonded labour release certificates by the Tamil Nadu government formally recognising them as victims of bonded labour, entitling them to rehabilitation and legal protection. Some of those rescued from Chennai have been provided training by non-government organisations.

Right activists and experts said despite the abolition under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act 1976, the practice continues to persist in hidden informal sectors, particularly affecting the poorest and most vulnerable communities.

Bonded labour continues despite 50 years of its abolition
उन्मूलन के 50 वर्ष बाद भी बंधुआ मज़दूरी जारी

- Bonded labour continues despite 50 years of its abolition

  उन्मूलन के 50 वर्ष बाद भी बंधुआ मज़दूरी जारी

- When the nation was observing **50 years** of the enactment of the **Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act** on **February 9**, **Chamru Majhi**, his wife and three children were rescued from a brick kiln in **Aranghata, Nadia district, West Bengal**.

  जब देश **9 फरवरी** को **बंधुआ मज़दूरी प्रणाली (उन्मूलन) अधिनियम** के लागू होने के **50 वर्ष** मना रहा था, तब **चमरू माझी**, उनकी पत्नी और तीन बच्चों को **अरनघाटा, नादिया ज़िला, पश्चिम बंगाल** की एक ईंट-भट्टे से बचाया गया।

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- It was a **joint effort** by several departments, including the officers of the **Taherpur police station**, and the **District Legal Services Authority Secretary**.
  यह कई विभागों का **संयुक्त प्रयास** था, जिसमें **ताहेरपुर पुलिस स्टेशन** के अधिकारी और **ज़िला विधिक सेवा प्राधिकरण के सचिव** शामिल थे।

- The brick kiln is located in a **remote area** surrounded by **fields and waterbodies** and employs mostly **migrant workers** from **Bihar and Jharkhand**. An **FIR** was registered after the rescue operation.
  ईंट-भट्टा **दूरदराज़ क्षेत्र** में **खेतों और जलाशयों** से घिरा है और वहाँ अधिकतर **बिहार और झारखंड** से आए **प्रवासी मज़दूर** काम करते हैं। बचाव अभियान के बाद **एफ़आईआर** दर्ज की गई।

- Hailing from **Hussainabad Sheikhpura in Bihar**, the **Majhi family** was trapped in **second-generation bonded labour** for the past **17 years**.
  बिहार के **हुसैनाबाद शेखपुरा** से आने वाला **माझी परिवार** पिछले **17 वर्षों** से **दूसरी पीढ़ी की बंधुआ मज़दूरी** में फँसा हुआ था।

- The family was held under an **advance bondage system** after accepting ₹35,000 from a **labour contractor**, forcing all family members, including the **three minor children**, to work in the kiln.
  परिवार को एक **मज़दूर ठेकेदार** से **₹35,000** लेने के बाद **अग्रिम बंधन प्रणाली** के तहत रखा गया, जिससे **तीन नाबालिग बच्चों** सहित सभी सदस्यों को भट्टे में काम करने के लिए मजबूर किया गया।

- The rescue is a **reflection** of the status of **bonded labour in West Bengal**, which remains both as a **source** of and **destination** for bonded labour.
  यह बचाव **पश्चिम बंगाल में बंधुआ मज़दूरी** की स्थिति का **प्रतिबिंब** है, जो बंधुआ मज़दूरी का **स्रोत** भी है और **गंतव्य** भी।

- Several **brick kilns** and other **small industrial units** act as a destination for bonded labour, particularly for those from **Bihar, Jharkhand and Odisha**.
  कई **ईंट-भट्टे** और अन्य **छोटी औद्योगिक इकाइयाँ**, विशेषकर **बिहार, झारखंड और ओडिशा** से आने वालों के लिए, बंधुआ मज़दूरी का गंतव्य बनती हैं।

- In **March 2025**, **28 children** were rescued from **two brick kilns** in **South 24 Parganas district**.
  मार्च 2025 में **दक्षिण 24 परगना ज़िले** की **दो ईंट-भट्टों** से **28 बच्चों** को बचाया गया।

Low wages, long hours
कम मज़दूरी, लंबे कार्य घंटे

- A **2020 report** estimated that **West Bengal** has around **11,000 brick kilns** employing nearly **eight lakh workers**.
  2020 की एक रिपोर्ट के अनुसार **पश्चिम बंगाल** में लगभग **11,000 ईंट-भट्टे** हैं, जिनमें करीब **आठ लाख मज़दूर** काम करते हैं।

- The study documented **low daily wages**, **long working hours**, **restrictions** on workers leaving kiln premises, and **limited access** to **health care** and **maternity benefits**.
  अध्ययन में **कम दैनिक मज़दूरी**, **लंबे कार्य घंटे**, भट्टे के परिसर से बाहर जाने पर **पाबंदियाँ**, तथा **स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं और प्रसूति लाभों** तक **सीमित पहुँच** दर्ज की गई।

- A total of **76 bonded labourers** were rescued from **restaurants, sweet shops, tea gardens, and makhana processing units** between **2023 and January 2026** in **Bengal**.
  2023 से जनवरी 2026 के बीच **बंगाल** में रेस्तरां, मिठाई की दुकानों, चाय बागानों और मखाना प्रसंस्करण इकाइयों से कुल **76 बंधुआ मज़दूरों** को बचाया गया।

- Between **2019 and 2024**, **143 people** from **West Bengal** were rescued in **four separate operations** from **jewellery manufacturing units in Chennai** — of which **60** were rescued in **September 2019**, **22** in **February 2023**, **54** in **July 2023** and **seven** in **November 2024**.
  2019 से 2024 के बीच **पश्चिम बंगाल** के **143 लोगों** को **चेन्नई** की **आभूषण निर्माण इकाइयों** से **चार अलग-अलग अभियानों** में बचाया गया — जिनमें **सितंबर 2019** में **60**, **फ़रवरी 2023** में **22**, **जुलाई 2023** में **54** और **नवंबर 2024** में **सात** शामिल हैं।

- All the survivors were issued **bonded labour release certificates** by the **Tamil Nadu government** formally recognising them as **victims of bonded labour**, entitling them to **rehabilitation** and **legal protection**.
  सभी बचे लोगों को **तमिलनाडु सरकार** द्वारा **बंधुआ मज़दूरी मुक्ति प्रमाणपत्र** जारी किए गए, जिससे उन्हें

- औपचारिक रूप से **बंधुआ मज़दूरी के पीड़ित** के रूप में मान्यता मिली और **पुनर्वास** तथा **कानूनी संरक्षण** का अधिकार मिला।

- Some of those rescued from **Chennai** have been provided **training** by **non-government organisations**.
  चेन्नई से बचाए गए कुछ लोगों को **गैर-सरकारी संगठनों** द्वारा **प्रशिक्षण** प्रदान किया गया है।

- **Right activists** and **experts** said despite the abolition under the **Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act 1976**, the practice continues to persist in **hidden informal sectors**, particularly affecting the **poorest** and **most vulnerable communities**.
  अधिकार कार्यकर्ताओं और **विशेषज्ञों** ने कहा कि बंधुआ मज़दूरी प्रणाली (उन्मूलन) अधिनियम 1976 के तहत उन्मूलन के बावजूद यह प्रथा **छिपे हुए अनौपचारिक क्षेत्रों** में जारी है, और विशेष रूप से **सबसे गरीब** तथा **सबसे कमजोर समुदायों** को प्रभावित करती है।

DMK's Tiruchi Siva moves notice against Piyush Goyal

GS II: Polity

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

DMK's Tiruchi Siva moves notice against Piyush Goyal
डीएमके के तिरुची शिवा ने पीयूष गोयल के खिलाफ नोटिस दिया

- DMK MP **Tiruchi Siva** on **Monday** informed the **Rajya Sabha** that he had submitted a **breach of privilege notice** against **Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal** for sharing details of an **interim trade deal between India and the U.S.** in a **media interview** while **Parliament was in session**.
  डीएमके सांसद **तिरुची शिवा** ने **सोमवार** को **राज्यसभा** को सूचित किया कि उन्होंने **वाणिज्य मंत्री पीयूष गोयल** के खिलाफ **विशेषाधिकार हनन नोटिस** प्रस्तुत किया है, क्योंकि उन्होंने **भारत और अमेरिका के बीच अंतरिम व्यापार समझौते** का विवरण **मीडिया साक्षात्कार** में साझा किया, जबकि **संसद का सत्र चल रहा था**।

- Raising the issue soon after the House met at **11 a.m.** and **papers were tabled**, Mr. Siva said, "I have given a notice of breach of privilege against **Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal**." He was supported by **Leader of the Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge**.
  सदन की बैठक **सुबह 11 बजे** शुरू होने और **दस्तावेज़ प्रस्तुत** किए जाने के तुरंत बाद यह मुद्दा उठाते हुए, श्री शिवा ने कहा, "मैंने **वाणिज्य मंत्री पीयूष गोयल** के खिलाफ विशेषाधिकार हनन का नोटिस दिया है।" उन्हें **नेता प्रतिपक्ष मल्लिकार्जुन खड़गे** का समर्थन मिला।

- **Chairman C.P. Radhakrishnan** said he would look into the matter.
  सभापति सी. पी. राधाकृष्णन ने कहा कि वह इस मामले को देखेंगे।

What is the current controversy around Form 7?

What has the Congress alleged with respect to Form 7? How many deletions have been reported?

GS II: Polity

Saee Pande

The story so far:

In the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR), bulk applications are being filed for the deletion of names from the draft electoral rolls. On January 29, the Congress, in a letter to the Election Commission of India (EC), alleged that the form was being misused through "systemic and coordinated efforts" to delete names of eligible voters and embolden BJP's efforts to wrongfully gain electoral advantage. *The Hindu's* reporting from Rajasthan and Gujarat also found individuals who said they had not submitted the Form 7 applications purportedly signed by them.

What is Form 7?

Form 7 is used for objecting to the inclusion of another person's or one's own name on the electoral roll on specific grounds such as death, duplication or shifting of residence. It can also be used to object to voters who are ineligible due to age, citizenship or misrepresentation. As per Section 13(2) of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, framed under the Representation of the People Act, 1950, "every objection to the inclusion of a name in the roll shall be (a) in Form 7 and (b) preferred only by a person whose name is already included in that roll". Booth Level Agents (BLAs) can also file objections. Earlier, only persons from the same booth/station were allowed to file an objection but in 2022, the EC amended Form 7 to allow any voter in a constituency to object, widening its ambit. However, to prevent misuse, the Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) is required to mandatorily verify all claims if an individual files more than five objections.

Once a Form 7 application is received, Booth Level Officers (BLO) are required to conduct physical verification of the voter's address and eligibility. In cases of death, verification involves confirmation signatures by three neighbours and a death certificate. If the voter is found absent, the BLO must make three physical visits to confirm whether the person has shifted. The concerned voter is then issued a notice for a hearing. Appeals against the ERO's decision can be made to the district magistrate within 15 days of publication of the updated list.

How extensive is the ongoing SIR?

According to the EC, more than 50.94 crore enumeration forms have been distributed since the launch of Phase II of the SIR, covering 99.94% of the nearly 51 crore voters included in this phase. The SIR is currently underway in Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Puducherry, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and Lakshadweep. The revision follows a tight schedule, and against this compressed timeline, the scale of objections and deletions sought through Form 7 has raised concerns about procedural fairness and administrative capacity. According to the draft electoral rolls published by the EC, the names of 6.5 crore electors were removed from the draft rolls of nine States and three Union Territories (UTs) as part of the ongoing SIR. Before the revision, these States and UTs had 51 crore voters; after publication of the draft rolls, the number fell to 44.4 crore. EC officials said those removed were placed in the 'ASD' category – Absent, Shifted and Dead/Duplicate. The highest deletions were reported from Uttar Pradesh (2.89 crore), followed by Tamil Nadu (97 lakh), and Gujarat (74 lakh).

What is the way ahead?

At the heart of the controversy is the bulk submission of Form 7 applications by anonymous or fraudulent actors seeking mass deletion of voters from electoral rolls in the ongoing SIR. Filing a false declaration is a punishable offence under Section 32 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, attracting imprisonment of up to one year or a fine or both. Critics argue that 'if remained unchecked this will lead to the disenfranchisement of lakhs of voters, especially those belonging to the backward, marginalised communities'.

Saee Pande is a freelance writer.

THE GIST

▼
Form 7 is used for objecting to the inclusion of another person's or one's own name on the electoral roll on specific grounds such as death, duplication or shifting of residence.

▼
According to the EC, more than 50.94 crore enumeration forms have been distributed since the launch of Phase II of the SIR.

▼
At the heart of the controversy is the bulk submission of Form 7 applications by anonymous or fraudulent actors seeking mass deletion of voters from electoral rolls in the ongoing SIR.

What is the current controversy around Form 7?
फॉर्म 7 के आसपास वर्तमान विवाद क्या है?

- In the ongoing **Special Intensive Revision (SIR)**, bulk applications are being filed for **deletion of names from draft electoral rolls**.
  चल रहे **विशेष गहन पुनरीक्षण (SIR)** में **मतदाता सूची के मसौदे से नाम हटाने के लिए बड़ी संख्या में आवेदन** दिए जा रहे हैं।

- On **January 29**, the **Congress** alleged misuse of the form through **systemic and coordinated efforts** to delete eligible voters and gain electoral advantage.
  29 जनवरी को **कांग्रेस** ने आरोप लगाया कि फॉर्म का दुरुपयोग **संगठित और व्यवस्थित प्रयासों** के माध्यम से योग्य मतदाताओं के नाम हटाने और चुनावी लाभ पाने के लिए किया जा रहा है।

- Reports from **Rajasthan and Gujarat** found individuals claiming they had not submitted the **Form 7 applications signed in their names**.
  राजस्थान और गुजरात से रिपोर्ट में कुछ लोगों ने कहा कि उन्होंने **अपने नाम से दायर फॉर्म 7 आवेदन** नहीं दिए थे।

What is Form 7?
फॉर्म 7 क्या है?

- **Form 7** is used to object to inclusion of a person's name in electoral roll on grounds such as **death, duplication, or shifting of residence**.
  फॉर्म 7 का उपयोग मतदाता सूची में नाम शामिल करने पर **मृत्यु, दोहराव या निवास परिवर्तन** जैसे आधारों पर आपत्ति दर्ज करने के लिए किया जाता है।

- It can also object to voters ineligible due to **age, citizenship, or misrepresentation**.
  यह **आयु, नागरिकता या गलत प्रस्तुतीकरण** के कारण अयोग्य मतदाताओं पर भी आपत्ति के लिए उपयोग होता है।

- As per **Section 13(2) of Registration of Electors Rules, 1960 under Representation of the People Act, 1950**, objections must be filed in **Form 7 by a person already on the roll**.
  जन प्रतिनिधित्व अधिनियम, 1950 के अंतर्गत **निर्वाचन पंजीकरण नियम, 1960 की धारा 13(2)** के अनुसार आपत्ति **फॉर्म 7 में केवल उसी व्यक्ति द्वारा दी जा सकती है जिसका नाम पहले से मतदाता सूची में हो**।

- **Booth Level Agents (BLAs)** can also file objections.
  बूथ लेवल एजेंट (BLA) भी आपत्ति दर्ज कर सकते हैं।

- Since **2022**, any voter in a constituency can file objection, widening scope of Form 7.
  2022 से किसी भी निर्वाचन क्षेत्र का मतदाता आपत्ति दर्ज कर सकता है, जिससे फॉर्म 7 का दायरा बढ़ा।

- If more than **five objections** are filed by one individual, **Electoral Registration Officer (ERO)** must mandatorily verify claims.

यदि एक व्यक्ति **पाँच से अधिक आपत्तियाँ** देता है, तो **निर्वाचन पंजीकरण अधिकारी (ERO)** को अनिवार्य रूप से सत्यापन करना होता है।

- After receiving Form 7, **Booth Level Officers (BLO)** must conduct **physical verification of voter's address and eligibility**.
  फॉर्म 7 प्राप्त होने के बाद **बूथ लेवल अधिकारी (BLO)** को **मतदाता के पते और पात्रता का भौतिक सत्यापन** करना होता है।

- In case of **death**, verification includes **death certificate and confirmation by three neighbours**.
  मृत्यु के मामले में सत्यापन में **मृत्यु प्रमाणपत्र और तीन पड़ोसियों की पुष्टि** शामिल होती है।

- If voter is absent, BLO must make **three physical visits** to verify shifting.
  यदि मतदाता अनुपस्थित हो, तो BLO को **तीन बार भौतिक सत्यापन** करना होता है।

- Voter is issued **notice for hearing**, and appeals can be filed to **District Magistrate within 15 days**.
  मतदाता को **सुनवाई का नोटिस** दिया जाता है और अपील **15 दिनों के भीतर जिला मजिस्ट्रेट के पास** की जा सकती है।

Extent of Ongoing SIR
चल रहे SIR का दायरा

- More than **50.94 crore enumeration forms** have been distributed, covering **99.94% of nearly 51 crore voters**.
  50.94 करोड़ से अधिक गणना फॉर्म वितरित किए गए हैं, जो **लगभग 51 करोड़ मतदाताओं के 99.94%** को कवर करते हैं।

- SIR is underway in **Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Puducherry, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and Lakshadweep**.
  SIR **छत्तीसगढ़, गोवा, गुजरात, केरल, मध्य प्रदेश, राजस्थान, तमिलनाडु, उत्तर प्रदेश, पश्चिम बंगाल, पुडुचेरी, अंडमान निकोबार द्वीप और लक्षद्वीप** में चल रहा है।

- The scale of deletions through Form 7 has raised concerns about **procedural fairness and administrative capacity**.
  फॉर्म 7 के माध्यम से बड़े पैमाने पर नाम हटाने से **प्रक्रियात्मक निष्पक्षता और प्रशासनिक क्षमता** पर चिंता बढ़ी है।

- Names of **6.5 crore electors** were removed from draft rolls of **nine States and three UTs**.
  6.5 करोड़ मतदाताओं के नाम नौ राज्यों और तीन केंद्रशासित प्रदेशों की मसौदा सूची से हटाए गए।

- Voters reduced from **51 crore to 44.4 crore** after revision.
  संशोधन के बाद मतदाता संख्या **51 करोड़ से घटकर 44.4 करोड़** हो गई।

- Removed voters were placed in **ASD category – Absent, Shifted, Dead/Duplicate**.
  हटाए गए मतदाताओं को **ASD श्रेणी – अनुपस्थित, स्थानांतरित, मृत/डुप्लीकेट** में रखा गया।

- Highest deletions: **Uttar Pradesh (2.89 crore), Tamil Nadu (97 lakh), Gujarat (74 lakh)**.
  सबसे अधिक नाम हटे: **उत्तर प्रदेश (2.89 करोड़), तमिलनाडु (97 लाख), गुजरात (74 लाख)**।

Way Ahead
आगे की राह

- Controversy centres on **bulk Form 7 submissions by anonymous or fraudulent actors** seeking mass voter deletion.
  विवाद का केंद्र **गुमनाम या फर्जी लोगों द्वारा बड़े पैमाने पर फॉर्म 7 जमा करना** है, जिसका उद्देश्य मतदाताओं को हटाना है।

- Filing false declaration is punishable under **Section 32 of Representation of the People Act, 1950**, with **up to one year imprisonment or fine or both**.
  गलत घोषणा देना **जन प्रतिनिधित्व अधिनियम, 1950 की धारा 32** के तहत दंडनीय है, जिसमें **एक वर्ष तक की कैद या जुर्माना या दोनों** हो सकते हैं।

- Critics warn that if unchecked, this could lead to **disenfranchisement of lakhs of voters**, especially from **backward and marginalised communities**.

आलोचकों का कहना है कि यदि इसे रोका नहीं गया तो **लाखों मतदाता मताधिकार से वंचित हो सकते हैं**, विशेषकर **पिछड़े और हाशिए के समुदायों** से।

GS Paper II: International Relations	
TOPICS COVERED	**10 February 2026**
1.	**India and Greece agree to strengthen defence industrial cooperation in five-year road map** भारत और ग्रीस ने पाँच वर्षीय रोड मैप में रक्षा औद्योगिक सहयोग को मजबूत करने पर सहमति जताई
2.	**Back on track India and Malaysia have set about repairing ties during the Modi visit** फिर पटरी पर भारत और मलेशिया ने मोदी की यात्रा के दौरान संबंधों को सुधारने की शुरुआत की
3.	**A chance for India to polish the Kimberley Process** भारत के लिए किम्बरली प्रोसेस को सुधारने का अवसर
4.	**What next after Thailand votes to scrap constitution** संविधान को खत्म करने के लिए थाईलैंड में मतदान के बाद आगे क्या
5.	**'Takaichi's landslide win reflects deep structural, ideological shift in Japan'** 'ताकाइची की भारी जीत जापान में गहरे संरचनात्मक और वैचारिक बदलाव को दर्शाती

India and Greece agree to strengthen defence industrial cooperation in five-year road map

GS II: IR

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh held a bilateral meeting with Greece's Minister of National Defence, Nikolaos-Georgios Dendias, in New Delhi on Monday.

The meeting focused on strengthening defence cooperation under the India-Greece Strategic Partnership.

According to the Defence Ministry, both Ministers reiterated that the partnership was rooted in shared values of peace, stability, freedom, and mutual respect. They agreed

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh with Greek counterpart Nikolaos Georgios S. Dendias in Delhi on Monday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

to expand the capacities of their indigenous defence industries by aligning India's Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative with Greece's defence reforms under Agenda 2030.

A Joint Declaration of Intent on strengthening defence industrial cooperation was signed, marking the beginning of work on a five-year road map. The two sides also exchanged a Bilateral Military Cooperation Plan for 2026, outlining future military engagements between the armed forces of both countries, the Ministry added.

Peace, security
The discussions covered regional peace and security, with both leaders acknowledging the steady deepening of bilateral defence cooperation and strategic ties. Convergence on key maritime issues was highlighted, reflecting the shared outlook of the two ancient seafaring nations.

The Greek side announced the deployment of a Greek International Liaison Officer at the Information Fusion Centre-Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) in Gurugram, underlining enhanced maritime cooperation.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Dendias laid a wreath at the National War Memorial and paid homage to fallen soldiers. He also inspected a Tri-Service Guard of Honour at the Manekshaw Centre.

India and Greece agree to strengthen defence industrial cooperation in five-year road map
भारत और ग्रीस ने पाँच वर्षीय रोड मैप में रक्षा औद्योगिक सहयोग को मजबूत करने पर सहमति जताई

- Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** held a bilateral meeting with Greece's Minister of National Defence, **Nikolaos-Georgios Dendias**, in **New Delhi** on **Monday**.
 रक्षा मंत्री **राजनाथ सिंह** ने **सोमवार** को **नई दिल्ली** में ग्रीस के राष्ट्रीय रक्षा मंत्री **निकोलाओस-जॉर्जियोस डेंडियास** के साथ द्विपक्षीय बैठक की।
- The meeting focused on strengthening defence cooperation under the **India-Greece Strategic Partnership**.
 बैठक का केंद्र **भारत-ग्रीस रणनीतिक साझेदारी** के तहत रक्षा सहयोग को मजबूत करना था।
- According to the **Defence Ministry**, both Ministers reiterated that the partnership was rooted in shared values of **peace**, **stability**, **freedom**, and **mutual respect**.
 रक्षा मंत्रालय के अनुसार, दोनों मंत्रियों ने दोहराया कि यह साझेदारी **शांति**, **स्थिरता**, **स्वतंत्रता** और **पारस्परिक सम्मान** के साझा मूल्यों पर आधारित है।
- They agreed to expand the capacities of their **indigenous defence industries** by aligning India's **Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative** with Greece's defence reforms under **Agenda 2030**.
 उन्होंने **एजेंडा 2030** के तहत ग्रीस के रक्षा सुधारों के साथ भारत की **आत्मनिर्भर भारत पहल** को संरेखित कर **स्वदेशी रक्षा उद्योगों** की क्षमताओं का विस्तार करने पर सहमति जताई।
- A **Joint Declaration of Intent** on strengthening defence industrial cooperation was signed, marking the beginning of work on a **five-year road map**.
 रक्षा औद्योगिक सहयोग को मजबूत करने पर एक **संयुक्त आशय घोषणा** पर हस्ताक्षर किए गए, जिससे **पाँच वर्षीय रोड मैप** पर कार्य की शुरुआत हुई।
- The two sides also exchanged a **Bilateral Military Cooperation Plan for 2026**, outlining future military engagements between the armed forces of both countries, the Ministry added.
 मंत्रालय ने बताया कि दोनों पक्षों ने **2026 के लिए द्विपक्षीय सैन्य सहयोग योजना** का भी आदान-प्रदान किया, जिसमें दोनों देशों की सशस्त्र सेनाओं के बीच भविष्य की सैन्य सहभागिताओं की रूपरेखा है।

Peace, security
शांति, सुरक्षा

- The discussions covered **regional peace and security**, with both leaders acknowledging the steady deepening of bilateral defence cooperation and strategic ties.
 चर्चाओं में **क्षेत्रीय शांति और सुरक्षा** शामिल रही, जिसमें दोनों नेताओं ने द्विपक्षीय रक्षा सहयोग और रणनीतिक संबंधों के निरंतर गहराने को स्वीकार किया।
- Convergence on key **maritime issues** was highlighted, reflecting the shared outlook of the two **ancient seafaring nations**.
 प्रमुख **समुद्री मुद्दों** पर अभिसरण को रेखांकित किया गया, जो दोनों **प्राचीन समुद्री राष्ट्रों** के साझा दृष्टिकोण को दर्शाता है।
- The Greek side announced the deployment of a **Greek International Liaison Officer** at the **Information Fusion Centre–Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR)** in **Gurugram**, underlining enhanced maritime cooperation.
 ग्रीक पक्ष ने **गुरुग्राम** स्थित **इन्फॉर्मेशन फ्यूज़न सेंटर–इंडियन ओशन रीजन (IFC-IOR)** में एक **ग्रीक अंतरराष्ट्रीय संपर्क अधिकारी** की तैनाती की घोषणा की, जिससे उन्नत समुद्री सहयोग को रेखांकित किया गया।
- Earlier in the day, Mr. Dendias laid a wreath at the **National War Memorial** and paid homage to **fallen soldiers**.
 दिन में पहले, श्री डेंडियास ने **राष्ट्रीय युद्ध स्मारक** पर पुष्पांजलि अर्पित की और **शहीद सैनिकों** को श्रद्धांजलि दी।
- He also inspected a **Tri-Service Guard of Honour** at the **Manekshaw Centre**.
 उन्होंने **मानेकशॉ सेंटर** में **त्रि-सेवा गार्ड ऑफ ऑनर** का निरीक्षण भी किया।

GS II: IR

Back on track

India and Malaysia have set about repairing ties during the Modi visit

Making amends was at the top of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 24-hour visit to Kuala Lumpur over the weekend after he had cancelled a planned trip to Malaysia last year, at short notice, to attend the ASEAN summit in October 2025. As a result, Mr. Modi said that he made Malaysia his first destination abroad in the new year. His talks with Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, who had visited India in 2024, resulted in MoUs, with plans to strengthen ties. There was some strain in India-Malaysia ties in 2025 too – although Malaysia condemned the Pahalgam terror attacks, Mr. Ibrahim had called for a "full and thorough enquiry" into the perpetrators and also for "de-escalation and meaningful dialogue between India and Pakistan", which ruffled feathers in New Delhi. He had even offered his services to mediate if required, and in October 2025, had hosted Pakistan Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif for an official visit. It is, therefore, significant that Mr. Modi set aside these concerns, and that the joint statement said India and Malaysia condemned terrorism unequivocally "... including cross-border terrorism". India and Malaysia also discussed counter-terrorism cooperation, intelligence and information sharing and coordinating positions at the United Nations and the Financial Action Task Force on the issue. Other important decisions were an MoU on semiconductors, building on cooperation between IIT Madras Global and the Advanced Semiconductor Academy of Malaysia. Building ties in trade, defence, energy and digital technologies were highlighted by the two sides, that took care not to discuss contentious issues publicly, such as the continued stay of preacher Zakir Naik, wanted in India on UAPA charges.

The two sides also side-stepped their differences over multilateral issues. Mr. Modi's decision to skip the ASEAN summit despite accepting the invitation had also dealt a blow to negotiations on reviewing the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA). Critical comments by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal about the FTA, as "badly negotiated" and "silly", and his reference to ASEAN countries as "B-teams" to China still rankled. Mr. Modi's visit was an important reminder of India's commitment even as New Delhi moves ahead with FTAs with Europe and the U.S. India will chair the BRICS Summit later this year – in the joint statement, India merely "noted" Malaysia's aspirations to become a member. Mr. Ibrahim will be invited as Malaysia is a BRICS partner country, while Indonesia has become a member. Mr. Modi's visit, which was welcomed warmly by Mr. Ibrahim, may thus lead to closer coordination but also lay the ground for closer ties between India and the ASEAN region, in terms of their shared geographies, and in dealing with the larger changes in the world.

Back on track India and Malaysia have set about repairing ties during the Modi visit
फिर पटरी पर भारत और मलेशिया ने मोदी की यात्रा के दौरान संबंधों को सुधारने की शुरुआत की

• Making amends was at the top of **Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 24-hour visit to Kuala Lumpur over the weekend** after he had **cancelled a planned trip to Malaysia last year**, at short notice, to attend the **ASEAN summit** in October 2025.
सुधार करना **प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी की सप्ताहांत में कुआलालंपुर की 24 घंटे की यात्रा** का मुख्य उद्देश्य था, जब उन्होंने **पिछले वर्ष मलेशिया की नियोजित यात्रा को रद्द कर दिया था**, ताकि वे **अक्टूबर 2025 में ASEAN शिखर सम्मेलन** में शामिल हो सकें।

• As a result, Mr. Modi said that he **made Malaysia his first destination abroad in the new year**.
इसके परिणामस्वरूप, श्री मोदी ने कहा कि उन्होंने **नए वर्ष में मलेशिया को अपनी पहली विदेश यात्रा का गंतव्य बनाया।**

• His talks with **Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim**, who had visited **India in 2024**, resulted in **MoUs, with plans to strengthen ties**.
उनकी बातचीत **मलेशिया के प्रधानमंत्री अनवर इब्राहिम** से, जिन्होंने **2024 में भारत का दौरा किया था**, **समझौता ज्ञापनों (MoUs)** और **संबंध मजबूत करने की योजनाओं** में परिणत हुई।

• There was some **strain in India-Malaysia ties in 2025 too** — although Malaysia condemned the **Pahalgam terror attacks**, Mr. Ibrahim had called for a **"full and thorough enquiry"** into the perpetrators and also for **"de-escalation and meaningful dialogue between India and Pakistan"**, which **ruffled feathers in New Delhi**.
2025 में भारत-मलेशिया संबंधों में कुछ तनाव भी था — यद्यपि मलेशिया ने **पहलगाम आतंकी हमलों** की निंदा की, श्री इब्राहिम ने **"पूर्ण और व्यापक जांच"** तथा **"भारत और पाकिस्तान के बीच तनाव कम करने और सार्थक संवाद"** का आह्वान किया, जिससे **नई दिल्ली में असंतोष** उत्पन्न हुआ।

• He had even **offered his services to mediate if required**, and in **October 2025**, had hosted **Pakistan Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif for an official visit**.
उन्होंने **जरूरत पड़ने पर मध्यस्थता की पेशकश भी की**, और **अक्टूबर 2025** में **पाकिस्तान के प्रधानमंत्री शहबाज शरीफ की आधिकारिक यात्रा की मेजबानी की।**

• It is, therefore, significant that Mr. Modi **set aside these concerns**, and that the **joint statement said India and Malaysia condemned terrorism unequivocally "including cross-border terrorism"**.
इसलिए यह महत्वपूर्ण है कि श्री मोदी ने **इन चिंताओं को अलग रखा**, और **संयुक्त वक्तव्य में कहा गया कि भारत और मलेशिया ने आतंकवाद की स्पष्ट रूप से निंदा की, "जिसमें सीमा-पार आतंकवाद भी शामिल है"।**

• India and Malaysia also discussed **counterterrorism cooperation, intelligence and information sharing and coordinating positions at the United Nations and the Financial Action Task Force** on the issue.
भारत और मलेशिया ने **आतंकवाद-रोधी सहयोग, खुफिया और सूचना साझा करना तथा संयुक्त राष्ट्र और वित्तीय कार्रवाई कार्यबल (FATF) में समन्वय** पर भी चर्चा की।

- Other important decisions were an **MoU on semiconductors**, building on cooperation between **IIT Madras Global and the Advanced Semiconductor Academy of Malaysia**.
अन्य महत्वपूर्ण निर्णयों में **सेमीकंडक्टर पर समझौता ज्ञापन** शामिल था, जो **IIT मद्रास ग्लोबल और मलेशिया की एडवांस्ड सेमीकंडक्टर अकादमी** के सहयोग पर आधारित है।

- Building ties in **trade, defence, energy and digital technologies** were highlighted by the two sides, that took care not to discuss **contentious issues publicly**, such as the continued stay of preacher **Zakir Naik**, wanted in India on **UAPA charges**.
दोनों पक्षों ने **व्यापार, रक्षा, ऊर्जा और डिजिटल प्रौद्योगिकी** में संबंध मजबूत करने पर जोर दिया, और **विवादास्पद मुद्दों पर सार्वजनिक चर्चा से बचा**, जैसे कि **जाकिर नाइक का मलेशिया में रहना**, जिन्हें भारत में **UAPA आरोपों** में वांछित माना जाता है।

- The two sides also **side-stepped their differences over multilateral issues**.
दोनों पक्षों ने **बहुपक्षीय मुद्दों पर अपने मतभेदों को भी टाल दिया।**

- Mr. Modi's decision to **skip the ASEAN summit despite accepting the invitation** had also dealt a **blow to negotiations on reviewing the ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA)**.
श्री मोदी का **निमंत्रण स्वीकार करने के बावजूद ASEAN शिखर सम्मेलन में शामिल न होने का निर्णय ASEAN-भारत वस्तु व्यापार समझौते (AITIGA)** की समीक्षा वार्ता के लिए झटका था।

- Critical comments by **Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal** about the **FTA as "badly negotiated" and "silly"**, and his reference to **ASEAN countries as "B-teams" to China** still rankled.
वाणिज्य मंत्री पीयूष गोयल द्वारा **FTA को "खराब तरीके से बातचीत किया गया"** और **"मूर्खतापूर्ण"** कहने तथा **ASEAN देशों को चीन की "बी-टीम"** बताने वाली टिप्पणी अब भी असंतोष का कारण है।

- Mr. Modi's visit was an **important reminder of India's commitment** even as New Delhi moves ahead with **FTAs with Europe and the U.S.**
श्री मोदी की यात्रा **भारत की प्रतिबद्धता की महत्वपूर्ण याद दिलाने वाली** थी, जबकि नई दिल्ली **यूरोप और अमेरिका के साथ FTA** आगे बढ़ा रहा है।

- India will **chair the BRICS Summit later this year** — in the joint statement, India merely **"noted" Malaysia's aspirations to become a member**.
भारत **इस वर्ष BRICS शिखर सम्मेलन की अध्यक्षता करेगा** — संयुक्त वक्तव्य में भारत ने केवल **मलेशिया की सदस्य बनने की आकांक्षा को "नोट"** किया।

- Mr. Ibrahim will be invited as **Malaysia is a BRICS partner country**, while **Indonesia has become a member**.
श्री इब्राहिम को आमंत्रित किया जाएगा क्योंकि **मलेशिया BRICS का भागीदार देश है**, जबकि **इंडोनेशिया सदस्य बन चुका है।**

- Mr. Modi's visit, which was **welcomed warmly by Mr. Ibrahim**, may thus lead to **closer coordination** but also lay the ground for **closer ties between India and the ASEAN region**, in terms of their **shared geographies**, and in dealing with the **larger changes in the world**.
श्री मोदी की यात्रा, जिसका **श्री इब्राहिम ने गर्मजोशी से स्वागत किया**, **निकट समन्वय** को बढ़ावा दे सकती है और **भारत तथा ASEAN क्षेत्र के बीच घनिष्ठ संबंधों की नींव रख सकती है**, विशेषकर उनकी **साझा भौगोलिक स्थिति** और **दुनिया में हो रहे बड़े परिवर्तनों से निपटने** के संदर्भ में।

A chance for India to polish the Kimberley Process

GS II: IR

India has assumed the chair of the Kimberley Process (KP) for the year 2026. The KP is a multinational mechanism or structure for governing the trade of 'conflict diamonds' – the rough (or pre-polished) diamonds which are used illegally by rebel or insurgent groups across the world to undermine or threaten legitimate governments. The KP was initiated in May 2000 when the countries of southern Africa initiated dialogues to prevent the trade in conflict diamonds. Negotiations with 37 signatory parties, in 2003, led to the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS). Today, the KP has 60 participants, representing 86 countries, and accounts for approximately 99.8% of the global rough diamond production.

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Badri Narayanan is the Founder and Director of Infisum Modeling

As chair of the Kimberley Process for 2026, India can steer meaningful reforms in global diamond governance

The current structure

The KPCS is the mechanism to prevent the trade of conflict diamonds, which is enforced individually by KP participant countries to ensure that rough diamonds in the legitimate supply chain are KP-compliant. Each consignment is accompanied by a KP certificate corroborated by a participant country. The rough diamonds trade is permitted only between certified KP members who comply fully with these international standards. Additionally, participant countries are obliged to share timely and accurate statistical data for diamond production and trade.

Angola, Botswana, Canada, Congo, Namibia and Russia alone account for more than 85% of the production of rough diamonds, in quantity and value terms. Though India is not a producer, it is a major importer of rough diamonds, importing roughly 40% of the total global imports, both in quantity and value. As the world's leading cutting and polishing hub, centered in Surat and Mumbai, India re-exports polished diamonds to major markets which include China, Hong Kong, Israel, the United Arab Emirates and the United States. India's strategic position, at the heart of the global diamond value chain, gives it unique leverage within the KP to steer meaningful reforms in global diamond governance.

The core issues for India

The KP, a tripartite setup of governments, industry organisations and civil society, faces much criticism and challenges. First, a long-standing criticism is about the definition of 'conflict diamonds'. Its scope is very narrow, capturing only the financial mechanism between rebel groups and governments, while ignoring the illicit use of rough diamonds in state-linked abuses, human rights violations and human trafficking, environmental harm, abuses in artisanal mining, and illicit trade channels.

There are also fundamental questions about the decision-making process. Civil society asks how the KP can ever identify 'conflict diamonds' if any such decision is subject to political veto. Under the current system, any determination can be blocked. What happens when the KP identifies conflict diamonds?

The case of the Central African Republic, which was banned from exporting rough diamonds in 2013 and rejoined in 2024, shows that embargoes without strong support measures tend to increase smuggling and worsen violence rather than stop it. Additionally, while many governments highlighted the need to protect the mining communities, there was less agreement on whether the KP should also address state-related violence. A more inclusive approach would better reflect the full range of challenges communities experience.

Going forward, India may broaden the agenda, without reopening political fights, by forming a technical working group on violence and human rights risks beyond rebel insurgencies. The findings/recommendations from this group may build a consensus before any re-definition of conflict diamonds.

India can leverage its technological strengths to promote digital, tamper-proof KP certificates and harmonised customs data exchange. A blockchain-based certification system, where each shipment carries a unique, immutable and time-stamped digital record linked to key shipment details, would significantly reduce fraud, enhance transparency, and modernise KP operations.

At the same time, India can support producer countries by establishing regional KP technical hubs in key producing areas, particularly in central and eastern Africa, offering training, IT support, certification assistance and forensic capacity. Such capacity-building would make reforms more feasible and collaborative rather than punitive.

Additionally, India can advance institutional reforms by adopting independent or third-party audits in a subset of participants and push for full public release of granular KP statistics from participant countries. This is a step towards greater transparency. Since the KP's strength is its tripartite structure, India can ensure that civil society engagement remains robust by facilitating open communication channels.

Focus on Africa

To address the community challenges, India can highlight how diamonds contribute to livelihoods in Africa. It can push the KP to explicitly acknowledge this reality by aligning its work with relevant Sustainable Development Goals, such as decent work, poverty reduction and responsible consumption. India can help ensure that the KP framework channels diamond revenues toward community development, supporting health, education, and local infrastructure, rather than allowing mining regions to be bypassed. This would help shift the KP's narrative from blocking bad diamonds to enabling a responsible and inclusive diamond trade.

India, as the KP chair and the leader of the Global South, should start pursuing the reform agenda more aggressively to make it a more inclusive, progressive, sustainable, and rule-based multilateral body.

A chance for India to polish the Kimberley Process
भारत के लिए किम्बरली प्रोसेस को सुधारने का अवसर

- **India has assumed the chair of the Kimberley Process (KP) for the year 2026**
  भारत ने वर्ष 2026 के लिए किम्बर्ली प्रोसेस (KP) की अध्यक्षता संभाली है
- India has assumed the **chair of the Kimberley Process (KP)** for the year **2026**.
  भारत ने वर्ष **2026** के लिए **किम्बर्ली प्रोसेस (KP)** की अध्यक्षता संभाली है।
- The **KP is a multinational mechanism** for governing the trade of **'conflict diamonds'**, the rough diamonds used illegally by **rebel or insurgent groups** to threaten **legitimate governments**.
  KP एक बहुराष्ट्रीय तंत्र है जो **'संघर्ष हीरों'** के व्यापार को नियंत्रित करता है, जिनका उपयोग **विद्रोही या उग्रवादी समूह** वैध सरकारों को कमजोर करने के लिए करते हैं।
- The KP was initiated in **May 2000** when **southern African countries** began dialogues to prevent trade in **conflict diamonds**.
  किम्बर्ली प्रोसेस मई 2000 में शुरू हुआ जब **दक्षिणी अफ्रीकी देशों** ने **संघर्ष हीरों** के व्यापार को रोकने के लिए संवाद शुरू किया।
- Negotiations with **37 signatory parties in 2003** led to the **Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS)**.
  2003 में **37 हस्ताक्षरकर्ता देशों** के साथ बातचीत के बाद **किम्बर्ली प्रोसेस सर्टिफिकेशन स्कीम (KPCS)** स्थापित हुई।
- Today, the KP has **60 participants representing 86 countries** and accounts for about **99.8% of global rough diamond production**.
  आज KP में **60 प्रतिभागी, 86 देशों का प्रतिनिधित्व करते हैं**, और यह वैश्विक **रफ हीरा उत्पादन का लगभग 99.8%** कवर करता है।

The current structure
वर्तमान संरचना

- The **KPCS is the mechanism** to prevent trade of **conflict diamonds**, enforced individually by **KP participant countries**.
  KPCS वह तंत्र है जो **संघर्ष हीरों के व्यापार को रोकता है**, जिसे **KP के सदस्य देश** अलग-अलग लागू करते हैं।

- Each consignment is accompanied by a **KP certificate** issued by a **participant country**.
  हर खेप के साथ **KP प्रमाणपत्र** होता है, जिसे **सदस्य देश** जारी करता है।

- Trade in rough diamonds is allowed only between **certified KP members** who fully comply with **international standards**.
  रफ हीरों का व्यापार केवल **प्रमाणित KP सदस्य देशों** के बीच ही अनुमत है, जो **अंतरराष्ट्रीय मानकों** का पालन करते हैं।

- Participant countries must also share **accurate statistical data** on **diamond production and trade**.
  सदस्य देशों को **हीरा उत्पादन और व्यापार** पर **सटीक सांख्यिकीय डेटा** साझा करना अनिवार्य है।

- **Angola, Botswana, Canada, Congo, Namibia and Russia** together account for **over 85% of global rough diamond production**.
  अंगोला, बोत्सवाना, कनाडा, कांगो, नामीबिया और रूस मिलकर **वैश्विक रफ हीरा उत्पादन का 85% से अधिक** हिस्सा रखते हैं।

- Though India is **not a producer**, it is a **major importer**, importing around **40% of global rough diamond imports**.
  हालाँकि भारत **उत्पादक नहीं है**, लेकिन यह **मुख्य आयातक** है, और वैश्विक रफ हीरों का लगभग **40% आयात** करता है।

- India is the **world's leading cutting and polishing hub**, centered in **Surat and Mumbai**.
  भारत **विश्व का प्रमुख कटिंग और पॉलिशिंग केंद्र** है, जिसका केंद्र **सूरत और मुंबई** है।

- India re-exports **polished diamonds** to markets such as **China, Hong Kong, Israel, UAE and the United States**.
  भारत **पॉलिश किए गए हीरे** को **चीन, हांगकांग, इज़राइल, UAE और अमेरिका** जैसे बाज़ारों में निर्यात करता है।

- India's **strategic position in the global diamond value chain** gives it **unique leverage within KP** to push **reforms in global diamond governance**.
  वैश्विक हीरा मूल्य श्रृंखला में भारत की **रणनीतिक स्थिति** उसे **KP में विशेष प्रभाव** देती है, जिससे वह **वैश्विक हीरा शासन में सुधार** को आगे बढ़ा सकता है।

The core issues for India
भारत के लिए प्रमुख मुद्दे

- The **Kimberley Process (KP)**, a **tripartite setup of governments, industry organisations and civil society**, faces much **criticism and challenges**.
  किम्बर्ली प्रोसेस (KP), जो **सरकार, उद्योग और नागरिक समाज की त्रिपक्षीय व्यवस्था** है, कई **आलोचनाओं और चुनौतियों** का सामना कर रहा है।

- A long-standing criticism concerns the **definition of 'conflict diamonds'**, which has a **very narrow scope**.
  एक प्रमुख आलोचना **'संघर्ष हीरों'** की परिभाषा से संबंधित है, जिसका **दायरा बहुत संकीर्ण** है।

- It captures only the **financial link between rebel groups and governments**, while ignoring **state-linked abuses, human rights violations, human trafficking, environmental harm, abuses in artisanal mining and illicit trade channels**.
  यह केवल **विद्रोही समूहों और सरकारों के बीच वित्तीय संबंध** को कवर करता है, जबकि **राज्य-सम्बंधित अत्याचार, मानवाधिकार उल्लंघन, मानव तस्करी, पर्यावरणीय नुकसान, कारीगर खनन में शोषण और अवैध व्यापार मार्गों** को अनदेखा करता है।

- There are also questions about the **decision-making process**.
  निर्णय लेने की प्रक्रिया पर भी सवाल उठते हैं।

- Civil society asks how the KP can identify **'conflict diamonds'** if decisions are subject to **political veto**.

नागरिक समाज पूछता है कि यदि निर्णय **राजनीतिक वीटो** के अधीन हों, तो KP **संघर्ष हीरों की पहचान कैसे करेगा**।

- Under the current system, **any determination can be blocked**.
  वर्तमान प्रणाली में **कोई भी निर्णय रोका जा सकता है**।

- The case of the **Central African Republic**, banned from exporting rough diamonds in **2013** and rejoining in **2024**, shows embargoes without support increase **smuggling and violence**.
  सेंट्रल अफ्रीकन रिपब्लिक का मामला, जिसे **2013 में प्रतिबंधित** किया गया और **2024 में पुनः शामिल किया गया**, दर्शाता है कि बिना समर्थन के प्रतिबंध **तस्करी और हिंसा बढ़ाते हैं**।

- Many governments highlighted protecting **mining communities**, but there was less agreement on addressing **state-related violence**.
  कई सरकारों ने **खनन समुदायों की सुरक्षा** पर जोर दिया, लेकिन **राज्य-सम्बंधित हिंसा** पर सहमति कम रही।

- A **more inclusive approach** would better reflect the **full range of community challenges**.
  एक **अधिक समावेशी दृष्टिकोण** समुदायों की **वास्तविक चुनौतियों** को बेहतर दर्शाएगा।

- India may broaden the agenda by forming a **technical working group on violence and human rights risks beyond rebel insurgencies**.
  भारत एजेंडा का विस्तार करते हुए **विद्रोह से परे हिंसा और मानवाधिकार जोखिमों पर तकनीकी कार्य समूह** बना सकता है।

- The findings may help build **consensus before redefining 'conflict diamonds'**.
  इसके निष्कर्ष **संघर्ष हीरों की पुनर्परिभाषा से पहले सहमति बनाने** में मदद कर सकते हैं।

- India can use its **technological strength** to promote **digital, tamper-proof KP certificates and harmonised customs data exchange**.
  भारत अपनी **तकनीकी क्षमता** का उपयोग कर **डिजिटल, छेड़छाड़-रोधी KP प्रमाणपत्र और समन्वित कस्टम डेटा विनिमय** को बढ़ावा दे सकता है।

- A **blockchain-based certification system** with **unique, immutable, time-stamped digital records** can reduce **fraud and enhance transparency**.
  ब्लॉकचेन आधारित प्रमाणन प्रणाली, जिसमें **अद्वितीय और समय-चिह्नित डिजिटल रिकॉर्ड** हों, धोखाधड़ी कम और पारदर्शिता बढ़ा सकती है।

- India can support producer countries by establishing **regional KP technical hubs in central and eastern Africa** for **training, IT support, certification and forensic capacity**.
  भारत **मध्य और पूर्वी अफ्रीका में क्षेत्रीय KP तकनीकी केंद्र** स्थापित कर **प्रशिक्षण, आईटी सहायता, प्रमाणन और फोरेंसिक क्षमता** प्रदान कर सकता है।

- Such **capacity-building** would make reforms more **collaborative rather than punitive**.
  ऐसी **क्षमता निर्माण** से सुधार **दंडात्मक के बजाय सहयोगात्मक** बनेंगे।

- India can promote **institutional reforms** through **independent audits and full public release of detailed KP statistics**.
  भारत **स्वतंत्र ऑडिट और विस्तृत KP आँकड़ों के सार्वजनिक प्रकाशन** के माध्यम से **संस्थागत सुधार** को बढ़ावा दे सकता है।

- India should ensure **strong civil society engagement** through **open communication channels**.
  भारत को **खुले संवाद माध्यमों** के माध्यम से **नागरिक समाज की मजबूत भागीदारी** सुनिश्चित करनी चाहिए।

Focus on Africa
अफ्रीका पर ध्यान

- India can highlight the role of **diamonds in livelihoods in Africa**.
  भारत **अफ्रीका में आजीविका में हीरों की भूमिका** को उजागर कर सकता है।

- It can align KP work with **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** such as **decent work, poverty reduction and responsible consumption**.
  यह KP के कार्य को **सतत विकास लक्ष्यों (SDGs)** जैसे **सम्मानजनक कार्य, गरीबी उन्मूलन और जिम्मेदार उपभोग** से जोड़ सकता है।

- India can ensure diamond revenues support **community development, health, education and infrastructure**.
  भारत यह सुनिश्चित कर सकता है कि हीरा राजस्व **समुदाय विकास, स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा और बुनियादी ढाँचे** में उपयोग हो।

- This would shift KP's focus from **blocking bad diamonds to enabling responsible and inclusive diamond trade**.
इससे KP का ध्यान **खराब हीरों को रोकने से जिम्मेदार और समावेशी व्यापार को सक्षम करने** की ओर जाएगा।

- India, as **KP chair and leader of the Global South**, should pursue reforms to make KP a more **inclusive, progressive, sustainable and rule-based multilateral body**.
भारत, **KP अध्यक्ष और वैश्विक दक्षिण के नेता** के रूप में, KP को **अधिक समावेशी, प्रगतिशील, सतत और नियम-आधारित बहुपक्षीय संस्था** बनाने हेतु सुधारों को आगे बढ़ाना चाहिए।

What next after Thailand votes to scrap constitution

What next after Thailand votes to scrap constitution

संविधान को खत्म करने के लिए थाईलैंड में मतदान के बाद आगे क्या

GS II: IR

Reuters
BANGKOK

Voters in Thailand's general election on Sunday overwhelmingly voted for a referendum calling for a new constitution to replace a 2017 charter. The referendum is the outcome of a decades-long struggle between the pro-military royalist establishment and democratic political movements.

Those backing change say the current military-backed charter entrenches unelected power, weakening democratic checks and civil liberties.

The referendum drew 60% support and 32% against, the Election Commission reported, with 94% of polling stations counted. The ballot asked, "Do you approve that there should be a new constitution?" and offered a choice of "Yes", "No" or "No opinion". The majority "Yes" vote gives Parliament a public mandate to begin drafting a new national charter, which would replace the current 2017 constitution which was drafted by a military-appointed committee following a 2014 coup.

Thailand has had 20 constitutions since the end of absolute monarchy in 1932. Most of the changes followed military coups, 13 of which have been successful in the last 94 years.

Most mainstream political parties, including the ruling Bhumjaithai Party, which won big in Sunday's election, as well as the Opposition People's Party and Pheu Thai, backed amending the constitution and urged supporters to vote "yes" in the referendum. Once formed, the new government and lawmakers can start the amendment process in Parliament, with two more referendums required to adopt a new constitution. The first task will be to lay out the framework and key principles of the drafting process, as well as identifying those responsible for writing the charter.

Experts say the process could run at least two years after the first referendum.

- Voters in **Thailand's general election** on **Sunday** overwhelmingly voted for a **referendum** calling for a **new constitution** to replace a **2017 charter**.
रविवार को हुए **थाईलैंड के आम चुनाव** में मतदाताओं ने भारी बहुमत से **2017 के चार्टर** को बदलने के लिए **नए संविधान** की मांग वाले **जनमत संग्रह** के पक्ष में मतदान किया।

- The **referendum** is the outcome of a **decades-long struggle** between the **pro-military royalist establishment** and **democratic political movements**.
यह **जनमत संग्रह सैन्य समर्थक राजतंत्रवादी प्रतिष्ठान** और **लोकतांत्रिक राजनीतिक आंदोलनों** के बीच **दशकों से चले आ रहे संघर्ष** का परिणाम है।

- Those backing change say the current **military-backed charter** entrenches **unelected power**, weakening **democratic checks** and **civil liberties**.
परिवर्तन का समर्थन करने वालों का कहना है कि मौजूदा **सैन्य समर्थित चार्टर गैर-निर्वाचित शक्ति** को मजबूत करता है, जिससे **लोकतांत्रिक नियंत्रण** और **नागरिक स्वतंत्रताएँ** कमजोर होती हैं।

- The **referendum** drew **60% support** and **32% against**, the **Election Commission** reported, with **94% of polling stations counted**.
चुनाव आयोग के अनुसार **94% मतदान केंद्रों** की गिनती के साथ **जनमत संग्रह** को **60% समर्थन** और **32% विरोध** मिला।

- The ballot asked, "**Do you approve that there should be a new constitution?**" and offered a choice of "**Yes**", "**No**" or "**No opinion**".
मतपत्र में पूछा गया, "**क्या आप नए संविधान के पक्ष में हैं?**" और "**हाँ**", "**नहीं**" या "**कोई राय नहीं**" का विकल्प दिया गया।

- The majority "**Yes**" vote gives **Parliament** a **public mandate** to begin drafting a **new national charter**, which would replace the current **2017 constitution** which was drafted by a **military-appointed committee** following a **2014 coup**.
बहुमत में मिले "**हाँ**" वोट से **संसद** को **नया राष्ट्रीय चार्टर** तैयार करने का **जनादेश** मिलता है, जो मौजूदा **2017 के संविधान** की जगह लेगा, जिसे **2014 के तख्तापलट** के बाद **सैन्य-नियुक्त समिति** ने तैयार किया था।

- **Thailand** has had **20 constitutions** since the end of **absolute monarchy** in **1932**.
  थाईलैंड में **1932** में **पूर्ण राजतंत्र** के अंत के बाद से अब तक **20 संविधान** बन चुके हैं।

- Most of the changes followed **military coups**, **13** of which have been **successful** in the last **94 years**.
  अधिकांश परिवर्तन **सैन्य तख्तापलटों** के बाद हुए, जिनमें से पिछले **94 वर्षों** में **13 सफल** रहे हैं।

- Most **mainstream political parties**, including the ruling **Bhumjaithai Party**, which won big in **Sunday's election**, as well as the **Opposition People's Party** and **Pheu Thai**, backed **amending the constitution** and urged supporters to vote "**yes**" in the **referendum**.
  अधिकांश **मुख्यधारा की राजनीतिक पार्टियाँ**, जिनमें **रविवार के चुनाव** में बड़ी जीत हासिल करने वाली सत्तारूढ़ **भूमजैथाई पार्टी**, **विपक्षी पीपल्स पार्टी** और **फ्यू थाई** शामिल हैं, ने **संविधान संशोधन** का समर्थन किया और समर्थकों से **जनमत संग्रह** में "**हाँ**" के पक्ष में मतदान करने की अपील की।

- Once formed, the **new government** and **lawmakers** can start the **amendment process** in **Parliament**, with **two more referendums** required to adopt a **new constitution**.
  एक बार **नई सरकार** बनने के बाद **सांसद संसद** में **संशोधन प्रक्रिया** शुरू कर सकते हैं, और **नए संविधान** को अपनाने के लिए **दो और जनमत संग्रह** आवश्यक होंगे।

- The **first task** will be to lay out the **framework** and **key principles** of the **drafting process**, as well as identifying those responsible for **writing the charter**.
  पहला कार्य मसौदा प्रक्रिया के **ढांचे** और **मुख्य सिद्धांतों** को तय करना होगा, साथ ही **चार्टर लिखने** के लिए जिम्मेदार लोगों की पहचान करना होगा।

- **Experts** say the process could run at least **two years** after the **first referendum**.
  विशेषज्ञों का कहना है कि यह प्रक्रिया **पहले जनमत संग्रह** के बाद कम से कम **दो वर्ष** तक चल सकती है।

'Takaichi's landslide win reflects deep structural, ideological shift in Japan'

GS II: IR

Press Trust of India

BEIJING

China on Monday said that Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's massive victory in the midterm polls, a result widely seen as fuelled by public resentment over Beijing's strong opposition to her, reflects some deep-seated structural problems and shifting ideological currents.

Ms. Takaichi's Liberal Democratic Party won more than two-thirds majority in the House of Representatives in Sunday's election.

The election results in Japan reflected some deep-seated structural problems as well as evolving trends of ideological currents, which deserve profound reflection by visionary individuals from all walks of

Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi speaks during a press conference in Tokyo on Monday. AP

life in Japan and the international community at large, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian told reporters.

He was replying to a question at a media briefing here whether Beijing's tough stance toward Ms. Takaichi's remarks on Taiwan, persisting with diplomatic tension, influenced the outcome of elections in

her favour.

"We urge those running the Japanese government to take seriously rather than brush aside the concerns of the international community, follow the path of peaceful development rather than return to militarism," he said.

"If Japan's far-right forces miscalculate and act recklessly, they will be met

by resistance from the Japanese people and serious backlash from the international community," he added.

China never interferes in the internal affairs of other countries, firmly opposes any erroneous words and actions that interfere in its internal affairs, infringe upon its core interests, Mr. Lin said, defending Beijing's tough stance towards Japan in the last few months.

China mounted a massive diplomatic offensive against Japan over Ms. Takaichi's remarks in November last year that a Taiwan contingency could be a "survival-threatening situation" for Japan that may lead to action from the country's defence forces in support of the United States.

'Takaichi's landslide win reflects deep structural, ideological shift in Japan'
'ताकाइची की भारी जीत जापान में गहरे संरचनात्मक और वैचारिक बदलाव को दर्शाती है'

- China on **Monday** said that **Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's** massive victory in the **midterm polls**, a result widely seen as fuelled by public resentment over **Beijing's strong opposition** to her, reflects some **deep-seated structural problems** and **shifting**

ideological currents.

सोमवार को **चीन** ने कहा कि **जापान की प्रधानमंत्री साने ताकाइची** की **मध्यावधि चुनावों** में भारी जीत, जिसे व्यापक रूप से उनके प्रति **बीजिंग के कड़े विरोध** से उपजे जन आक्रोश से प्रेरित माना जा रहा है, कुछ **गहरे जड़ें जमाए संरचनात्मक समस्याओं** और **बदलती वैचारिक धाराओं** को दर्शाती है।

- Ms. Takaichi's **Liberal Democratic Party** won **more than two-thirds majority** in the **House of Representatives** in **Sunday's election**.

  सुश्री ताकाइची की लिबरल डेमोक्रेटिक पार्टी ने रविवार के चुनाव में प्रतिनिधि सभा में **दो-तिहाई से अधिक बहुमत** हासिल किया।

- The election results in **Japan** reflected some **deep-seated structural problems** as well as **evolving trends of ideological currents**, which deserve **profound reflection** by visionary individuals from all walks of life in **Japan** and the **international community** at large, **Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian** told reporters.

  जापान में चुनाव परिणाम कुछ **गहरे संरचनात्मक समस्याओं** के साथ-साथ **विकसित होती वैचारिक प्रवृत्तियों** को दर्शाते हैं, जिन पर **जापान** और व्यापक **अंतरराष्ट्रीय समुदाय** के सभी वर्गों के दूरदर्शी व्यक्तियों द्वारा **गहन चिंतन** किया जाना चाहिए, **चीनी विदेश मंत्रालय के प्रवक्ता लिन जियान** ने पत्रकारों से कहा।

- He was replying to a question at a **media briefing** here whether **Beijing's tough stance** toward Ms. Takaichi's remarks on **Taiwan**, persisting with **diplomatic tension**, influenced the outcome of elections in her favour.

  वह यहां एक **मीडिया ब्रीफिंग** में इस प्रश्न का उत्तर दे रहे थे कि **ताइवान** पर **सुश्री ताकाइची** की टिप्पणियों के प्रति **बीजिंग के कड़े रुख**, और जारी **राजनयिक तनाव**, ने चुनाव परिणामों को उनके पक्ष में प्रभावित किया या नहीं।

- "We urge those running the **Japanese government** to take seriously rather than brush aside the concerns of the **international community**, follow the path of **peaceful development** rather than return to **militarism**," he said.

  उन्होंने कहा, "हम **जापानी सरकार** चलाने वालों से आग्रह करते हैं कि वे **अंतरराष्ट्रीय समुदाय** की चिंताओं को नजरअंदाज करने के बजाय गंभीरता से लें, और **सैन्यवाद** की ओर लौटने के बजाय **शांतिपूर्ण विकास** के मार्ग का अनुसरण करें।"

- "If Japan's **far-right forces** miscalculate and act recklessly, they will be met by resistance from the **Japanese people** and serious backlash from the **international community**," he added.

  उन्होंने आगे कहा, "यदि जापान की **दूर-दराज़ दक्षिणपंथी ताकतें** गलत आकलन करती हैं और लापरवाही से कार्य करती हैं, तो उन्हें **जापानी जनता** के प्रतिरोध और **अंतरराष्ट्रीय समुदाय** की गंभीर प्रतिक्रिया का सामना करना पड़ेगा।"

- **China** never interferes in the **internal affairs** of other countries, firmly opposes any **erroneous words and actions** that interfere in its internal affairs, infringe upon its **core interests**, Mr. Lin said, defending **Beijing's tough stance** towards **Japan** in the last few months.

  लिन ने कहा कि **चीन** कभी भी अन्य देशों के **आंतरिक मामलों** में हस्तक्षेप नहीं करता, और ऐसे किसी भी **गलत शब्दों और कार्यों** का कड़ा विरोध करता है जो उसके आंतरिक मामलों में दखल दें या उसके **मूल हितों** का उल्लंघन करें, और उन्होंने पिछले कुछ महीनों में **जापान** के प्रति **बीजिंग के कड़े रुख** का बचाव किया।

- **China** mounted a massive **diplomatic offensive** against **Japan** over Ms. Takaichi's remarks in **November last year** that a **Taiwan contingency** could be a "**survival-threatening situation**" for **Japan** that may lead to action from the country's **defence forces** in support of the **United States**.

  चीन ने **पिछले वर्ष नवंबर** में **सुश्री ताकाइची** की उन टिप्पणियों को लेकर **जापान** के खिलाफ एक बड़ा **राजनयिक अभियान** चलाया था, जिनमें कहा गया था कि **ताइवान संकट जापान** के लिए एक "**अस्तित्व-के-लिए-खतरा पैदा करने वाली स्थिति**" हो सकता है, जिससे **संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका** के समर्थन में देश की **रक्षा बलों** की कार्रवाई हो सकती है।

GS Paper III: Economy,

	TOPICS COVERED	10 February 2026
1.	'Workers, employers found Labour Codes forward-looking' 'श्रमिकों, नियोक्ताओं ने श्रम संहिताओं को दूरदर्शी पाया'	
2.	The next big commodity is the mineable self अगली बड़ी कमोडिटी है माइन करने योग्य स्वयं	
3.	Lessons about job creation from Misty Milk मिस्टी मिल्क से रोजगार सृजन के बारे में सबक	
4.	Tale of two consumers: Rural aspiration vs. urban caution दो उपभोक्ताओं की कहानी: ग्रामीण आकांक्षा बनाम शहरी सावधानी	
5.	Gross NPAs of SCBs at a historic low of 2.15% as of September सितंबर तक एससीबी के सकल एनपीए ऐतिहासिक रूप से 2.15% के निचले स्तर पर	

'Workers, employers found Labour Codes forward-looking'

GS III: Economy

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A survey conducted by the Union Labour Ministry's research arm, V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, among 5,720 workers and 715 employers has found "a broad-based and constructive acceptance" of the four Labour Codes. "The overall perception scores indicate that stakeholders view the Labour Codes as a credible and forward-looking reform, reflecting confidence in their long-term relevance despite the acknowledged transitional nature of the current phase," a report based on the survey said.

The results were released by Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Monday. Ten Central trade unions have given a call for general strike on February 12 against the implementation of the four Labour Codes.

"The study finds a positive assessment of the potential impact of the Labour Codes on working conditions, wages, and income security. Workers perceive that the Codes will lead to improved regulation of working hours, better leave practices, and regularity in wage payments," it added. Sixty per cent of surveyed workers expect working conditions to improve over time.

It added that "71% of employers express confidence that the Labour Codes support women's participation in employment, while 66% of workers believe that safety, transport, and monitoring requirements will improve protection for women workers".

'Workers, employers found Labour Codes forward-looking'
'श्रमिकों, नियोक्ताओं ने श्रम संहिताओं को दूरदर्शी पाया'

• A **survey** conducted by the **Union Labour Ministry's research arm**, **V.V. Giri National Labour Institute**, among **5,720 workers** and **715 employers** has found "a **broad-based and constructive acceptance**" of the **four Labour Codes**.
केंद्रीय श्रम मंत्रालय की अनुसंधान शाखा, वी.वी. गिरि राष्ट्रीय श्रम संस्थान द्वारा 5,720 श्रमिकों और 715 नियोक्ताओं के बीच किए गए सर्वेक्षण में चार श्रम संहिताओं को लेकर "व्यापक और रचनात्मक स्वीकृति" पाई गई है।

• "The **overall perception scores** indicate that stakeholders view the **Labour Codes** as a **credible and forward-looking reform**, reflecting **confidence in their long-term relevance** despite the acknowledged **transitional nature** of the current phase," a **report** based on the survey said.
सर्वेक्षण पर आधारित रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है कि "कुल धारणा स्कोर दर्शाते हैं कि हितधारक श्रम संहिताओं को विश्वसनीय और दूरदर्शी सुधार के रूप में देखते हैं, जो वर्तमान चरण की स्वीकृत संक्रमणकालीन प्रकृति के बावजूद दीर्घकालिक प्रासंगिकता में विश्वास को दर्शाता है।"

• The **results** were released by **Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya** on **Monday**.
परिणाम केंद्रीय श्रम मंत्री मनसुख मांडविया द्वारा सोमवार को जारी किए गए।

• **Ten Central trade unions** have given a call for **general strike** on **February 12** against the implementation of the **four Labour Codes**.
दस केंद्रीय ट्रेड यूनियनों ने चार श्रम संहिताओं के कार्यान्वयन के विरोध में 12 फरवरी को सामान्य हड़ताल का आह्वान किया है।

• "The study finds a **positive assessment** of the **potential impact** of the **Labour Codes** on **working conditions**, **wages**, and **income security**.
अध्ययन में कार्य परिस्थितियों, वेतन और आय सुरक्षा पर श्रम संहिताओं के संभावित प्रभाव का सकारात्मक आकलन पाया गया है।

• Workers perceive that the Codes will lead to **improved regulation of working hours**, **better leave practices**, and **regularity in wage payments**," it added.

इसमें जोड़ा गया है कि श्रमिकों का मानना है कि संहिताएँ **कार्य घंटों के बेहतर नियमन**, **अवकाश प्रथाओं में सुधार**, और **वेतन भुगतान की नियमितता** लाएँगी।

- **Sixty per cent** of surveyed workers expect **working conditions** to **improve over time**.
  सर्वेक्षण में शामिल **60 प्रतिशत** श्रमिकों को उम्मीद है कि **कार्य परिस्थितियाँ** समय के साथ **बेहतर होंगी।**

- It added that "**71% of employers** express **confidence** that the **Labour Codes** support **women's participation in employment**, while **66% of workers** believe that **safety**, **transport**, and **monitoring requirements** will improve **protection for women workers**".
  इसमें यह भी कहा गया है कि "**71% नियोक्ता** मानते हैं कि **श्रम संहिताएँ रोज़गार में महिलाओं की भागीदारी** का समर्थन करती हैं, जबकि **66% श्रमिकों** का विश्वास है कि **सुरक्षा**, **परिवहन**, और **निगरानी आवश्यकताएँ** महिला श्रमिकों के संरक्षण में सुधार करेंगी।"

The next big commodity is the mineable self

GS III: Economy

A global market in a new commodity is growing exponentially in front of our eyes. It is not artificial intelligence (AI). It is not rare earths. It is not some new source of energy. It is not even in pharmaceuticals, media, or finance. It is integral to each of them and might determine the future of all of them. It is an infinitely renewable resource, which will last at least for as long as human beings and our planet continue to exist.

This commodity is the self, in which a global market has gradually emerged. It cuts across all domains of human life, from entertainment to journalism, from streaming to gender transitions, from banking to branding, from identity politics to soft power, and from crowdfunding to the tariff wars.

Arjun Appadurai
is Emeritus Professor of Media Studies at New York University

Mining the self
Industrial capitalism has a marked predilection for the creation and exploitation of what Marx called surplus value, value beyond the value of the labour required to produce commodities, and floats into the mysterious form of profit for the owners and managers of capital.

Today, human beings are the new object and horizon of capitalist extraction. The new object is sociality itself. It is our friendships, our love lives, our family connections, our classmates, our children, our fellow workers, our neighbours, as well as our digital lives, our political allies, our food and drug suppliers, and more. This is profiling on steroids. It mines our deepest affinities and our most ephemeral social ties. It is a new feat of creative destruction, which renders ideas such as privacy, intimacy and trust obsolete. It makes all our sociality a resource that can be mined without permission or limit. And in this unbounded mining of sociality, our stories are the access code. There are three recent changes in the market for selves, which together drive the mineable self.

This first change is that the seduction of the global has captured the market in characters. This is evident in the global hunt for stories from Mexico to Nepal and Spain to Indonesia. Every form of local mythology, folklore and backwater is trolled by publishers, film festivals, art biennales, and literary prize committees in the ceaseless hunt for portability, local flavour, vaguely universal themes and new character types (aliens, cyber-monsters, souped up heroes, zombies, post-blobs).

The most sought-after stories of our times are about obviously mobile phenomena such as drugs, migrants or mercenaries. More precisely, they are about the local addresses of transborder volatility. And this is as true of the stories that make up the news, as it is of more obviously literary fiction. It has been a few decades since any person with a camera or a video-recorder who happens to be in a scheme of war, crime or terror becomes a photojournalist, a kind of narrative First Responder, who puts the global narrative system on alert. Syndicated news services, stringers, overseas correspondents and their metropolitan handlers become parts of a vast system of triage for these "local" incidents and images, stoking the furnace of global media. Of course, there is a vast pyramid of news organisations, media, audiences and platforms, which form an uneven hierarchy of priorities and tastes. These include media that are resolutely local in their reach. But even they imagine the larger world through their own lenses.

So, "local" news is often a prismatic refraction of global issues, in a manner that changes the texture of locality, which is no longer bound by the parochial, the proximate and the familiar. Thus, locality regarding the news is no longer what it used to be. Nor is the global its simple antonym. The market for stories, whether of the real or of the less real, occupies a new geography which cannot be captured by opposing the global and the local. This development drives the transformation of the self into the newest form of raw material, a new horizon for extraction, exploitation and commodification.

In this new market, everyone has a story, including ordinary humans (who still are the reference point of what used to be called human interest), but also banks, nations, sports teams, genders (old and new), corporations, and franchises and cities among other social forms. This multiplication of the "I" and the "Me" is discernible even in the twilight zone of AI, where Siri, ChatGPT and numerous bots are in the race to display the same emotions, intuitions and vulnerabilities as any garden variety human can do. The strange symbiosis between the mineable self, the rebooted idea of locality and the story market can be better understood by looking at the single biggest force in the story market today, which is OTT (Over the Top) streaming, the entertainment technology of choice for such giants as Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney and other companies in this market.

Stories, technology platforms and digital markets are transforming humans into commodities

The character of streaming
It is widely known that streaming, driven by OTT technologies, which rely only on the Internet, and not on prior media infrastructures, is colonising much of the market previously dominated by big studios, their business models, their modes of distribution and their approaches to branding, promotion and audience-building.

Perhaps the biggest element of this booming story economy is the rise of "unknowns", mid-market actors and characters who appear to be woven into modest parts of professional life and seem extraordinarily ordinary. In India, a streaming market that Netflix CEO Reed Hastings claimed in 2018 would bring his company a 100 million subscribers. This trend highlights a more general global trend toward the democratisation of the self, a not entirely positive phenomenon.

The rise of the self is sometimes seen as an expression of the best of enlightenment values, another face of the rise of the individual, of personal liberty, of freedom from assigned collective identities, and of freedom to craft one's own path from the raw materials of birth, context and social stereotypes. But that potential has now become a big part of the mineable self of our digital era. The intelligence of the artificial competes with previously human monopolies over affect, judgement and intuition. The classical individual is now an unstable composite of credit scores, actuarial charts, algorithmic storehouses, and consumer profiles, with virtually no need for a unified or continuous anchor in a singular person.

Thus, what the philosopher Charles Taylor studied as "The Sources of the Self" might today be retold as the story of the "sources of the selfie". The selfie taken with a celebrity, even by photobombing, is a quintessential expression of the democratisation of the self, equal to anyone else before the lens.

The chain of storytelling
This trend is now at the cutting edge of mining the self. Everyone has the right to have a self-centered story, whether of heroism, victimhood, martyrdom, or redemption, and anyone can get help to tell their story better with the paid help of influencers, coaches, writing apps, publishing platforms or, sometimes, through selling the right to mine their stories to entertainers, journalists, publicists or scriptwriters. The great chain of storytelling always strives for more ears and eyeballs. The careers of many YouTube stars have been powered by nothing more than the lucky virality of often trivial self-narrations.

Thus, two slogans meet one another in the global market for selves. One is that every self has a story, and the other one is that every such story deserves an audience. These two pieces of recent common sense fuel the rush to drill into every living mineshaft, looking for a chunk of ourselves with the tools that we have so recently invented. What we have now is a new super-commodity, bound only by our appetite for mining ourselves.

The next big commodity is the mineable self
अगली बड़ी कमोडिटी है माइन करने योग्य स्वयं

- A global market in a **new commodity** is growing **exponentially** in front of our eyes.
  एक **नई वस्तु** में वैश्विक बाज़ार हमारी आँखों के सामने **तेजी से** बढ़ रहा है।

- It is not **artificial intelligence (AI)**.
  यह **कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता (AI)** नहीं है।

- It is not **rare earths**.
  यह **रेयर अर्थ** नहीं है।

- It is not some **new source of energy**.
  यह कोई **नई ऊर्जा का स्रोत** नहीं है।
- It is not even in **pharmaceuticals, media, or finance**.
  यह **फार्मास्यूटिकल्स, मीडिया या वित्त** में भी नहीं है।
- It is **integral to each of them** and might determine the **future of all of them**.
  यह **इन सभी का अभिन्न हिस्सा** है और इनके **भविष्य को निर्धारित कर सकता है**।
- It is an **infinitely renewable resource**, which will last at least for as long as **human beings and our planet continue to exist**.
  यह एक **अनंत रूप से नवीकरणीय संसाधन** है, जो तब तक रहेगा जब तक **मानव और हमारा ग्रह अस्तित्व में हैं**।
- This commodity is the **self**, in which a **global market** has gradually emerged.
  यह वस्तु **स्वयं (self)** है, जिसमें एक **वैश्विक बाज़ार** धीरे-धीरे उभरा है।
- It cuts across **all domains of human life**, from **entertainment to journalism, from streaming to gender transitions, from banking to branding, from identity politics to soft power, and from crowdfunding to the tariff wars**.
  यह **मानव जीवन के सभी क्षेत्रों** में फैला है, जैसे **मनोरंजन से पत्रकारिता, स्ट्रीमिंग से जेंडर परिवर्तन, बैंकिंग से ब्रांडिंग, पहचान राजनीति से सॉफ्ट पावर, और क्राउडफंडिंग से टैरिफ युद्ध** तक।

Mining the self
स्वयं का खनन

- Industrial capitalism has a marked predilection for the creation and exploitation of what **Marx called surplus value**, value beyond the value of the labour required to produce commodities, and **floats into the mysterious form of profit for the owners and managers of capital**.
  औद्योगिक पूंजीवाद में उस चीज़ के निर्माण और शोषण की प्रवृत्ति होती है जिसे **मार्क्स ने अधिशेष मूल्य** कहा, जो वस्तुओं के उत्पादन हेतु श्रम के मूल्य से अधिक होता है और **पूंजी के मालिकों व प्रबंधकों के लिए लाभ के रूप में परिवर्तित हो जाता है**।
- Today, **human beings are the new object and horizon of capitalist extraction**.
  आज **मानव स्वयं पूंजीवादी शोषण का नया लक्ष्य और क्षितिज बन गए हैं**।
- The new object is **sociality itself**.
  नया लक्ष्य **सामाजिकता स्वयं** है।
- It is our **friendships, love lives, family connections, classmates, children, fellow workers, neighbours, digital lives, political allies, food and drug suppliers, and more**.
  यह हमारी **मित्रता, प्रेम जीवन, पारिवारिक संबंध, सहपाठी, बच्चे, सहकर्मी, पड़ोसी, डिजिटल जीवन, राजनीतिक सहयोगी, भोजन और दवा आपूर्तिकर्ता आदि** हैं।
- This is **profiling on steroids**.
  यह **अत्यधिक प्रोफाइलिंग** है।
- It mines our **deepest affinities and most ephemeral social ties**.
  यह हमारी **गहरी पसंद और क्षणिक सामाजिक संबंधों** का खनन करता है।
- It is a new feat of **creative destruction**, which renders ideas such as **privacy, intimacy and trust obsolete**.
  यह **रचनात्मक विनाश** का नया उदाहरण है, जो **गोपनीयता, अंतरंगता और विश्वास** जैसे विचारों को अप्रासंगिक बना देता है।
- It makes all our **sociality a resource that can be mined without permission or limit**.
  यह हमारी पूरी **सामाजिकता** को ऐसा संसाधन बना देता है जिसका बिना अनुमति या सीमा के खनन किया जा सकता है।
- And in this **unbounded mining of sociality**, our **stories are the access code**.
  और इस **असीमित सामाजिक खनन** में, हमारी **कहानियाँ ही प्रवेश कोड हैं**।
- There are **three recent changes in the market for selves**, which together drive the **mineable self**.
  स्वयं के बाज़ार में तीन हालिया परिवर्तन हुए हैं, जो मिलकर **खनन योग्य स्वयं** को बढ़ावा देते हैं।
- This first change is that the **seduction of the global has captured the market in characters**.
  पहला परिवर्तन यह है कि **वैश्विक आकर्षण ने पात्रों के बाज़ार को पकड़ लिया है**।

- This is evident in the **global hunt for stories from Mexico to Nepal and Spain to Indonesia**.
  यह **मेक्सिको से नेपाल और स्पेन से इंडोनेशिया तक कहानियों की वैश्विक खोज** में स्पष्ट है।

- Every form of **local mythology, folklore and backwater** is trolled by **publishers, film festivals, art biennales, and literary prize committees** in the ceaseless hunt for **portability, local flavour, vaguely universal themes and new character types**.
  हर प्रकार की **स्थानीय पौराणिक कथाएँ, लोककथाएँ और दूरस्थ क्षेत्र** को प्रकाशक, फिल्म फेस्टिवल, **कला बिएनाले और साहित्यिक पुरस्कार समितियाँ** लगातार खोजती हैं, ताकि **वैश्विक उपयोगिता, स्थानीय स्वाद, सार्वभौमिक विषय और नए पात्र प्रकार** मिल सकें।

- The most sought-after stories of our times are about **mobile phenomena such as drugs, migrants or mercenaries**.
  आज की सबसे अधिक मांग वाली कहानियाँ **ड्रग्स, प्रवासी या भाड़े के सैनिक जैसे गतिशील विषयों** पर आधारित हैं।

- More precisely, they are about the **local addresses of transborder volatility**.
  अधिक सटीक रूप से, वे **सीमापार अस्थिरता के स्थानीय रूपों** के बारे में हैं।

- And this is as true of the **stories that make up the news**, as it is of **literary fiction**.
  यह **समाचार की कहानियों** के लिए उतना ही सत्य है जितना **साहित्यिक कथाओं** के लिए।

- It has been a few decades since any person with a **camera or video-recorder** who happens to be in a scheme of **war, crime or terror** becomes a **photojournalist, a narrative First Responder**.
  कई दशकों से, कोई भी व्यक्ति जिसके पास **कैमरा या वीडियो रिकॉर्डर** हो और जो **युद्ध, अपराध या आतंक** की घटना में उपस्थित हो, **फोटो पत्रकार या कथा का प्रथम उत्तरदाता** बन जाता है।

- Syndicated news services, **stringers, overseas correspondents and metropolitan handlers** become parts of a **vast system of triage** for these "local" incidents and images, stoking the **furnace of global media**.
  सिंडिकेटेड समाचार सेवाएँ, **स्ट्रिंगर, विदेशी संवाददाता और महानगरीय प्रबंधक** इन "स्थानीय" घटनाओं और छवियों के लिए **विशाल चयन प्रणाली** का हिस्सा बन जाते हैं, जिससे **वैश्विक मीडिया को बढ़ावा मिलता है**।

- Of course, there is a vast **pyramid of news organisations, media, audiences and platforms**, forming an **uneven hierarchy of priorities and tastes**.
  निश्चित रूप से, **समाचार संगठनों, मीडिया, दर्शकों और प्लेटफार्मों का विशाल पिरामिड** है, जो **प्राथमिकताओं और रुचियों की असमान संरचना** बनाता है।

- These include media that are **resolutely local in their reach**.
  इनमें ऐसे मीडिया भी शामिल हैं जो **अपनी पहुँच में पूर्णतः स्थानीय** हैं।

- But even they imagine the **larger world through their own lenses**.
  लेकिन वे भी **अपने दृष्टिकोण से बड़े विश्व की कल्पना** करते हैं।

- So, **"local" news is often a prismatic refraction of global issues**, changing the **texture of locality**.
  इस प्रकार, **"स्थानीय" समाचार अक्सर वैश्विक मुद्दों का बहुआयामी प्रतिबिंब** होता है, जो **स्थानीयता की प्रकृति को बदल देता है**।

- Locality is no longer bound by the **parochial, proximate and familiar**.
  स्थानीयता अब **संकीर्ण, निकट और परिचित सीमाओं** तक सीमित नहीं रही।

- Thus, locality regarding the news is **no longer what it used to be**, nor is the **global its simple antonym**.
  इस प्रकार, समाचार के संदर्भ में स्थानीयता **अब पहले जैसी नहीं रही**, और **वैश्विक उसका सरल विपरीत नहीं है**।

- The market for stories, whether **real or less real**, occupies a **new geography beyond the global-local divide**.
  कहानियों का बाज़ार, चाहे **वास्तविक हो या कम वास्तविक**, **वैश्विक-स्थानीय विभाजन से परे नई भूगोल** में स्थित है।

- This development drives the **transformation of the self into the newest form of raw material**, a new horizon for **extraction, exploitation and commodification**.
  यह विकास **स्वयं को कच्चे माल के नए रूप में बदलने** की प्रक्रिया को बढ़ाता है, जो **शोषण, उपयोग और वस्तुकरण का नया क्षितिज** है।

In this new market, everyone has a story
इस नए बाज़ार में हर किसी के पास एक कहानी है

- In this new market, **everyone has a story**, including **ordinary humans**, but also **banks, nations, sports teams, genders, corporations, franchises and cities** among other social forms.
  इस नए बाज़ार में **हर किसी के पास एक कहानी है**, जिसमें **साधारण मनुष्य** ही नहीं बल्कि **बैंक, राष्ट्र, खेल टीम, जेंडर, कॉरपोरेशन, फ्रैंचाइज़ और शहर** भी शामिल हैं।

- This multiplication of the **"I"** and the **"Me"** is discernible even in the **twilight zone of AI**, where **Siri, ChatGPT and numerous bots** are in the race to display the same **emotions, intuitions and vulnerabilities** as humans.
  "मैं" और **"मुझे"** की यह वृद्धि **AI की दुनिया** में भी दिखाई देती है, जहाँ **Siri, ChatGPT और अनेक बॉट्स** मनुष्यों जैसी **भावनाएँ, अंतर्ज्ञान और कमजोरियाँ** दिखाने की दौड़ में हैं।

- The strange **symbiosis between the mineable self, rebooted locality and the story market** can be understood by looking at **OTT streaming**, the entertainment technology used by **Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney and others**.
  खनन योग्य स्वयं, पुनर्परिभाषित स्थानीयता और कहानी बाज़ार के बीच का सहजीवन को समझने के लिए **OTT स्ट्रीमिंग** को देखना आवश्यक है, जिसे **Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney आदि** उपयोग करते हैं।

- **The character of streaming**
  स्ट्रीमिंग का स्वरूप

- Streaming driven by **OTT technologies** using only the Internet is **colonising the market** once dominated by **big studios, their distribution and branding models**.
  इंटरनेट आधारित OTT तकनीक द्वारा संचालित स्ट्रीमिंग अब **बड़े स्टूडियो, वितरण और ब्रांडिंग मॉडल** वाले बाज़ार पर कब्ज़ा कर रही है।

- A major element of this story economy is the rise of **"unknowns"** and mid-market actors, ordinary characters woven into **modest professional lives**.
  इस कहानी अर्थव्यवस्था का प्रमुख तत्व **"अनजान"** और **मध्यम स्तर के पात्रों का उदय** है, जो **साधारण पेशेवर जीवन** से जुड़े होते हैं।

- In India, the streaming market was expected by **Netflix CEO Reed Hastings (2018)** to bring **100 million subscribers**.
  भारत में स्ट्रीमिंग बाज़ार से **Netflix के CEO Reed Hastings (2018)** को **100 मिलियन सब्सक्राइबर** की उम्मीद थी।

- This trend reflects a global movement toward **democratisation of the self**, though not entirely positive.
  यह प्रवृत्ति **स्वयं के लोकतंत्रीकरण** की वैश्विक प्रवृत्ति को दर्शाती है, जो पूरी तरह सकारात्मक नहीं है।

- The rise of the self is linked to **individual liberty, freedom from collective identities and freedom to craft one's own path**.
  स्वयं का उदय **व्यक्तिगत स्वतंत्रता, सामूहिक पहचान से मुक्ति और अपना मार्ग बनाने की स्वतंत्रता** से जुड़ा है।

- But this potential has become part of the **mineable self of the digital era**.
  लेकिन यह क्षमता अब **डिजिटल युग के खनन योग्य स्वयं** का हिस्सा बन गई है।

- **Artificial intelligence now competes with human monopoly over affect, judgement and intuition**.
  अब कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता भावनाओं, निर्णय और अंतर्ज्ञान पर मानव एकाधिकार से प्रतिस्पर्धा कर रही है।

- The classical individual is now an **unstable composite of credit scores, actuarial charts, algorithmic storehouses and consumer profiles**.
  पारंपरिक व्यक्ति अब **क्रेडिट स्कोर, एक्चुरियल चार्ट, एल्गोरिदमिक डेटा और उपभोक्ता प्रोफाइल का अस्थिर मिश्रण** बन गया है।

- Thus, philosopher **Charles Taylor's "The Sources of the Self"** might today be retold as **"the sources of the selfie"**.
  इस प्रकार दार्शनिक **चार्ल्स टेलर की "The Sources of the Self"** को आज **"सेल्फी के स्रोत"** के रूप में समझा जा सकता है।

- The **selfie with a celebrity** symbolises **democratisation of the self**, equal before the lens.
  सेलिब्रिटी के साथ ली गई सेल्फी स्वयं के लोकतंत्रीकरण का प्रतीक है, जहाँ सब कैमरे के सामने समान हैं।

The chain of storytelling
कहानी कहने की श्रृंखला

- This trend is now at the **cutting edge of mining the self**.
  यह प्रवृत्ति अब **स्वयं के खनन की अग्रिम सीमा** पर है।
- Everyone has the right to a **self-centered story**, whether of **heroism, victimhood, martyrdom or redemption**.
  हर किसी को **स्वयं-केंद्रित कहानी** का अधिकार है, चाहे वह **वीरता, पीड़ितता, बलिदान या मुक्ति** की हो।
- People can get help through **influencers, coaches, writing apps, publishing platforms**, or by **selling rights to mine their stories**.
  लोग **इन्फ्लुएंसर, कोच, लेखन ऐप, प्रकाशन प्लेटफॉर्म** या **अपनी कहानियों के अधिकार बेचकर** मदद प्राप्त कर सकते हैं।
- The **chain of storytelling seeks more ears and eyeballs**, powering many **YouTube careers through viral self-narrations**.
  कहानी कहने की श्रृंखला अधिक दर्शक और श्रोता खोजती है, और कई **YouTube करियर वायरल आत्म-कथाओं से बने हैं।**
- Thus, two slogans dominate the **global market for selves**: **every self has a story** and **every story deserves an audience**.
  इस प्रकार **स्वयं के वैश्विक बाज़ार** में दो विचार प्रमुख हैं: **हर स्वयं की एक कहानी है** और **हर कहानी को दर्शक मिलना चाहिए।**
- These ideas fuel the **rush to mine every living mineshaft**, using newly invented tools.
  ये विचार **हर जीवित खदान (स्वयं) के खनन की दौड़** को बढ़ावा देते हैं, नए उपकरणों के साथ।
- What we have now is a **new super-commodity**, limited only by **our appetite for mining ourselves**.
  आज हमारे पास एक **नई सुपर-वस्तु** है, जो केवल **स्वयं के खनन की हमारी इच्छा** से सीमित है।

Lessons about job creation from Misty Milk

GS III: Economy

A recent visit to a dairy processing plant in Erode taught us more about job creation than all the TV debates on the Indian economy. Erode has been key to Tamil Nadu's economic story for decades. Business owners mentioned multiple constraints holding them back: access to credit, skills gaps, regulatory complexity, tariff structures. To understand how these constraints operate in practice, we visited the main plant of Misty Milk, a mid-sized company in western Tamil Nadu. There, we found that even when ambition, demand, and infrastructure exist, structural barriers prevent growth. Yet the visit also revealed reasons for optimism about India's employment challenge.

Salman Soz
Economist, author, and member, Indian National Congress

Anand Srinivasan
Expert in personal finance and member, Indian National Congress

The constraints

Misty Milk has an impressive capital-intensive facility, with a sophisticated plant designed to handle far more milk than it receives. It is not a startup – with over ₹2,500 crore in annual turnover, it is a serious operation. It sources milk from about 2,000 dairy farmers. Yet management estimates that the plant could integrate supply from nearly 70,000 farmers without significant additional investment at the processing end. The constraint is not demand for dairy products, nor is it a lack of infrastructure. It is the limited ability of small dairy farmers to expand production because they lack access to affordable and reliable credit.

For small dairy farmers, purchasing additional cattle, ensuring consistent feed supply, investing in basic sheds, and accessing veterinary care all require upfront expenditure. Reserve Bank of India data show that small and marginal farmers, who account for over 85% of operational landholdings, receive a disproportionately small share of formal agricultural credit. The alternative remains informal borrowing at high interest rates, which raises risk and discourages investment. Misty Milk and its supplier farmers can grow together – but only if policy enables those who can create output, jobs, and income.

Misty Milk has ambitious growth plans, inspired by the success of giants such as Amul. Amul's cooperative network today includes roughly 3.6 million dairy farmers. Daily milk procurement is close to 35 million litres, and the Amul group's turnover has crossed ₹80,000 crore. These numbers reflect not just consumer demand or brand strength, but the power of aggregation combined with institutional support. Amul's model reduces risk for farmers by ensuring predictable procurement and facilitating access to services and finance. The lesson is not that private firms must become cooperatives. It is that without solving credit constraints at the producer level, scaling up becomes nearly impossible. Misty Milk's experience highlights how much untapped potential exists between India's small private firms and its national champions.

Looking beyond dairy, Erode's broader industrial landscape reinforces the same pattern. The district has long been a hub for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), particularly in textiles and manufacturing, built on dense clusters shaped by reinvestment, local networks, and market responsiveness. During a meeting with around 50 SME owners, there was no shortage of ideas or demand. But nearly all of them pointed to constraints that limit growth and employment. Skill shortages are emerging as production becomes more technologically demanding. Regulatory complexity and compliance costs weigh disproportionately on smaller firms. Tax uncertainty strains cash flows, while tariff structures raise input costs for manufacturers dependent on imports. Together, these constraints determine whether firms can scale and integrate into national and global value chains – the process through which jobs-intensive growth is created.

International evidence shows that SMEs account for a disproportionate share of net job creation, particularly in labour-abundant economies. The World Bank estimates that SMEs provide nearly 70% of global employment and are the primary source of new jobs in developing countries. When these firms are unable to grow, employment creation slows even if headline GDP numbers look strong. Capital-intensive investments may raise output, but they cannot absorb labour at the scale India's demographics demand.

Demographic trajectory

The urgency of addressing these constraints is heightened by India's demographic trajectory. Most projections suggest that India's working-age population advantage will begin to narrow within the next two decades. If sufficient quality jobs are not created during this period, the opportunity will be lost. Large infrastructure projects and headline investment announcements, while important, will not by themselves absorb India's labour force. Employment at scale will come from MSMEs, agro-processing, and value chains that link small producers to markets.

When SMEs are enabled to grow, they strengthen the entire economic ecosystem. Firms scale organically, smaller suppliers raise incomes sustainably, and workers find better jobs closer to home. India's growth story won't be written by its largest corporations alone – it will be written by millions of smaller enterprises, farmers, and workers who are ready to grow right now. In Erode, that readiness is already visible.

The question is not whether India can create jobs at scale. It is whether it will remove the constraints, starting with credit access, before the demographic dividend expires. We likely have two decades. The clock is ticking.

The lack of access to affordable and reliable credit is one of the factors at the heart of India's job crisis

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Lessons about job creation from Misty Milk
मिस्टी मिल्क से रोजगार सृजन के बारे में सबक

- **A recent visit to a dairy processing plant in Erode taught us more about job creation**
  इरोड के एक डेयरी प्रोसेसिंग प्लांट की हालिया यात्रा ने हमें रोजगार सृजन के बारे में अधिक सिखाया

- A recent visit to a **dairy processing plant in Erode** taught us more about **job creation** than all the **TV debates on the Indian economy**.
  इरोड के एक **डेयरी प्रोसेसिंग प्लांट की हालिया यात्रा** ने हमें **रोजगार सृजन** के बारे में भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था पर सभी **टीवी बहसों से अधिक सिखाया**।

- **Erode** has been key to **Tamil Nadu's economic story** for decades.
  इरोड दशकों से **तमिलनाडु की आर्थिक कहानी** का महत्वपूर्ण हिस्सा रहा है।

- Business owners mentioned constraints such as **access to credit, skills gaps, regulatory complexity and tariff structures**.

व्यवसाय मालिकों ने **ऋण तक पहुँच, कौशल अंतर, नियामकीय जटिलता और टैरिफ संरचना** जैसी बाधाओं का उल्लेख किया।

- To understand these constraints, we visited the main plant of **Misty Milk**, a **mid-sized company in western Tamil Nadu**.
  इन बाधाओं को समझने के लिए हमने **पश्चिमी तमिलनाडु की मध्यम आकार की कंपनी Misty Milk** के मुख्य संयंत्र का दौरा किया।
- Even when **ambition, demand and infrastructure exist**, structural barriers **prevent growth**.
  जब **महत्वाकांक्षा, मांग और बुनियादी ढाँचा मौजूद होते हैं**, तब भी संरचनात्मक बाधाएँ **विकास रोकती हैं**।
- The visit also revealed **reasons for optimism about India's employment challenge**.
  इस यात्रा ने **भारत की रोजगार चुनौती के प्रति आशा के कारण** भी दिखाए।

The constraints
बाधाएँ

- Misty Milk has a **capital-intensive facility** capable of handling **far more milk than it receives**.
  Misty Milk के पास **पूंजी-गहन संयंत्र** है जो **मौजूदा से अधिक दूध संभाल सकता है**।
- With over **₹2,500 crore annual turnover**, it is a **serious operation**.
  ₹2,500 करोड़ से अधिक वार्षिक कारोबार के साथ यह एक **महत्वपूर्ण उद्यम** है।
- It sources milk from about **2,000 dairy farmers**.
  यह लगभग **2,000 डेयरी किसानों** से दूध लेता है।
- The plant could integrate supply from nearly **70,000 farmers without major additional investment**.
  संयंत्र लगभग **70,000 किसानों की आपूर्ति बिना बड़े अतिरिक्त निवेश** के जोड़ सकता है।
- The constraint is not **demand or infrastructure**, but **limited access to affordable and reliable credit for small dairy farmers**.
  बाधा **मांग या बुनियादी ढाँचा नहीं**, बल्कि **छोटे किसानों के लिए सस्ती और विश्वसनीय ऋण की कमी** है।
- Small farmers need funds for **purchasing cattle, feed supply, sheds and veterinary care**.
  छोटे किसानों को **पशु खरीद, चारा, शेड और पशु चिकित्सा देखभाल** के लिए धन चाहिए।
- **RBI data** show **small and marginal farmers (85% of holdings)** receive a **small share of formal agricultural credit**.
  RBI के आँकड़े बताते हैं कि **छोटे और सीमांत किसान (85% जोत)** को **औपचारिक कृषि ऋण का कम हिस्सा** मिलता है।
- Farmers depend on **informal borrowing at high interest rates**, which **raises risk and discourages investment**.
  किसान **उच्च ब्याज पर अनौपचारिक ऋण** पर निर्भर रहते हैं, जिससे **जोखिम बढ़ता और निवेश घटता है**।
- Growth of Misty Milk and farmers depends on **policy enabling credit access and productivity**.
  Misty Milk और किसानों की वृद्धि **नीतिगत समर्थन और ऋण उपलब्धता** पर निर्भर है।
- Misty Milk aims to grow inspired by **Amul's success**.
  Misty Milk **अमूल की सफलता** से प्रेरित होकर बढ़ना चाहता है।
- Amul's network includes about **3.6 million dairy farmers**, with **35 million litres daily procurement** and turnover above **₹80,000 crore**.
  अमूल नेटवर्क में लगभग **36 लाख किसान**, **35 मिलियन लीटर दैनिक संग्रहण** और **₹80,000 करोड़ से अधिक कारोबार** है।
- These achievements show the power of **aggregation and institutional support**.
  ये उपलब्धियाँ **संगठन और संस्थागत समर्थन की शक्ति** दर्शाती हैं।
- Amul reduces farmer risk through **predictable procurement and access to services and finance**.
  अमूल **निश्चित खरीद और सेवाओं व वित्त तक पहुँच** देकर किसानों का जोखिम कम करता है।
- The lesson is not about turning firms into cooperatives, but about **solving credit constraints at the producer level**.
  सीख यह नहीं कि सभी कंपनियाँ सहकारी बनें, बल्कि **उत्पादक स्तर पर ऋण बाधाएँ दूर करना** है।
- Misty Milk highlights the **untapped potential between small firms and national champions in India**.

Misty Milk भारत में **छोटी कंपनियों और राष्ट्रीय स्तर की कंपनियों के बीच अपार संभावनाओं** को दर्शाता है।

Looking beyond dairy
डेयरी से आगे देखते हुए

- Looking beyond dairy, **Erode's broader industrial landscape** reinforces the same pattern.
  डेयरी से आगे देखते हुए **इरोड का व्यापक औद्योगिक परिदृश्य** उसी पैटर्न को दर्शाता है।
- The district has long been a hub for **small and medium enterprises (SMEs)**, especially in **textiles and manufacturing**, built on **dense clusters, reinvestment, local networks and market responsiveness**.
  यह जिला लंबे समय से **सूक्ष्म, लघु और मध्यम उद्यमों (SMEs)** का केंद्र रहा है, विशेषकर **टेक्सटाइल और विनिर्माण** में, जो **घने क्लस्टर, पुनर्निवेश, स्थानीय नेटवर्क और बाजार प्रतिक्रिया** पर आधारित हैं।
- During a meeting with around **50 SME owners**, there was **no shortage of ideas or demand**.
  लगभग **50 SME मालिकों** के साथ बैठक में **विचारों या मांग की कोई कमी नहीं** थी।
- Almost all pointed to **constraints limiting growth and employment**.
  लगभग सभी ने **विकास और रोजगार को सीमित करने वाली बाधाओं** की ओर संकेत किया।
- **Skill shortages** are emerging as production becomes **technologically demanding**.
  उत्पादन के **तकनीकी रूप से जटिल** होने के साथ **कौशल की कमी** बढ़ रही है।
- **Regulatory complexity and compliance costs** weigh heavily on **smaller firms**.
  नियामकीय जटिलता और अनुपालन लागत का बोझ **छोटी कंपनियों** पर अधिक पड़ता है।
- **Tax uncertainty** strains **cash flows**, while **tariff structures raise input costs** for import-dependent manufacturers.
  कर अनिश्चितता नकदी प्रवाह पर दबाव डालती है, जबकि **टैरिफ संरचना आयात-निर्भर उद्योगों की लागत बढ़ाती है।**
- These constraints determine whether firms can **scale and integrate into national and global value chains**, which drive **job-intensive growth**.
  ये बाधाएँ तय करती हैं कि कंपनियाँ **राष्ट्रीय और वैश्विक मूल्य श्रृंखलाओं में विस्तार और एकीकरण** कर पाएंगी या नहीं, जो **रोजगार आधारित विकास** को बढ़ावा देती हैं।
- International evidence shows **SMEs create a disproportionate share of net jobs**, especially in **labour-abundant economies**.
  अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रमाण बताते हैं कि **SMEs शुद्ध रोजगार का असमान रूप से बड़ा हिस्सा बनाते हैं**, विशेषकर **श्रम-समृद्ध अर्थव्यवस्थाओं** में।
- The **World Bank** estimates SMEs provide nearly **70% of global employment** and are the **primary source of new jobs in developing countries**.
  विश्व बैंक के अनुसार SMEs वैश्विक रोजगार का लगभग **70% प्रदान करते हैं** और **विकासशील देशों में नए रोजगार का मुख्य स्रोत** हैं।
- When SMEs cannot grow, **employment creation slows even if GDP appears strong**.
  जब SMEs नहीं बढ़ते, तो **रोजगार सृजन धीमा पड़ता है, भले ही GDP मजबूत दिखे।**
- **Capital-intensive investments** may increase output but cannot absorb labour at **India's demographic scale**.
  पूंजी-गहन निवेश उत्पादन बढ़ा सकते हैं, लेकिन **भारत की जनसंख्या के पैमाने पर रोजगार नहीं दे सकते।**

Demographic trajectory
जनसांख्यिकीय प्रवृत्ति

- India's **working-age population advantage** is projected to narrow within **two decades**.
  भारत की **कार्यशील आयु जनसंख्या का लाभ** अगले **दो दशकों** में घटने की संभावना है।
- If sufficient **quality jobs** are not created during this period, the **opportunity will be lost**.
  यदि इस अवधि में पर्याप्त **गुणवत्तापूर्ण रोजगार** नहीं बने, तो **अवसर खो जाएगा।**
- **Large infrastructure projects and headline investments** alone cannot absorb India's labour force.
  केवल **बड़े बुनियादी ढांचा परियोजनाएँ और बड़े निवेश** भारत की श्रमशक्ति को समाहित नहीं कर सकते।
- Employment at scale will come from **MSMEs, agro-processing and value chains linking small producers to markets**.

- बड़े पैमाने पर रोजगार **MSME, एग्रो-प्रोसेसिंग और छोटे उत्पादकों को बाजार से जोड़ने वाली मूल्य श्रृंखलाओं** से आएगा।

- When SMEs grow, they **strengthen the economic ecosystem**, scale organically, and raise **supplier incomes sustainably**.
  जब SMEs बढ़ते हैं, तो वे **आर्थिक तंत्र को मजबूत करते हैं**, स्वाभाविक रूप से विस्तार करते हैं और **आपूर्तिकर्ताओं की आय स्थायी रूप से बढ़ाते हैं।**

- Workers then find **better jobs closer to home**.
  तब श्रमिकों को **घर के पास बेहतर रोजगार** मिलता है।

- India's growth will be driven not only by **large corporations**, but by **millions of small enterprises, farmers and workers**.
  भारत की वृद्धि केवल **बड़ी कंपनियों** से नहीं बल्कि **लाखों छोटे उद्यमों, किसानों और श्रमिकों** से होगी।

- In **Erode**, this readiness for growth is already visible.
  इरोड में विकास की यह तैयारी पहले से दिखाई दे रही है।

- The key question is whether India will **remove constraints, especially credit access, before the demographic dividend expires**.
  मुख्य प्रश्न यह है कि क्या भारत **जनसांख्यिकीय लाभ समाप्त होने से पहले, विशेषकर ऋण उपलब्धता जैसी बाधाएँ हटाएगा।**

- India likely has **two decades — the clock is ticking**.
  भारत के पास संभवतः **दो दशक हैं — समय तेजी से बीत रहा है।**

Tale of two consumers: Rural aspiration vs. urban caution

The demand among rural consumers for non-essentials remains strong despite weakening sentiments in urban areas

GS III: Economy

DATA POINT

Vignesh Radhakrishnan
Devyanshi Bihani

While rural Indians began the year feeling relatively confident, their urban counterparts remained cautious, according to a reading of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)'s consumer confidence survey. While the rural population is driving consumption beyond essentials, urban consumers remain financially conservative, despite enjoying slightly better income stability, the survey results suggest. The conclusions are based on the January 2026 round of the survey.

Tables 1 and **2** summarise the survey findings based on the net responses of participants. A net response represents the difference between the share of respondents reporting optimism and those reporting pessimism on a specific subject. Values range from +100 (maximum optimism) to -100 (maximum pessimism), with any score above zero indicating optimism and any score below zero indicating pessimism. Tables show both current perceptions (how respondents felt compared to a year ago) and expectations (what respondents expect one year ahead).

Blue arrows represent positive sentiments: an upward arrow signals improvement from the last round, a downward arrow indicates deterioration, and a double-headed arrow signifies no change. Conversely, red arrows represent negative sentiments, while their directions have the same meaning.

Urban consumers are pessimistic about the economic situation, employment opportunities, and price levels, which keeps their Consumer Confidence Index in the negative sentiment category. In contrast, while rural consumers are pessimistic about income and price levels, they are upbeat about the general economic situation and employment opportunities;

consequently, their overall index is in the positive sentiment category.

The directionality of the arrows offers an interesting reading. Urban consumers are not only pessimistic about the economic situation and price levels, but their pessimism has deepened since the last round. In contrast, positive sentiment regarding the economic situation has strengthened among rural consumers, as have outlooks on employment opportunities. Table 1 indicates that rural consumers are also positive about the future, whereas Table 2 shows that urban consumers are more cautious with discretionary spending.

A higher share of net respondents in both urban and rural areas reported an increase in spending compared to a year ago. However, the true distinction lies in what they are spending on. The RBI survey distinguishes between essential and non-essential items: generally, a rise in essential spending may point towards inflationary pressure, whereas an increase in non-essential spending possibly indicates an aspiration for a better lifestyle. Notably, a significantly higher share of rural consumers reported an increase in spending on non-essential items compared to their urban counterparts.

Charts 3 and **4** illustrate the proportion of rural and urban consumers who perceived an increase/improvement or a decrease/deterioration in various factors. The difference between these two figures constitutes the net responses presented in Tables 1 and 2. Interestingly, 25.9% of rural consumers reported a decrease in current income levels compared to a year ago, while only 22.6% reported an increase, resulting in a net response of -3.3%. In contrast, 23% of urban consumers reported a decrease against 26.3% who saw an increase, yielding a net response of +3.3%. Despite this pessimistic income outlook, the share of rural consumers with increased spending on non-essential items remains notably high.

Rural-urban spending gap

The data were sourced from the Reserve Bank of India's Urban Consumer Confidence Survey and Rural Consumer Confidence Survey

TABLE 1: Summary based on **net responses** across rural consumer confidence indicators (in %)

Rural confidence indicators	Current perceptions (Nov. '25)	Current perceptions (Jan. '26)	Change	One year ahead expectations (Nov. '25)	One year ahead expectations (Jan. '26)	Change
Economic situation	7.3	7.5	▲	40.4	42	▲
Employment	4.7	5.2	▲	40.6	41.6	▲
Price level	-87.4	-89	▼	-76.7	-77.1	▼
Income	-2.2	-3.3	▼	51.7	52	▲
Spending	81.5	82	▲	86.9	88	▲
Rural Consumer Confidence Index	100.8	100.5	▼	128.6	129.3	▲

▲ Positive sentiments with a sign of improvement compared to last round
▼ Positive sentiments with a sign of deterioration compared to last round
◄► Positive sentiments with no change compared to last round
▲ Negative sentiments with a sign of improvement compared to last round
▼ Negative sentiments with a sign of deterioration compared to last round
◄► Negative sentiments with no change compared to last round

TABLE 2: Summary based on **net responses** across urban consumer confidence indicators (in %)

Urban confidence indicators	Current Perceptions (Nov. '25)	Current Perceptions (Jan. '26)	Change	One year ahead Expectations (Nov. '25)	One year ahead Expectations (Jan. '26)	Change
Economic Situation	-2.5	-3.5	▼	32.9	29.3	▼
Employment	-6.3	-6.3	◄►	31.6	33	▲
Price Level	-78.9	-81.2	▼	-68.8	-75.2	▼
Income	3.5	3.3	▼	53.1	50.1	▼
Spending	76.1	78	▲	79.3	80	▲
Urban Consumer Confidence Index	98.4	98.1	▼	125.6	123.4	▼

CHART 3: **Rural** responses showing current perception across parameters in Jan. 2026 compared to a year ago
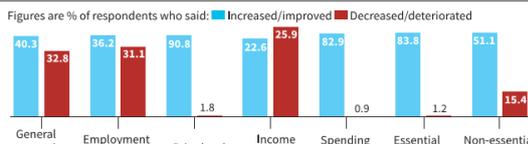
Figures are % of respondents who said: ■ Increased/improved ■ Decreased/deteriorated

	General economic situation	Employment opportunities	Price level	Income level	Spending level	Essential spending	Non-essential spending
Increased/improved	40.3	36.2	90.8	22.6	82.9	83.8	51.1
Decreased/deteriorated	32.8	31.1	1.8	25.9	0.9	1.2	15.4

CHART 4: **Urban** responses showing current perception across parameters in Jan. 2026 compared to a year ago

	General economic situation	Employment opportunities	Price level	Income level	Spending level	Essential spending	Non-essential spending
Increased/improved	36.8	35.8	86.3	26.3	79.7	86.6	30.7
Decreased/deteriorated	40.2	42.1	5.1	23	1.7	1.2	30
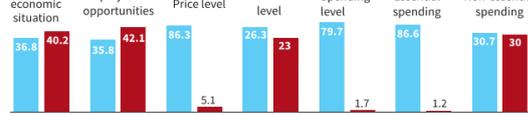
Tale of two consumers: Rural aspiration vs. urban caution
दो उपभोक्ताओं की कहानी: ग्रामीण आकांक्षा बनाम शहरी सावधानी

- The **demand** among **rural consumers** for **non-essentials** remains **strong** despite **weakening sentiments** in **urban areas**
  ग्रामीण उपभोक्ताओं के बीच **गैर-आवश्यक वस्तुओं** की **मांग मजबूत** बनी हुई है, जबकि **शहरी क्षेत्रों** में **कमजोर भावनाओं** के बावजूद

RBI Consumer Confidence Survey – January 2026
आरबीआई उपभोक्ता विश्वास सर्वेक्षण – जनवरी 2026

- While **rural Indians began the year relatively confident**, **urban consumers remained cautious**, according to the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Consumer Confidence Survey – January 2026**.
  जनवरी 2026 के आरबीआई उपभोक्ता विश्वास सर्वेक्षण के अनुसार **ग्रामीण भारत वर्ष की शुरुआत में अपेक्षाकृत आत्मविश्वासी** था, जबकि **शहरी उपभोक्ता सतर्क** रहे।
- Rural consumers are driving **consumption beyond essentials**, whereas **urban consumers remain financially conservative** despite slightly better income stability.
  ग्रामीण उपभोक्ता जरूरी वस्तुओं से आगे खर्च बढ़ा रहे हैं, जबकि **शहरी उपभोक्ता थोड़ी बेहतर आय स्थिरता के बावजूद वित्तीय रूप से सतर्क हैं।**
- **Net response** is the difference between **optimistic and pessimistic respondents**, ranging from **+100 (maximum optimism)** to **-100 (maximum pessimism)**.
  नेट प्रतिक्रिया आशावादी और निराशावादी उत्तरदाताओं के बीच अंतर है, जिसका मान **+100 (अधिकतम आशावाद)** से **-100 (अधिकतम निराशावाद)** तक होता है।
- Scores **above zero indicate optimism**, while **below zero indicate pessimism**.
  शून्य से ऊपर का स्कोर आशावाद और **शून्य से नीचे का स्कोर निराशावाद** दर्शाता है।
- The survey captures both **current perceptions (compared to last year)** and **future expectations (one year ahead)**.
  सर्वेक्षण में **वर्तमान धारणा (पिछले वर्ष की तुलना में)** और **भविष्य की अपेक्षाएँ (एक वर्ष आगे)** दोनों शामिल हैं।
- **Blue arrows represent positive sentiment**, while **red arrows represent negative sentiment**.
  नीले तीर सकारात्मक भावना और **लाल तीर नकारात्मक भावना** दर्शाते हैं।
- Urban consumers are **pessimistic about economic situation, employment and price levels**, keeping the **Consumer Confidence Index negative**.
  शहरी उपभोक्ता **आर्थिक स्थिति, रोजगार और मूल्य स्तर** को लेकर **निराशावादी हैं**, जिससे **उपभोक्ता विश्वास सूचकांक नकारात्मक** बना हुआ है।
- Rural consumers are **pessimistic about income and prices but optimistic about economic situation and employment**, keeping their **overall index positive**.
  ग्रामीण उपभोक्ता **आय और कीमतों को लेकर निराशावादी लेकिन आर्थिक स्थिति और रोजगार को लेकर आशावादी हैं**, जिससे उनका **कुल सूचकांक सकारात्मक** है।
- Urban pessimism about **economic situation and price levels has deepened** since the last round.
  पिछले दौर के बाद शहरी उपभोक्ताओं की आर्थिक स्थिति और कीमतों को लेकर निराशा बढ़ी है।
- Rural sentiment regarding **economic situation and employment has strengthened**.
  ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में **आर्थिक स्थिति और रोजगार के प्रति सकारात्मक भावना मजबूत हुई है।**
- Rural consumers show **greater optimism about the future**, while urban consumers are **cautious with discretionary spending**.
  ग्रामीण उपभोक्ता **भविष्य को लेकर अधिक आशावादी हैं**, जबकि शहरी उपभोक्ता **वैकल्पिक खर्च में सतर्क हैं।**
- Both rural and urban consumers reported **higher spending than a year ago**.
  ग्रामीण और शहरी दोनों उपभोक्ताओं ने **पिछले वर्ष की तुलना में अधिक खर्च** की सूचना दी।
- The key difference lies in **what they spend on**.
  मुख्य अंतर इस बात में है कि वे **किस पर खर्च कर रहे हैं।**
- An increase in **essential spending may indicate inflationary pressure**, while rising **non-essential spending indicates aspiration for better lifestyle**.
  आवश्यक खर्च बढ़ना मुद्रास्फीति का संकेत हो सकता है, जबकि **गैर-आवश्यक खर्च बढ़ना बेहतर जीवनशैली की आकांक्षा** दर्शाता है।

- A significantly higher share of **rural consumers increased spending on non-essential items** compared to urban consumers.
  ग्रामीण उपभोक्ताओं का बड़ा हिस्सा गैर-जरूरी वस्तुओं पर खर्च बढ़ा रहा है, जो शहरी उपभोक्ताओं से अधिक है।
- **25.9% rural consumers reported income decrease**, while **22.6% reported increase**, giving **net response -3.3%**.
  25.9% ग्रामीण उपभोक्ताओं ने आय में कमी और **22.6% ने वृद्धि** बताई, जिससे **नेट प्रतिक्रिया -3.3%** रही।
- In urban areas, **23% reported income decrease**, while **26.3% reported increase**, giving **net response +3.3%**.
  शहरी क्षेत्रों में **23% ने आय में कमी** और **26.3% ने वृद्धि** बताई, जिससे **नेट प्रतिक्रिया +3.3%** रही।
- Despite pessimistic income outlook, **rural spending on non-essential items remains high**.
  निराशावादी आय दृष्टिकोण के बावजूद **ग्रामीण गैर-जरूरी खर्च उच्च बना हुआ है**।

Gross NPAs of SCBs at a historic low of 2.15% as of September

GS III: Economy: Banking
The
MUMBAI

The gross non-performing assets (NPA) ratio of Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) for domestic operations was at a historic low of 2.15% as of 2025-end (provisional data), which is lower than 2010-11 level, the Finance Ministry said on Monday.

Gross NPA has been continuously declining during the last eight financial years, the Ministry informed the Lok Sabha.

This continuous decline in gross NPAs of SCBs, including Public Sector Banks (PSBs), has led to reduced provisioning by them, which in turn has improved their profitability, thereby causing positive impact on the business growth, the Ministry said.

This also indicates that the asset quality as well as underwriting has improved in PSBs supported by a strong balance sheet and sustained profitability, the Ministry said in a note.

The Reserve Bank of India initiated the Asset Quality Review (AQR) in 2015, post which the government initiated 4R's strategy of recognising NPAs, resolving and recovering value from stressed accounts through clean and effective laws and processes, recapitalising PSBs, and reforms in banks and the financial ecosystem to address the problem of growing loan default.

Gross NPAs of SCBs at a historic low of 2.15% as of September
सितंबर तक एससीबी के सकल एनपीए ऐतिहासिक रूप से 2.15% के निचले स्तर पर

- The **gross non-performing assets (NPA) ratio** of Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) for **domestic operations** was at a **historic low of 2.15%** as of **2025-end (provisional data)**, which is lower than **2010-11 level**, the **Finance Ministry** said on **Monday**.
  अनुसूचित वाणिज्यिक बैंकों (SCBs) के **घरेलू परिचालनों** के लिए **सकल गैर-निष्पादित परिसंपत्ति (NPA) अनुपात 2025 के अंत (अस्थायी आंकड़े)** तक **2.15%** के **ऐतिहासिक निचले स्तर** पर था, जो **2010-11 के स्तर** से भी कम है, ऐसा **वित्त मंत्रालय** ने **सोमवार** को कहा।
- **Gross NPA** has been **continuously declining** during the last **eight financial years**, the **Ministry** informed the **Lok Sabha**.
  सकल एनपीए पिछले **आठ वित्तीय वर्षों** के दौरान **लगातार घटता** रहा है, यह जानकारी **मंत्रालय** ने **लोकसभा** को दी।
- This **continuous decline** in gross NPAs of SCBs, including **Public Sector Banks (PSBs)**, has led to **reduced provisioning** by them, which in turn has **improved their profitability**, thereby causing **positive impact on the business growth**, the **Ministry** said.
  एससीबी, जिनमें **सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के बैंक (PSBs)** भी शामिल हैं, के **सकल एनपीए में निरंतर गिरावट** से **प्रावधान (प्रोविजनिंग)** में कमी आई है, जिससे उनकी **लाभप्रदता में सुधार** हुआ है और परिणामस्वरूप **व्यवसाय वृद्धि पर सकारात्मक प्रभाव** पड़ा है, मंत्रालय ने कहा।
- This also indicates that the **asset quality** as well as **underwriting** has **improved in PSBs** supported by a **strong balance sheet** and **sustained profitability**, the **Ministry** said in a **note**.
  यह भी दर्शाता है कि **सशक्त बैलेंस शीट** और **निरंतर लाभप्रदता** के समर्थन से **पीएसबी में परिसंपत्ति गुणवत्ता** तथा **अंडरराइटिंग में सुधार** हुआ है, मंत्रालय ने एक **नोट** में कहा।
- The **Reserve Bank of India** initiated the **Asset Quality Review (AQR)** in **2015**, post which the **government** initiated **4R's strategy** of **recognising NPAs**, **resolving and recovering value from stressed accounts** through **clean and effective laws and processes**, **recapitalising PSBs**, and **reforms in banks and the financial ecosystem** to address the problem of **growing loan default**.
  भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक ने **2015** में **एसेट क्वालिटी रिव्यू (AQR)** शुरू किया, जिसके बाद **सरकार** ने **4R's**

रणनीति अपनाई—**एनपीए की पहचान**, **स्वच्छ और प्रभावी क़ानूनों व प्रक्रियाओं** के माध्यम से **तनावग्रस्त खातों का समाधान और मूल्य वसूली**, **पीएसबी का पुनर्पूंजीकरण**, तथा **बैंकों और वित्तीय पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र में सुधार**, ताकि **बढ़ते ऋण डिफॉल्ट** की समस्या का समाधान किया जा सके।

GS Paper III: **S&T,**	
TOPICS COVERED	**10 February 2026**
1.	**Anaemia, blood disorders can distort diabetes test HbA1c results, says study** एनीमिया, रक्त विकार मधुमेह जांच HbA1c परिणामों को प्रभावित कर सकते हैं: अध्ययन
2.	**Remembering Leo D'Souza, who transformed cashew industry** लियो डी'सूजा को याद करते हुए, जिन्होंने काजू उद्योग को बदल दिया
3.	**New AI tool helps identify dinosaur footprints** नया AI टूल डायनासोर के पदचिह्न पहचानने में मदद करता है
4.	**On gravity's role in the earth's journey through space** अंतरिक्ष में पृथ्वी की यात्रा में गुरुत्वाकर्षण की भूमिका पर

Anaemia, blood disorders can distort diabetes test HbA1c results, says study

GS III: S&T

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

Glycated haemoglobin (HbA1c), which is commonly used to diagnose and monitor Type 2 diabetes (T2D), may mislead diagnosis and monitoring in South Asia, particularly in India's population, due to the high prevalence of anaemia, haemoglobinopathies such as sickle cell disease and thalassaemia, and glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase (G6PD) deficiency, says an article published online in *Lancet Regional Health: Southeast Asia*.

Led by Anoop Misra, corresponding author and chairman of Fortis C-DOC Centre of Excellence for Diabetes, the review questions reliance on HbA1c as the sole diagnostic or monitoring tool for type 2 diabetes in South Asia.

The article adds that poorly standardised HbA1c assay methods complicate interpretation of HbA1c values. "Overall, reliance solely on HbA1c is constrained by several clinical and biological factors in India. A multiparametric, risk-stratified approach that integrates oral glucose tolerance test, self-monitoring of blood glucose, and whenever possible, continuous glucose monitoring, in addition to relevant haematologic assessments, are essential to enhance diagnostic and monitoring accuracy and inform appropriate treatment decisions, especially in primary care and resource-limited settings," Dr. Misra says.

Any condition that affects the quantity, structure, or lifespan of haemoglobin – such as anaemia, haemoglobinopathies, or other red blood cell disorders – can distort HbA1c values and lead to misleading estimates of average blood glucose, the viewpoint article notes.

Co-author Shashank Joshi, from Joshi Clinic, Mumbai, explains that in some regions of India, people are nutritionally challenged and have iron-deficiency anaemia, which can distort HbA1c readings.

"This would affect both diagnosis and monitoring thus misleading clinicians. Reliance on HbA1c alone could delay diagnosis by up to four years in men with undetected G6PD deficiency, potentially increasing risk of complications," Dr. Joshi says.

The article explains that in patients with Type 1 diabetes, a non-linear relationship between mean blood glucose and HbA1c has been documented.

Reliance solely on HbA1c is constrained by several clinical and biological factors in India, say experts.

Anaemia, blood disorders can distort diabetes test HbA1c results, says study
एनीमिया, रक्त विकार मधुमेह जांच HbA1c परिणामों को प्रभावित कर सकते हैं: अध्ययन

- Glycated haemoglobin (**HbA1c**), which is commonly used to diagnose and monitor **Type 2 diabetes (T2D)**, may mislead diagnosis and monitoring in **South Asia**, particularly in **India's**

population, due to the high prevalence of **anaemia**, **haemoglobinopathies** such as **sickle cell disease** and **thalassaemia**, and **glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase (G6PD) deficiency**, says an article published online in **Lancet Regional Health: Southeast Asia**.

ग्लाइकेटेड हीमोग्लोबिन (**HbA1c**), जिसका उपयोग सामान्यतः **टाइप 2 मधुमेह (T2D)** के निदान और निगरानी के लिए किया जाता है, **दक्षिण एशिया**, विशेषकर **भारत की आबादी** में, एनीमिया, **हीमोग्लोबिनोपैथी** जैसे **सिकल सेल रोग** और **थैलेसीमिया**, तथा **ग्लूकोज़-6-फॉस्फेट डीहाइड्रोजनेज़ (G6PD) की कमी** की अधिकता के कारण निदान और निगरानी को भ्रामक बना सकता है, ऐसा **लैंसेट रीजनल हेल्थ: साउथईस्ट एशिया** में ऑनलाइन प्रकाशित लेख में कहा गया है।

- Led by **Anoop Misra**, corresponding author and chairman of **Fortis C-DOC Centre of Excellence for Diabetes**, the review questions reliance on **HbA1c** as the sole diagnostic or monitoring tool for **type 2 diabetes** in **South Asia**.

  अनूप मिश्रा, जो **फोर्टिस C-DOC सेंटर ऑफ एक्सीलेंस फॉर डायबिटीज** के चेयरमैन और संबंधित लेखक हैं, के नेतृत्व में की गई इस समीक्षा में **दक्षिण एशिया** में **टाइप 2 मधुमेह** के लिए केवल **HbA1c** पर निर्भर रहने पर सवाल उठाए गए हैं।

- The article adds that poorly standardised **HbA1c assay methods** complicate interpretation of **HbA1c values**.

  लेख में यह भी जोड़ा गया है कि **HbA1c जांच विधियों** का अपर्याप्त मानकीकरण **HbA1c मानों** की व्याख्या को जटिल बना देता है।

- "Overall, reliance solely on **HbA1c** is constrained by several **clinical and biological factors** in **India**. A **multiparametric, risk-stratified approach** that integrates **oral glucose tolerance test**, **self-monitoring of blood glucose**, and whenever possible, **continuous glucose monitoring**, in addition to relevant **haematologic assessments**, are essential to enhance diagnostic and monitoring accuracy and inform appropriate treatment decisions, especially in **primary care** and **resource-limited settings**," **Dr. Misra** says.

  डॉ. मिश्रा कहते हैं, "कुल मिलाकर **भारत** में केवल **HbA1c** पर निर्भरता कई **नैदानिक और जैविक कारकों** से सीमित है। **मल्टीपैरामीट्रिक, जोखिम-स्तरीकृत दृष्टिकोण**, जिसमें **ओरल ग्लूकोज़ टॉलरेंस टेस्ट**, **रक्त शर्करा की स्वयं निगरानी**, और जहाँ संभव हो **निरंतर ग्लूकोज़ मॉनिटरिंग**, साथ ही प्रासंगिक **रक्त संबंधी मूल्यांकन** शामिल हों, निदान और निगरानी की सटीकता बढ़ाने तथा उचित उपचार निर्णयों के लिए आवश्यक हैं, विशेषकर **प्राथमिक देखभाल** और **सीमित संसाधन वाले क्षेत्रों** में।"

- Any condition that affects the quantity, structure, or lifespan of **haemoglobin** — such as **anaemia**, **haemoglobinopathies**, or other **red blood cell disorders** — can distort **HbA1c values** and lead to misleading estimates of **average blood glucose**, the viewpoint article notes.

  दृष्टिकोण लेख में कहा गया है कि **हीमोग्लोबिन** की मात्रा, संरचना या आयु को प्रभावित करने वाली कोई भी स्थिति — जैसे **एनीमिया**, **हीमोग्लोबिनोपैथी**, या अन्य **लाल रक्त कोशिका विकार** — **HbA1c मानों** को विकृत कर सकती है और **औसत रक्त शर्करा** के भ्रामक अनुमान दे सकती है।

- Co-author **Shashank Joshi**, from **Joshi Clinic, Mumbai**, explains that in some regions of **India**, people are nutritionally challenged and have **iron-deficiency anemia**, which can distort **HbA1c readings**.

  सह-लेखक **शशांक जोशी**, **जोशी क्लिनिक, मुंबई** से, बताते हैं कि **भारत** के कुछ क्षेत्रों में लोग पोषण की कमी से जूझ रहे हैं और उनमें **आयरन की कमी से होने वाला एनीमिया** पाया जाता है, जो **HbA1c रीडिंग** को प्रभावित कर सकता है।

- "This would affect both **diagnosis and monitoring** thus misleading clinicians. Reliance on **HbA1c alone** could delay diagnosis by up to **four years** in men with undetected **G6PD deficiency**, potentially increasing risk of **complications**," **Dr. Joshi** says.

  डॉ. जोशी कहते हैं, "यह **निदान और निगरानी** दोनों को प्रभावित करेगा और चिकित्सकों को गुमराह कर सकता है। केवल **HbA1c** पर निर्भरता, बिना पहचानी गई **G6PD कमी** वाले पुरुषों में निदान को **चार वर्ष** तक विलंबित कर सकती है, जिससे **जटिलताओं** का जोखिम बढ़ सकता है।"

- The article explains that in patients with **Type 1 diabetes**, a **non-linear relationship** between **mean blood glucose** and **HbA1c** has been documented.

  लेख में बताया गया है कि **टाइप 1 मधुमेह** के रोगियों में **औसत रक्त शर्करा** और **HbA1c** के बीच **अरेखीय संबंध** दर्ज किया गया है।

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Remembering Leo D'Souza, who transformed cashew industry

Fr. Leo built one of India's earliest plant tissue culture labs and helped crack cashew micropropagation, including a test-tube cashew tree that made it to the soil; he leaves behind a rare Jesuit legacy that fused rigorous science with public purpose, shaping women scientists and vulnerable lives alike

GS III/S&T

Nandita Jayaraj

On January 20, Rev. Dr. Leo D'Souza, a Jesuit scientist based in Mangaluru, died aged 93. Dr. D'Souza, fondly known as Fr. Leo, trained in the 1960s at the Max Planck Institute for Plant Breeding Research in Cologne, working alongside stalwarts in the field such as Ingo Potrykus, Joseph Straub, and Sudhir Kumar Sopory.

He set up one of India's earliest tissue culture laboratories in 1975, where his women-led team of doctoral students slowly and steadily made a series of breakthroughs — including the world's first ever test-tube cashew tree that was transferred to soil.

"Fr. D'Souza was among the early pioneers of plant tissue culture research in India, making significant contributions at a time when the discipline was still in its formative stage," said Pramod Tandon, a leading plant biotechnologist and Padma Shri awardee.

In 1970, when Leo D'Souza was called back to India after his scientific studies, his PhD advisor Joseph Straub suggested he meet a friend that would help him guide him on a suitable research topic. The friend turned out to be M.S. Swaminathan, who was at the time in New Delhi. When Dr. Swaminathan found out that the young priest's hometown was Mangalore, he recommended *Anacardium occidentale*, the cashew plant, as a topic of research.

Tissue culture

The cashew tree is not native to India. It was brought into the coastal region by the Portuguese from Brazil in the 16th century to keep the lateritic soil found there from being eroded. Once people recognised the commercial value of its nuts and fruits, it emerged as an important cash crop. By the 1980s, cashew was being cultivated on nearly 5 lakh ha of land in the country, although the net production remained far below what was optimal for the processing industry.

An article in the 1982 issue of the journal *Manushi* noted that women accounted for more than 80% of the labourers employed in the cashew industry. They were usually illiterate and routinely underpaid.

Fr. Leo personally visited many cashew processing plants in and around Mangalore, and the situation of the labourers and small farmers of cashew plantations made an impression on him.

He recognised that relying on seed propagation, grafting, and cutting was not sufficient, and that these cashew — a relatively new technology that he was an expert on — could be the answer. He embarked on a mission to develop high yielding varieties of cashew in order to benefit these sections of society.

At the time, there was already a cashew research station in Ullal, near Mangalore, but Fr. Leo was told that the scientists deputed there were desperate to be transferred because they were unused to the intense rains and severe humidity of the seaside town. Dr. Swaminathan also believed that as a Jesuit priest untethered by aspirations for promotions and transfers, Fr. Leo was uniquely placed to do justice to this overlooked area of research.

Convinced, Fr. Leo established his Laboratory of Applied Biology at the Jesuit-run St. Joseph's College in Bangalore in 1975. This was nearly a decade before the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) came to be.

However, five years later, he was appointed principal at another Jesuit college, St. Aloysius in Mangalore. While Mangalore was his hometown and St. Aloysius was where he had done all of his schooling, he dreaded the thought of sidelining research for administration. Fortunately, there was a room available for him to move his laboratory to.

His laboratory has operated there ever since, and is today headed by his former PhD student Shashikaran Nivas.

Top of his mind

Despite being a reluctant principal, Fr. Leo administered the college efficiently. Right from the start, he advocated for the inclusion of women in the college, which had been boys-only since it was founded in 1880. Not only did he have to convince a sceptical management and staff, he also had to ensure that the college infrastructure would adequately serve the needs of this new demographic.

In 1986, the college finally started admitting women; today they constitute more than 50% of the staff and the students there.

Of the many responsibilities he assumed over the course of his career, one was particularly close to his heart: the establishment and running of the Aloysians' Boys' Home, a rehabilitation centre and home for abandoned, traumatised, and orphaned children, many of whose parents were in prison. He was proud of the lives the boys grew up there built for themselves.

In one of his essays, he wrote about how driving a bus was a dream for many of the boys, and of being heartened that so many of them fulfilled it by becoming bus drivers in Mangalore.

He recalled another example of a former resident of the home named Nelson, who completed a course in vocational training and had secured a job as training officer in air-conditioning and refrigeration at a technical institute.

Even as he navigated administrative challenges and was involved in many other activities, his laboratory was always on top of Fr. Leo's mind. He received approval from Mangalore University to start a PhD programme, which was (and remains) an unconventional and notable achievement for an undergraduate college.

His first PhD student was a young woman from a village in Kundapura in Udupi district, named Joy D'Silva. Together, the duo began attempts to grow tissue culture cashew plants, which would enable large scale rapid multiplication of trees.

From lab to soil

Conventional breeding techniques such as seed propagation and cross-breeding can help improve plant varieties and their yield, but they are time consuming and the quality is difficult to maintain.

On the other hand, tissue culture, also known as micropropagation, allows for the development of a whole cashew plant from a small tissue sample. The controlled conditions in a laboratory allow for the technique to be used *en masse*, with the guarantee that the resulting plantlets will be genetically identical to the original plant.

Several scientists in tropical countries, including India, were trying to revolutionise the cashew industry with a reliable tissue culture protocol but this proved exceedingly difficult to maintain. Compared to related species such as mango and pistachio trees, cashew is recalcitrant to tissue culture, presumably because it releases phenolic compounds into the culture medium, eventually killing the

> Fr. Leo D'Souza was among the early pioneers of plant tissue culture research in India, making significant contributions at a time when the discipline was still in its formative stage
>
> PRAMOD TANDON
> Plant biotechnologist

developing cells. In the few cases that researchers were successful in generating plantlets in the lab, the plantlets would die soon after being transferred into the soil.

It took close to 10 years, but in 1990, D'Silva, under the guidance of Fr. Leo, accomplished her goal. In a paper published in the journal *Plant Cell, Tissue and Organ Culture* in 1992, the pair described how they had generated cashew plantlets, successfully transferred them to soil, and established them in the field.

One of Fr. Leo's regrets was that he couldn't secure the cooperation of scientists at the cashew research station in Ullal in taking the work forward. He believed this came in the way of science fulfilling its potential with respect to improving cashew as well as the livelihoods of people who cultivated and processed it.

'International quality'

Over the years, Fr. Leo's lab also conducted important work with coconuts, ferns, algae, ragi, and ornamental and medicinal plants. Besides cashew, the team managed to micropropagate a range of other trees.

Part of Fr. Leo's legacy is the avenue of tissue cultured trees growing in the St. Aloysius (now a deemed-to-be university) campus today.

Many of his students went on to pursue research in academia as well as in industry, in India and abroad. One is Smitha Hegde, a leading pteridologist (pteridology is the science of ferns) and currently the research director at the Centre for Advanced Learning, Mangaluru. Dr. Hegde pointed out that Fr. Leo made sure to give his students every opportunity to present and share their work in conferences abroad. She herself got the chance to present her work on ferns in the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew in 1995.

"These experiences helped us realise that our work was of international quality." She fondly remembered their small group of researchers strutting around campus feeling like "little Einsteins".

Dr. Hegde also recalled Fr. Leo being a champion of women's empowerment.

"If he saw only men on stage, even for a simple function, he would ask 'where is the woman representation?' Not only did he want women to get the chance to work, he was also very keen that our work got visibility," she said.

Used to explaining himself

Though he taught at St. Joseph's College in Bengaluru for a relatively short period of time, his students still remember him. Notable among them is Jyotsna Dhawan, a leading cell biologist and Emeritus Scientist at the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology in Hyderabad.

"What strikes me now is that there was no dichotomy in his teaching of a scientific discipline rooted in the tenets of evolutionary theory and his identity as a man of the cloth," she wrote to this reporter upon hearing of Fr. Leo's death. "Along with Fr. Cecil Saldanha, these Jesuit botanists gave us a firm grounding in plant science for which I am forever grateful."

Reconciling these two identities came effortlessly to Fr. Leo, but he constantly encountered raised eyebrows along the way.

"People stared at me the first time I entered the Max Planck Institute in Cologne," he said in an interview with this reporter a few months before he passed away. "I thought they were staring at my brown skin, but it was my clerical collar."

So Fr. Leo was used to explaining himself.

"A priest is not only to work in the church. His work must have a value for other people, especially poor people," he affirmed in the same interview.

When one of his colleagues in Germany asked him why he didn't stick to the altar and pulpit, Fr. Leo replied: "Had Gregor Mendel [the Austrian monk who is often known as the father of genetics] followed this principle, then the scientific world would have lost an important scientist who discovered the basics of genetics and plant breeding."

(Nandita Jayaraj is an independent science journalist and co-founder of the feminist media project Labhopping. nandita.jayaraj@gmail.com)

(Clockwise from the top) Fr. Leo D'Souza; Fr. Leo at the Max Planck Institute in Cologne; A photograph from Fr. Leo's collection showing women working at a cashew processing plant. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Remembering Leo D'Souza, who transformed cashew industry
लियो डी'सूजा को याद करते हुए, जिन्होंने काजू उद्योग को बदल दिया

- Fr. **Leo** built one of **India's earliest plant tissue culture labs** and helped crack **cashew micropropagation**, including a **test-tube cashew tree** that made it to the **soil**; he leaves behind a rare **Jesuit legacy** that fused **rigorous science** with **public purpose**, shaping **women scientists** and **vulnerable lives** alike

फादर **लियो** ने **भारत की शुरुआती प्लांट टिशू कल्चर लैब्स** में से एक बनाई और **काजू माइक्रोप्रोपेगेशन** को सफल बनाने में मदद की, जिसमें एक **टेस्ट-ट्यूब काजू का पेड़** भी शामिल था जो **मिट्टी** तक पहुंचा; वे एक दुर्लभ **जेसुइट विरासत** छोड़ गए जिसने **कठोर विज्ञान** को **जनहित** के साथ जोड़ा और **महिला वैज्ञानिकों** तथा **कमजोर जीवनों** को समान रूप से आकार दिया

- On **January 20**, Rev. Dr. **Leo D'Souza**, a **Jesuit scientist** based in Mangaluru, died aged **93**.

20 जनवरी को, रेव. डॉ. **लियो डी'सूज़ा**, जो **मंगलुरु** में स्थित एक **जेसुइट वैज्ञानिक** थे, का **93** वर्ष की आयु में निधन हो गया।

- Dr. **D'Souza**, fondly known as **Fr. Leo**, trained in the **1960s** at the **Max Planck Institute for Plant Breeding Research** in **Cologne**, working alongside stalwarts in the field such as **Ingo Potrykus**, **Joseph Straub**, and **Sudhir Kumar Sopory**.

डॉ. **डी'सूज़ा**, जिन्हें स्नेहपूर्वक **फादर लियो** कहा जाता था, ने **1960 के दशक** में **कोलोन** स्थित **मैक्स प्लैंक इंस्टीट्यूट फॉर प्लांट ब्रीडिंग रिसर्च** में प्रशिक्षण लिया, जहाँ उन्होंने **इंगो पोटिकस**, **जोसेफ स्ट्रॉब**, और **सुधीर कुमार सोपोरी** जैसे विशेषज्ञों के साथ कार्य किया।

- He set up one of **India's earliest tissue culture laboratories** in 1975, where his **women-led team** of doctoral students slowly and steadily made a series of **breakthroughs — including the world's first ever test-tube cashew tree that was transferred to soil**.

उन्होंने **1975** में **भारत की सबसे प्रारंभिक टिशू कल्चर प्रयोगशालाओं** में से एक की स्थापना की, जहाँ उनकी **महिला-नेतृत्व वाली टीम** के शोध छात्रों ने धीरे-धीरे कई **महत्वपूर्ण उपलब्धियाँ** हासिल कीं — जिनमें दुनिया का पहला टेस्ट-ट्यूब काजू का पेड़ शामिल था जिसे मिट्टी में स्थानांतरित किया गया।

- "Fr. **D'Souza** was among the early **pioneers of plant tissue culture research in India**, making significant contributions at a time when the discipline was still in its **formative stage**,"

said **Pramod Tandon**, a leading **plant biotechnologist** and **Padma Shri awardee**.

"फादर डी'सूज़ा भारत में **प्लांट टिशू कल्चर अनुसंधान के शुरुआती अग्रदूतों** में थे, जिन्होंने उस समय महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया जब यह क्षेत्र अभी अपने **प्रारंभिक चरण** में था," ऐसा कहना है **प्रमोद टंडन** का, जो एक प्रमुख **प्लांट बायोटेक्नोलॉजिस्ट** और **पद्म श्री पुरस्कार विजेता** हैं।

- In **1970**, when **Leo D'Souza** was called back to **India** after his scientific studies, his **PhD advisor Joseph Straub** suggested he meet a friend of his to guide him on a suitable research topic.

  1970 में, जब **लियो डी'सूज़ा** को अपने वैज्ञानिक अध्ययन के बाद **भारत** वापस बुलाया गया, तो उनके **पीएचडी सलाहकार जोसेफ स्ट्रॉब** ने उन्हें एक मित्र से मिलने की सलाह दी ताकि वह उन्हें उपयुक्त शोध विषय पर मार्गदर्शन दे सकें।

- The friend turned out to be **M.S. Swaminathan**, who was at the time in **New Delhi**.

  वह मित्र **एम. एस. स्वामीनाथन** निकले, जो उस समय **नई दिल्ली** में थे।

- When Dr. **Swaminathan** found out that the young priest's hometown was **Mangalore**, he recommended **Anacardium occidentale, the cashew plant**, as a topic of research.

  जब डॉ. **स्वामीनाथन** को पता चला कि युवा पादरी का गृह नगर **मैंगलोर** है, तो उन्होंने शोध विषय के रूप में **एनाकार्डियम ऑक्सिडेंटेल, काजू का पौधा** सुझाया।

Tissue culture
टिशू कल्चर

- The **cashew tree** is **not native to India**.
  काजू का पेड़ भारत का मूल निवासी नहीं है।

- It was brought into the **coastal region** by the **Portuguese from Brazil in the 16th century** to keep the **lateritic soil** found there from being eroded.
  इसे **16वीं शताब्दी** में ब्राज़ील से पुर्तगालियों द्वारा तटीय क्षेत्र में लाया गया था ताकि वहाँ की **लेटराइट मिट्टी** का कटाव रोका जा सके।

- Once people recognised the **commercial value of its nuts and fruits**, it emerged as an important **cash crop**.
  जब लोगों ने इसके **नट और फलों के व्यावसायिक मूल्य** को पहचाना, तो यह एक महत्वपूर्ण **नकदी फसल** बन गई।

- By the **1980s**, cashew was being cultivated on nearly **5 lakh ha of land** in the country, although the **net production remained far below what was optimal for the processing industry**.
  1980 के दशक तक, देश में लगभग **5 लाख हेक्टेयर भूमि** पर काजू की खेती की जा रही थी, हालांकि **कुल उत्पादन प्रसंस्करण उद्योग के लिए आवश्यक स्तर से काफी कम था।**

- At the time, there was already a **cashew research station in Ullal, near Mangalore**, but Fr. Leo was told that the scientists deputed there were desperate to be transferred because they were unused to the **intense rains and severe humidity** of the seaside town.
  उस समय, **मैंगलोर के पास उल्लाल में पहले से ही एक काजू अनुसंधान केंद्र** था, लेकिन फादर लियो को बताया गया कि वहाँ तैनात वैज्ञानिक स्थानांतरण के लिए बेचैन थे क्योंकि वे समुद्र तटीय नगर की **भारी बारिश और अत्यधिक आर्द्रता** के अभ्यस्त नहीं थे।

- Dr. **Swaminathan** also believed that as a **Jesuit priest untethered by aspirations for promotions and transfers**, Fr. Leo was uniquely placed to do justice to this **overlooked area of research**.
  डॉ. **स्वामीनाथन** का भी मानना था कि **पदोन्नति और स्थानांतरण की आकांक्षाओं से मुक्त एक जेसुइट पादरी** होने के कारण, फादर लियो इस **उपेक्षित शोध क्षेत्र** के साथ न्याय करने के लिए विशिष्ट रूप से उपयुक्त थे।

- Convinced, Fr. Leo established his **Laboratory of Applied Biology** at the Jesuit-run **St. Joseph's College in Bangalore in 1975**.
  विश्वस्त होकर, फादर लियो ने **1975 में बैंगलोर के जेसुइट संचालित सेंट जोसेफ कॉलेज में अपनी एप्लाइड बायोलॉजी प्रयोगशाला** की स्थापना की।

- This was nearly a **decade before the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) came to be**.
  यह **डिपार्टमेंट ऑफ बायोटेक्नोलॉजी (DBT)** के अस्तित्व में आने से लगभग **एक दशक पहले** की बात थी।

- However, **five years later**, he was appointed principal at another Jesuit college, **St. Aloysius in Mangalore**.

हालाँकि, **पाँच वर्ष बाद**, उन्हें एक अन्य जेसुइट कॉलेज, **मैंगलोर के सेंट एलॉयसियस** में प्रिंसिपल नियुक्त किया गया।

- While Mangalore was his hometown and **St. Aloysius was where he had done all of his schooling**, he dreaded the thought of **sidelining research for administration**.
  यद्यपि मैंगलोर उनका गृह नगर था और **सेंट एलॉयसियस वही स्थान था जहाँ उन्होंने अपनी पूरी स्कूली शिक्षा प्राप्त की थी**, फिर भी वे **प्रशासन के लिए शोध को किनारे करने** के विचार से चिंतित थे।

- Fortunately, there was a **room available for him to move his laboratory to**.
  सौभाग्य से, उनके लिए **अपनी प्रयोगशाला स्थानांतरित करने हेतु एक कमरा उपलब्ध** था।

- His laboratory has operated there **ever since**, and is today headed by his former PhD student **Shashikiran Nivas**.
  उनकी प्रयोगशाला **तब से वहीं संचालित हो रही है**, और आज इसका नेतृत्व उनके पूर्व पीएचडी छात्र **शशिकिरण निवास** कर रहे हैं।

Top of his mind
उनके मन में सर्वोपरि

- Despite being a **reluctant principal**, Fr. Leo administered the college **efficiently**.
  अनिच्छुक प्रिंसिपल होने के बावजूद, फादर लियो ने कॉलेज का प्रशासन **कुशलतापूर्वक** संभाला।

- Right from the start, he advocated for the **inclusion of women in the college**, which had been **boys-only since it was founded in 1880**.
  शुरुआत से ही, उन्होंने कॉलेज में **महिलाओं को शामिल करने की वकालत की**, जो **1880 में स्थापना से ही केवल लड़कों के लिए** था।

- Not only did he have to convince a **sceptical management and staff**, he also had to ensure that the **college infrastructure would adequately serve the needs of this new demographic**.
  उन्हें न केवल **संदेहपूर्ण प्रबंधन और स्टाफ को मनाना पड़ा**, बल्कि यह भी सुनिश्चित करना पड़ा कि **कॉलेज का बुनियादी ढाँचा इस नए वर्ग की आवश्यकताओं को पर्याप्त रूप से पूरा करे**।

- In **1986**, the college finally started **admitting women**; today they constitute **more than 50% of the staff and the students there**.
  1986 में, कॉलेज ने अंततः **महिलाओं को प्रवेश देना शुरू किया**; आज वे वहाँ के **स्टाफ और छात्रों का 50% से अधिक** हिस्सा हैं।

- Of the many responsibilities he assumed over the course of his career, one was particularly **close to his heart**: the establishment and running of the **Aloysians' Boys' Home**, a **rehabilitation centre and home for abandoned, traumatised, and orphaned children**, many of whose parents were **in prison**.
  अपने करियर के दौरान संभाली गई अनेक जिम्मेदारियों में से एक उनके **दिल के बेहद करीब** थी: **एलॉयसियन्स बॉयज़ होम** की स्थापना और संचालन, जो **त्यागे गए, आघातग्रस्त और अनाथ बच्चों के लिए पुनर्वास केंद्र और घर** था, जिनमें से कई के माता-पिता जेल में थे।

- He was proud of the **lives the boys who grew up there built for themselves**.
  उन्हें इस बात पर गर्व था कि वहाँ बड़े हुए लड़कों ने **अपने लिए जो जीवन बनाया**।

- In one of his essays, he wrote about how **driving a bus was a dream for many of the boys**, and of being heartened that so many of them **fulfilled it by becoming bus drivers in Mangalore**.
  अपने एक निबंध में, उन्होंने लिखा कि **बस चलाना कई लड़कों का सपना था**, और उन्हें यह देखकर खुशी हुई कि उनमें से कई ने **मैंगलोर में बस चालक बनकर इसे पूरा किया**।

- He recalled another example of a former resident of the home named **Nelson**, who completed a course in **vocational training** and had secured a job as **training officer in air-conditioning and refrigeration at a technical institute**.
  उन्होंने घर के एक पूर्व निवासी **नेल्सन** का एक और उदाहरण याद किया, जिसने **व्यावसायिक प्रशिक्षण** का कोर्स पूरा किया और **एक तकनीकी संस्थान में एयर-कंडीशनिंग और रेफ्रिजरेशन में प्रशिक्षण अधिकारी** की नौकरी प्राप्त की।

- Even as he navigated **administrative challenges** and was involved in many other activities, his **laboratory was always on top of Fr. Leo's mind**.
  भले ही वे **प्रशासनिक चुनौतियों** से जूझ रहे थे और कई अन्य गतिविधियों में शामिल थे, उनकी **प्रयोगशाला हमेशा फादर लियो के मन में सर्वोपरि** रहती थी।

- He received approval from **Mangalore University** to start a **PhD programme**, which was (and remains) an **unconventional and notable achievement for an undergraduate college**.
  उन्हें **मैंगलोर विश्वविद्यालय** से **पीएचडी कार्यक्रम** शुरू करने की स्वीकृति मिली, जो एक **स्नातक कॉलेज के लिए असामान्य और उल्लेखनीय उपलब्धि** थी।
- His **first PhD student** was a young woman from a village in **Kundapura in Udupi district**, named **Icy D'Silva**.
  उनकी **पहली पीएचडी छात्रा** उडुपी जिले के कुंदापुरा के एक गाँव की युवा महिला **आइसी डी'सिल्वा** थीं।
- Together, the duo began attempts to grow **tissue culture cashew plants**, which would enable **large scale rapid multiplication of trees**.
  दोनों ने मिलकर **टिशू कल्चर काजू पौधे उगाने** के प्रयास शुरू किए, जिससे **पेड़ों का बड़े पैमाने पर तेज़ी से गुणन संभव हो सके**।

From lab to soil
लैब से मिट्टी तक

- Conventional breeding techniques such as **seed propagation and cross-breeding** can help improve plant varieties and their yield, but they are **time consuming** and the **quality is difficult to maintain**.
  पारंपरिक प्रजनन तकनीकें जैसे **बीज प्रसार और क्रॉस-ब्रीडिंग** पौधों की किस्मों और उनकी उपज में सुधार कर सकती हैं, लेकिन वे **समय लेने वाली** हैं और **गुणवत्ता बनाए रखना कठिन होता है**।
- On the other hand, **tissue culture, also known as micropropagation**, allows for the development of a whole **cashew plant from a small tissue sample**.
  दूसरी ओर, **टिशू कल्चर, जिसे माइक्रोप्रोपेगेशन भी कहा जाता है**, एक छोटे **ऊतक नमूने से पूरे काजू पौधे के विकास** की अनुमति देता है।
- The controlled conditions in a **laboratory** allow for the technique to be used **en masse**, with the guarantee that the resulting **plantlets will be genetically identical to the original plant**.
  प्रयोगशाला की नियंत्रित परिस्थितियाँ इस तकनीक को **बड़े पैमाने पर उपयोग** करने की अनुमति देती हैं, और यह सुनिश्चित करती हैं कि प्राप्त **पौधशिशु मूल पौधे के आनुवंशिक रूप से समान होंगे**।
- Several scientists in **tropical countries, including India**, were trying to **revolutionise the cashew industry** with a reliable **tissue culture protocol** but this proved **exceedingly difficult**.
  भारत सहित उष्णकटिबंधीय देशों के कई वैज्ञानिक **विश्वसनीय टिशू कल्चर प्रोटोकॉल** के साथ **काजू उद्योग में क्रांति लाने** की कोशिश कर रहे थे, लेकिन यह **अत्यंत कठिन साबित हुआ**।
- Compared to related species such as **mango and pistachio trees**, cashew is **recalcitrant to tissue culture**, presumably because it releases **phenolic compounds into the culture medium**, eventually **killing the developing cells**.
  आम और पिस्ता जैसे संबंधित प्रजातियों की तुलना में, काजू **टिशू कल्चर के प्रति प्रतिरोधी** है, संभवतः क्योंकि यह **कल्चर माध्यम में फेनोलिक यौगिक छोड़ता है**, जो अंततः **विकसित होती कोशिकाओं को मार देता है**।
- In the few cases that researchers were successful in generating **plantlets in the lab**, the plantlets would **die soon after being transferred into the soil**.
  कुछ मामलों में जब शोधकर्ता **प्रयोगशाला में पौधशिशु उत्पन्न करने में सफल** हुए, तो वे **मिट्टी में स्थानांतरित होने के तुरंत बाद मर जाते थे**।
- It took close to **10 years**, but in **1990**, **D'Silva**, under the guidance of **Fr. Leo**, accomplished her goal.
  लगभग **10 वर्ष** लगे, लेकिन **1990** में **फादर लियो** के मार्गदर्शन में **डी'सिल्वा** ने अपना लक्ष्य प्राप्त कर लिया।
- In a paper published in the journal **Plant Cell, Tissue and Organ Culture in 1992**, the pair described how they had **generated cashew plantlets, successfully transferred them to soil, and established them in the field**.
  1992 में **Plant Cell, Tissue and Organ Culture** जर्नल में प्रकाशित एक शोधपत्र में, दोनों ने बताया कि उन्होंने **काजू पौधशिशु उत्पन्न किए, उन्हें सफलतापूर्वक मिट्टी में स्थानांतरित किया और खेत में स्थापित किया**।
- One of Fr. Leo's regrets was that he **couldn't secure the cooperation of scientists at the cashew research station in Ullal** in taking the work forward.

फादर लियो का एक अफसोस यह था कि वे **उल्लाल के काजू अनुसंधान केंद्र के वैज्ञानिकों का सहयोग प्राप्त नहीं कर सके** ताकि इस कार्य को आगे बढ़ाया जा सके।

- He believed this came in the way of **science fulfilling its potential** with respect to improving **cashew as well as the livelihoods of people who cultivated and processed it**.
  उनका मानना था कि इससे **विज्ञान की क्षमता को पूरा करने में बाधा आई**, विशेषकर **काजू और उसे उगाने व प्रसंस्करण करने वाले लोगों की आजीविका सुधारने** के संदर्भ में।

'International quality'
'अंतरराष्ट्रीय गुणवत्ता'

- Over the years, Fr. Leo's lab also conducted **important work with coconuts, ferns, algae, ragi, and ornamental and medicinal plants**.
  वर्षों के दौरान, फादर लियो की प्रयोगशाला ने **नारियल, फर्न, शैवाल, रागी तथा सजावटी और औषधीय पौधों पर महत्वपूर्ण कार्य** भी किया।
- Besides cashew, the team managed to **micropropagate a range of other trees**.
  काजू के अलावा, टीम ने **अन्य कई पेड़ों का माइक्रोप्रोपेगेशन** भी किया।
- Part of Fr. Leo's legacy is the **avenue of tissue cultured trees growing in the St. Aloysius (now a deemed-to-be university) campus today**.
  फादर लियो की विरासत का एक हिस्सा **सेंट एलॉयसियस (अब डीम्ड-टू-बी विश्वविद्यालय) परिसर में उग रहे टिशू कल्चर पेड़ों की श्रृंखला** है।
- Many of his students went on to pursue **research in academia as well as in industry, in India and abroad**.
  उनके कई छात्र आगे चलकर **भारत और विदेश में अकादमिक तथा उद्योग दोनों क्षेत्रों में शोध** करने लगे।
- One is **Smitha Hegde**, a leading **pteridologist (science of ferns)** and currently the **research director at the Centre for Advanced Learning, Mangaluru**.
  उनमें से एक **स्मिता हेगड़े** हैं, जो एक प्रमुख **पेरिडोलॉजिस्ट (फर्न का विज्ञान)** हैं और वर्तमान में **सेंटर फॉर एडवांस्ड लर्निंग, मंगलुरु में शोध निदेशक** हैं।
- Dr. Hegde pointed out that Fr. Leo made sure to give his students **every opportunity to present and share their work in conferences abroad**.
  डॉ. हेगड़े ने बताया कि फादर लियो ने अपने छात्रों को **विदेशी सम्मेलनों में अपने कार्य प्रस्तुत और साझा करने का हर अवसर** दिया।
- She herself got the chance to present her work on **ferns in the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew in 1995**.
  उन्हें स्वयं **1995 में केव के रॉयल बोटैनिक गार्डन्स में फर्न पर अपना कार्य प्रस्तुत** करने का अवसर मिला।
- "These experiences helped us realise that our work was of **international quality**."
  "इन अनुभवों ने हमें यह महसूस कराया कि हमारा कार्य **अंतरराष्ट्रीय गुणवत्ता** का था।"
- She fondly remembered their small group of researchers strutting around campus feeling like **"little Einsteins"**.
  उन्होंने स्नेहपूर्वक याद किया कि शोधकर्ताओं का उनका छोटा समूह परिसर में घूमते हुए खुद को **"छोटे आइंस्टीन"** जैसा महसूस करता था।
- Dr. Hegde also recalled Fr. Leo being a **champion of women's empowerment**.
  डॉ. हेगड़े ने यह भी याद किया कि फादर लियो **महिला सशक्तिकरण के समर्थक** थे।
- "If he saw only men on stage, even for a simple function, he would ask **'where is the woman representation?'** Not only did he want women to get the chance to work, he was also very keen that **our work got visibility**," she said.
  "यदि वे मंच पर केवल पुरुषों को देखते, चाहे वह एक साधारण कार्यक्रम ही क्यों न हो, तो वे पूछते **'महिला प्रतिनिधित्व कहाँ है?'** वे न केवल चाहते थे कि महिलाओं को काम करने का अवसर मिले, बल्कि वे यह भी चाहते थे कि **हमारे कार्य को पहचान मिले**," उन्होंने कहा।

Used to explaining himself
खुद को समझाने के अभ्यस्त

- Though he taught at **St. Joseph's College in Bengaluru** for a relatively short period of time, his **students still remember him**.

यद्यपि उन्होंने **बेंगलुरु के सेंट जोसेफ कॉलेज** में अपेक्षाकृत कम समय तक पढ़ाया, फिर भी उनके **छात्र उन्हें आज भी याद करते हैं।**

- Notable among them is **Jyotsna Dhawan**, a leading **cell biologist** and **Emeritus Scientist at the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology in Hyderabad**.
  उनमें प्रमुख हैं **ज्योत्सना धवन**, जो एक अग्रणी **सेल बायोलॉजिस्ट** और **हैदराबाद स्थित CSIR-सेंटर फॉर सेलुलर एंड मॉलिक्यूलर बायोलॉजी में एमेरिटस साइंटिस्ट** हैं।

- "What strikes me now is that there was **no dichotomy in his teaching of a scientific discipline rooted in the tenets of evolutionary theory and his identity as a man of the cloth**," she wrote to this reporter upon hearing of **Fr. Leo's death**.
  "मुझे अब जो बात प्रभावित करती है वह यह है कि **इवोल्यूशनरी थ्योरी के सिद्धांतों पर आधारित वैज्ञानिक शिक्षा और एक धार्मिक व्यक्ति के रूप में उनकी पहचान में कोई द्वंद्व नहीं था**," उन्होंने **फादर लियो की मृत्यु** के समाचार पर इस संवाददाता को लिखा।

- "Along with **Fr. Cecil Saldanha**, these **Jesuit botanists** gave us a **firm grounding in plant science** for which I am forever grateful."
  "**फादर सेसिल सालदान्हा** के साथ, इन **जेसुइट वनस्पति वैज्ञानिकों** ने हमें **प्लांट साइंस में मजबूत आधार** दिया, जिसके लिए मैं सदा आभारी हूँ।"

- Reconciling these **two identities** came effortlessly to **Fr. Leo**, but he constantly encountered **raised eyebrows** along the way.
  इन **दो पहचान** को समेटना **फादर लियो** के लिए सहज था, लेकिन रास्ते में उन्हें लगातार **आश्चर्य और संदेह** का सामना करना पड़ा।

- "People stared at me the first time I entered the **Max Planck Institute in Cologne**," he said in an interview with this reporter a few months before he **passed away**.
  "जब मैं पहली बार **कोलोन के मैक्स प्लैंक इंस्टीट्यूट** में गया, तो लोग मुझे घूर रहे थे," उन्होंने अपनी **मृत्यु से कुछ महीने पहले** इस संवाददाता को दिए एक साक्षात्कार में कहा।

- "I thought they were staring at my **brown skin**, but it was my **clerical collar**."
  "मुझे लगा वे मेरी **भूरी त्वचा** को देख रहे थे, लेकिन वास्तव में वे मेरे **पादरी कॉलर** को देख रहे थे।"

- So **Fr. Leo** was used to **explaining himself**.
  इसलिए **फादर लियो** खुद को समझाने के अभ्यस्त थे।

- "A priest is not only to work in the **church**. His work must have a **value for other people, especially poor people**," he affirmed in the same interview.
  "एक पादरी का कार्य केवल **चर्च** तक सीमित नहीं है। उसके कार्य का **अन्य लोगों, विशेषकर गरीब लोगों के लिए मूल्य होना चाहिए**," उन्होंने उसी साक्षात्कार में कहा।

- When one of his colleagues in **Germany** asked him why he didn't stick to the **altar and pulpit**, Fr. Leo replied: "Had **Gregor Mendel** [the Austrian monk who is often known as the **father of genetics**] followed this principle, then the **scientific world would have lost an important scientist who discovered the basics of genetics and plant breeding**."
  जब **जर्मनी** में उनके एक सहयोगी ने उनसे पूछा कि वे केवल **वेदी और उपदेश मंच** तक ही क्यों सीमित नहीं रहते, तो फादर लियो ने उत्तर दिया: "यदि **ग्रेगर मेंडल** [ऑस्ट्रियाई साधु जिन्हें अक्सर **आनुवंशिकी का जनक** कहा जाता है] ने इस सिद्धांत का पालन किया होता, तो **वैज्ञानिक जगत एक ऐसे महत्वपूर्ण वैज्ञानिक को खो देता जिसने आनुवंशिकी और प्लांट ब्रीडिंग की मूल बातें खोजीं।**"

New AI tool helps identify dinosaur footprints

GS III: S&T
Reuters

Footprints are among the most common kind of dinosaur fossils. Sometimes scientists find a single, lonely footprint. Sometimes they come across a chaotic jumble of tracks resembling a dance floor. But identifying which dinosaur left which track has been notoriously difficult.

Researchers have now developed a method harnessing artificial intelligence (AI) to assist in pinpointing the type of dinosaur responsible for the tracks, based on eight traits of a given footprint.

"This is important because it provides an objective way to classify and compare tracks, reducing reliance on subjective human interpretation," physicist Gregor Hartmann of the Helmholtz-Zentrum Berlin research centre in Germany, lead author of the research published in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* said.

The algorithm analysed 1,974 footprint silhouettes spanning 150 million years, with the AI discerning eight features that explained variance in the shapes

Dinosaurs left behind numerous kinds of fossilised remains, including bones, teeth and claws, impressions of their skin, faeces and vomit, undigested remains in their stomach, eggshells and the remnants of nests. But footprints often are more abundant and can tell scientists a lot, including the type of environment a dinosaur inhabited and, when other tracks are present, the types of animals that shared an ecosystem.

The new method was honed with an analysis by the algorithm of 1,974 footprint silhouettes spanning 150 million years of dinosaur history, with the AI discerning eight features that explained variance in the shapes of these tracks.

These features included: overall load and shape, reflecting the foot's ground contact area; the position of loading; the spread of the toes; how the toes attach to the foot; heel position; the load from the heel; the relative emphasis of toes versus heel; and shape discrepancy between left and right sides of the track.

Many of the footprints previously had been identified as a specific kind of dinosaur by experts. After the algorithm identified the differentiation traits, the experts charted how those corresponded to the various kinds of dinosaurs believed to have made the tracks in order to guide identification of future tracks.

"The problem is that identifying who made a fossilised footprint is inherently uncertain," Hartmann said. "The shape of a track depends on many factors beyond the animal itself, including what the dinosaur was doing at the time, the moisture and type of the substrate, how the footprint was buried by sediment, and how it was altered by erosion over millions of years. As a result, the same dinosaur can leave very different-looking tracks," Hartmann added.

One intriguing conclusion made by the algorithm involved images it examined of seven small, three-toed footprints about 210 million years old from South Africa. It validated a prior assessment by scientists that these closely resemble those of birds, even though they are 60 million years older than the earliest-known avian fossils.

"This, of course, doesn't prove they were made by birds," University of Edinburgh palaeontologist and study senior author Steve Brusatte said, which he said perhaps were made by previously unknown dinosaurs ancestral to birds or by dinosaurs that merely had bird-like feet. "So we have to find an explanation for it," he said.

New AI tool helps identify dinosaur footprints
नया AI टूल डायनासोर के पदचिह्न पहचानने में मदद करता है

- Footprints are among the most common kind of **dinosaur fossils**.
पदचिह्न **डायनासोर जीवाश्मों** के सबसे सामान्य प्रकारों में से एक हैं।

- Sometimes scientists find a **single, lonely footprint**.
कभी-कभी वैज्ञानिकों को **एक अकेला पदचिह्न** मिलता है।

- Sometimes they come across a **chaotic jumble of tracks resembling a dance floor**.
कभी-कभी उन्हें **डांस फ्लोर जैसे बिखरे हुए पदचिह्नों का समूह** मिलता है।

- But identifying **which dinosaur left which track** has been **notoriously difficult**.
लेकिन **कौन-सा डायनासोर कौन-सा पदचिह्न छोड़ गया**, यह पहचानना **काफी कठिन** रहा है।

- Researchers have now developed a **method harnessing artificial intelligence (AI)** to assist in **pinpointing the type of dinosaur responsible for the tracks**, based on **eight traits of a given footprint**.
शोधकर्ताओं ने अब **कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता (AI) आधारित एक विधि** विकसित की है जो **किस प्रकार का डायनासोर पदचिह्न के लिए जिम्मेदार था**, यह पहचानने में मदद करती है, जो **एक पदचिह्न के आठ गुणों** पर आधारित है।

- "This is important because it provides an **objective way to classify and compare tracks**, reducing reliance on **subjective human interpretation**," physicist **Gregor Hartmann** of the **Helmholtz-Zentrum Berlin** research centre in Germany, lead author of the research published in the journal **Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences** said.
"यह महत्वपूर्ण है क्योंकि यह **पदचिह्नों को वर्गीकृत और तुलना करने का एक वस्तुनिष्ठ तरीका** प्रदान करता है, जिससे **मानवीय व्यक्तिपरक व्याख्या पर निर्भरता कम होती है**," जर्मनी के **हेल्महोल्ट्ज-जेंट्रम बर्लिन** के भौतिक विज्ञानी **ग्रेगर हार्टमैन**, जिन्होंने Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences जर्नल में प्रकाशित शोध का नेतृत्व किया, ने कहा।

- Dinosaurs left behind numerous kinds of **fossilised remains**, including **bones, teeth and claws, impressions of their skin, faeces and vomit, undigested remains in their stomach, eggshells and the remnants of nests**.
  डायनासोरों ने कई प्रकार के **जीवाश्म अवशेष** छोड़े, जिनमें **हड्डियाँ, दाँत और पंजे, त्वचा के निशान, मल और उल्टी, पेट में अपचित अवशेष, अंडों के छिलके और घोंसलों के अवशेष** शामिल हैं।

- But footprints often are **more abundant** and can tell scientists a lot, including the **type of environment a dinosaur inhabited** and, when other tracks are present, the **types of animals that shared an ecosystem**.
  लेकिन पदचिह्न अक्सर **अधिक मात्रा में** मिलते हैं और वैज्ञानिकों को बहुत कुछ बताते हैं, जैसे **डायनासोर किस प्रकार के वातावरण में रहता था** और अन्य पदचिह्न होने पर **कौन-कौन से जीव एक ही पारिस्थितिकी तंत्र साझा करते थे।**

- The new method was honed with an analysis by the algorithm of **1,974 footprint silhouettes spanning 150 million years of dinosaur history**, with the AI discerning **eight features** that explained variance in the shapes of these tracks.
  नई विधि को **डायनासोर के 150 मिलियन वर्ष के इतिहास के 1,974 पदचिह्न सिल्युएट** के एल्गोरिदमिक विश्लेषण से विकसित किया गया, जिसमें AI ने **आठ विशेषताओं** की पहचान की जो इन पदचिह्नों के आकार में भिन्नता को समझाती हैं।

- These features included: **overall load and shape, reflecting the foot's ground contact area; the position of loading; the spread of the toes; how the toes attach to the foot; heel position; the load from the heel; the relative emphasis of toes versus heel; and shape discrepancy between left and right sides of the track**.
  इन विशेषताओं में शामिल थे: **कुल भार और आकार, जो पैर के जमीन से संपर्क क्षेत्र को दर्शाता है; भार की स्थिति; उँगलियों का फैलाव; उँगलियों का पैर से जुड़ाव; एड़ी की स्थिति; एड़ी से भार; उँगलियों बनाम एड़ी का महत्व; और पदचिह्न के बाएँ-दाएँ पक्षों में आकार का अंतर।**

- Many of the footprints previously had been identified as a **specific kind of dinosaur by experts**.
  पहले कई पदचिह्नों की पहचान **विशेष प्रकार के डायनासोर के रूप में विशेषज्ञों द्वारा** की जा चुकी थी।

- After the algorithm identified the **differentiation traits**, the experts charted how those corresponded to the **various kinds of dinosaurs believed to have made the tracks** in order to guide identification of **future tracks**.
  एल्गोरिदम द्वारा **भेदकारी गुणों की पहचान** के बाद, विशेषज्ञों ने यह दर्शाया कि वे **विभिन्न प्रकार के डायनासोरों से कैसे मेल खाते हैं**, ताकि **भविष्य के पदचिह्नों की पहचान** में मदद मिल सके।

- "The problem is that identifying who made a **fossilised footprint is inherently uncertain**," Hartmann said.
  "समस्या यह है कि **जीवाश्म पदचिह्न किसने बनाया, यह स्वभावतः अनिश्चित होता है**," हार्टमैन ने कहा।

- "The shape of a track depends on many factors beyond the animal itself, including **what the dinosaur was doing at the time, the moisture and type of the substrate, how the footprint was buried by sediment, and how it was altered by erosion over millions of years**.
  "पदचिह्न का आकार केवल जीव पर ही निर्भर नहीं करता, बल्कि **उस समय डायनासोर क्या कर रहा था, सतह की नमी और प्रकार, तलछट द्वारा पदचिह्न का दबना, और लाखों वर्षों में अपरदन द्वारा हुए परिवर्तन** पर भी निर्भर करता है।

- As a result, the **same dinosaur can leave very different-looking tracks**," Hartmann added.
  इसलिए **एक ही डायनासोर बहुत अलग-दिखने वाले पदचिह्न छोड़ सकता है**," हार्टमैन ने कहा।

- One intriguing conclusion made by the algorithm involved images it examined of **seven small, three-toed footprints about 210 million years old from South Africa**.
  एल्गोरिदम द्वारा निकाला गया एक रोचक निष्कर्ष **दक्षिण अफ्रीका से लगभग 210 मिलियन वर्ष पुराने सात छोटे, तीन-उँगली वाले पदचिह्नों** से संबंधित था।

- It validated a prior assessment by scientists that these **closely resemble those of birds**, even though they are **60 million years older than the earliest-known avian fossils**.
  इसने वैज्ञानिकों के पूर्व आकलन की पुष्टि की कि ये **पक्षियों के पदचिह्नों से बहुत मिलते-जुलते हैं**, जबकि ये **सबसे पुराने ज्ञात पक्षी जीवाश्मों से 60 मिलियन वर्ष अधिक पुराने** हैं।

- "This, of course, doesn't prove they were made by **birds**," **University of Edinburgh palaeontologist Steve Brusatte** said, which he said perhaps were made by **previously unknown dinosaurs ancestral to birds or by dinosaurs that merely had bird-like feet**.
  "यह निश्चित रूप से साबित नहीं करता कि ये **पक्षियों द्वारा बनाए गए थे**," एडिनबर्ग विश्वविद्यालय के जीवाश्म

विज्ञानी स्टीव ब्रुसाटे ने कहा, उनका मानना है कि ये **ऐसे अज्ञात डायनासोरों द्वारा बनाए गए हो सकते हैं जो पक्षियों के पूर्वज थे या ऐसे डायनासोर जिनके पैर पक्षियों जैसे थे।**

- "So we have to find an **explanation for it**," he said.
  "इसलिए हमें इसका **स्पष्टीकरण खोजना होगा**," उन्होंने कहा।

On gravity's role in the earth's journey through space

Revisiting the significance of gravity as it keeps mankind grounded and enables earth's rapid movement through space at 1,07,000 kilometres per hour, emphasising the remarkable journey of life amidst the vast mysteries of the universe

GS III: S&T

Adhip Agarwala

A fresh year has just started, and we are already a month old. Year endings and startings are always occasions to ponder. Here in IIT Kanpur, where some of us teach, the first week of January is always hectic. A new semester just started, students are back after winter breaks, and people are rushing through foggy mornings towards their classes.

As people meet on the way, we invariably greet each other 'Happy new year'. However, if you belong to that category of people, who have felt that last year wasn't really that remarkable, let me try to convince you otherwise. The secret, as always, lies in the physics behind.

The discovery of gravity
As the common folklore states, Issac Newton, about 400 years back, discovered gravity while sitting beneath an apple tree. That things attract each other just because they have some weight is quite extraordinary. And we see this everyday – when we fall, we fall towards the floor and not towards someone else (unless, of course you are falling in love). This is because, on earth, the heaviest thing around us is the earth itself.

In fact all of us, animals, humans, oceans and even our air is essentially stuck to this massive piece of toffee-like liquid filled rock which we call earth. All life, our leaders, their wars, are essentially the result of this cohabitation – the result of gravity.

But then, when two things attract because of gravity, it's not necessary for them to get stuck to each other. A thing attracted to another may decide to just revolve around it. In the language of physics, we say this is when the gravitational pull acts as the centripetal force. Centripetal force is a force which acts towards a centre.

Roller coaster
That pulling something towards you can rotate it is not something unusual. For instance, imagine you are tying a strong rope to the seat of a kid riding a bicycle and try to pull the cycle towards you. As you pull, instead of the cycle coming directly at you, it will make the cycle circle around you. If you continue to do so, the cycle may make a full turn. Here your pull acts like a centripetal force. And this is what the earth does to the moon through gravitational pull. The moon is attracted by the gravitational force of earth, but it makes the moon revolve around us. This very behaviour is repeated by the earth and the sun.

The earth takes one whole year to make a complete revolution around the sun. Can you guess how much distance the earth travels in that one year? It's about 1,000,000,000 kilometres. If one travels from Delhi to Chennai – that's about 2,500 kms. And if one plans to travel via car and drive it at a high speed of 100 km per hour (all the time, with no breaks and no toll booth stops), it will take approximately a day. Now imagine travelling that same distance, 4,00,000 times. How much time would you take? About 1,000 years.

Well, earth covers it in just 365 days, that is one year. The earth moves at an extraordinary speed of 1,07,000 kilometres per hour. No roller coaster can ride you at such high speeds.

But who or what is fuelling the earth to continue on this speed? After all, even to maintain a car at 100kms/hr, one needs to keep supplying it with oil (one of the reasons why many countries are obsessed with oil).

Friction and aether
The reason one needs to supply oil to our car even to maintain it at some speed is because the road has friction. If we just leave the car on its own at some speed, it will eventually come to a stand-still. This friction is caused by the surroundings which pushes back a bit to anything which tries to move due to other forces. For instance, a car may feel it from the road, a bird by the air, a fish by the water it is in.

But then what about earth? Are planets or even the sun moving in some liquid?

This was a question which puzzled scientists for a long time. While we now know that the earth lies in vacuum – which means essentially nothing – at some point people thought that the earth and all celestial objects are in an invisible material called "aether". Michelson and Morley, two American scientists, did an experiment 140 years back (in 1887) trying to detect aether. The result is considered one of the most famous "failed" experiments: experiments which disprove something it was designed to prove. They showed that aether doesn't exist.

The earth thus continues to move at this extraordinary speed without anything to resist it or slow it down. And as it does, it continues to rotate around the sun.

The advent of space study
The study of planets, galaxies and the way they form is called astrophysics. One of the most celebrated Indian physicists working in this area was Prof. Jayant Narlikar who passed away last year. Apart from being a researcher, he wrote many science stories. He also became the founding director of the Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics

(IUCAA) in Pune, an institute dedicated to astrophysics research in India and was awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 2004 by the Government of India.

Apart from being a cosmologist who came up with theories of how the universe came along, he also did experiments to disprove many of our superstitions which arise from celestial events. If you have a free weekend, and want to learn more about astrophysics and our everyday unscientific superstitions, consider watching "Brahmand" a TV series which was written by Prof. Narlikar which ran in Doordarshan between 1994-95. The episodes are now available on the YouTube channel of Doordarshan National.

One may still wonder how did scientists really disprove the existence of aether? You may also wonder if we are able to explain all the things we see in the night sky – the stars, how they form, how they die. Well, it turns out there are many things we still don't understand and if you are interested to learn more, you will need to learn physics, for example in an institute like ours, where there are undergraduate programmes in it.

Next time, on a serene morning, if you are staring at a water pond, as birds chirp next to you, wondering how calm everything around you is, imagine for a second how you are really on a rollercoaster traveling in space at an extraordinary speed.

And when this year ends; even if your regular earthly life has been ordinary, don't forget to congratulate yourself, and your fellow life forms on earth, on the extraordinary space travel you all have together completed.

Adhip Agarwala is an assistant professor of physics at IIT Kanpur.

On gravity's role in the earth's journey through space
अंतरिक्ष में पृथ्वी की यात्रा में गुरुत्वाकर्षण की भूमिका पर

- **Revisiting** the **significance of gravity** as it keeps **mankind grounded** and enables **earth's rapid movement through space** at **1,07,000 kilometres per hour**, emphasising the **remarkable journey of life** amidst the **vast mysteries of the universe**
  गुरुत्वाकर्षण के महत्व को फिर से देखते हुए, यह **मानव जाति को पृथ्वी से जुड़े रहने** में मदद करता है और **पृथ्वी की अंतरिक्ष में तेज गति** को **1,07,000 किलोमीटर प्रति घंटा** पर संभव बनाता है, जो **जीवन की अद्भुत यात्रा** को **ब्रह्मांड के विशाल रहस्यों** के बीच रेखांकित करता है

New Year, Physics and Gravity
नया वर्ष, भौतिकी और गुरुत्वाकर्षण

- A fresh year has just started, and **we are already a month old**.
  एक नया वर्ष शुरू हो चुका है और **हम पहले ही एक महीने पुराने हो चुके हैं।**
- Year endings and beginnings are always occasions **to ponder**.
  साल का अंत और शुरुआत हमेशा **विचार करने का अवसर** होते हैं।

- At **IIT Kanpur**, the first week of January is always **hectic with a new semester, students returning, and foggy mornings**.
  आईआईटी कानपुर में जनवरी का पहला सप्ताह हमेशा **नए सेमेस्टर, छात्रों की वापसी और धुंध भरी सुबहों** के कारण व्यस्त रहता है।
- People greet each other **'Happy New Year'**, but if last year felt **not remarkable**, physics can explain otherwise.
  लोग एक-दूसरे को **'हैप्पी न्यू ईयर'** कहते हैं, लेकिन यदि पिछला वर्ष **विशेष नहीं लगा**, तो भौतिकी इसे अलग तरह से समझा सकती है।

Discovery of Gravity
गुरुत्वाकर्षण की खोज

- According to folklore, **Isaac Newton discovered gravity about 400 years ago under an apple tree**.
  लोककथा के अनुसार **आइज़ैक न्यूटन ने लगभग 400 वर्ष पहले सेब के पेड़ के नीचे गुरुत्वाकर्षण की खोज की**।
- Objects attract each other because they have **weight**, which is extraordinary.
  वस्तुएँ एक-दूसरे को **भार के कारण आकर्षित** करती हैं, जो असाधारण है।
- When we fall, we fall towards the **earth**, because the **earth is the heaviest object around us**.
  जब हम गिरते हैं तो **पृथ्वी की ओर गिरते हैं**, क्योंकि **पृथ्वी हमारे आसपास की सबसे भारी वस्तु है**।
- All humans, animals, oceans, and air are **stuck to this massive rock called earth due to gravity**.
  सभी मनुष्य, पशु, महासागर और वायु **गुरुत्वाकर्षण के कारण पृथ्वी नामक विशाल चट्टान से जुड़े हुए हैं**।
- Life, leaders, and wars are also **results of this cohabitation under gravity**.
  जीवन, नेता और युद्ध भी **गुरुत्वाकर्षण के अधीन सह-अस्तित्व का परिणाम हैं**।
- Two objects attracted by gravity may **revolve instead of sticking together**.
  गुरुत्वाकर्षण से आकर्षित दो वस्तुएँ **एक-दूसरे से चिपकने के बजाय घूम भी सकती हैं**।
- This happens when **gravitational pull acts as centripetal force toward a centre**.
  यह तब होता है जब **गुरुत्वाकर्षण बल केंद्राभिमुख बल की तरह केंद्र की ओर कार्य करता है**।

Roller Coaster and Rotation
रोलर कोस्टर और घूर्णन

- Pulling something can make it **rotate around you like centripetal force**.
  किसी वस्तु को खींचने से वह **केंद्राभिमुख बल की तरह आपके चारों ओर घूम सकती है**।
- Example: pulling a bicycle tied with rope makes it **circle around you instead of coming straight**.
  उदाहरण: रस्सी से बंधी साइकिल को खींचने पर वह **सीधे आने के बजाय आपके चारों ओर घूमती है**।
- This is how **earth's gravity makes the moon revolve around earth**.
  इसी प्रकार **पृथ्वी का गुरुत्वाकर्षण चंद्रमा को पृथ्वी के चारों ओर घुमाता है**।
- Similarly, **earth revolves around the sun**.
  इसी तरह **पृथ्वी सूर्य के चारों ओर घूमती है**।
- Earth takes **one year (365 days)** to complete one revolution around the sun.
  पृथ्वी को सूर्य के चारों ओर एक चक्कर लगाने में **एक वर्ष (365 दिन)** लगते हैं।
- Earth travels about **1,000,000,000 kilometres in one year**.
  पृथ्वी एक वर्ष में लगभग **1,000,000,000 किलोमीटर** की दूरी तय करती है।
- Delhi to Chennai distance is about **2,500 km**, which takes about **one day at 100 km/h**.
  दिल्ली से चेन्नई की दूरी लगभग **2,500 किमी** है, जिसे **100 किमी/घंटा की गति से लगभग एक दिन** लगता है।
- Travelling that distance **4,00,000 times would take about 1,000 years**, but earth covers it in **365 days**.
  उसी दूरी को **4,00,000 बार तय करने में लगभग 1,000 वर्ष लगेंगे**, जबकि पृथ्वी इसे **365 दिनों** में पूरा करती है।
- Earth moves at a speed of about **1,07,000 km per hour**, faster than any roller coaster.
  पृथ्वी लगभग **1,07,000 किमी प्रति घंटा** की गति से चलती है, जो किसी भी रोलर कोस्टर से अधिक है।

- But what fuels the earth to maintain this speed, when even a car at **100 km/h needs constant fuel**?
  लेकिन पृथ्वी को यह गति बनाए रखने की ऊर्जा कौन देता है, जबकि **100 किमी/घंटा की कार को भी लगातार ईंधन चाहिए**?

Friction and Aether
घर्षण और ईथर

- Friction is the reason a **car needs oil even to maintain speed**, otherwise it will **eventually come to a standstill**.
  घर्षण के कारण **कार को गति बनाए रखने के लिए भी तेल चाहिए**, अन्यथा वह **अंततः रुक जाएगी।**
- Friction is caused by the **surroundings pushing back** against moving objects.
  घर्षण **आसपास के वातावरण द्वारा चलती वस्तु के विरुद्ध प्रतिरोध** के कारण होता है।
- A car feels friction from the **road**, a bird from the **air**, and a fish from the **water**.
  कार को घर्षण **सड़क से**, पक्षी को **हवा से**, और मछली को **पानी से** महसूस होता है।
- Scientists once wondered whether **earth and planets move in some liquid medium**.
  वैज्ञानिकों ने सोचा था कि क्या **पृथ्वी और ग्रह किसी तरल माध्यम में चलते हैं।**
- Although we now know the earth moves in **vacuum (empty space)**, earlier people believed in an invisible substance called **"aether"**.
  हालाँकि अब हम जानते हैं कि पृथ्वी **निर्वात (खाली स्थान)** में चलती है, पहले लोग **"ईथर" नामक अदृश्य पदार्थ** पर विश्वास करते थे।
- **Michelson and Morley experiment (1887)** tried to detect aether but **proved that aether does not exist**.
  माइकलसन और मॉर्ले का प्रयोग (1887) ईथर का पता लगाने के लिए था, लेकिन इसने **साबित किया कि ईथर अस्तित्व में नहीं है।**
- It became one of the most famous **"failed experiments"** that disproved its own **hypothesis**.
  यह सबसे प्रसिद्ध **"असफल प्रयोगों"** में से एक बना जिसने अपनी ही परिकल्पना को गलत साबित किया।
- Thus, earth continues to move at **extraordinary speed without resistance**, revolving around the sun.
  इस प्रकार पृथ्वी **बिना किसी प्रतिरोध के असाधारण गति से चलती रहती है** और सूर्य के चारों ओर घूमती है।

The Advent of Space Study
अंतरिक्ष अध्ययन का विकास

- The study of planets and galaxies is called **astrophysics**.
  ग्रहों और आकाशगंगाओं का अध्ययन **खगोल भौतिकी (Astrophysics)** कहलाता है।
- One of the most celebrated Indian physicists in this field was **Prof. Jayant Narlikar**, who **passed away last year**.
  इस क्षेत्र के प्रसिद्ध भारतीय भौतिक वैज्ञानिकों में **प्रो. जयंत नार्लीकर** थे, जिनका **पिछले वर्ष निधन हो गया।**
- He was the **founding director of IUCAA Pune** and received the **Padma Vibhushan in 2004**.
  वे **IUCAA पुणे के संस्थापक निदेशक** थे और उन्हें **2004 में पद्म विभूषण** मिला।
- Apart from research, he wrote **science stories and theories about the universe**.
  अनुसंधान के अलावा उन्होंने **विज्ञान कथाएँ और ब्रह्मांड से जुड़ी सिद्धांत** लिखे।
- He also conducted experiments to **disprove superstitions related to celestial events**.
  उन्होंने **खगोलीय घटनाओं से जुड़ी अंधविश्वासों को गलत साबित करने के प्रयोग** भी किए।
- His TV series **"Brahmand" (Doordarshan, 1994-95)** explains astrophysics and superstitions; episodes are available on **YouTube (Doordarshan National)**.
  उनकी टीवी श्रृंखला **"ब्रह्मांड" (द्रूरदर्शन, 1994-95)** खगोल भौतिकी और अंधविश्वास समझाती है; इसके एपिसोड **यूट्यूब (द्रूरदर्शन नेशनल)** पर उपलब्ध हैं।
- Scientists still try to understand **stars, their formation and death**, and many mysteries remain unsolved.
  वैज्ञानिक अभी भी **तारों, उनके निर्माण और मृत्यु** को समझने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं और कई रहस्य अभी भी अनसुलझे हैं।

- To learn more, one must **study physics**, possibly in institutes offering **undergraduate programmes**.
और अधिक जानने के लिए **भौतिकी का अध्ययन** आवश्यक है, संभवतः **स्नातक कार्यक्रम वाले संस्थानों** में।

- Next time, on a calm morning, remember that **you are traveling in space at extraordinary speed like a roller coaster**.
अगली बार शांत सुबह में याद रखें कि **आप रोलर कोस्टर की तरह असाधारण गति से अंतरिक्ष में यात्रा कर रहे हैं।**

- At the end of the year, even if life felt ordinary, remember you completed **extraordinary space travel with all life on earth**.
साल के अंत में, यदि जीवन साधारण लगे, तब भी याद रखें कि आपने **पृथ्वी के सभी जीवन के साथ असाधारण अंतरिक्ष यात्रा पूरी की है।**

GS Paper III: Environment,	
TOPICS COVERED	**10 February 2026**
1.	**New species of dragonfly discovered in Kerala's rubber plantations, named Lyriothemis keralensis** केरल के रबर बागानों में ड्रैगनफ़्लाई की नई प्रजाति की खोज, नाम Lyriothemis keralensis
2.	**Don't let poachers sneak through The Forest Department's amnesty scheme must not legitimise illegal wildlife possession** शिकारियों को छुपकर निकलने न दें वन विभाग की एमनेस्टी योजना अवैध वन्यजीव कब्जे को वैध नहीं बना सकती

New species of dragonfly discovered in Kerala's rubber plantations, named *Lyriothemis keralensis*

GS III: Environment

The Hindu Bureau
KANNUR

Researchers have discovered a new species of dragonfly from Kerala and named it *Lyriothemis keralensis*, recognising the State's exceptional biodiversity. The species was recorded from Varapetty near Kothamangalam in Ernakulam district, where it inhabits vegetated pools and irrigation canals within shaded pineapple and rubber plantations.

The study was conducted by Dattaprasad Sawant of the Indian Foundation for Butterflies, Bengaluru, A. Vivek Chandran of the Department of Wildlife Science College of Forestry, Kerala Agricultural University, Renjith Jacob Mathews of the Society for Odonate Studies, Kerala, and Krushnamegh Kunte of the National Centre for Biological Science, Bengaluru. The findings have been published in the International Journal of Odonatology.

According to Dr. Chandran the newly described dragonfly is seasonally visible only during the Southwest monsoon from later May to the end of August.

During the remaining months of the year, the species is believed to persist in its aquatic larval stage, surviving in the network of canals and pools inside shaded plantation landscapes.

He said *Lyriothemis keralensis* is a small dragonfly with distinct sexual dimorphism. The males are bright blood-red with black markings, making them visually striking, while the females are bulkier and yellow with black markings.

Although the species has been known to be found in Kerala since 2013, it had remained misidentified for over a decade as *Lyriothemis acigastra*, a species previously thought to be restricted to northeast India. The researchers confirmed its distinct identity through detailed microscopic examinations and comparisons with museum specimens, which revealed clear difference, including a more slender abdomen and distinctly shaped anal appendages and genitalia.

Dr. Chandran and other researchers highlighted the conservation concerns, nothing that most population of the species occur outside the protected area network.

They stressed the importance of careful land-use practices, especially in plantation-dominated landscapes, to ensure the survival of the species.

Researchers stressed the importance of careful land-use practices to ensure the survival of the species. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

New species of dragonfly discovered in Kerala's rubber plantations, named Lyriothemis keralensis
केरल के रबर बागानों में ड्रैगनफ़्लाई की नई प्रजाति की खोज, नाम Lyriothemis keralensis

- New species of dragonfly discovered in Kerala and named **Lyriothemis keralensis**, recognising the **State's exceptional biodiversity**.
  केरल में ड्रैगनफ़्लाई की एक नई प्रजाति की खोज की गई है और इसे **Lyriothemis keralensis** नाम दिया गया है, जो **राज्य की असाधारण जैव विविधता** को दर्शाता है।

- The species was recorded from **Varapetty near Kothamangalam in Ernakulam district**, where it inhabits **vegetated pools and irrigation canals** within **shaded pineapple and rubber plantations**.
  यह प्रजाति **एरणाकुलम ज़िले में कोठामंगलम के पास वरापेट्टी** से दर्ज की गई, जहाँ यह **छायादार अनानास और रबर बागानों** के भीतर **वनस्पति युक्त तालाबों और सिंचाई नहरों** में निवास करती है।

- The study was conducted by **Dattaprasad Sawant** of the **Indian Foundation for Butterflies, Bengaluru**, **A. Vivek Chandran** of the **Department of Wildlife Science College of Forestry, Kerala Agricultural University**, **Renjith Jacob Mathews** of the **Society for Odonate Studies, Kerala**, and **Krushnamegh Kunte** of the **National Centre for Biological Science, Bengaluru**.
  यह अध्ययन **दत्तप्रसाद सावंत** (इंडियन फ़ाउंडेशन फ़ॉर बटरफ़्लाइज़, बेंगलुरु), **ए. विवेक चंद्रन** (डिपार्टमेंट ऑफ़ वाइल्डलाइफ़ साइंस कॉलेज ऑफ़ फ़ॉरेस्ट्री, केरल एग्रीकल्चरल यूनिवर्सिटी), **रेनजिथ जैकब मैथ्यूज़** (सोसाइटी फ़ॉर ओडोनेट स्टडीज़, केरल) और **कृष्णमेघ कुंटे** (नेशनल सेंटर फ़ॉर बायोलॉजिकल साइंस, बेंगलुरु) द्वारा किया गया।

- The findings have been published in the **International Journal of Odonatology**.
  इन निष्कर्षों को **इंटरनेशनल जर्नल ऑफ़ ओडोनाटोलॉजी** में प्रकाशित किया गया है।

- According to **Dr. Chandran**, the newly described dragonfly, is seasonally visible only during the **Southwest monsoon from late May to the end of August**.
  डॉ. चंद्रन के अनुसार, यह नई ड्रैगनफ़्लाई केवल **दक्षिण-पश्चिम मानसून के दौरान, मई के अंत से अगस्त के अंत तक** मौसमी रूप से दिखाई देती है।

- During the remaining months of the year, the species is believed to persist in its **aquatic larval stage**, surviving in the **network of canals and pools** inside **shaded plantation landscapes**.
  वर्ष के शेष महीनों में यह प्रजाति **जलीय लार्वा अवस्था** में बनी रहती है और **छायादार बागान परिदृश्यों** के भीतर **नहरों और तालाबों के नेटवर्क** में जीवित रहती है।

- He said Lyriothemis keralensis is a **small dragonfly** with **distinct sexual dimorphism**.
  उन्होंने कहा कि Lyriothemis keralensis एक **छोटी ड्रैगनफ़्लाई** है जिसमें **स्पष्ट लैंगिक द्विरूपता** पाई जाती है।

- The **males are bright blood-red with black markings**, making them visually striking, while the **females are bulkier and yellow with black markings**.
  इसके **नर चमकीले रक्त-लाल रंग के होते हैं जिन पर काले निशान होते हैं**, जबकि **मादाएँ अधिक भारी और पीले रंग की होती हैं जिन पर काले निशान होते हैं**।

- Although the species has been known to be found in **Kerala since 2013**, it had remained **misidentified for over a decade** as Lyriothemis acigastra, a species previously thought to be restricted to **northeast India**.
  हालाँकि यह प्रजाति **2013 से केरल में पाई जा रही थी**, लेकिन इसे **एक दशक से अधिक समय तक गलत पहचान** के तहत Lyriothemis acigastra समझा जाता रहा, जिसे पहले **पूर्वोत्तर भारत** तक सीमित माना जाता था।

- The researchers confirmed its distinct identity through **detailed microscopic examinations** and **comparisons with museum specimens**, which revealed clear differences, including a **more slender abdomen** and **distinctly shaped anal appendages and genitalia**.
  शोधकर्ताओं ने **विस्तृत सूक्ष्मदर्शी परीक्षणों** और **संग्रहालय नमूनों से तुलना** के माध्यम से इसकी अलग पहचान की पुष्टि की, जिससे **अधिक पतला उदर** तथा **विशिष्ट आकार के एनल एपेंडेज और जननांग** जैसे स्पष्ट अंतर सामने आए।

- **Conservation concerns** were highlighted, noting that most populations of the species occur **outside the protected area network**.
  संरक्षण संबंधी चिंताओं को रेखांकित किया गया, यह बताते हुए कि इस प्रजाति की अधिकांश आबादी **संरक्षित क्षेत्र नेटवर्क के बाहर** पाई जाती है।

- They stressed the importance of **careful land-use practices**, especially in **plantation-dominated landscapes**, to ensure the **survival of the species**.

उन्होंने **सावधानीपूर्वक भूमि-उपयोग प्रथाओं** के महत्व पर ज़ोर दिया, विशेष रूप से **बागान-प्रधान परिदृश्यों** में, ताकि **इस प्रजाति का अस्तित्व** सुनिश्चित किया जा सके।

Don't let poachers sneak through

The Forest Department's amnesty scheme must not legitimise illegal wildlife possession

GS III: Environment

STATE OF PLAY

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Wildlife-related issues, particularly incidents of wild animals straying into human habitations and causing loss of life and property, often dominate headlines in Kerala. This time, however, the focus has shifted to wildlife articles.

The State Forest Department's decision to offer a one-time amnesty scheme for the keepers of undeclared wildlife articles has generated unusual interest in the State, where many people are believed to possess such articles. Officials say they have been receiving applications from people who want to declare inherited animal trophies and obtain ownership certificates, or surrender them without any case being registered.

The proposal, which the Forest Department had been pushing for some time, gained particular significance following a recent Kerala High Court judgment that cancelled the ownership certificates issued for two sets of ivory and 13 ivory idols found in the illegal possession of actor Mohanlal.

In fact, even before the High Court order, the Forest Department had got approval for the proposal at a meeting of the State Wildlife Advisory Board held on June 18, 2025, chaired by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. The proposal allowed legal owners of wildlife articles to surrender them to the department. The proposal has to be ratified by the Union Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change. Section 40(2B) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, notes that the keepers of wildlife articles or trophies must submit a declaration to the Chief Wildlife Warden within 90 days of inheriting them. This ensures that these articles are registered and not illegally traded. However, according to the Forest Department, most people, due to ignorance, submit their applications after the legal deadline. It adds that there also may be many people who inherit trophies but never declare them. The amnesty scheme, it argues, offers such individuals one final opportunity.

In Kerala, the statutory deadline for declaring such articles expired on October 18, 2003. The Act also requires the Forest Department to conduct an inquiry into the legality of possession before accepting surrendered articles or issuing ownership certificates.

A plain reading of the Act makes it clear that only legally owned or legally inherited wildlife articles are eligible for declaration and certification. Articles illegally acquired cannot be legitimised merely by surrender. The crucial safeguard, therefore, lies in the inquiry to be conducted by the Chief Wildlife Warden or an authorised officer to determine whether the possession is lawful.

In the case of Mr. Mohanlal, ownership certificates were issued for two sets of ivory and several ivory idols that came to light during an Income Tax raid at his Kochi residence a few years ago. These certificates were granted following an inquiry by a forest official. However, the articles were neither inherited by the actor nor derived from animals he legally owned. The petitioners who challenged the granting of the certificates to him said that the Forest Department failed to conduct a proper inquiry and the notifications were not published in the government gazette.

While the Kerala High Court did not delve into the issue of the adequacy of the inquiry, the Bench comprising Justices A. K. Jayasankaran Nambiar and Jobin Sebastian declared the orders issuing the ownership certificates void ab initio and legally unenforceable. The Bench also observed that the State government was free to issue "a fresh notification for conferring the immunity envisaged under the statutory provision, to persons or a class of persons envisaged under the statute."

The government's amnesty initiative comes at a time when celebrities, including Union Minister and actor Suresh Gopi and rapper Vedan (Hirandas Murali), are under investigation for the alleged possession of ornaments made from wildlife articles. While the government may justifiably consider genuine cases involving the surrender of legally acquired wildlife articles and protect such keepers from prolonged litigation, the amnesty must not become a backdoor mechanism to legitimise illegal possession. Wildlife trophies obtained unlawfully constitute a punishable offence under the Act.

The government must also ensure that legal safeguards are not diluted, as was alleged in the Mohanlal case, since any such dilution would encourage wildlife crime and illegal trade, ultimately endangering protected species.

Don't let poachers sneak through The Forest Department's amnesty scheme must not legitimise illegal wildlife possession

शिकारियों को छुपकर निकलने न दें वन विभाग की एमनेस्टी योजना अवैध वन्यजीव कब्जे को वैध नहीं बना सकती

- Wildlife-related issues, particularly **wild animals straying into human habitations causing loss of life and property**, often dominate headlines in **Kerala**.
  वन्यजीव संबंधी मुद्दे, विशेषकर **जंगली जानवरों का मानव बस्तियों में घुसना और जान-माल का नुकसान**, अक्सर **केरल** में सुर्खियाँ बनते हैं।

- This time, however, the focus has shifted to **wildlife articles**.
  इस बार ध्यान **वन्यजीव वस्तुओं** पर केंद्रित हो गया है।

- The **Kerala Forest Department's one-time amnesty scheme** for keepers of **undeclared wildlife articles** has generated unusual interest.
  केरल वन विभाग की एक-बार की माफी योजना ने अघोषित वन्यजीव वस्तुओं के धारकों में असामान्य रुचि पैदा की है।

- Officials say they are receiving **applications from people to declare inherited animal trophies, obtain ownership certificates, or surrender them without cases**.
  अधिकारियों के अनुसार लोग **विरासत में मिले पशु ट्रॉफी घोषित करने, स्वामित्व प्रमाणपत्र लेने या बिना मामला दर्ज किए समर्पण करने** के लिए आवेदन कर रहे हैं।

- The proposal gained significance after a **Kerala High Court judgment** cancelled **ownership certificates for two sets of ivory and 13 ivory idols** in actor **Mohanlal's illegal possession**.
  यह प्रस्ताव **केरल हाई कोर्ट के निर्णय** के बाद महत्वपूर्ण हुआ, जिसमें अभिनेता **मोहनलाल के अवैध कब्जे में पाए गए दो हाथीदांत सेट और 13 हाथीदांत मूर्तियों** के स्वामित्व प्रमाणपत्र रद्द किए गए।

- Even before the order, the proposal was approved at the **State Wildlife Advisory Board meeting** chaired by **Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan**.
  इस आदेश से पहले ही **18 जून 2025** को **राज्य वन्यजीव सलाहकार बोर्ड की बैठक**, जिसकी अध्यक्षता **मुख्यमंत्री पिनराई विजयन** ने की, में प्रस्ताव स्वीकृत हुआ था।

- The proposal allows **legal owners to surrender wildlife articles** to the department.
  यह प्रस्ताव **वैध मालिकों को वन्यजीव वस्तुएँ विभाग को सौंपने** की अनुमति देता है।

- It must be **ratified by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change**.
  इसे **केंद्रीय पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय** द्वारा अनुमोदित किया जाना आवश्यक है।

- **Section 40(2B) of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972** requires keepers of **wildlife articles or trophies** to declare them within **90 days of inheritance** to the **Chief Wildlife Warden**.
  वन्यजीव संरक्षण अधिनियम, 1972 की धारा 40(2B) के अनुसार **वन्यजीव वस्तु या ट्रॉफी** के धारकों को विरासत मिलने के **90 दिनों के भीतर मुख्य वन्यजीव संरक्षक** को घोषणा देनी होती है।

- This ensures articles are **registered and not illegally traded**.
  इससे वस्तुएँ **पंजीकृत रहती हैं और अवैध व्यापार नहीं होता।**

- However, most people submit applications **after the legal deadline due to ignorance**.
  लेकिन अज्ञानता के कारण अधिकांश लोग **कानूनी समय सीमा के बाद आवेदन करते हैं।**

- There may also be people who **inherit trophies but never declare them**.
  ऐसे लोग भी हो सकते हैं जो **ट्रॉफी विरासत में लेते हैं पर कभी घोषित नहीं करते।**

- The **amnesty scheme offers one final opportunity** to such individuals.
  माफी योजना ऐसे लोगों को अंतिम अवसर देती है।

- In Kerala, the statutory deadline for declaring such articles expired on **October 18, 2003**.
  केरल में ऐसी वस्तुओं की घोषणा की कानूनी समय सीमा **18 अक्टूबर 2003** को समाप्त हो गई थी।

- The Act requires the Forest Department to **conduct an inquiry into legality of possession** before accepting surrender or issuing **ownership certificates**.
  अधिनियम के अनुसार वन विभाग को समर्पण स्वीकार करने या **स्वामित्व प्रमाणपत्र जारी करने से पहले वैधता की जांच** करनी होती है।

Legal interpretation and safeguards
कानूनी व्याख्या और सुरक्षा प्रावधान

- A plain reading of the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972** makes it clear that only **legally owned or legally inherited wildlife articles** are eligible for **declaration and certification**.
  वन्यजीव संरक्षण अधिनियम, 1972 का सामान्य अध्ययन स्पष्ट करता है कि केवल **कानूनी रूप से स्वामित्व या विरासत में प्राप्त वन्यजीव वस्तुएँ** ही **घोषणा और प्रमाणन** के लिए पात्र हैं।

- Articles **illegally acquired cannot be legitimised by surrender**.
  अवैध रूप से प्राप्त वस्तुओं को समर्पण से वैध नहीं बनाया जा सकता।

- The key safeguard is the **inquiry by the Chief Wildlife Warden or authorised officer** to verify **lawful possession**.
मुख्य सुरक्षा उपाय **मुख्य वन्यजीव संरक्षक या अधिकृत अधिकारी द्वारा जांच** है, जिससे **कानूनी स्वामित्व** की पुष्टि होती है।

The Mohanlal case
मोहनलाल मामला

- Ownership certificates were issued for **two sets of ivory and several ivory idols** discovered during an **Income Tax raid at Mohanlal's Kochi residence**.
मोहनलाल के कोच्चि निवास पर आयकर छापे में मिले **दो हाथीदांत सेट और कई हाथीदांत मूर्तियों** के लिए स्वामित्व प्रमाणपत्र जारी किए गए थे।
- These certificates were granted after an **inquiry by a forest official**.
ये प्रमाणपत्र **वन अधिकारी की जांच** के बाद दिए गए थे।
- However, the articles were **neither inherited nor derived from legally owned animals**.
लेकिन ये वस्तुएँ **न तो विरासत में मिली थीं और न ही कानूनी रूप से स्वामित्व वाले जानवरों से प्राप्त** थीं।
- Petitioners argued the **Forest Department failed to conduct a proper inquiry** and **notifications were not published in the government gazette**.
याचिकाकर्ताओं ने कहा कि **वन विभाग ने उचित जांच नहीं की** और **सरकारी राजपत्र में अधिसूचना प्रकाशित नहीं हुई।**
- The **Kerala High Court Bench (Justices A. K. Jayasankaran Nambiar and Jobin Sebastian)** declared the ownership certificates **void ab initio and legally unenforceable**.
केरल हाई कोर्ट की पीठ (न्यायमूर्ति ए. के. जयशंकरन नांबियार और जोबिन सेबेस्टियन) ने स्वामित्व प्रमाणपत्रों को **प्रारंभ से ही शून्य और कानूनी रूप से अमान्य** घोषित किया।
- The Court said the **State government may issue a fresh notification granting immunity under the statutory provision**.
अदालत ने कहा कि **राज्य सरकार वैधानिक प्रावधान के तहत प्रतिरक्षा देने के लिए नई अधिसूचना जारी कर सकती है।**

Amnesty scheme and concerns
माफी योजना और चिंताएँ

- The government's amnesty comes amid investigations against **Union Minister and actor Suresh Gopi and rapper Vedan (Hirandas Murali)** for alleged possession of **ornaments made from wildlife articles**.
सरकार की माफी योजना ऐसे समय आई है जब **केंद्रीय मंत्री व अभिनेता सुरेश गोपी और रैपर वेदन (हिरंदास मुरली)** पर **वन्यजीव वस्तुओं से बने आभूषण रखने** के आरोपों की जांच चल रही है।
- The government may consider genuine cases involving **legally acquired wildlife articles**, protecting keepers from **prolonged litigation**.
सरकार **कानूनी रूप से प्राप्त वन्यजीव वस्तुओं** वाले वास्तविक मामलों पर विचार कर सकती है और धारकों को **लंबी कानूनी प्रक्रिया से बचा सकती है।**
- However, the amnesty **must not become a backdoor to legitimise illegal possession**.
लेकिन माफी योजना **अवैध स्वामित्व को वैध बनाने का माध्यम नहीं बननी चाहिए।**
- **Illegal wildlife trophies constitute a punishable offence under the Act**.
अवैध वन्यजीव ट्रॉफी अधिनियम के तहत दंडनीय अपराध हैं।
- The government must ensure **legal safeguards are not diluted**, as any dilution may **encourage wildlife crime and illegal trade**, threatening **protected species**.
सरकार को सुनिश्चित करना चाहिए कि **कानूनी सुरक्षा उपाय कमजोर न हों**, क्योंकि ऐसा होने से **वन्यजीव अपराध और अवैध व्यापार बढ़ेगा** और **संरक्षित प्रजातियाँ खतरे में पड़ेंगी।**