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PCS Special:	21 February
21F Panchayat leadership helps Bela Gram emerge as first net-zero village पंचायत नेतृत्व ने बेला ग्राम को पहला नेट-जीरो गांव बनने में मदद की	
21F General Upendra Dwivedi concludes 4-day Australia visit जनरल उपेंद्र द्विवेदी ने 4-दिन की ऑस्ट्रेलिया यात्रा समाप्त की	
21F Bengali author Shankar passes away in Kolkata at 92 बंगाली लेखक शंकर का कोलकाता में 92 वर्ष की आयु में निधन	
21F Panchayat leadership helps Bela Gram emerge as first net-zero village पंचायत नेतृत्व ने बेला ग्राम को पहला नेट-जीरो गांव बनने में मदद की	

Panchayat leadership helps Bela Gram emerge as first net-zero village

Snehal Mutha
MUMBAI

Bela Gram in the Bhandara district of Vidarbha region of Maharashtra, India's first net-zero panchayat, was highlighted during the Mumbai Climate Week 2026 earlier this week, reflecting that panchayat leadership plays a vital role in shaping localised climate action and combating climate change.

"Climate change is first felt by common people in daily routines; in the food you grow, water you fetch. The impacts are visible when it affects health. So, for us, climate action begins at home, when the panchayat guides, people participate, and change starts," said Sharada Gaydhane, the sarpanch of Bela Gram, who led the initiatives to make her village a net-zero panchayat, i.e. with zero greenhouse gas emissions.

Maharashtra Governor Acharya Devvrat at the three-day environmental conference 'Mumbai Climate Week', in Mumbai on Thursday. X/@MAHA_GOVERNOR VIA ANI

Bela Gram panchayat planted more than 90,000 trees during weddings and festivals. It also advocated for a smooth energy transition from smoky chulhas to LPG, installed solar panels at homes, anganwadis, and panchayat offices. "We also promoted waste segregation at doorsteps and achieved the vanishing of single-use plastics," said Ms. Gaydhane, who was twice-elected sarpanch and is a recipient of the Vasundhara Award for climate protection.

Bela Gram became Maharashtra's first net-zero village, receiving the 2024 Rashtriya Panchayat Puraskar. Ms. Gaydhane, in her blue saree and fixing her glasses, said, "Waste can be converted into wealth if thought properly."

Stories of resilience

K.K. Sachith from Kerala's Perinjanam reflected how his village became Solar Gramam. "With the funding from different sources, the panchayat got free solar panels, and today, after eight years, 850 households are rooftop prosumers, bills cut to 80%, emissions reduced at scale," said Mr. Sachith. Perinjanam won the 2019 *Akshaya Oorja* and *MediaOne Maha* panchayat awards for community-led renewables.

Mr. Sachith concluded, saying, "Development should not disturb the balance of nature. The government should make solar rooftops compulsory for new buildings. This will help India become people-centric."

Jharkhand's Ramvriksh Murmu, sarpanch of Siyari, belonging to the Birhor Tanda tribal group, conserved water, revived sources, and cut diesel pump reliance. "Climate change is a reality. Growing up, I felt forest water bodies had shrunk. Jharkhand, which gives coal to the entire country, did not have electricity for my hamlet. We came across 'District Mineral Fund (DMF)', which helped us revive the lake, introduce solar lift irrigation, and provide electricity. Also, installed 72 solar streetlights, school solar systems, and planting 2,880 mango saplings plus 800 fruit/shade trees, boosting forest livelihoods," said Mr. Murmu.

DMF is a non-profit trust under the MMDR Amendment Act 2015 that operates in mining-affected districts.

Pushpa Khairawar from Bihar's Garhi forests pointed out that climate stress meant thirst: ponds and streams dried yearly. "Erratic rains worsened erosion and risky farming; monsoons brought flash floods, damaging fields. Wildlife strayed into villages, injuring cattle and crops amid heat deaths ending coexistence," said Ms. Khairawar, adding the community built 45 mud check dams, 90 boulder dams, and three ponds.

Suryanarayan from Karnataka's Kolar implemented local solutions for the region's development and climate mitigation, including revival of lakes, groundwater, and a decline in the use of chemical fertilizer.

21F. Panchayat leadership helps Bela Gram emerge as first net-zero village
पंचायत नेतृत्व ने बेला ग्राम को पहला नेट-जीरो गांव बनने में मदद की

- **Bela Gram in the Bhandara district of Vidarbha region of Maharashtra, India's first net-zero panchayat, was highlighted during the Mumbai Climate Week 2026** earlier this week, reflecting that panchayat leadership plays a vital role in shaping localised climate action and combating climate change.

  महाराष्ट्र के विदर्भ क्षेत्र के भंडारा जिले में बेला ग्राम, **भारत की पहली नेट-जीरो पंचायत,** इस सप्ताह के प्रारंभ में **मुंबई क्लाइमेट वीक 2026** के दौरान उजागर हुआ, यह दर्शाता है कि **पंचायत नेतृत्व** स्थानीय जलवायु कार्रवाई को आकार देने और **जलवायु परिवर्तन से लड़ने** में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाता है।

- "Climate change is first felt by common people in daily routines; in the food you grow, water you fetch. The impacts are visible when it affects health. So, for us, climate action begins at home, when the panchayat guides, people participate, and change starts," said Sharada Gaydhane, the sarpanch of Bela Gram, who led the initiatives to make her village a net-zero panchayat, i.e. with zero greenhouse gas emissions.

  "**जलवायु परिवर्तन** सबसे पहले आम लोगों द्वारा दैनिक जीवन में महसूस किया जाता है; जिस भोजन को आप उगाते हैं, जिस पानी को आप लाते हैं। इसके प्रभाव तब दिखाई देते हैं जब यह **स्वास्थ्य** को प्रभावित करता है। इसलिए, हमारे लिए **जलवायु कार्रवाई** घर से शुरू होती है, जब पंचायत मार्गदर्शन करती है, लोग भाग लेते हैं, और परिवर्तन शुरू होता है," कहा **शारदा गायधाने**, बेला ग्राम की **सारपंच**, जिन्होंने अपने गांव को **नेट-जीरो पंचायत** बनाने की पहल का नेतृत्व किया, यानी **शून्य ग्रीनहाउस गैस उत्सर्जन**।

- Bela Gram panchayat planted more than 90,000 trees during weddings and festivals.

  बेला ग्राम पंचायत ने **शादियों और त्योहारों** के दौरान 90,000 से अधिक **पेड़** लगाए।

- It also advocated for a smooth energy transition from smoky chulhas to LPG, installed solar panels at homes, anganwadis, and panchayat offices.

  इसने **धुंधले चूल्हों** से **LPG** में सुचारु **ऊर्जा संक्रमण** की वकालत की, और घरों, आंगनवाड़ियों, और पंचायत कार्यालयों में **सोलर पैनल** लगाए।

- "We also promoted waste segregation at doorsteps and achieved the vanishing of single-use plastics," said Ms. Gaydhane, who was twice-elected sarpanch and is a recipient of the **Vasundhara Award for climate protection.**

  "हमने **कचरा पृथक्करण** को दरवाजे पर बढ़ावा दिया और **सिंगल-यूज प्लास्टिक** के समाप्त होने को प्राप्त किया," कहा **श्रीमती गायधाने**, जो दो बार निर्वाचित सारपंच रही हैं और **वसुंधरा पुरस्कार** प्राप्तकर्ता हैं **जलवायु संरक्षण** के लिए।

- Bela Gram became Maharashtra's first net-zero village, receiving the 2024 Rashtriya Panchayat Puraskar.

  बेला ग्राम महाराष्ट्र का पहला **नेट-जीरो गांव** बन गया, और उसे **2024 राष्ट्रीय पंचायत पुरस्कार** प्राप्त हुआ।

- Ms. Gaydhane, in her blue saree and fixing her glasses, said, "Waste can be converted into wealth if thought properly."

  श्रीमती गायधाने, अपनी **नीली साड़ी** में और चश्मा ठीक करते हुए, ने कहा, "यदि सही तरीके से सोचा जाए, तो **कचरे** को **धन** में बदला जा सकता है।"

General Upendra Dwivedi concludes 4-day Australia visit

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Upendra Dwivedi concluded his official visit to Australia on Thursday reinforcing the growing strategic partnership between India and the country in the Indo-Pacific region.

According to the Indian Army, the General held extensive talks during the four-day visit from February 16 to 19 with senior leadership of the Australian defence forces to review bilateral engagements and expand army-to-army cooperation.

In Sydney, the COAS interacted with the leadership of Forces Command (FORCOMD), Special Operations Command (SO-COMD) and the 2nd Division of the Australian

The Army chief held extensive talks with senior leadership of Australian defence forces

Army. The engagements facilitated exchanges on force readiness, operational concepts and training methodologies.

Special emphasis was placed on the bilateral Army Exercise 'AUSTRA-HIND' with both sides expressing commitment to enriching its forthcoming edition scheduled which will be held in India later this year.

In Canberra, General Dwivedi was accorded a ceremonial guard of honour before holding discussions with Lieutenant General Simon Stuart, Chief of Australian Army.

21F. General Upendra Dwivedi concludes 4-day Australia visit
जनरल उपेंद्र द्विवेदी ने 4-दिन की ऑस्ट्रेलिया यात्रा समाप्त की

- **Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Upendra Dwivedi** concluded his official visit to Australia on Thursday reinforcing the growing strategic partnership between India and the country in the Indo-Pacific region.

  सेना प्रमुख (COAS) जनरल उपेंद्र द्विवेदी ने गुरुवार को ऑस्ट्रेलिया की अपनी आधिकारिक यात्रा समाप्त की, जो **इंडो-पैसिफिक क्षेत्र में भारत और ऑस्ट्रेलिया के बढ़ते रणनीतिक साझेदारी** को मजबूत करती है।

- In Sydney, the **COAS interacted with the leadership of Forces Command (FORCOMD), Special Operations Command (SOCOMD) and the 2nd Division of the Australian Army**.

  सिडनी में, COAS ने **Forces Command (FORCOMD), Special Operations Command (SOCOMD)** और **ऑस्ट्रेलियाई सेना की 2वीं डिविजन** के नेतृत्व से बातचीत की।

- The engagements facilitated exchanges on force readiness, operational concepts and training methodologies.

  इन बैठकों ने **बल की तत्परता, संचालनात्मक अवधारणाओं और प्रशिक्षण पद्धतियों** पर आदान-प्रदान को सुविधा प्रदान की।

- Special emphasis was placed on the **bilateral Army Exercise 'AUSTRAHIND'** with both sides expressing commitment to enriching its **forthcoming edition scheduled to be held in India later this year.**

  द्विपक्षीय सेना अभ्यास 'AUSTRAHIND' पर विशेष जोर दिया गया, जिसमें दोनों पक्षों ने इस वर्ष भारत में होने वाले आगामी संस्करण को **संपन्न और समृद्ध बनाने की प्रतिबद्धता** व्यक्त की।

21F. Bengali author Shankar passes away in Kolkata at 92
बंगाली लेखक शंकर का कोलकाता में 92 वर्ष की आयु में निधन

- **Veteran Bengali author Mani Shankar Mukhopadhyay, popularly known as Shankar**, passed away on Friday at the age of 92.

  वरिष्ठ बंगाली लेखक मणि शंकर मुखोपाध्याय, जिन्हें लोकप्रिय रूप से शंकर कहा जाता है, का शुक्रवार को 92 वर्ष की आयु में निधन हो गया।

- He had been undergoing treatment in a Kolkata hospital for age-related ailments.

  वे आयु-संबंधित बीमारियों के लिए कोलकाता के एक अस्पताल में इलाज करवा रहे थे।

- A towering figure in Bengali literature, Mr. Shankar authored several novels, including Chowringhee, Jana Aranya, and Seemabaddha.

  बंगाली साहित्य में एक प्रमुख हस्ती, श्री शंकर ने कई उपन्यास लिखे, जिनमें Chowringhee, Jana Aranya, और Seemabaddha शामिल हैं।

Bengali author Shankar passes away in Kolkata at 92

Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

Veteran Bengali author Mani Shankar Mukhopadhyay, popularly known as Shankar, passed away on Friday at the age of 92.

He had been undergoing treatment in a Kolkata hospital for age-related ailments.

A towering figure in Bengali literature, Mr. Shankar authored several novels, including *Chowringhee, Jana Aranya,* and *Seemabaddha*. All three were made into films, with *Chowringhee* becoming particularly iconic. *Jana Aranya* and *Seemabaddha* were adapted for the screen by Satyajit Ray.

His stories mostly revolved around the lives of common people.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said it was "the fall of one of the brightest stars in the world of Bengali literature".

- All three were made into films, with Chowringhee becoming particularly iconic.

  इन तीनों को फिल्मों में भी बनाया गया, जिसमें **Chowringhee** विशेष रूप से प्रतीकात्मक बन गई।

- Jana Aranya and Seemabaddha were adapted for the screen by Satyajit Ray.

  Jana Aranya और **Seemabaddha** को **Satyajit Ray** द्वारा स्क्रीन पर रूपांतरित किया गया।

- His stories mostly revolved around the lives of common people.

  उनकी कहानियाँ मुख्य रूप से सामान्य लोगों के जीवन के इर्द-गिर्द घूमती थीं।

- West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said it was "the fall of one of the brightest stars in the world of Bengali literature".

  पश्चिम बंगाल की मुख्यमंत्री ममता बनर्जी ने कहा कि यह बंगाली साहित्य की दुनिया के सबसे चमकदार सितारों में से एक का निधन है।

GS Paper 1: History,	
TOPICS COVERED	21 February 2026
21F	Amid row, J&K CM defends regulation on zakat collection विवाद के बीच, J&K के मुख्यमंत्री ने जकात संग्रह पर नियम का बचाव किया

Ramzan prayers

Muslims offer prayers on the first Friday of the holy month of Ramzan at the Jamia Masjid in Srinagar. Muslims around the world observe Ramzan by offering special night prayers and abstaining from food and drink between sunrise and sunset. IMRAN NISSAR

Muslims over prayers on the first Friday of the holy month of Ramzan at the Jamia Masjid in Srinagar. Muslims around the world observe Ramzan by offering special night prayers and abstaining from food and drink between sunrise and sunset.

RAMZAN (RAMADAN)

• **Ramzan (Ramadan)** is the **ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar** and holds the highest spiritual significance in Islam.
• It commemorates the period when the **first revelation of the Quran** was received by **Prophet Muhammad in 610 CE** in the Cave of Hira near Mecca.
• It is observed by **fasting (Sawm)** from **dawn (Fajr) to sunset (Maghrib),** which is one of the **Five Pillars of Islam**.
• The Islamic calendar is **lunar-based (354 days)**, hence Ramadan shifts about **10–11 days earlier each year** in the Gregorian calendar.

Origin and Early Development

• Ramadan became obligatory in **2 AH (624 CE)** after the migration (**Hijra**) of Prophet Muhammad from **Mecca to Medina in 622 CE**.
• The command to fast during Ramadan is mentioned in the **Quran, Surah Al-Baqarah (2:183-185)**.
• Historically, fasting existed in earlier Abrahamic traditions, but Islam formalized it with **strict spiritual and social discipline**.

Revelation of the Quran

• The **first verses of the Quran** were revealed on **Laylat al-Qadr (Night of Power)** during Ramadan, believed to fall in the **last ten odd nights (21st, 23rd, 25th, 27th, or 29th)**.
• Laylat al-Qadr is described in the Quran as **"better than a thousand months."**
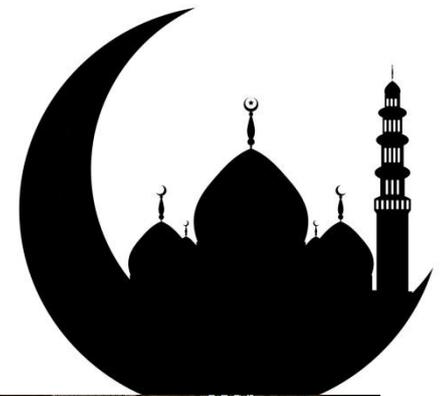
Five Pillars Connection

• **Sawm (Fasting)** during Ramadan is the **fourth pillar of Islam**.
• Other pillars include **Shahada (faith), Salat (prayer), Zakat (charity), and Hajj (pilgrimage)**.

Spiritual Objectives

• Development of **self-discipline, patience, and empathy for the poor**.
• Purification of the soul through **prayer, charity, and Quran recitation**.
• Strengthening **community bonds** through collective prayers and charity.

Key Practices During Ramadan

Fasting (Sawm)

• Muslims abstain from **food, drink, smoking, and marital relations** from dawn to sunset.
• The fast begins with **Suhoor (pre-dawn meal)** and ends with **Iftar (meal at sunset)**, traditionally with **dates and water**, following Prophet Muhammad's practice.

Taraweeh Prayer

• Special nightly prayers called **Taraweeh** are performed in mosques after **Isha prayer**.
• The entire **Quran is recited over 29–30 nights** during these prayers.

Zakat and Charity

• **Zakat (mandatory charity)** and **Zakat al-Fitr (charity before Eid)** are emphasized.
• Charity ensures that **poor and needy can celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr**.

Laylat al-Qadr (Night of Power)

• Considered the **holiest night** of Ramadan.
• Worship on this night is believed to bring **immense spiritual rewards and forgiveness**.

• Ramadan is observed by **over 1.9 billion Muslims worldwide**.
• Fasting hours vary by geography, ranging from **11 to 20 hours** depending on daylight duration.

Scientific and Health Perspective

• Fasting promotes **metabolic regulation, detoxification, and improved insulin sensitivity** when practiced moderately.
• Encourages **regulated eating habits and reduced consumption**.
• Exemptions exist for **pregnant women, travelers, elderly, sick persons, and children**.

Important Dates and Facts

• First Revelation of Quran: **610 CE**
• Hijra (Migration to Medina): **622 CE**
• Fasting made obligatory: **624 CE (2 AH)**
• Islamic Calendar Type: **Lunar (354 days)**
• Laylat al-Qadr occurs in: **Last 10 days of Ramadan**
• Festival marking end of Ramadan: **Eid-ul-Fitr**

Amid row, J&K CM defends regulation on *zakat* collection

GS I: History: A&C

Peerzada Ashiq

SRINAGAR

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday defended an order regulating collection of *zakat* (charity) during Ramzan in Kishtwar district, amid growing criticism from political parties.

Speaking in the J&K Assembly, Mr. Abdullah said the order was issued following "requests of local Muslim religious leaders, who had pointed out misuse of *zakat*".

"Ahead of Ramzan, directions were issued to all Deputy Commissioners to consult local stakeholders. In Kishtwar, religious leaders themselves raised concerns about fake NGOs collecting *zakat* and donations without transparency and sought regulation to prevent misuse. Acting on their request, the order was issued... We should not politicise every administrative decision," Mr. Abdullah said.

The order, issued by the Deputy Commissioner of Kishtwar, stated that indi-

The order was issued to prevent misuse of charity money and to ensure transparency, Omar Abdullah says

viduals, NGOs, trusts, societies or committees cannot collect charity "without a valid registration under the relevant Acts".

Several political parties, including the National Conference (NC), the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and the CPI (M), criticised the move, terming it interference in religious affairs. "The order is strange. It is an attempt to target a particular community," CPI(M) leader and legislator M.Y. Tarigami said .

Meanwhile, the BJP welcomed the move.

"The head priest of Jama Masjid, Kishtwar has welcomed the order. He had pointed out that there are elements who raise money to use for subversive and anti-national activities," Leader of Opposition Sunil Sharma said.

21F. Amid row, J&K CM defends regulation on zakat collection
विवाद के बीच, J&K के मुख्यमंत्री ने जकात संग्रह पर नियम का बचाव किया

- Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday defended an order regulating collection of zakat (charity) during Ramzan in Kishtwar district, amid growing criticism from political parties.

जम्मू और कश्मीर के मुख्यमंत्री ओमर अब्दुल्ला ने शुक्रवार को किश्तवार जिले में रमज़ान के दौरान जकात (दान) के संग्रह को नियंत्रित करने वाले आदेश का बचाव किया, राजनीतिक पार्टियों की बढ़ती आलोचना के बीच।

- In Kishtwar, religious leaders themselves raised concerns about fake NGOs collecting zakat and donations without transparency and sought regulation to prevent misuse.

किश्तवार में, धार्मिक नेताओं ने स्वयं नकली NGO द्वारा जकात और दान बिना पारदर्शिता के संग्रह किए जाने के बारे में चिंता जताई और दुरुपयोग रोकने के लिए नियम की मांग की।

- Acting on their request, the order was issued... We should not politicise every administrative decision," Mr. Abdullah said.

उनकी मांग पर कार्रवाई करते हुए, आदेश जारी किया गया... हमें हर प्रशासनिक निर्णय को राजनीति से नहीं जोड़ना चाहिए, " श्री अब्दुल्ला ने कहा।

- The order, issued by the Deputy Commissioner of Kishtwar, stated that individuals, NGOs, trusts, societies or committees cannot collect charity "without a valid registration under the relevant Acts".

यह आदेश, जो किश्तवार के Deputy Commissioner द्वारा जारी किया गया, में कहा गया कि व्यक्ति, NGO, ट्रस्ट, सोसाइटी या समिति बिना संबंधित कानूनों के तहत वैध पंजीकरण के दान संग्रह नहीं कर सकते।

GS Paper 1: Society		
TOPICS COVERED	**21 February 2026**	
21F	**Centre notifies committee to clear pending CAA applications in Bengal** केंद्र ने बंगाल में लंबित CAA आवेदनों को निपटाने के लिए समिति का नोटिफिकेशन जारी किया	
21F	**Bhasha' matters in India's multilingual moment** भारत के बहुभाषी दौर में 'भाषा' का महत्व	
21F	**A tribal hamlet's tryst with AI-assisted tools** एआई-सहायता प्राप्त उपकरणों के साथ एक आदिवासी बस्ती का अनुभव	

Centre notifies committee to clear pending CAA applications in Bengal

Several Matua community members have applied for citizenship under the CAA, amid the special intensive revision of electoral rolls; the new panel, in addition to an existing empowered committee, will process and fast-track the requests

GS I: Society

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Friday notified another empowered committee comprising Census, postal and Intelligence Bureau (IB) officials to fast-track hundreds of pending citizenship applications under the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), amid the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in West Bengal.

Several people belonging to the Matua community, comprising Hindu Namasudras with roots in Bangladesh, have applied for citizenship under the CAA as their names are not in the 2002 electoral list, the threshold for the ongoing SIR exercise.

A government source said that although an empowered committee headed by the Director, Census Operations exists with the mandate to process CAA applications in all States, another such panel headed by the Deputy Registrar-General, Directorate of Census Operations, West Bengal has been notified only for the State in the wake of a deluge of citizenship requests. "This is an additional committee that will process and fast-track CAA applications in West Bengal," said the source.

Central officials
The committee will comprise an officer in the Subsidiary Intelligence Bureau not below the rank of Deputy Secretary, two Under Secretary rank officials to be nominated by the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) and the National Informatics Centre of West Bengal and the Postmaster General of the State. A representative from the office of the Principal Secretary (Home) or Additional Chief Secretary (Home) of the West Bengal government and a representative of jurisdictional Divisional Railway Manager would be special invitees, the notification said.

On March 11, 2024, days ahead of the announcement of the General Election, the MHA notified the Citizenship Amendment Rules, 2024 enabling the implementation of the CAA, four years after the legislation was passed.

The Act facilitates citizenship to undocumented people belonging to Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Parsi, Christian and Jain community from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan who entered India on or before December 31, 2014 and fast-tracks the process by reducing the eligibility to five years' continuous stay instead of 12 years.

Though the legislation was brought in for undocumented migrants, the Rules mentioned several documents to be provided by the applicants, including a document issued by a government authority in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh.

Earlier, members of the Matua community had been hesitant about applying under the CAA as they came from Bangladesh without any documents, but after the SIR was announced, there has been a significant increase in such requests.

Considerable presence
The Matuas began migrating from Bangladesh in 1947 and continued to arrive in India both before and after the war in 1971 that liberated what was then East Pakistan from West Pakistan.

In West Bengal, the community has a considerable presence in border districts such as North 24 Parganas, Nadia, Howrah, Cooch Behar, and Malda, and are the State's second largest Scheduled Caste community.

Matua community members during a protest rally held in Kolkata in November 2025 against the SIR of electoral rolls and the Citizenship Amendment Act. ANI

21F. Centre notifies committee to clear pending CAA applications in Bengal
केंद्र ने बंगाल में लंबित CAA आवेदनों को निपटाने के लिए समिति का नोटिफिकेशन जारी किया

- Several **Matua community** members have applied for citizenship under the CAA, amid the special intensive revision of electoral rolls; the new panel, in addition to an existing empowered committee, will process and fast-track the requests.
  कई मतुआ समुदाय के सदस्य ने **CAA** के तहत नागरिकता के लिए आवेदन किया है, **चुनावी सूची के विशेष गहन संशोधन (SIR)** के बीच; नई पैनल, मौजूदा **सशक्त समिति** के अलावा, इन **अनुरोधों** को प्रक्रिया में लाएगा और तेजी से निपटाएगा।

- The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Friday notified another empowered committee comprising Census, postal and Intelligence Bureau (IB) officials to fast-track hundreds of pending citizenship applications under the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), amid the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in West Bengal.
  गृह मंत्रालय (MHA) ने शुक्रवार को एक और **सशक्त समिति** का नोटिफिकेशन जारी किया, जिसमें **जनगणना, डाक और खुफिया ब्यूरो (IB) के अधिकारी** शामिल होंगे, ताकि **CAA के तहत सैकड़ों लंबित नागरिकता आवेदन** को तेजी से निपटाया जा सके, **पश्चिम बंगाल में विशेष गहन संशोधन (SIR)** के बीच।

- **Several people belonging to the Matua community, comprising Hindu Namasudras** with roots in Bangladesh, have applied for citizenship under the CAA as **their names are not in the 2002 electoral list,** the threshold for the ongoing SIR exercise.
  कई लोग मतुआ समुदाय के, जिसमें **हिंदू नमसूद्र** शामिल हैं और जिनकी जड़ें **बांग्लादेश** में हैं, ने **CAA** के

तहत नागरिकता के लिए आवेदन किया है क्योंकि उनके नाम **2002 की चुनावी सूची** में नहीं हैं, जो चल रही **SIR** प्रक्रिया के लिए सीमा है।

- The committee will comprise an officer in the Subsidiary Intelligence Bureau not below the rank of Deputy Secretary, two Under Secretary rank officials to be nominated by the **Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) and the National Informatics Centre** of West Bengal and the Postmaster General of the State.
  समिति में शामिल होगा **Subsidiary Intelligence Bureau** का एक अधिकारी, जिसका पद **Deputy Secretary** से नीचे नहीं होगा, **दो Under Secretary पद के अधिकारी** जिन्हें **Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO)** और **National Informatics Centre, West Bengal** द्वारा नामांकित किया जाएगा और राज्य का **Postmaster General** ।

- On March 11, 2024, days ahead of the announcement of the General Election, the MHA notified the Citizenship Amendment Rules, 2024 enabling the implementation of the CAA, four years after the legislation was passed.
  11 मार्च 2024 को, **सामान्य चुनाव की घोषणा** से कुछ दिन पहले, **MHA** ने **Citizenship Amendment Rules, 2024** का नोटिफिकेशन जारी किया, जिससे **CAA** को लागू करना संभव हुआ, यह कानून पास होने के **चार साल बाद** ।

- The Act facilitates citizenship to undocumented people belonging to **Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Parsi, Christian and Jain** community from **Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan** who entered India on or before December 31, 2014 and fast-tracks the process by reducing the eligibility to five years' continuous stay instead of 12 years.
  यह **कानून** पाकिस्तान, बांग्लादेश और अफगानिस्तान से आए **हिंदू, सिख, बौद्ध, पारसी, ईसाई और जैन समुदाय** के **अप्रमाणित लोगों** को नागरिकता देने में सहायक है, जिन्होंने **31 दिसंबर 2014** तक भारत प्रवेश किया और **12 साल के बजाय 5 साल की लगातार निवास** की पात्रता के साथ प्रक्रिया को तेजी से पूरा करता है।

- Though the legislation was brought in for undocumented migrants, the Rules mentioned several documents to be provided by the applicants, including a document issued by a government authority in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh.
  यद्यपि यह **कानून अप्रमाणित प्रवासियों** के लिए लाया गया था, नियमों में **कई दस्तावेजों** का उल्लेख किया गया है जो आवेदनकर्ताओं को प्रस्तुत करने होंगे, जिसमें **पाकिस्तान, अफगानिस्तान और बांग्लादेश** में सरकारी प्राधिकरण द्वारा जारी दस्तावेज शामिल हैं।

- **The Matuas began migrating from Bangladesh in 1947 and continued to arrive in India both before and after the war in 1971** that liberated what was then East Pakistan from West Pakistan.
  मतुआ लोग 1947 में **बांग्लादेश** से भारत आना शुरू हुए और 1971 के युद्ध से पहले और बाद में भारत आते रहे, जिसने तब के **पूर्व पाकिस्तान को पश्चिम पाकिस्तान से मुक्त** किया।

- In West Bengal, the community has a considerable presence in border districts such as North 24 Parganas, Nadia, Howrah, Cooch Behar, and Malda, and are the **State's second largest Scheduled Caste community**.
  पश्चिम बंगाल में, इस समुदाय की **सीमावर्ती जिलों** जैसे **North 24 Parganas, Nadia, Howrah, Cooch Behar, और Malda** में महत्वपूर्ण उपस्थिति है, और यह राज्य की **दूसरी सबसे बड़ी अनुसूचित जाति समुदाय** है।

'Bhasha' matters in India's multilingual moment

GS I: Society

India stands at an extraordinary crossroads, with a linguistic landscape unmatched in scale and richness. According to the 2011 Census, India is home to more than 1,300 mother tongues and 121 constitutionally recognised languages. This diversity is not merely a statistic. It is a national strength, central to how children learn, grow and understand the world.

When a language disappears, we lose more than words. We lose a way of understanding the world built over generations. Safeguarding languages is, therefore, not only a cultural imperative. It is fundamentally a question of holding on to humanity's accumulated knowledge, which in turn makes it an educational issue. This is why mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) is critical.

Basis for quality education

As we mark International Mother Language Day (February 21), under the theme "Youth voices on multilingual education", the message is clear: young people thrive when their languages – and, therefore, their identities – are recognised and valued in the classroom. When this happens, schools become spaces where children learn about themselves, others, and the world in all its diversity. UNESCO has long championed multilingual teaching, based on the language best understood and spoken, as a condition for quality education.

Each year, UNESCO publishes the State of the Education Report for India, focusing on a specific themes. This year, which is the seventh edition (2025), Bhasha Matters: Mother Tongue and Multilingual Education, brought together global research, new national evidence and practical lessons to explore the state of Mother Tongue and Multilingual Education in India. The report demonstrates that MTB-MLE is not only pedagogically sound but also transformative. It outlines 10 policy recommendations to guide India towards a more inclusive and equitable education system that treats linguistic diversity as

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Mother-tongue-based multilingual education is central to inclusive and effective education

an asset rather than a challenge. It also highlights what is working – from bilingual learning materials and teacher preparation to innovative digital solutions that bring multilingual resources to classrooms and communities

A barrier of language

Globally, over a quarter of a billion learners lack access to education in a language they fully understand. In India, nearly 44% of children enter school speaking a language that is different from the medium of instruction, according to the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) in 2022. For these children, learning begins with the added burden of decoding an unfamiliar language before grasping academic concepts. Weak foundational literacy and numeracy can lead to cumulative learning gaps, reduced confidence and, ultimately, a higher risk of dropout.

India has taken decisive steps to address this challenge. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, followed by the National Curriculum Frameworks of 2022 and 2023, places the child's home or mother tongue at the centre of early education.

The Bhasha Matters report highlights promising examples. In Odisha, a long-standing multilingual education programme spans 21 tribal languages across 17 districts, supporting nearly 90,000 children. In Telangana, the use of Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA)-enabled multilingual resources demonstrates how digital tools can expand access to learning materials in local languages. National initiatives such as PM eVIDYA, Adi Vaani (developed by a national consortium), BHASHINI (BHash-based ANd Intelligent Node for InclusioN in India) and AI4Bharat's community-developed language technologies show how digital platforms and artificial intelligence can help document endangered languages, create local-language content and support teachers with multilingual resources.

Building on these examples, Bhasha Matters sets out a practical road map. It calls for clear state-level language-in-education policies grounded in MTB-MLE, stronger teacher recruitment and professional standards for multilingual classrooms, and reforms in pre-service and in-service training to embed multilingual pedagogy. It emphasises high-quality multilingual materials and assessments, community participation and indigenous knowledge, gender-responsive approaches, responsible investment in language technologies, and sustainable financing. Crucially, it proposes a National Mission for Mother-Tongue-Based Multilingual Education to coordinate action across ministries, research institutions, civil society and technology partners, ensuring that promising pilots become systemic reform.

Linguistic diversity is a driver

India's linguistic diversity is not a barrier to development; it is a powerful driver of equity, identity and social cohesion. With States already demonstrating what is possible, and with clear policy frameworks in place, the country stands at the threshold of transformative educational change. This shift reflects a growing body of evidence: children learn best when taught in a language they understand.

On International Mother Language Day, the call is clear. Education systems must recognise and value every learner's language, not only to improve learning outcomes but also to affirm identity, well-being and meaningful participation in society.

When young people's voices are heard, multilingual education becomes more than a policy aspiration. It becomes a shared national movement. India's multilingual moment has arrived – and its youth are helping to shape its future.

Link to report:
https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000397158

21F. Bhasha' matters in India's multilingual moment
भारत के बहुभाषी दौर में 'भाषा' का महत्व

- **According to the 2011 Census, India is home to more than 1,300 mother tongues and 121 constitutionally recognised languages**. It is a national strength, central to how children learn, grow and understand the world.
  भारत एक **असाधारण मोड़** पर खड़ा है, जहाँ **भाषाई परिदृश्य** अपने पैमाने और समृद्धि में अद्वितीय है। **2011 की जनगणना** के अनुसार, भारत में **1,300 से अधिक मातृभाषाएँ** और **121 संवैधानिक रूप से मान्यता प्राप्त भाषाएँ** हैं। यह विविधता मात्र एक आँकड़ा नहीं है। यह एक राष्ट्रीय शक्ति है, जो बच्चों के सीखने, बढ़ने और दुनिया को समझने के केंद्र में है।

- When a language disappears, we lose more than words. We lose a way of understanding the world built over generations. It is fundamentally a question of holding on to humanity's accumulated knowledge, which in turn makes it an educational issue. This is why **mother-tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE)** is critical.
  जब कोई भाषा लुप्त होती है, तो हम केवल शब्द नहीं खोते। हम पीढ़ियों से निर्मित दुनिया को समझने का एक तरीका खो देते हैं। इसलिए भाषाओं की रक्षा केवल एक सांस्कृतिक अनिवार्यता नहीं है। यह मूलतः मानवता के संचित ज्ञान को बनाए रखने का प्रश्न है, जो इसे एक शैक्षिक मुद्दा भी बनाता है। यही कारण है कि **मातृभाषा-आधारित बहुभाषी शिक्षा (MTB-MLE)** अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण है।

Basis for quality education
गुणवत्तापूर्ण शिक्षा का आधार

- As we mark **International Mother Language Day (February 21)**, under the theme **"Youth voices on multilingual education"**, the message is clear: young people thrive when their languages — and, therefore, their identities — are recognised and valued in the classroom.
  जब हम **अंतरराष्ट्रीय मातृभाषा दिवस (21 फरवरी)** को **"बहुभाषी शिक्षा पर युवाओं की आवाज़"** विषय के

साथ मनाते हैं, संदेश स्पष्ट है: युवा तब प्रगति करते हैं जब उनकी भाषाओं — और इसलिए उनकी पहचानों — को कक्षा में मान्यता और सम्मान दिया जाता है।

- When this happens, schools become spaces where children learn about themselves, others, and the world in all its diversity. **UNESCO** has long championed multilingual teaching, based on the language best understood and spoken, as a condition for **quality education**.
  जब ऐसा होता है, स्कूल ऐसे स्थान बन जाते हैं जहाँ बच्चे अपने बारे में, दूसरों के बारे में और दुनिया की विविधता के बारे में सीखते हैं। **यूनेस्को** लंबे समय से उस भाषा पर आधारित बहुभाषी शिक्षण का समर्थन करता रहा है जिसे सबसे अच्छी तरह समझा और बोला जाता है, और इसे **गुणवत्तापूर्ण शिक्षा** की शर्त मानता है।

- Each year, **UNESCO** publishes the **State of the Education Report for India**, focusing on specific themes. This year, which is the **seventh edition (2025)**, **Bhasha Matters: Mother Tongue and Multilingual Education**, brought together global research, new national evidence and practical lessons to explore the state of **Mother Tongue and Multilingual Education in India**.
  हर वर्ष, **यूनेस्को भारत के लिए शिक्षा की स्थिति रिपोर्ट** प्रकाशित करता है, जो विशिष्ट विषयों पर केंद्रित होती है। इस वर्ष, जो कि **सातवाँ संस्करण (2025)** है, **भाषा मायने रखती है: मातृभाषा और बहुभाषी शिक्षा**, ने वैश्विक शोध, नए राष्ट्रीय प्रमाण और व्यावहारिक पाठों को एकत्र किया ताकि **भारत में मातृभाषा और बहुभाषी शिक्षा** की स्थिति का अध्ययन किया जा सके।

- The report demonstrates that **MTB-MLE** is not only pedagogically sound but also transformative. It outlines **10 policy recommendations** to guide India towards a more **inclusive and equitable education system** that treats **linguistic diversity as an asset rather than a challenge**.
  रिपोर्ट दर्शाती है कि **MTB-MLE** केवल शैक्षणिक रूप से सुदृढ़ नहीं है बल्कि परिवर्तनकारी भी है। यह भारत को एक अधिक **समावेशी और न्यायसंगत शिक्षा प्रणाली** की ओर मार्गदर्शन करने के लिए **10 नीतिगत सिफारिशें** प्रस्तुत करती है, जो **भाषाई विविधता को चुनौती नहीं बल्कि संपत्ति** के रूप में देखती है।

A barrier of language
भाषा की बाधा

- Globally, over a **quarter of a billion learners** lack access to education in a language they fully understand. In **India**, nearly **44% of children** enter school speaking a language that is different from the **medium of instruction**, according to the **National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) in 2022**.
  वैश्विक स्तर पर **एक चौथाई अरब से अधिक शिक्षार्थियों** को ऐसी भाषा में शिक्षा उपलब्ध नहीं है जिसे वे पूरी तरह समझते हों। **भारत में लगभग 44% बच्चे** ऐसी भाषा बोलते हुए स्कूल में प्रवेश करते हैं जो **शिक्षण के माध्यम** से अलग होती है, **राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद (NCERT) 2022** के अनुसार।

- For these children, learning begins with the added burden of **decoding an unfamiliar language** before grasping **academic concepts**. Weak **foundational literacy and numeracy** can lead to cumulative learning gaps, reduced confidence and, ultimately, a higher risk of **dropout**.
  इन बच्चों के लिए सीखना **अपरिचित भाषा को समझने** के अतिरिक्त बोझ से शुरू होता है, उससे पहले कि वे **शैक्षणिक अवधारणाओं** को समझ सकें। कमजोर **मूलभूत साक्षरता और संख्यात्मकता** संचयी सीखने की कमी, कम आत्मविश्वास और अंततः **स्कूल छोड़ने** के उच्च जोखिम का कारण बन सकती है।

- **India** has taken decisive steps to address this challenge. The **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, followed by the **National Curriculum Frameworks of 2022 and 2023**, places the child's **home or mother tongue** at the centre of early education.
  भारत ने इस चुनौती का समाधान करने के लिए निर्णायक कदम उठाए हैं। **राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति (NEP) 2020**, और उसके बाद **राष्ट्रीय पाठ्यचर्या ढाँचा 2022 और 2023**, प्रारंभिक शिक्षा के केंद्र में बच्चे की **मातृभाषा या घरेलू भाषा** को रखते हैं।

- The **Bhasha Matters report** highlights promising examples. In **Odisha**, a long-standing **multilingual education programme** spans **21 tribal languages across 17 districts**, supporting nearly **90,000 children**.
  भाषा मायने रखती है रिपोर्ट आशाजनक उदाहरण प्रस्तुत करती है। **ओडिशा** में एक दीर्घकालिक **बहुभाषी शिक्षा कार्यक्रम** 17 जिलों में 21 जनजातीय भाषाओं को शामिल करता है, जो लगभग **90,000 बच्चों** को सहयोग देता है।

- In **Telangana**, the use of **Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing (DIKSHA)-enabled multilingual resources** demonstrates how **digital tools** can expand access to learning

materials in **local languages**.

तेलंगाना में **डिजिटल इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर फॉर नॉलेज शेयरिंग (DIKSHA) सक्षम बहुभाषी संसाधनों** का उपयोग दर्शाता है कि कैसे **डिजिटल उपकरण स्थानीय भाषाओं** में शिक्षण सामग्री की पहुँच बढ़ा सकते हैं।

- National initiatives such as **PM eVIDYA**, **Adi Vaani**, **BHASHINI**, and **AI4Bharat's community-developed language technologies** show how **digital platforms and artificial intelligence** can help document **endangered languages**, create **local-language content** and support teachers with **multilingual resources**.

  PM eVIDYA, **आदि वाणी**, BHASHINI, और **AI4Bharat की सामुदायिक भाषा तकनीक** जैसी राष्ट्रीय पहलें दिखाती हैं कि कैसे **डिजिटल प्लेटफॉर्म और कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता लुप्तप्राय भाषाओं** का दस्तावेजीकरण करने, **स्थानीय भाषा सामग्री** बनाने और शिक्षकों को **बहुभाषी संसाधनों** से सहयोग देने में मदद कर सकती हैं।

- It emphasises high-quality **multilingual materials and assessments**, **community participation and indigenous knowledge**, **gender-responsive approaches**, responsible investment in **language technologies**, and **sustainable financing**.

  यह उच्च गुणवत्ता वाली **बहुभाषी सामग्री और मूल्यांकन**, समुदाय की भागीदारी और स्वदेशी ज्ञान, लैंगिक-संवेदनशील दृष्टिकोण, भाषा तकनीकों में जिम्मेदार निवेश और **सतत वित्तपोषण** पर जोर देती है।

- Crucially, it proposes a **National Mission for Mother-Tongue-Based Multilingual Education** to coordinate action across **ministries, research institutions, civil society and technology partners**, ensuring that promising pilots become **systemic reform**.

A tribal hamlet's tryst with AI-assisted tools

In the remote hills of Kumram Bheem Asifabad district, Limbuguda – home to less than 40 Kolam families – is witnessing a quiet transformation. A state-of-the-art Multipurpose Centre, established under the PM-JANMAN scheme, is leveraging AI-assisted learning tools to improve education, alongside healthcare and nutrition services, reshaping aspirations in one of Telangana's most marginalised PVTG habitations, writes P. Sridhar.

The Multipurpose Centre in Limbuguda, a tribal hamlet, in Kumram Bheem Asifabad district.

21F . A tribal hamlet's tryst with AI-assisted tools
एआई-सहायता प्राप्त उपकरणों के साथ एक आदिवासी बस्ती का अनुभव

- In the remote hills of **Kumram Bheem Asifabad district**, Limbuguda — home to less than **40 Kolam families** — is witnessing a **quiet transformation**.

  कुमराम भीम आसिफाबाद जिला की दूरस्थ पहाड़ियों में स्थित **लिम्बुगुड़ा**, जहां **40 से**

कम कोलम परिवार रहते हैं, एक शांत परिवर्तन का साक्षी बन रहा है।

- A state-of-the-art **Multipurpose Centre**, established under the **PM-JANMAN scheme**, is leveraging **AI-assisted learning tools** to improve **education**, alongside **healthcare** and **nutrition services**, reshaping **aspirations** in one of **Telangana's most marginalised PVTG habitations**, writes **P. Sridhar**.

  PM-JANMAN योजना के तहत स्थापित एक अत्याधुनिक **मल्टीपरपज़ सेंटर** **एआई-सहायता प्राप्त लर्निंग टूल्स** का उपयोग कर **शिक्षा** में सुधार कर रहा है,

Address : 3rd Floor, KV Tower, Padleyganj Road, Gorakhpur
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साथ ही **स्वास्थ्य सेवा** और **पोषण सेवाओं** के माध्यम से **तेलंगाना के सबसे वंचित PVTG आवासों** में **आकांक्षाओं** को नया रूप दे रहा है, ऐसा **P. Sridhar** ने लिखा है।

- In **July last year**, the MPC was set up under **Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN)** at a cost of **₹60 lakh**. AI tools were introduced to enhance learning outcomes among **PVTG children**.
  पिछले वर्ष जुलाई में **प्रधानमंत्री जनजाति आदिवासी न्याय महा अभियान (PM-JANMAN)** के तहत **₹60 लाख** की लागत से MPC स्थापित किया गया। **PVTG बच्चों** के सीखने के परिणाम सुधारने के लिए एआई उपकरण जोड़े गए।

- Billed as the **first-of-its-kind state-of-the-art centre** in PVTG habitations, it houses an **ANM centre, Anganwadi, conference hall with projector, and a computer lab**.
  इसे PVTG बस्तियों में **पहला अत्याधुनिक केंद्र** बताया गया है, जिसमें **ANM केंद्र, आंगनवाड़ी, प्रोजेक्टर सहित सम्मेलन कक्ष और कंप्यूटर लैब** हैं।

- **Kolams** form the majority of PVTGs in the combined **Adilabad district** and are among the most marginalised communities.
  कोलाम बहुसंख्यक PVTG हैं और सबसे अधिक हाशिए पर रहने वाले समुदायों में शामिल हैं।

- The MPC serves as a **beacon of hope** and plans are underway to extend this initiative to other PVTG hamlets under the **Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA), Utnoor**.
  MPC स्थानीय जनजातीय समुदाय के लिए **आशा की किरण** है और इसे अन्य PVTG बस्तियों तक बढ़ाने की योजना **एकीकृत जनजातीय विकास एजेंसी (ITDA), उत्नूर** के तहत बनाई जा रही है।

- Kolam farmers rely on **rain-fed agriculture**, mainly cultivating **cotton in black soil**, and take up **daily wage labour** during the off-season.
  कोलाम किसान **वर्षा आधारित कृषि** पर निर्भर हैं, मुख्यतः **काली मिट्टी में कपास** उगाते हैं, और ऑफ-सीजन में **दैनिक मजदूरी** करते हैं।

- "I donated land hoping it will spread the light of education and improve living conditions," says Jaithu, affectionately called **'Devara'** by villagers.
  "मैंने भूमि दान की ताकि यह शिक्षा का प्रकाश फैलाए और जीवन स्तर सुधारे," जैथु कहते हैं, जिन्हें गाँव वाले प्यार से **'देवरा'** कहते हैं।

- Improved transport access would help tribal children utilise the MPC's **educational and digital learning facilities** without hardship.
  बेहतर परिवहन सुविधा जनजातीय बच्चों को MPC की **शैक्षिक और डिजिटल शिक्षण सुविधाओं** का बिना कठिनाई उपयोग करने में मदद करेगी।

Need for high-speed internet
उच्च गति इंटरनेट की आवश्यकता

- Villagers stress the need for **reliable high-speed internet** at the MPC to ensure seamless functioning of **AI-assisted learning tools** and **online educational resources**.
  ग्रामीण MPC में **विश्वसनीय हाई-स्पीड इंटरनेट** की आवश्यकता पर जोर देते हैं ताकि **एआई-सहायता प्राप्त शिक्षण उपकरण** और **ऑनलाइन शैक्षिक संसाधन** सुचारू रूप से चल सकें।

- Officials say Limbuguda MPC is part of a **multipronged strategy** delivering **healthcare, nutrition and digital learning** under one roof.
  अधिकारियों के अनुसार लिम्बुगुड़ा MPC एक **बहुआयामी रणनीति** का हिस्सा है, जो **स्वास्थ्य, पोषण और डिजिटल शिक्षा** एक ही स्थान पर उपलब्ध कराती है।

- Community leaders and youth stress the need for **skill development programmes** to promote **sustainable livelihoods and financial self-reliance** among **PVTG youth and women**.
  समुदाय के नेता और युवा **कौशल विकास कार्यक्रमों** की आवश्यकता पर जोर देते हैं ताकि **PVTG युवा और महिलाएँ सतत आजीविका और वित्तीय आत्मनिर्भरता** प्राप्त कर सकें।

GS Paper II: Polity,	
TOPICS COVERED	**21 February 2026**
21F	Supreme Court steps in; judicial officers will now join Bengal SIR process

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	सुप्रीम कोर्ट हस्तक्षेप करता है; न्यायिक अधिकारी अब बंगाल SIR प्रक्रिया में शामिल होंगे
21F	Treatise for federalism संघवाद के लिए ग्रंथ
21F	A temporary relief from bonded labour बंधुआ मज़दूरी से अस्थायी राहत

Supreme Court steps in; judicial officers will now join Bengal SIR process

GS II: Polity

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday took an "extraordinary" decision to involve the judiciary in the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in West Bengal, saying the persistent "trust deficit" between the Mamata Banerjee government and the Election Commission (EC) has led to a "stalemate", with time running out.

A three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant requested the Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court to deploy a force of serving and retired judicial officers of West Bengal to take over the quasi-judicial task of Electoral Registration Officers/ Assistant Electoral Registration Officers. They would hear lakhs of voters who had been dropped from the draft roll and had received hearing notices after the EC found them "unmapped" or detected "logical discrepancies" in their personal details.

Now, with hardly a week to go for the claims/objections phase to end on February 28, the court found the State government and the EC exchanging recriminations over the quality and rank of personnel the State had deputed to the EC for the SIR exercise.

The past hearings had seen the court try to intervene and bring the "running dispute" between the two to an amicable end. Friday saw the court compelled to move in.

"The foremost and urgent issue revolves around the completion of SIR in West Bengal... Allegations and counter-allegations are being traded between two constitutional functionaries, namely the State government and the Election Commission of India. The

People get their documents verified during hearings under the SIR of electoral rolls, in Nadia, West Bengal. PTI

EC dragged back to reality by SC order: Trinamool

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress on Friday described the Supreme Court's order on assigning judicial officers to complete the special intensive revision (SIR) of

electoral rolls in West Bengal a huge victory for the people of the State.

"Today marks a historic demolition of @ECISVEEP's bloated arrogance..," the Trinamool posted on social media. » PAGE 3

SIR process is stuck," the top court said.

The Bench asked the High Court Chief Justice to hold a meeting on Saturday with the State Election Commissioner, the West Bengal Chief Secretary, the Director-General of Police and the Advocate-General of the State, to iron out a plan for the deployment of judicial officers, who should be in the rank of District or Additional District Judge. Their instructions would be deemed to be that of the apex court, and the State/district administration would have to comply without demur.

'Extraordinary state'
"The circumstances being extraordinary, the inclusion of judicial officers is extraordinary in nature. It may have some impact on the pending court cases," the court acknowledged.

The Bench proposed shifting urgent cases pending with the deployed judicial officers to other courts for a period of a week or 10 days "by which the entire process [SIR] is required to be completed".

The top court agreed with a suggestion from the EC that it should be allowed to publish the list of voters whose names have been cleared in the SIR process on February 28. The rest could be included in a supplementary roll.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, for West Bengal, said such a publication may lead to a "law-and-order" situation. But the Chief Justice said the electoral roll of names published on February 28 would not be treated as a final one.

"It is an ongoing process," the court said.

It posted the case on March 10, 2026.

21F. Supreme Court steps in; judicial officers will now join Bengal SIR process
सुप्रीम कोर्ट हस्तक्षेप करता है; न्यायिक अधिकारी अब बंगाल SIR प्रक्रिया में शामिल होंगे

- **A three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant requested the Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court to deploy a force of serving and retired judicial officers of West Bengal to take over the quasi-judicial task of Electoral Registration Officers/Assistant Electoral Registration Officers.**

तीन-न्यायाधीशों वाली पीठ, जिसका नेतृत्व भारत के मुख्य न्यायाधीश सूर्य कांत कर रहे थे, ने कोलकाता उच्च न्यायालय के मुख्य न्यायाधीश से अनुरोध किया कि वे बंगाल के सेवारत और सेवानिवृत्त न्यायिक अधिकारियों को तैनात करें ताकि वे अर्ध-न्यायिक कार्य जैसे चुनावी पंजीकरण अधिकारी/सहायक पंजीकरण अधिकारी संभाल सकें।

- The Bench asked the High Court Chief Justice to hold a meeting on Saturday with the State Election Commissioner, the West Bengal Chief Secretary, the Director-General of Police and the Advocate-General of the State, to **iron out a plan** for the deployment of judicial officers, who should be in the rank of District or Additional District Judge.

पीठ ने उच्च न्यायालय के मुख्य न्यायाधीश से कहा कि वे शनिवार को राज्य चुनाव आयुक्त, बंगाल के मुख्य सचिव, पुलिस महानिदेशक और राज्य के अधिवक्ता-जनरल के साथ बैठक करें, ताकि न्यायिक अधिकारियों की तैनाती की योजना बनाई जा सके, जिनका पद जिला या अतिरिक्त जिला न्यायाधीश होना चाहिए।

- Their instructions would be deemed to be that of the apex court, and the State/district administration would have to comply without demur.

उनके **निर्देश** को **सर्वोच्च न्यायालय** के आदेश के रूप में माना जाएगा, और **राज्य/जिला प्रशासन** को बिना किसी आपत्ति के पालन करना होगा।

GS II: Polity

Treatise for federalism
The Kurian Joseph report must provoke a debate on reversing centralisation

A high-level committee on Union-State relations appointed by the Government of Tamil Nadu has mapped the pattern of centralisation of power and the weakening of federal democracy in India over the decades, and suggested comprehensive corrective measures. The three-member Committee, chaired by a former Supreme Court judge, Justice Kurian Joseph, has drawn on scholarship across various disciplines, Constituent Assembly debates, and the findings of three other committees on Centre-State relations, while also critiquing recent governance trends that weaken the authority of States. It concludes that centralisation is increasing – which it notes is not healthy – and calls for urgent remedial measures. The report is an expansive critique of the dilapidation of federalism, threatening India's progress, and calls for changes to reverse the dangerous course, stating that "Indian federalism now requires a structural reset comparable in ambition to the economic reforms of 1991". India's constitutional framework took shape against the backdrop of Partition, and the consolidation of princely States. The context encouraged the founders to tilt towards a centralising constitutional scheme; legislative, administrative, and judicial measures in the ensuing decades further reinforced this line of thinking. The report convincingly takes down the arguments for centralisation, and argues that federalised governance is essential for a country of India's size and diversity, and that it would in fact be dangerous to overlook this imperative.

The Kurian Joseph Committee report comes amid repeated and deliberate moves by the Union to centralise power. The Constitution can be amended far too easily for a federal polity, and this creates a self-perpetuating cycle of centralisation. The territorial integrity of States is at the mercy of the Centre, most blatantly illustrated by the dismantling of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories in 2019. The misplaced idea that the country needs one national language is being pursued by the Union government, which is particularly assertive on the question. Governors have become instruments of the Centre's overreach in all areas of governance. The impending inter-State delimitation of Lok Sabha constituencies is causing anxiety among States that have stabilised their populations and stand to lose their relative weight in national governance. The Union has overt power in the conduct of elections, and key sectors such as education and health are being increasingly centralised. The GST regime has restructured India's fiscal landscape in favour of the Union and at States' expense. This report lays out the logic, facts and common sense about why federated governance should be the path to progress. This report must form the basis for a new national conversation.

'Extraordinary state'
'असाधारण स्थिति'

- "The circumstances being extraordinary, the inclusion of judicial officers is extraordinary in nature. It may have some impact on the pending court cases," the court acknowledged.

"स्थिति असाधारण होने के कारण, **न्यायिक अधिकारियों** को शामिल करना स्वाभाविक रूप से असाधारण है। इसका **लंबित मामलों** पर कुछ प्रभाव पड़ सकता है," अदालत ने स्वीकार किया।

21F. Treatise for federalism
संघवाद के लिए ग्रंथ

- The **Kurian Joseph report** must provoke a debate on reversing **centralisation**

कुरियन जोसेफ रिपोर्ट को **केंद्रीकरण** को उलटने पर बहस को उकसाना चाहिए

- A **high-level committee on Union-State relations** appointed by the **Government of Tamil Nadu** has mapped the pattern of **centralisation of power** and the **weakening of federal democracy in India over the decades**, and suggested **comprehensive corrective measures**.

तमिलनाडु सरकार द्वारा नियुक्त **संघ-राज्य संबंधों पर उच्च स्तरीय समिति** ने **शक्ति के केंद्रीकरण** और दशकों में **भारत में संघीय लोकतंत्र के कमजोर होने** के पैटर्न को चिन्हित किया है और **व्यापक सुधारात्मक उपाय** सुझाए हैं।

- The **three-member Committee**, chaired by a former **Supreme Court judge, Justice Kurian Joseph**, has drawn on scholarship across various disciplines, **Constituent Assembly debates**, and the findings of **three other committees on Centre-State relations**, while also critiquing **recent governance trends that weaken the authority of States**.

तीन सदस्यीय समिति, जिसकी अध्यक्षता पूर्व **सुप्रीम कोर्ट न्यायाधीश जस्टिस कुरियन जोसेफ** ने की, ने विभिन्न विषयों के अध्ययन, **संविधान सभा की बहसों**, और **संघ-राज्य संबंधों पर तीन अन्य समितियों के निष्कर्षों** का उपयोग किया है, साथ ही **राज्यों की शक्ति को कमजोर करने वाले हालिया शासन रुझानों** की आलोचना भी की है।

- It concludes that **centralisation is increasing** — which it notes is **not healthy** — and calls for **urgent remedial measures**.

यह निष्कर्ष निकालती है कि **केंद्रीकरण बढ़ रहा है** — जिसे यह **स्वस्थ नहीं** मानती — और **तत्काल सुधारात्मक उपायों** की मांग करती है।

- The report is an expansive critique of the **dilapidation of federalism**, threatening **India's progress**, and calls for changes to reverse the **dangerous course**, stating that "**Indian federalism now requires a structural reset comparable in ambition to the economic reforms of 1991**".

यह रिपोर्ट **संघवाद के क्षरण** की व्यापक आलोचना है, जो **भारत की प्रगति** को खतरे में डाल रही है, और **खतरनाक दिशा** को पलटने के लिए बदलावों की मांग करती है, यह कहते हुए कि "**भारतीय संघवाद को अब 1991 के आर्थिक सुधारों जैसी संरचनात्मक पुनर्स्थापना की आवश्यकता है**"।

- **India's constitutional framework** took shape against the backdrop of **Partition**, and the consolidation of **princely States**.

  भारत का **संवैधानिक ढांचा विभाजन** और **रियासतों के एकीकरण** की पृष्ठभूमि में विकसित हुआ।

- The context encouraged the founders to tilt towards a **centralising constitutional scheme**; **legislative, administrative, and judicial measures** in the ensuing decades further reinforced this line of thinking.

  इस संदर्भ ने संस्थापकों को **केंद्रीकृत संवैधानिक व्यवस्था** की ओर झुकने के लिए प्रेरित किया; बाद के दशकों में **विधायी, प्रशासनिक और न्यायिक उपायों** ने इस सोच को और मजबूत किया।

- The report convincingly takes down the arguments for **centralisation**, and argues that **federalised governance is essential** for a country of **India's size and diversity**, and that it would in fact be dangerous to overlook this imperative.

  रिपोर्ट **केंद्रीकरण** के पक्ष में दिए गए तर्कों को प्रभावी ढंग से खारिज करती है, और यह तर्क देती है कि **संघीय शासन व्यवस्था भारत के आकार और विविधता** वाले देश के लिए आवश्यक है, और इस अनिवार्यता की अनदेखी करना वास्तव में खतरनाक होगा।

- The **Constitution** can be amended far too easily for a federal polity, and this creates a self-perpetuating cycle of **centralisation**.

  संविधान को एक संघीय व्यवस्था के लिए अत्यधिक आसानी से संशोधित किया जा सकता है, और यह **केंद्रीकरण** के एक आत्म-स्थायी चक्र को जन्म देता है।

- The **territorial integrity of States** is at the mercy of the **Centre**, most blatantly illustrated by the dismantling of **Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories in 2019**.

  राज्यों की क्षेत्रीय अखंडता केंद्र की दया पर निर्भर है, जिसका सबसे स्पष्ट उदाहरण **2019 में जम्मू और कश्मीर को दो केंद्रशासित प्रदेशों में विभाजित करना** है।

- The misplaced idea that the country needs **one national language** is being pursued by the **Union government**, which is particularly assertive on the question.

  यह गलत धारणा कि देश को **एक राष्ट्रीय भाषा** की आवश्यकता है, **केंद्र सरकार** द्वारा आगे बढ़ाई जा रही है, जो इस प्रश्न पर विशेष रूप से दृढ़ है।

- **Governors** have become instruments of the **Centre's overreach** in all areas of governance.

  राज्यपाल शासन के सभी क्षेत्रों में **केंद्र के अतिक्रमण** के उपकरण बन गए हैं।

- The impending **inter-State delimitation of Lok Sabha constituencies** is causing anxiety among States that have stabilised their populations and stand to lose their relative weight in national governance.

  आगामी **लोकसभा निर्वाचन क्षेत्रों का अंतर-राज्यीय परिसीमन** उन राज्यों में चिंता पैदा कर रहा है जिन्होंने अपनी जनसंख्या को स्थिर किया है और जो राष्ट्रीय शासन में अपने सापेक्ष महत्व को खो सकते हैं।

- The **Union** has overt power in the conduct of **elections**, and key sectors such as **education and health** are being increasingly centralised.

  केंद्र के पास **चुनावों** के संचालन में प्रत्यक्ष शक्ति है, और **शिक्षा और स्वास्थ्य** जैसे प्रमुख क्षेत्रों का बढ़ता हुआ केंद्रीकरण हो रहा है।

- The **GST regime** has restructured India's **fiscal landscape** in favour of the **Union** and at **States' expense**.

  जीएसटी व्यवस्था ने भारत के **राजकोषीय परिदृश्य** को **केंद्र** के पक्ष में और **राज्यों के नुकसान पर** पुनर्गठित किया है।

- This report lays out the logic, facts and common sense about why **federated governance** should be the path to progress.

  यह रिपोर्ट यह तर्क, तथ्य और सामान्य समझ प्रस्तुत करती है कि क्यों **संघीय शासन व्यवस्था** प्रगति का मार्ग होना चाहिए।

- This report must form the basis for a **new national conversation**.

  यह रिपोर्ट एक **नए राष्ट्रीय विमर्श** का आधार बननी चाहिए।

A temporary relief from bonded labour

A landmark law formulated to end bonded labour in India marks its 50th year of passing.
Satyasundar Barik examines the Act's relevance and effectiveness through the voices of labourers in Odisha who slipped back into bondage even after being officially rescued

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Determined to fund the education of his two sons and daughter, Panchanan Muduli, 44, of Balangir, a western Odisha district that depends on rain for agriculture, left home in early 2025 for Hyderabad. He had been promised work on a poultry farm and a place to sleep with the chicks he would be rearing. Though the wages were meagre, just ₹10,00 a month, he felt he would at least get a steady income he could send home. The stench, the humiliation, the loneliness proved unbearable. In about a month, he quit and began the journey home.

At Vijayawada railway station, desperation caught up with him. A fishery farm owner offered him work. Muduli agreed. What followed was worse: 15-hour workdays, makeshift shelters, and a job that tied him to the place he worked at. He and other labourers lived under constant watch and fear for seven months, he says.

One day, when a relative of the owner died, the labourers escaped. They walked for hours through the forest to flee captivity. They walked to Perumallapuram village in East Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh. Muduli was later rescued by officials of Telangana's Nagarkurnool district and declared a bonded labourer under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976.

He returned to his village Dumerpadar carrying the hope that the law would help him rebuild his life. Months passed. Help did not come, he says. Within five months of rescue, Muduli chose to migrate again. This time, with his wife and 5-year-old daughter. They moved to a brick kiln in Telangana in November 2025, and continue to work there.

The Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976, then a landmark in India's history, completed 50 years of enactment in February 2026. It came into force retrospectively in October 1975 and is "the system of forced, or partly forced, labour under which a debtor enters... into an agreement with the creditor..." The reasons are generally economic or caste-based, both of which the law covers.

Under the Act, which has not been amended since its enactment, the State government is required to conduct periodic surveys to ascertain the presence of bonded labourers. However, the last source of data is the Socio Economic Caste Census (SECC)-2011. As per its assessment, 8,304 bonded labourers mostly tribals, were rescued and released in Odisha. The number of legally released bonded labourers in the country was 1.65 lakh. However, the Odisha government never revealed what action it had taken to identify and rehabilitate these 8,304 people.

Five decades after its enactment, the term "bonded labourer" continues to evoke images of slavery, something many believed had vanished with colonial rule in India. Every district administration in Odisha was asked to create a corpus fund of ₹10 lakh so that immediate relief could be provided to released bonded labour. Half the districts in Odisha, do not have such a fund.

Individuals and families migrate

In 2017, Dambarudhar Majhi, 35, from Odisha's Nuapada district had migrated to Karnataka in search of survival, only to find himself trapped in

> The three months we spent inside the poultry farm felt less like work and more like a punishment... The owner had promised us ₹10,000 a month, but wages rarely came. He would not allow us to leave
>
> **DAMBARUDHAR MAJHI**
> Resident, Nuapada district

what he now calls the worst ordeal of his life. He and his family slept beside heaps of rotting chicks. Cleaning droppings from dawn to dusk became routine.

"The three months we spent inside the poultry farm felt less like work and more like a punishment. It was worse than the hell described in mythologies," he says. "The owner had promised us ₹10,000 a month, but wages rarely came. He would not allow us to leave," Majhi recalls. In desperation, the couple secretly sent their children away with a relative. By chance, the children stumbled upon labour officials at Yesvantpur Junction railway station. What followed was a rescue operation. "That day, we got our freedom," he says.

Nine years on, the rescue certificate remains carefully preserved in their home, but the rehabilitation promised under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act never arrived, he says. Fearful of returning to migration, the couple now survives on daily wage work, but they can just get one meal a day.

Their story echoes that of Jayaraj Jagat from Nuapada, who, along with his wife, was rescued from a brick kiln in Tamil Nadu in 2012. They received ₹19,000 each as rehabilitation assistance, they say. For a brief period, the money offered relief and dignity, allowing them to stay back in their village. But the poverty and lack of opportunity to earn in their village proved relentless.

By 2017, the couple had no choice but to migrate again. They returned to the same cycle of exploitation. For six months each year, they lived under 6-foot-high makeshift shelters in brick kilns, working up to 14 hours a day. Illness was a luxury they could not afford. Hunger, debt, and compulsion left them with no exit. Currently, they are working in a brick kiln in Telangana.

Freedom sans relief

Delays in rehabilitation assistance are a problem, especially for inter-State migrant labourers.

Jayaraj Jagat and his wife, who hail from Odisha's Nuapada district, and were rescued as bonded labourers in 2012, are working in a brick kiln in Telangana. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"When rehabilitation is delayed, rescued labourers are pushed back into the same profession, no matter how harsh or exploitative the conditions are," says Umi Daniel, Director of Migration and Education, Aid et Action, an international non-profit working at the intersection of poverty and education.

Timely financial support is only the first step. "We may have freed people physically from their captors, but not from the debt that binds them. Helping them stand on their own feet is a long-term process," Daniel adds. Without sustained support, rescue becomes a temporary interruption, not a permanent escape.

The law mandates close monitoring of rescued bonded labourers, with their details recorded in official registers. It also requires the District Collector to designate an officer to oversee their rehabilitation and ensure long-term protection. District-level vigilance committees, chaired by the Collector, are meant to anchor this process.

The Odisha nodal officer responsible for rehabilitation of released bonded labourers, Binod Senapati, says he was unaware that people were not being assisted. "Whenever other States inform us about rescue and release of our labourers, we immediately inform the District Collectors to take care of them," he says.

Daniel says rehabilitation cannot be reduced to a one-time cash payment. "Survivors must be linked to anti-poverty programmes such as housing, livelihood schemes, and social security to break the cycle of vulnerability," says Daniel.

Jagat echoes this: "I am good at tailoring. My wife too knows a little bit of tailoring. Had we been provided handholding support, I would not have migrated to another State to work in such harsh working conditions."

Daniel says that there was one sustained intervention in Odisha, when nearly 1,200 rescued bonded labourers from 500 families were rehabilitated (from 2010-2015) and connected to government welfare programmes, "helping them rebuild their lives with dignity".

Before 2016, the Centre and State government used to pay ₹10,000 each as assistance to a labourer after their rescue from bondage. Under the 1976 law, identification, release and rehabilitation of freed bonded labour is the direct responsibility of States and Union Territories.

However, in 2016, the Ministry of Labour and Employment introduced the Central Sector Scheme for Rehabilitation of Bonded Labourers, later strengthened and relaunched in 2022. Fully funded by the Centre, the scheme does not require any matching contribution from State governments. It guarantees immediate relief of up to ₹30,000 to each rescued labourer, followed by graded rehabilitation assistance of ₹1 lakh, ₹2 lakh, or ₹3 lakh, depending on the gender, severity of exploitation, and vulnerability. The assis-

tance is meant to be a foundation for rebuilding lives after bondage. Yet, hundreds of released bonded labourers continue to wait for rehabilitation.

Few understand this gap better than Baghambar Patnaik, a septuagenarian civil rights activist who has taken up the cause of 1,472 released bonded labourers before the Orissa Human Rights Commission. The petition covers 1,085 labourers from Balangir district, 44 from Subarnapur district, 28 from Bargarh district, 114 from Nuapada district, and 201 from Kalahandi district.

"A labour collective, Shramvahini, coordinated the rescue of hundreds of workers from different States. Most were migrant labourers from western Odisha who had endured bonded conditions," Patnaik says. "They underwent summary trials before Sub-Divisional Magistrates in the districts where they were rescued and were issued release certificates. But rehabilitation never followed," he points out, adding that many returned to the same exploitative work they had escaped.

The activist, who spent time in jail when he led a silent rally of barbers, attributes the failure largely to poor awareness and weak accountability within the administration. "The law exists. The provisions exist. What is missing is timely action," he says.

Caste-based bondage

Bondage in many villages survives not through chains, but through caste. For generations, families from barber and washermen communities have remained trapped in hereditary servitude, paid not in wages but in a few kilograms of rice. The arrangement, unwritten, yet rigidly enforced, passes from one generation to the next.

"We are forced to perform tasks like shaving villagers during death rituals, clearing leftover food after feasts, and carrying ceremonial offerings on our shoulders," says Lalatendu Barik of Brahampur village.

"This work is imposed on us by birth. There is no escape. Anyone who resists faces social boycott," he continues.

When members of these communities began resisting the system, the backlash was swift. They faced intimidation, exclusion, and economic isolation from dominant caste villagers.

Following sustained protests by people and intervention by civil society groups, hundreds were formally identified as bonded labourers and issued release certificates under the 1976 Act. But acknowledgement did not translate into rehabilitation, they say.

"Due to lack of administrative sensitivity, the State government failed to send rehabilitation proposals to the Centre," says Patnaik, who has moved both the Orissa High Court and the Orissa Human Rights Commission seeking justice for the affected families. "Years later, instead of extending assistance, the government cancelled many of their release certificates," he alleges.

As many as 1,283 people from tehsils, including Brahmagiri, Krushnaprasad, Delang, and Nimapara in Puri district, were once officially recognised as bonded labourers. Today, many of those certificates stand revoked.

Barik is among them. "I was declared a bonded labourer on March 3, 2016. But an April 8, 2025 report says I am no longer one because I have stopped performing customary services," he says.

Patnaik calls it a denial of reality. "This reflects deep bureaucratic ignorance," he says. "The government is unwilling to acknowledge that caste-based bondage still exists and comes under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976," he says.

Daniel says implementation of the law remains weak as it requires coordination among various departments like labour, revenue, panchayati raj, and the police. "There is no clear ownership, defined roles, or standard operating procedures to ensure that the historic Act benefits the most vulnerable," he says.

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21F. A temporary relief from bonded labour
बंधुआ मज़दूरी से अस्थायी राहत

- A **landmark law** formulated to end **bonded labour** in **India** marks its **50th year** of passing.
  भारत में **बंधुआ मज़दूरी** समाप्त करने के लिए बनाया गया एक **ऐतिहासिक कानून** अपने पारित होने के **50वें वर्ष** में प्रवेश कर चुका है।

- **Satyasundar Barik** examines the **Act's relevance** and **effectiveness** through the voices of **labourers** in **Odisha** who slipped back into **bondage** even after being **officially rescued**.
  सत्यसुंदर बरिक ने **ओडिशा** के उन **मज़दूरों** की आवाज़ों के माध्यम से इस **अधिनियम की प्रासंगिकता** और **प्रभावशीलता** का अध्ययन किया, जो **आधिकारिक रूप से बचाए जाने** के बाद भी फिर से **बंधुआ स्थिति** में चले गए।

- Determined to fund the education of his two sons and daughter, **Panchanan Muduli, 44**, of **Balangir (Odisha)** migrated to **Hyderabad in early 2025** for work at a poultry farm with wages of **₹10,000 per month**.
  अपने दो बेटों और एक बेटी की शिक्षा के लिए वृढ़ संकल्पित **पंचानन मुदुली, 44, बलांगीर (ओडिशा)** के निवासी, **2025 की शुरुआत में हैदराबाद** एक पोल्ट्री फार्म में **₹10,000 प्रतिमाह** की मजदूरी पर काम करने गए।

- The **stench, humiliation and loneliness** became unbearable and within a month he left and began his journey home.

दुर्गंध, अपमान और अकेलापन असहनीय हो गया और एक महीने के भीतर ही उन्होंने काम छोड़कर घर लौटने का निर्णय लिया।

- At **Vijayawada railway station**, a fishery farm owner offered him work where he endured **15-hour workdays, constant surveillance and captivity for seven months**.
  विजयवाड़ा रेलवे स्टेशन पर एक मत्स्य फार्म मालिक ने काम दिया जहाँ उसने **15 घंटे की मजदूरी, निरंतर निगरानी और सात महीने की कैद** झेली।

- When the owner's relative died, labourers escaped through forests from **Perumallapuram village, East Godavari (Andhra Pradesh)** and Muduli was rescued and declared a **bonded labourer under the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976**.
  जब मालिक के रिश्तेदार की मृत्यु हुई, मजदूर **पूर्वी गोदावरी (आंध्र प्रदेश) के पेरुमल्लापुरम गांव** से जंगलों के रास्ते भाग निकले और मुदुली को बचाकर **बंधुआ मजदूर (उन्मूलन) अधिनियम, 1976** के तहत बंधुआ मजदूर घोषित किया गया।

- He returned to his village hoping for rehabilitation but received no help and within **five months migrated again with his wife and 5-year-old daughter** to a brick kiln in **November 2025**.
  वह पुनर्वास की आशा लेकर गांव लौटे पर मदद नहीं मिली और **पाँच महीनों के भीतर पत्नी और 5 वर्ष की बेटी के साथ नवंबर 2025 में** फिर एक ईंट भट्टे पर काम करने चले गए।

Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976
बंधुआ मजदूर प्रणाली (उन्मूलन) अधिनियम, 1976

- The **Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976** completed **50 years in February 2026** and came into force retrospectively in **October 1975**.
  बंधुआ मजदूर प्रणाली (उन्मूलन) अधिनियम, 1976 ने फरवरी 2026 में **50 वर्ष** पूरे किए और यह **अक्टूबर 1975** से प्रभावी हुआ।

- The law defines bonded labour as forced labour due to **economic or caste-based reasons** and mandates **periodic surveys by State governments**.
  यह कानून बंधुआ मजदूरी को **आर्थिक या जातिगत कारणों** से उत्पन्न जबरन श्रम के रूप में परिभाषित करता है और **राज्य सरकारों द्वारा नियमित सर्वेक्षण** अनिवार्य करता है।

- As per **SECC-2011**, 8,304 bonded labourers in Odisha were rescued and **1.65 lakh in India**, but rehabilitation action in Odisha remained unclear.
  SECC-2011 के अनुसार **ओडिशा में 8,304 बंधुआ मजदूर** और पूरे भारत में **1.65 लाख** मुक्त किए गए, पर ओडिशा में पुनर्वास की स्थिति स्पष्ट नहीं रही।

- District administrations in Odisha were asked to create a **₹10 lakh corpus fund**, yet **half the districts lack such funds**.
  ओडिशा के जिला प्रशासन को **₹10 लाख कोष** बनाने का निर्देश दिया गया, पर **आधे जिलों में ऐसा कोष नहीं है।**

Individuals and families migrate
व्यक्ति और परिवार पलायन करते हैं

- In **2017**, **Dambarudhar Majhi, 35**, from **Nuapada (Odisha)** migrated to **Karnataka** and was trapped in exploitative labour at a poultry farm with **₹10,000 promised wages but rarely paid**.
  2017 में, **नुआपाड़ा (ओडिशा)** के **डंबरुधर माझी, 35**, **कर्नाटक** गए और पोल्ट्री फार्म में शोषण का शिकार हुए जहाँ **₹10,000 मजदूरी का वादा** था पर शायद ही भुगतान हुआ।

- His children were secretly sent away and later found by labour officials at **Yesvantpur Junction**, leading to a rescue operation.
  उनके बच्चों को गुप्त रूप से भेजा गया और वे **यशवंतपुर जंक्शन** पर श्रम अधिकारियों से मिले, जिससे बचाव अभियान चला।

- Nine years later, despite holding a **rescue certificate**, rehabilitation never arrived and the family survives on **daily wage with one meal a day**.
  नौ वर्ष बाद भी **राहत प्रमाणपत्र** होने के बावजूद पुनर्वास नहीं मिला और परिवार **दैनिक मजदूरी पर एक समय भोजन** से जीवन यापन करता है।

- **Jayaraj Jagat** from **Nuapada** was rescued from a brick kiln in **Tamil Nadu (2012)** and received **₹19,000 rehabilitation assistance**, but poverty forced migration again by **2017**.
  नुआपाड़ा के जयराज जगत को 2012 में तमिलनाडु के ईंट भट्टे से बचाया गया और ₹19,000 पुनर्वास सहायता मिली, पर गरीबी के कारण 2017 में फिर पलायन करना पड़ा।
- They worked **14 hours a day**, lived in **6-foot makeshift shelters**, and currently work in a brick kiln in **Telangana**.
  वे 14 घंटे प्रतिदिन काम करते हैं, 6 फुट ऊँचे अस्थायी आश्रयों में रहते हैं और वर्तमान में तेलंगाना के ईंट भट्टे में कार्यरत हैं।

Freedom sans relief
राहत के बिना स्वतंत्रता

- Delays in **rehabilitation assistance** are a problem, especially for **inter-State migrant labourers**.
  पुनर्वास सहायता में देरी एक समस्या है, विशेषकर अंतर-राज्यीय प्रवासी मजदूरों के लिए।
- "When rehabilitation is delayed, rescued labourers are pushed back into the same profession, no matter how harsh or exploitative the conditions are," says **Umi Daniel, Director of Migration and Education, Aid et Action**.
  "जब पुनर्वास में देरी होती है, बचाए गए मजदूरों को फिर उसी पेशे में लौटना पड़ता है, चाहे परिस्थितियाँ कितनी भी कठोर या शोषणकारी हों," उमी डेनियल, निदेशक (Migration and Education), Aid et Action कहते हैं।
- Timely **financial support** is only the first step.
  समय पर वित्तीय सहायता केवल पहला कदम है।
- "We may have freed people physically from their captors, but not from the debt that binds them. Helping them stand on their own feet is a **long-term process**," Daniel adds.
  "हमने लोगों को शारीरिक रूप से तो मुक्त किया है, पर उन्हें बाँधने वाले कर्ज से नहीं। उन्हें आत्मनिर्भर बनाना एक दीर्घकालिक प्रक्रिया है," डेनियल कहते हैं।
- Without **sustained support**, rescue becomes a **temporary interruption**, not a permanent escape.
  निरंतर सहायता के बिना बचाव केवल अस्थायी विराम बन जाता है, स्थायी मुक्ति नहीं।
- The law mandates **close monitoring of rescued bonded labourers** with their details recorded in official registers.
  कानून के अनुसार मुक्त बंधुआ मजदूरों की करीबी निगरानी और उनका विवरण आधिकारिक अभिलेखों में दर्ज करना अनिवार्य है।
- It requires the **District Collector** to designate an officer to oversee rehabilitation and ensure **long-term protection**.
  इसमें जिला कलेक्टर को पुनर्वास की निगरानी और दीर्घकालिक संरक्षण सुनिश्चित करने हेतु अधिकारी नियुक्त करना आवश्यक है।
- **District-level vigilance committees**, chaired by the Collector, are meant to anchor this process.
  जिला स्तरीय सतर्कता समितियाँ, कलेक्टर की अध्यक्षता में, इस प्रक्रिया को संचालित करने के लिए बनाई जाती हैं।
- The Odisha nodal officer **Binod Senapati** said he was unaware that people were not being assisted.
  ओडिशा के नोडल अधिकारी बिनोद सेनापति ने कहा कि उन्हें जानकारी नहीं थी कि लोगों को सहायता नहीं मिल रही है।
- "Whenever other States inform us about rescue, we immediately inform District Collectors," he said.
  "जब भी अन्य राज्य हमें बचाव की सूचना देते हैं, हम तुरंत जिला कलेक्टरों को सूचित करते हैं," उन्होंने कहा।
- Daniel says rehabilitation cannot be reduced to a **one-time cash payment**.
  डेनियल कहते हैं कि पुनर्वास को केवल एक बार के नकद भुगतान तक सीमित नहीं किया जा सकता।
- Survivors must be linked to **housing, livelihood and social security schemes** to break the cycle of vulnerability.
  पीड़ितों को आवास, आजीविका और सामाजिक सुरक्षा योजनाओं से जोड़ना आवश्यक है ताकि असुरक्षा का चक्र टूट सके।

- Bondage in many villages survives not through chains, but through **caste**.

कई गांवों में बंधन जंजीरों से नहीं बल्कि **जाति** के माध्यम से जीवित है।

- For generations, families from **barber and washermen communities** have remained trapped in hereditary servitude, paid not in wages but in a few kilograms of **rice**.

पीढ़ियों से **नाई और धोबी समुदायों** के परिवार वंशानुगत बंधन में फंसे रहे, जिन्हें मजदूरी के बजाय कुछ किलोग्राम **चावल** दिया जाता है।

GS Paper II: Governance,	
TOPICS COVERED	**21 February 2026**
21F PAC pulls up govt. for slow implementation of SANKALP scheme	
PAC ने SANKALP योजना के धीमे क्रियान्वयन के लिए सरकार को फटकारा	

PAC pulls up govt. for slow implementation of SANKALP scheme

Panel questions govt. over absence of a central monitoring mechanism and gaps in due diligence; CAG had flagged shortfalls in financial progress

GS II: Governance
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament, chaired by senior Congress leader K.C. Venugopal, on Friday criticised the government for what members described as "lackadaisical" implementation of the Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) scheme, a flagship programme of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

The panel was examining a Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report that highlighted significant delays and shortfalls in both financial and physical progress under the scheme. According to the CAG, only 44% of the budgeted provision for SANKALP was disbursed between 2017-18 and 2023-24 (as of October 2023). The audit also flagged weak adherence to implementation guidelines and a sluggish pace of execution across components.

Approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs in October 2017 with a total outlay of ₹4,455 crore, SANKALP was designed to strengthen short-term skill training through better institutional frameworks, enhanced industry linkages, and targeted inclusion of marginalised communities.

The scheme was slated to be financed through a World Bank loan of ₹3,300 crore, State leverage of ₹660 crore, and industry leverage of ₹495 crore.

Launched in 2018, SANKALP was originally scheduled for completion by March 2023 but was later extended to March 2024. Against the first tranche of the agreed loan of $250 million, the Bank disbursed ₹1,606.15 crore (86%), but the Ministry utilised only ₹850.71 crore as of December 2023.

The CAG attributed part of the delay to "non-preparedness" within the Ministry before the commencement of the loan period. The PAC members echoed this during the meeting, questioning the government over the absence of a central monitoring mechanism and gaps in due diligence.

The scheme seeks to strengthen short-term skill training through better institutional frameworks and industry linkage. FILE PHOTO

21F. PAC pulls up govt. for slow implementation of SANKALP scheme

 PAC ने SANKALP योजना के धीमे क्रियान्वयन के लिए सरकार को फटकारा

- Panel questions govt. over absence of a central monitoring mechanism and gaps in due diligence; CAG had flagged shortfalls in financial progress.

पैनल ने केंद्रीय निगरानी तंत्र की अनुपस्थिति और पर्याप्त सावधानी में अंतर के लिए सरकार से सवाल किया; CAG ने वित्तीय प्रगति में कमियों की चेतावनी दी थी।

- The **Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Parliament**, **chaired by senior Congress leader K.C. Venugopal,** on Friday criticised the government for what members described as "lackadaisical" implementation of the **Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) scheme**, a flagship programme of the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

 संसद की Public Accounts Committee (PAC), जिसकी अध्यक्षता वरिष्ठ कांग्रेस नेता K.C. Venugopal कर रहे हैं, ने शुक्रवार को सरकार की Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) योजना के "अलसापनपूर्ण" क्रियान्वयन के लिए आलोचना की, जो कौशल विकास और उद्यमिता मंत्रालय की प्रमुख योजना है।

- The **panel was examining a Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report** that highlighted **significant delays and shortfalls in both financial and physical progress under the scheme**.

पैनल Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) की एक रिपोर्ट की जांच कर रहा था, जिसमें योजना के तहत वित्तीय और भौतिक प्रगति में महत्वपूर्ण देरी और कमियों को उजागर किया गया था।

- According to the CAG, only 44% of the budgeted provision for SANKALP was disbursed between 2017-18 and 2023-24 (as of October 2023).

  CAG के अनुसार, 2017-18 से 2023-24 (अक्टूबर 2023 तक) के बीच SANKALP के लिए बजट प्रावधान का केवल 44% वितरित किया गया।

- The audit also flagged weak adherence to implementation guidelines and a sluggish pace of execution across components.

  ऑडिट ने क्रियान्वयन दिशानिर्देशों के कमजोर पालन और योजना के विभिन्न घटकों में धीमी कार्यान्वयन गति को भी उजागर किया।

- Approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs in October 2017 with a total outlay of ₹4,455 crore, **SANKALP was designed to strengthen short-term skill training through better institutional frameworks, enhanced industry linkages, and targeted inclusion of marginalised communities.**

  अक्टूबर 2017 में Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs द्वारा कुल ₹4,455 करोड़ की राशि के साथ अनुमोदित, SANKALP को बेहतर संस्थागत ढांचे, उद्योग लिंक और हाशिए पर रहने वाले समुदायों की लक्षित समावेशन के माध्यम से अल्पकालिक कौशल प्रशिक्षण को मजबूत करने के लिए डिज़ाइन किया गया।

- The **scheme was slated to be financed through a World Bank loan of ₹3,300 crore, State leverage of ₹660 crore, and industry leverage of ₹495 crore**.

  योजना को विश्व बैंक ऋण ₹3,300 करोड़, राज्य का योगदान ₹660 करोड़, और उद्योग का योगदान ₹495 करोड़ के माध्यम से वित्त पोषित करने का प्रस्ताव था।

- **Launched in 2018, SANKALP** was originally scheduled for completion by March 2023 but was later extended to March 2024.

  2018 में शुरू हुई SANKALP को मूल रूप से मार्च 2023 तक पूरा करने का कार्यक्रम था, लेकिन बाद में इसे मार्च 2024 तक बढ़ा दिया गया।

- Against the first tranche of the agreed loan of $250 million, the Bank disbursed ₹1,606.15 crore (86%), but the Ministry utilised only ₹850.71 crore as of December 2023.

  सहमति ऋण के पहले हिस्से $250 मिलियन के खिलाफ, बैंक ने ₹1,606.15 करोड़ (86%) वितरित किए, लेकिन दिसंबर 2023 तक मंत्रालय ने केवल ₹850.71 करोड़ का उपयोग किया।

- The CAG attributed part of the delay to "non-preparedness" within the Ministry before the commencement of the loan period.

  CAG ने देरी का हिस्सा ऋण अवधि शुरू होने से पहले मंत्रालय की "अप्रस्तुतता" को बताया।

- The PAC members echoed this during the meeting, questioning the government over the absence of a central monitoring mechanism and gaps in due diligence.

  PAC सदस्यों ने बैठक के दौरान इसे दोहराया, केंद्रीय निगरानी तंत्र की अनुपस्थिति और पर्याप्त सावधानी में अंतर के लिए सरकार से सवाल किया।

GS Paper II: International Relations	
TOPICS COVERED	**21 February 2026**
21F	**U.S. Supreme Court rejects Trump tariffs** यू.एस. सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने ट्रंप के टैरिफ खारिज कर दिए
21F	**India joins U.S.-led tech alliance to build supply chains for electronics and critical minerals** भारत ने इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स और महत्वपूर्ण खनिजों के लिए आपूर्ति श्रृंखलाएं बनाने के लिए यू.एस.-नेतृत्व वाली तकनीकी गठबंधन में शामिल हुआ
21F	**India took part as 'observer' in the first Board of Peace for Gaza meeting, says MEA** भारत ने गाजा के लिए पहले बोर्ड ऑफ पीस बैठक में 'पर्यवेक्षक' के रूप में हिस्सा लिया, MEA ने कहा
21F	**Modi holds talks with UN chief, other world leaders**

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	मोदी ने UN प्रमुख और अन्य विश्व नेताओं के साथ बैठक की
21F	**Poland withdraws from treaty banning anti-personnel mines**
	पोलैंड ने एंटी-पर्सनेल माइंस पर प्रतिबंध वाले संधि से वापसी की
21F	**'As dynamic economies, India, Brazil can't remain distant'**
	'गतिशील अर्थव्यवस्थाओं के रूप में, भारत और ब्राज़ील दूर नहीं रह सकते'

U.S. Supreme Court rejects Trump tariffs

■ The ruling nullifies 'reciprocal' tariffs Trump imposed utilising an emergency powers law

■ The Supreme Court declared that only Congress has the power to impose taxes, including tariffs

■ The Treasury collected more than $133 billion from the import taxes the President imposed

GS II: IR

Associated Press
WASHINGTON

The United States Supreme Court struck down President Donald Trump's far-reaching global tariffs on Friday, handing him a significant loss on an issue crucial to his economic agenda.

The 6-3 decision centres on tariffs imposed under an emergency powers law, including the sweeping "reciprocal" tariffs he levied on nearly every other country, such as India.

It's the first major piece of Mr. Trump's broad agenda to come squarely before the nation's highest court, which he helped shape with the appointments of three conservative jurists in his first term.

The majority found that the Constitution "very clearly" gives Congress the power to impose taxes, which include tariffs. "The Framers did not vest any part of the taxing power in the Executive Branch," Chief Justice John Roberts wrote.

The Treasury had collected more than $133 billion from the import taxes the President has imposed under the emergency powers law as of December, federal data shows.

The tariff decision doesn't stop Mr. Trump from imposing duties under other laws. While those have more limitations on the speed and severity of Mr. Trump's actions, top administration officials have said they ex-

Court rebuff
On Friday, the U.S. Supreme Court invalidated President Donald Trump's global tariffs under a 1977 emergency powers law.
■ **April 2025:** Trump imposes 'reciprocal' tariffs on most countries to address trade deficits and emergencies
■ **2025-2026:** Lawsuits filed by states and businesses challenge the tariffs' legality
■ **Dec. 2025:** Treasury reports $133 billion collected from the import taxes; companies like Costco seek refunds
■ **Feb. 20:** Court rules 6-3; it says only Congress has the constitutional power to impose tariffs

pect to keep the tariff framework in place under other authorities.

'Absolutely ashamed'
The Supreme Court ruling comes despite a series of short-term wins on the court's emergency docket that have allowed Mr. Trump to push ahead with extraordinary flexes of executive power on issues ranging from high-profile

Trump orders temporary 10% global tariff

WASHINGTON

Donald Trump said he would impose a 10% global tariff for 150 days, under Section 122 of the Trade Act of 1974, to replace some duties struck down by the court. He said the new duties would be over and above the existing tariffs. He also said nothing changes on trade deal with India. REUTERS

firings to major federal funding cuts.

Mr. Trump on Friday said the court's ruling that struck down his sweeping tariffs was "deeply disappointing" and that he was

"absolutely ashamed" by the justices who ruled against him in the 6-3 decision.

Mr. Trump set what he called "reciprocal" tariffs on most countries in April 2025 to address trade deficits, which he declared a national emergency. Those came after he imposed duties on Canada, China and Mexico, ostensibly to address a drug trafficking emergency.

However, Justices Samuel Alito, Clarence Thomas and Brett Kavanaugh dissented. "The tariffs at issue here may or may not be wise policy. But as a matter of text, history, and precedent, they are clearly lawful," Justice Kavanaugh wrote.

The majority did not ad-

dress whether companies could get refunded for the billions they have collectively paid in tariffs.

Many companies, including the big-box warehouse chain Costco, have already lined up to demand refunds in lower courts. Justice Kavanaugh noted the process could be complicated.

The Republican President has been vocal about the case, calling it one of the most important in U.S. history and saying a ruling against him would be an economic body blow to the country.

But legal opposition crossed the political spectrum, including libertarian and pro-business groups that are typically aligned with the Republican Party.

21F. U.S. Supreme Court rejects Trump tariffs
यू.एस. सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने ट्रंप के टैरिफ खारिज कर दिए

- The **ruling nullifies 'reciprocal' tariffs Trump imposed utilising an emergency powers law**
  यह निर्णय उन 'प्रतिपूरक' टैरिफ को रद्द करता है जो ट्रंप ने आपातकालीन शक्तियों के कानून का उपयोग करके लागू किए थे

- **The Supreme Court declared that only Congress has the power to impose taxes, including tariffs**
  सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने घोषणा की कि केवल **संसद** के पास **कर** लगाने की शक्ति है, जिसमें **टैरिफ** भी शामिल हैं

- The Treasury collected more than $133 billion from the import taxes the President imposed
  ट्रेज़री ने उन **आयात करों** से $133 बिलियन से अधिक एकत्र किए जो राष्ट्रपति ने लगाया

- The United States Supreme Court struck down President Donald Trump's far-reaching global tariffs on Friday, handing him a significant loss on an issue crucial to his economic agenda.
  संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका की सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने शुक्रवार को राष्ट्रपति **डोनाल्ड ट्रंप** के व्यापक वैश्विक **टैरिफ** रद्द कर दिए, जिससे उन्हें उनके आर्थिक एजेंडा के लिए महत्वपूर्ण मुद्दे पर बड़ा झटका लगा।

- The **6-3 decision centres on tariffs imposed under an emergency powers law, including the sweeping "reciprocal" tariffs he levied on nearly every other country**, such as India.
  6-3 के निर्णय का केंद्र **टैरिफ** पर है जो आपातकालीन शक्तियों के कानून के तहत लगाए गए थे, जिसमें व्यापक "**प्रतिपूरक**" टैरिफ शामिल हैं जो उन्होंने लगभग हर अन्य देश, जैसे भारत, पर लगाए।

- It's the first major piece of Mr. Trump's broad agenda to come squarely before the nation's highest court, which he helped shape with the appointments of three conservative jurists in his first term.
  यह **मिस्टर ट्रंप** के व्यापक एजेंडा का पहला प्रमुख हिस्सा है जो सीधे राष्ट्र की सर्वोच्च अदालत के सामने आया, जिसे उन्होंने अपने पहले कार्यकाल में तीन **रूढ़िवादी न्यायाधीशों** की नियुक्तियों के साथ आकार देने में मदद की।

- The Treasury had collected more than $133 billion from the import taxes the President has imposed under the emergency powers law as of December, federal data shows.

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फेडरल डेटा के अनुसार, **ट्रेज़री** ने दिसंबर तक आपातकालीन शक्तियों के कानून के तहत राष्ट्रपति द्वारा लगाए गए **आयात करों** से $133 बिलियन से अधिक एकत्र किए थे।

- The tariff decision doesn't stop Mr. Trump from imposing duties under other laws.
  यह **टैरिफ** निर्णय **मिस्टर ट्रंप** को अन्य कानूनों के तहत **शुल्क** लगाने से नहीं रोकता।

- Mr. Trump set what he called "reciprocal" tariffs on most countries in April 2025 to address trade deficits, which he declared a national emergency.
  मिस्टर ट्रंप ने अप्रैल 2025 में अधिकांश देशों पर जो उन्होंने "**प्रतिपूरक**" टैरिफ कहा, उसे **व्यापार घाटे** को संबोधित करने के लिए लागू किया, जिसे उन्होंने राष्ट्रीय आपातकाल घोषित किया।

- Those came after he imposed duties on Canada, China and Mexico, ostensibly to address a drug trafficking emergency.
  ये तब आए जब उन्होंने **कनाडा, चीन और मेक्सिको** पर शुल्क लगाए, कथित रूप से **ड्रग तस्करी आपातकाल** को संबोधित करने के लिए।

- However, Justices Samuel Alito, Clarence Thomas and Brett Kavanaugh dissented.
  हालांकि, **न्यायाधीश सैमुअल एलिटो, क्लेरेंस थॉमस और ब्रेट कैवेनॉ** ने असहमति व्यक्त की।

- "The tariffs at issue here may or may not be wise policy. But as a matter of text, history, and precedent, they are clearly lawful," Justice Kavanaugh wrote.
  "यहाँ जो **टैरिफ** मुद्दे में हैं वे शायद या शायद नहीं समझदारी की नीति हों। लेकिन **पाठ, इतिहास और मिसाल** के मामले में, वे स्पष्ट रूप से कानूनी हैं," **न्यायाधीश कैवेनॉ** ने लिखा।

India joins U.S.-led tech alliance to build supply chains for electronics and critical minerals

GS II: IR

Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

India joined the Pax Silica group on Friday, teaming up with the United States and other countries that have sought to build a common supply chain for electronics and critical minerals.

At an event during the AI Impact Summit, Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw signed a document formally including India in the group, along with U.S. Undersecretary of State for economic growth, energy, and the environment Jacob Helberg.

Mr. Helberg has been a major force in creating the group, which had its inaugural summit at the U.S. Institute of Peace in Washington, D.C. last December.

In a brief impassioned address on Friday, Mr. Helberg asserted that "we have allowed the foundations of our economic security to drift", adding that it was important for countries like India and the U.S., who had both rejected "a king oceans away", to reclaim sovereignty over their supply chains.

Pax Silica's other signatories include Canada, Japan, South Korea, and the European Union.

They have sought to make their supply chains more resilient to shocks from China, which has exercised its leverage over the last year as the sole source of refined rare earth elements, to gain an upper hand in trade negotiations with the U.S.

"We have a very large talent pool, and we have conducted our foreign policy in a manner that builds trust," Mr. Vaishnaw said on the sidelines of the summit.

'Say no to blackmail'
"We find ourselves grappling with a global supply chain that is massively over concentrated," Mr. Helberg said.

"We watch as our friends and allies face daily threats of economic coercion and blackmail, forced to choose between their sovereignty and their prosperity. We have seen the lights of a great Indian city extinguished by a keystroke from across the border," he added, in an apparent reference to alleged sabotage that caused a blackout in Mumbai in October 2020.

"And we've seen our friends denied essential minerals simply because a leader dared to speak her mind," he said, in an apparent reference to China's recent restrictions on rare earth element exports as a response to Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's remarks on Taiwan.

"So today, as we signed the Pax Silica Declaration, we say no to weaponised dependency, and we say no to blackmail," Mr. Helberg said.

India was not a signatory at the initial summit for reasons that remain unconfirmed. However, the U.S., as the convening party of the group, had said for weeks that it is open to India joining.

New bond: IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw (second from right) with U.S. envoy Sergio Gor (centre) and others at an event to mark India's entry into the Pax Silica initiative in New Delhi on Friday. PTI

21F. India joins U.S.-led tech alliance to build supply chains for electronics and critical minerals
भारत ने इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स और महत्वपूर्ण खनिजों के लिए आपूर्ति श्रृंखलाएं बनाने के लिए यू.एस.-नेतृत्व वाली तकनीकी गठबंधन में शामिल हुआ

- **India joined the Pax Silica group on Friday, teaming up with the United States and other countries that have sought to build a common supply chain for electronics and critical minerals.**
  भारत ने शुक्रवार को **Pax Silica** समूह में शामिल होकर **संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका** और अन्य देशों के साथ

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साझेदारी की, जिन्होंने **इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स और महत्वपूर्ण खनिजों के लिए एक सामान्य आपूर्ति श्रृंखला** बनाने का प्रयास किया।

- At an event during the AI Impact Summit, Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw signed a document formally including India in the group, along with U.S. Undersecretary of State for economic growth, energy, and the environment Jacob Helberg.

  AI इंपैक्ट समिट के दौरान एक कार्यक्रम में, **केंद्रीय इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स और सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्री अश्विनी वैष्णव** ने एक दस्तावेज़ पर हस्ताक्षर किए जिसमें भारत को आधिकारिक रूप से समूह में शामिल किया गया, साथ ही **अमेरिका के आर्थिक विकास, ऊर्जा और पर्यावरण के उप-राज्य सचिव जैकब हेलबर्ग** भी मौजूद थे।

- **Pax Silica's other signatories include Canada, Japan, South Korea, and the European Union**.

  Pax Silica के अन्य हस्ताक्षरकर्ताओं में **कनाडा, जापान, दक्षिण कोरिया, और यूरोपीय संघ** शामिल हैं।

- They have sought to make their supply chains more resilient to shocks from China, which has exercised its leverage over the last year as the sole source of refined rare earth elements, to gain an upper hand in trade negotiations with the U.S.

  उन्होंने अपनी **आपूर्ति श्रृंखलाओं** को चीन से होने वाले झटकों के लिए अधिक **सहनशील** बनाने का प्रयास किया है, जिसने पिछले वर्ष **संपूर्ण परिष्कृत दुर्लभ पृथ्वी तत्वों** का एकमात्र स्रोत होने के नाते अपने प्रभाव का प्रयोग किया, ताकि **यू.एस. के साथ व्यापार वार्ता** में बढ़त हासिल की जा सके।

- India was not a signatory at the initial summit for reasons that remain unconfirmed.

  प्रारंभिक शिखर सम्मेलन में भारत किसी भी **हस्ताक्षरकर्ता** में शामिल नहीं था, कारण जो अभी **अस्पष्ट** हैं।

India took part as 'observer' in the first Board of Peace for Gaza meeting, says MEA

GS II: IR

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

A day after an Indian diplomat participated in the first meeting of the Board of Peace for Gaza in Washington D.C., the Ministry of External Affairs said India was there as an "observer".

The official spokesperson of the Ministry, Randhir Jaiswal, reiterated India's position on the Palestinian issue and said India stood for a "sovereign, independent, and viable state of Palestine based on 1967 borders".

"India attended the Board of Peace meeting held in Washington D.C. as an observer. India has supported the Gaza Peace Plan initiative of President Trump and the efforts underway due to UNSC reso-

Randhir Jaiswal

lution 2803," he said in response to a question on India's presence in the meeting. India was represented by Deputy Chief of Mission of the Indian Embassy in Washington D.C. Namgya Khampa.

Mr. Jaiswal explained India's multiple moves on the Israel-Palestine conflict over the past few days that received sharper focus because of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's upcom-

ing visit to Israel.

Earlier this week, India opted out of a joint appearance of member nations at the UN criticising Israel for its continued expansion of West Bank settlements. India did not initially sign a statement critical of Israel that was endorsed by 85 member states. But, more than 24 hours later, India signed the statement that was read out by the Palestinian Ambassador to the UN criticising the Israeli government for its policy of expanding settlements in the West Bank.

Israel's recent decisions asking existing Palestinian landholders of West Bank for proof of ownership and facilitating outside settlers to acquire land in the enclave have drawn strong condemnation from multiple quarters.

21F. India took part as 'observer' in the first Board of Peace for Gaza meeting, says MEA

भारत ने गाजा के लिए पहले बोर्ड ऑफ पीस बैठक में 'पर्यवेक्षक' के रूप में हिस्सा लिया, MEA ने कहा

- **A day after an Indian diplomat participated in the first meeting of the Board of Peace for Gaza in Washington D.C., the Ministry of External Affairs said India was there as an "observer".**

  एक दिन बाद जब एक भारतीय राजनयिक ने वाशिंगटन डी.सी. में गाजा के लिए पहले बोर्ड ऑफ पीस की बैठक में भाग लिया, तो विदेश मंत्रालय ने कहा कि भारत वहाँ एक "पर्यवेक्षक" के रूप में मौजूद था।

- The official spokesperson of the Ministry, Randhir Jaiswal, reiterated India's position on the Palestinian issue and **said India stood for a "sovereign, independent, and viable state of Palestine based on 1967 borders".**

मंत्रालय के आधिकारिक प्रवक्ता, रंधीर जैसवाल, ने फिलिस्तीनी मुद्दे पर भारत की स्थिति दोहराई और कहा कि भारत 1967 की सीमाओं पर आधारित संप्रभु, स्वतंत्र और सक्षम फिलिस्तीन राज्य के पक्ष में खड़ा है।

- **"India attended the Board of Peace meeting held in Washington D.C.** as an observer. India has supported the **Gaza Peace Plan initiative of President Trump and the efforts underway due to UNSC resolution 2803,**" he said in response to a question on India's presence in the meeting.

  "**भारत ने वाशिंगटन डी.सी. में आयोजित बोर्ड ऑफ पीस बैठक** में एक पर्यवेक्षक के रूप में भाग लिया। भारत ने राष्ट्रपति **ट्रम्प** की गाजा शांति योजना पहल का समर्थन किया है और **UNSC प्रस्ताव 2803** के तहत चल रहे प्रयासों का समर्थन किया है," उन्होंने बैठक में भारत की उपस्थिति पर सवाल के जवाब में कहा।

- India did not initially sign a statement critical of Israel that was endorsed by 85 member states.

  भारत ने शुरू में उस बयान पर हस्ताक्षर नहीं किए जो इजराइल की आलोचना करता था और जिसे 85 सदस्य राज्यों ने अनुमोदित किया था।

- But, more than 24 hours later, India signed the statement that was read out by the Palestinian Ambassador to the UN criticising the Israeli government for its policy of expanding settlements in the West Bank.

  लेकिन, 24 घंटे से अधिक बाद, भारत ने उस बयान पर हस्ताक्षर किए जिसे फिलिस्तीनी राजदूत ने संयुक्त राष्ट्र में पढ़ा, जो पश्चिमी तट में बस्तियों का विस्तार करने की इजराइल सरकार की नीति की आलोचना करता था।

- Israel's recent decisions asking existing Palestinian landholders of the West Bank for proof of ownership and facilitating outside settlers to acquire land in the enclave have drawn strong condemnation from multiple quarters.

  इजराइल के हालिया फैसले, जिसमें पश्चिमी तट के मौजूदा फिलिस्तीनी भूमि धारकों से स्वामित्व का प्रमाण मांगा गया और बाहरी बस्तियों को भूमि अधिग्रहण की सुविधा दी गई, ने कई पक्षों से कड़ी निंदा प्राप्त की है।

Modi holds talks with UN chief, other world leaders

GS II: IR

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday held bilateral talks with top leaders of Mauritius and Slovakia.

Mr. Modi also held a meeting with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and discussed how the global body can play a "constructive role" in making use of artificial intelligence inclusive.

The Prime Minister met Mr. Guterres and other leaders on the sidelines of the AI Impact Summit.

Following his talks with Mauritius Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Mr. Modi said both sides would continue to work in close cooperation to ensure regional security and prosperity.

Mr. Modi also described Mauritius as a vital partner in India's MAHASAGAR vision.

Mr. Modi said he and Slovak President Peter Pellegrini discussed bilateral cooperation in areas of defence, space and digital public infrastructure.

21F. Modi holds talks with UN chief, other world leaders
मोदी ने UN प्रमुख और अन्य विश्व नेताओं के साथ बैठक की

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday held bilateral talks with top leaders of Mauritius and Slovakia.

  प्रधान मंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने शुक्रवार को **मॉरीशस और स्लोवाकिया के शीर्ष नेताओं** के साथ **द्विपक्षीय वार्ता** की।

- Mr. Modi also held a meeting with **UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres** and discussed how the global body can play a "constructive role" in making use of artificial intelligence inclusive.

  श्री मोदी ने **UN महासचिव एंटोनियो गुटेरेस** के साथ भी बैठक की और इस पर चर्चा की कि **वैश्विक संगठन** कैसे **कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता (AI) के उपयोग** को **समावेशी** बनाने में एक **रचनात्मक भूमिका** निभा सकता है।

- The Prime Minister met Mr. Guterres and other leaders on the sidelines of the AI Impact Summit.

  प्रधान मंत्री ने **AI Impact Summit** के दौरान **श्री गुटेरेस और अन्य नेताओं** से मुलाकात की।

- Following his talks with **Mauritius Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam**, Mr. Modi said both sides would continue to work in close cooperation to ensure regional security and prosperity.

  मॉरीशस के प्रधानमंत्री नविचंद्र रामगूलम के साथ बातचीत के बाद, श्री मोदी ने कहा कि **दोनों पक्ष** क्षेत्रीय **सुरक्षा और समृद्धि** सुनिश्चित करने के लिए **निकट सहयोग** जारी रखेंगे।

- Mr. Modi also described **Mauritius as a vital partner in India's MAHASAGAR vision.**

  श्री मोदी ने **मॉरीशस** को भारत की **MAHASAGAR दृष्टि** में एक महत्वपूर्ण साझेदार के रूप में भी वर्णित किया।

- Mr. Modi said he and **Slovak President Peter Pellegrini** discussed bilateral cooperation in areas of defence, space and digital

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श्री मोदी ने कहा कि उन्होंने और **स्लोवाकिया के राष्ट्रपति पीटर पेलग्रिनी** ने **रक्षा, अंतरिक्ष और डिजिटल सार्वजनिक अवसंरचना** के क्षेत्रों में **द्विपक्षीय सहयोग** पर चर्चा की।

WARSAW
Poland withdraws from treaty banning anti-personnel mines

GS II: IR

Poland will use anti-personnel as well as anti-tank land mines to defend its eastern border against the growing threat from Russia, Poland's deputy Defence Minister said on Friday, as the country officially left the 1997 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty, also known as the Ottawa Convention. AP

21F. Poland withdraws from treaty banning anti-personnel mines
पोलैंड ने एंटी-पर्सनेल माइंस पर प्रतिबंध वाले संधि से वापसी की

- **Poland will use anti-personnel as well as anti-tank land mines to defend its eastern border against the growing threat from Russia**, Poland's deputy Defence Minister said on Friday, as the country officially left the **1997 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty, also known as the Ottawa Convention**.

पोलैंड अपने पूर्वी सीमा की रक्षा के लिए एंटी-पर्सनेल और एंटी-टैंक लैंड माइंस का उपयोग करेगा, रूस से बढ़ते खतरे के मद्देनजर, पोलैंड के उप रक्षा मंत्री ने शुक्रवार को कहा, क्योंकि देश आधिकारिक तौर पर 1997 की एंटी-पर्सनेल माइंस प्रतिबंध संधि, जिसे ओटावा कन्वेंशन भी कहा जाता है, से बाहर हो गया।

'As dynamic economies, India, Brazil can't remain distant'

Bilateral trade between Brazil and India reached its peak in 2025, but it remains far below its true potential, says Brazilian President Lula da Silva, who is accompanied by the country's largest-ever business delegation of 600 representatives to the Brazil-India Business Forum, highlighting the role of private-sector collaboration in driving economic growth; Lula warns against 'digital colonialism'

GS II: IR: India-Brazil   MOB

INTERVIEW

Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva

Shobhan Saxena

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva is in India on a four-day visit with the largest-ever delegation, underscoring the momentum in relations between the two countries. In an exclusive interview with *The Hindu*, President Lula responded to questions on a range of issues, from strengthening bilateral cooperation to navigating an increasingly uncertain global order. Edited excerpts:

During your visit to New Delhi, what concrete measures and agreements are expected to deepen and diversify trade between India and Brazil?

Bilateral trade between Brazil and India reached its highest level in 2025, but it remains far below its true potential. India has 1.4 billion people and Brazil has 215 million. It makes no sense for our trade to be only $15 billion. That is why significantly expanding our trade flows is one of the main objectives of this visit. We will sign several agreements to achieve this goal. We will sign agreements on critical minerals – the first of its kind to be signed by Brazil – and on small and medium-sized enterprises, a sector that generates millions of jobs. During my visit, I will also take part in the Brazil-India Business Forum, with 600 representatives from the private sectors of both countries. Because it is the private sector, through partnerships and joint projects, that will transform the excellent relationship we have with India into shared prosperity for our societies.

Brazil and India cannot remain distant. Two of the world's largest democracies, with extraordinarily diverse cultures and dynamic economies, have an obligation to build a much closer relationship. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and I are working towards that goal.

You are travelling with the largest Brazilian business delegation ever brought to India, along with several Ministers. What is the importance of India for Brazil's long-term economic strategy?

I often say that the answer to the crisis of multilateralism is more multilateralism. And the answer to trade wars is more international trade. Diversifying trade partnerships with both emerging and traditional economies is a central part of Brazil's strategy. In this, we have a strong convergence with India. This convergence now needs to translate into concrete results.

We in Mercosur have signed a partnership agreement with the European Union. Less than two weeks later, India did the same. We now need to make the expansion of the Mercosur-India trade agreement a reality. We have complementary interests in areas such as biofuels, artificial intelligence, science and technology, defence, the space industry, and health. We both stand for fair, multilateral, open, and rules-based international economies with a central part of Brazil's strategy. The futures of Brazil and India are closely linked.

You participated in the AI Impact Summit in Delhi. How can Brazil and India lead broader cooperation among Global South countries in the field of AI, ensuring equitable access to technology, joint development, and rules that serve their interests?

We must avoid a new form of colonialism: digital colonialism. The development of artificial intelligence is irreversible, but it cannot become a privilege of a few countries, nor a tool of manipulation in the hands of billionaires. Brazil and India are interested in an emancipatory artificial intelligence – one that reflects the face of the Global South, strengthens cultural diversity, and serves as a tool for peace, not war.

We need every chip, every algorithm, to carry the mark of social inclusion. To achieve this, we need intergovernmental governance of artificial intelligence. It is urgent that the United Nations be at the centre of this debate, and that all states have a seat at the table. Our countries have the conditions to be at the forefront of this agenda, as demonstrated by the AI Impact Summit organised by the Indian government.

Brazil has emphasised the importance of India's upcoming BRICS presidency in 2026. What are your expectations regarding India's leadership in the bloc?

Brazil handed over the BRICS presidency to India in 2026. I am confident that India's presidency will carry forward important Brazilian initiatives for cooperation within the bloc, in areas such as health and the fight against socially determined diseases, climate change, and artificial intelligence.

As for global governance, we are witnessing an unprecedented collapse of multilateralism. The paralysis of the United Nations and its Security Council has contributed to the rise in armed conflicts around the world, to levels not seen since the end of the Second World War.

BRICS has a very important role to play in this process. The group is a defender of multilateralism and has legitimacy in the debates on a renewed governance, in which the voice of the Global South carries weight.

Brazil and India agree that global governance institutions must reflect the new multipolar reality of the 21st century and effectively promote peace. We are countries that have traditionally advocated reformation of the Council. It makes no sense, at this stage of the 21st century, for the Security Council not to include India, Brazil, and African countries as permanent members.

We fully support India's BRICS presidency in advancing these objectives.

The long-pending Mercosur-India trade agreement is expected to be discussed during your visit. Do you see this trip as a decisive moment to advance this framework?

When I took office again as President of Brazil, at the beginning of 2023, I made a commitment to open new markets and build trade partnerships around the world. In three years, we have opened more than 500 markets and, through Mercosur, signed important trade agreements with the European Union (EU), EFTA, and Singapore.

These agreements are multilateralism's response to protectionism and to the logic of trade wars that impoverish countries and increase inequality. Prime Minister Modi shares a very similar view to ours on the importance of trade agreements.

It is in this spirit that expanding the Mercosur-India Agreement, in force since 2009, is one of the priorities of my visit.
(For full interview, visit: newsth.live/Lula)

21F. 'As dynamic economies, India, Brazil can't remain distant'
'गतिशील अर्थव्यवस्थाओं के रूप में, भारत और ब्राज़ील दूर नहीं रह सकते'

- **Bilateral trade between Brazil and India reached its peak in 2025**, but it remains far below its true potential, says Brazilian President Lula da Silva, who is accompanied by the country's largest-ever business delegation of 600 representatives to the **Brazil-India Business Forum**, highlighting **the role of private-sector collaboration in driving economic growth; Lula warns against 'digital colonialism'**.

ब्राज़ील और भारत के बीच द्विपक्षीय व्यापार 2025 में अपने शिखर पर पहुंच गया, लेकिन यह अपनी असली क्षमता से बहुत कम है, ब्राज़ील के राष्ट्रपति लूला दा सिल्वा ने कहा, जो ब्राज़ील-भारत बिज़नेस फोरम में 600 प्रतिनिधियों के अपने देश के अब तक के सबसे बड़े व्यापार प्रतिनिधिमंडल के साथ हैं, जो

आर्थिक विकास में निजी क्षेत्र के सहयोग की भूमिका को उजागर करता है; लूला ने 'डिजिटल उपनिवेशवाद' के खिलाफ चेतावनी दी।

- Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva **is in India on a four-day visit with the largest-ever delegation**, underscoring the momentum in relations between the two countries.
  ब्राज़ील के राष्ट्रपति लुइज इनासियो लूला दा सिल्वा चार दिन के दौरे पर भारत में हैं, सबसे बड़े प्रतिनिधिमंडल के साथ, जो दोनों देशों के बीच संबंधों में तेजी को दर्शाता है।

- During your visit to New Delhi, what concrete measures and agreements are expected to deepen and diversify trade between India and Brazil?
  आपके नई दिल्ली दौरे के दौरान, भारत और ब्राज़ील के बीच व्यापार को गहरा और विविध बनाने के लिए कौन से ठोस उपाय और समझौते अपेक्षित हैं?

- Bilateral trade between Brazil and India reached its highest level in 2025, but it remains far below its true potential.
  ब्राज़ील और भारत के बीच द्विपक्षीय व्यापार 2025 में अपने उच्चतम स्तर पर पहुंचा, लेकिन यह अपनी असली क्षमता से बहुत कम है।

- **India has 1.4 billion people and Brazil has 215 million**.
  भारत में 1.4 बिलियन लोग हैं और ब्राज़ील में 215 मिलियन लोग हैं।

- It makes no sense for our trade to be only $15 billion.
  हमारे व्यापार का केवल $15 बिलियन होना कोई तर्कसंगत बात नहीं है।

- That is why significantly expanding our trade flows is one of the main objectives of this visit.
  यही कारण है कि हमारे व्यापार प्रवाह का महत्वपूर्ण विस्तार इस दौरे के मुख्य उद्देश्यों में से एक है।

- We will sign several agreements to achieve this goal.
  हम इस लक्ष्य को प्राप्त करने के लिए कई समझौते करेंगे।

- We will sign agreements on critical minerals — the first of its kind to be signed by Brazil — and on small and medium-sized enterprises, a sector that generates millions of jobs.
  हम महत्वपूर्ण खनिजों पर समझौते करेंगे — ब्राज़ील द्वारा इस प्रकार के पहले समझौते — और छोटे और मध्यम उद्यमों पर, एक ऐसा क्षेत्र जो लाखों नौकरियां उत्पन्न करता है।

- Because it is the private sector, through partnerships and joint projects, that will transform the excellent relationship we have with India into shared prosperity for our societies.
  क्योंकि यह निजी क्षेत्र है, साझेदारी और संयुक्त परियोजनाओं के माध्यम से, जो हमारे भारत के साथ उत्कृष्ट संबंध को हमारे समाजों के लिए साझा समृद्धि में बदल देगा।

- Two of the world's largest democracies, with extraordinarily diverse cultures and dynamic economies, have an obligation to build a much closer relationship.
  दुनिया के दो सबसे बड़े लोकतंत्र, अत्यंत विविध संस्कृतियों और गतिशील अर्थव्यवस्थाओं के साथ, एक बहुत करीबी संबंध बनाने के लिए बाध्य हैं।

- What is the importance of India for Brazil's long-term economic strategy?
  ब्राज़ील की दीर्घकालिक आर्थिक रणनीति के लिए भारत का क्या महत्व है?

- Diversifying trade partnerships with both emerging and traditional economies is a central part of Brazil's strategy.
  उभरती और पारंपरिक अर्थव्यवस्थाओं के साथ व्यापार साझेदारियों का विविधीकरण ब्राज़ील की रणनीति का एक केंद्रीय हिस्सा है।

- In this, we have a strong convergence with India.
  इसमें, हमारे और भारत के बीच मजबूत संगति है।

- This convergence now needs to translate into concrete results.
  अब इस संगति को ठोस परिणामों में बदलने की आवश्यकता है।

- We in **Mercosur have signed a partnership agreement with the European Union**.
  हम, मर्कोसुर में, ने यूरोपीय संघ के साथ एक साझेदारी समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर किए हैं।

- We now need to make the expansion of the **Mercosur-India trade agreement a reality**.
  अब हमें मर्कोसुर-भारत व्यापार समझौते के विस्तार को वास्तविकता बनाना होगा।

- **We have complementary interests in areas such as biofuels, artificial intelligence, science and technology, defence, the space industry, and health.**
  हमारे पास जैव ईंधन, कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता, विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी, रक्षा, अंतरिक्ष उद्योग और स्वास्थ्य जैसे क्षेत्रों में पूरक हित हैं।

- We both stand for fair, multilateral, open, and rules-based trade, anchored in the **World Trade Organization (WTO).**

हम दोनों निष्पक्ष, बहुपक्षीय, खुले और नियम-आधारित व्यापार के पक्ष में हैं, जो विश्व व्यापार संगठन (WTO) में आधारित है।

- How can Brazil and India lead broader cooperation among Global South countries in the field of AI, ensuring equitable access to technology, joint development, and rules that serve their interests?

 ब्राज़ील और भारत ग्लोबल साउथ देशों के बीच एआई के क्षेत्र में व्यापक सहयोग का नेतृत्व कैसे कर सकते हैं, यह सुनिश्चित करते हुए कि प्रौद्योगिकी तक समान पहुँच, संयुक्त विकास और उनके हितों की सेवा करने वाले नियम हों?

- We must avoid a new form of colonialism: **digital colonialism**.

 हमें उपनिवेशवाद के नए रूप से बचना चाहिए: डिजिटल उपनिवेशवाद।

- The development of artificial intelligence is irreversible, but it cannot become a privilege of a few countries, nor a tool of manipulation in the hands of billionaires.

 कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता का विकास अपरिवर्तनीय है, लेकिन यह कुछ देशों का विशेषाधिकार नहीं बन सकता, न ही अरबपतियों के हाथों में हेरफेर का उपकरण।

- Brazil and India are interested in an **emancipatory artificial intelligence — one that reflects the face of the Global South, strengthens cultural diversity, and serves as a tool for peace, not war.**

 ब्राज़ील और भारत एक मुक्ति देने वाली कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता में रुचि रखते हैं — जो ग्लोबल साउथ का चेहरा दर्शाती है, सांस्कृतिक विविधता को मजबूत करती है, और युद्ध के बजाय शांति का उपकरण है।

- We need every chip, every algorithm, to carry the mark of social inclusion.

 हमें हर चिप, हर एल्गोरिथ्म में सामाजिक समावेशन का निशान होना चाहिए।

- To achieve this, we need intergovernmental governance of artificial intelligence.

 इसे हासिल करने के लिए, हमें कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता के अंतर-सरकारी शासन की आवश्यकता है।

- It is urgent that the United Nations be at the centre of this debate, and that all states have a seat at the table.

 यह अत्यंत आवश्यक है कि इस बहस के केंद्र में संयुक्त राष्ट्र हो, और सभी राज्यों को इस में भाग लेने का अधिकार हो।

- Our countries have the conditions to be at the forefront of this agenda, as demonstrated by the AI Impact Summit organised by the Indian government.

 हमारे देशों में इस एजेंडे के अग्रिम पंक्ति में रहने की स्थितियाँ हैं, जैसा कि भारतीय सरकार द्वारा आयोजित एआई इम्पैक्ट समिट से प्रदर्शित हुआ।

- Brazil has emphasised the importance of India's upcoming BRICS presidency in 2026.

 ब्राज़ील ने 2026 में भारत की आगामी BRICS अध्यक्षता के महत्व पर जोर दिया है।

- What are your expectations regarding India's leadership in the bloc?

 ब्लॉक में भारत की नेतृत्व क्षमता के बारे में आपकी क्या उम्मीदें हैं?

- Brazil handed over the BRICS presidency to India in 2026.

 ब्राज़ील ने 2026 में BRICS अध्यक्षता भारत को सौंप दी।

- I am confident that India's presidency will carry forward important Brazilian initiatives for cooperation within the bloc, in areas such as health and the fight against socially determined diseases, climate change, and artificial intelligence.

 मुझे विश्वास है कि भारत की अध्यक्षता ब्लॉक के भीतर सहयोग के लिए महत्वपूर्ण ब्राज़ीलियाई पहलों को आगे बढ़ाएगी, जैसे स्वास्थ्य, सामाजिक रूप से निर्धारित बीमारियों के खिलाफ लड़ाई, जलवायु परिवर्तन और कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता।

- As for global governance, we are witnessing an unprecedented collapse of multilateralism.

 वैश्विक शासन के मामले में, हम बहुपक्षवाद के अभूतपूर्व पतन का साक्षी हैं।

- The paralysis of the United Nations and its Security Council has contributed to the rise in armed conflicts around the world, to levels not seen since the end of the Second World War.

 संयुक्त राष्ट्र और इसकी सुरक्षा परिषद की पक्षाघात ने दुनिया भर में सशस्त्र संघर्षों की वृद्धि में योगदान दिया है, ऐसे स्तर पर जो द्वितीय विश्व युद्ध के अंत के बाद नहीं देखा गया।

- BRICS has a very important role to play in this process.

 इस प्रक्रिया में BRICS की बहुत महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका है।

- The group is a defender of multilateralism and has legitimacy in the debates on a renewed governance, in which the voice of the Global South carries weight.

 यह समूह बहुपक्षवाद का रक्षक है और नवीनीकृत शासन पर बहसों में वैधता रखता है, जिसमें ग्लोबल साउथ की आवाज़ महत्वपूर्ण होती है।

- Brazil and India agree that global governance institutions must reflect the new multipolar reality of the 21st century and effectively promote peace.
  ब्राज़ील और भारत सहमत हैं कि वैश्विक शासन संस्थानों को 21वीं सदी की नई बहुध्रुवीय वास्तविकता को प्रतिबिंबित करना चाहिए और प्रभावी रूप से शांति को बढ़ावा देना चाहिए।

- We are countries that have traditionally advocated reform of the Council.
  हम ऐसे देश हैं जो परंपरागत रूप से परिषद के सुधार की वकालत करते रहे हैं।

- It makes no sense, at this stage of the 21st century, for the Security Council not to include India, Brazil, and African countries as permanent members.
  21वीं सदी के इस चरण में, सुरक्षा परिषद में भारत, ब्राज़ील और अफ्रीकी देशों को स्थायी सदस्य के रूप में शामिल न करना कोई तर्कसंगत बात नहीं है।

- We fully support India's BRICS presidency in advancing these objectives.
  हम इन उद्देश्यों को आगे बढ़ाने में भारत की BRICS अध्यक्षता का पूर्ण समर्थन करते हैं।

- Mercosur-India trade agreement is expected to be discussed during your visit.
  मर्कोसुर-भारत व्यापार समझौते पर आपके दौरे के दौरान चर्चा की अपेक्षा है।

- Do you see this trip as a decisive moment to advance this framework?
  क्या आप इस यात्रा को इस ढांचे को आगे बढ़ाने के लिए निर्णायक क्षण मानते हैं?

- When I took office again as President of Brazil, at the beginning of 2023, I made a commitment to open new markets and build trade partnerships around the world.
  जब मैंने 2023 की शुरुआत में ब्राज़ील के राष्ट्रपति के रूप में फिर से पद संभाला, तो मैंने नए बाजार खोलने और दुनिया भर में व्यापार साझेदारियाँ बनाने का संकल्प लिया।

- In three years, we have opened more than 500 markets and, through Mercosur, signed important trade agreements with the European Union (EU), EFTA, and Singapore.
  तीन वर्षों में, हमने 500 से अधिक बाजार खोले हैं और मर्कोसुर के माध्यम से यूरोपीय संघ (EU), EFTA, और सिंगापुर के साथ महत्वपूर्ण व्यापार समझौते किए हैं।

- These agreements are multilateralism's response to protectionism and to the logic of trade wars that impoverish countries and increase inequality.
  ये समझौते बहुपक्षवाद का संरक्षणवाद और व्यापार युद्धों की उस तर्कशीलता के प्रति प्रतिक्रिया हैं, जो देशों को गरीब बनाते हैं और असमानता बढ़ाते हैं।

- Prime Minister Modi shares a very similar view to ours on the importance of trade agreements.
  प्रधानमंत्री मोदी व्यापार समझौतों के महत्व पर हमारे विचारों से बहुत समान दृष्टिकोण साझा करते हैं।

- It is in this spirit that expanding the Mercosur-India Agreement, in force since 2009, is one of the priorities of my visit.
  इस भावना में, 2009 से प्रभावी मर्कोसुर-भारत समझौते के विस्तार को मेरे दौरे की प्राथमिकताओं में से एक माना गया है।

GS Paper III: Economy,		
TOPICS COVERED		**21 February 2026**
21F	**Gen Z and the dynamics of democratic engagement** जेन Z और लोकतांत्रिक सहभागिता की गतिशीलता	
21F	**Net FDI into India negative for fourth straight month** भारत में शुद्ध FDI लगातार चौथे महीने नकारात्मक	
21F	**Govt. announces 7 additional measures under Export Promotion Mission** सरकार ने एक्सपोर्ट प्रमोशन मिशन के तहत 7 अतिरिक्त उपायों की घोषणा की	
21F	**'EU, U.S. trade deals to boost economy; growth resilient'** 'ईयू, यू.एस. व्यापार समझौते अर्थव्यवस्था को बढ़ावा देंगे; वृद्धि स्थिर'	
21F	**Core sector growth slows to 4% in Jan., casts shadow on IIP** कोर सेक्टर की वृद्धि जनवरी में 4% तक धीमी, IIP पर असर	

Gen Z and the dynamics of democratic engagement

GS I: Economy

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Democracies across the globe have been witnessing backsliding and counter-narratives have not been too successful in arresting the malaise. In this context, Generation Z, or Gen Z (those born roughly between 1997 and 2012), has emerged as a renewed source of hope at a time when many people had begun to resign themselves to authoritarian regimes and their unresponsive governance.

In Bangladesh (2024) and Nepal (2025), Gen Z has spearheaded regime-challenging protests, mobilising around issues of corruption, transparency and institutional accountability. These sporadic protests proved to be more effective than the earlier round of such mass protests, examples being the Occupy Wall Street in the United States (2011), the Arab Spring (the early 2010s), and the Brazilian Spring (2013). Some of these protests hit the headlines but did not make effective policy changes, leave alone regime change. So, how do we make sense of such sudden eruptions?

Every generation recalibrates ethics, values and social practices in a manner that is distinct from the previous generations. Therefore, it takes time to make sense of what the new generations think and say – the ingredients of old practices and imagination melt into a new recipe. The old has an 'absent presence' in the way the new gets articulated. The new looks like a distorted version of the old, and the older generations, understandably, feel disappointed and disturbed.

The essence, its worldview

Long dismissed as preoccupied, politically disengaged, and lost in the virtual world, Gen Z defied expectations by expressing anguish in such an 'organised way'. Observers continue to interpret such movements as flash-in-the-pan political mobilisations – characterised by pointed demands but marked by an episodic and short-lived presence. One can make better sense of such political events only if one gets to understand the emergent political subjectivity of Gen Z, beyond conventional registers. While democracies are typically understood in terms of constitutional frameworks and institutional structures, their true substratum consists of shifting everyday moral practices and latent collective emotions.

To begin with, Gen Z is an uncanny combination of radical individualism and social indifference, but with less prejudice and a less jaundiced view of the world. It is too removed to be myopic, too nonchalant to be emotional, and too indifferent to be prejudiced and discriminatory. Gen Z seems to believe in a worldview that the 'personal is political' but political is not personal. It is not involved in worldly affairs but that does not mean it lacks a worldview.

Being political seems to matter the most in its personal conduct and the way it is treated. In essence, it operates primarily as exemplars rather than as emissaries. It believes in living rather than making propositions – and, therefore, not ideologically motivated – and in making practical sense of the world. It resists being preached to and is sensitive about not preaching to others, which makes forging collective struggles that much more difficult. It responds readily to lived hierarchies but that does not necessarily reflect a structural understanding of those hierarchies.

Gen Z avoids making moral judgments about the world. It also makes people within this generation more active in the virtual world than the real one. They find it more agreeable to work and express their views on virtual platforms than attend physical meets to interact. This instinct to avoid thick face-to-face interaction has an impact on the nature of protest and in imagining democratic futures. It is for this reason that Gen Z is more at home with sporadic and episodic protests than organised movements; their protests are leaderless and without pronounced ideological frames.

A comparison of protests

The difference becomes clear when one compares the farmers' movement (2020-24) with the Gen Z protests. The farmers were formally organised, had a sustained leadership and pronounced demands. They could sustain a movement for years. In comparison, Gen Z protests fizzle out and disappear without a trace but nevertheless leave a great impact behind.

The changing modes of protest also have something to do with again an uncanny combination of confidence and anxiety. Gen Z is the first self-confident generation in post-independent India but also the most anxious one. Gen Z is a result of both sustained social democratisation and fast disappearing economic opportunities. Sustained democratisation has allowed Gen Z to be more open about 'self' introspection.

The people of this generation are at ease with counselling and therapy; therefore, mental health-related issues are pronounced.

Previous generations were less comfortable in accepting emotional trauma and seem to have passed on a lot of the toxic and masculine stuff to the next generation. Gen Z is more conscious and wants to overcome the battles of 'mental despair'. The New York Times reported a sense of "mental despair" not only among unemployed youth but also among those employed, many of whom find their workplaces toxic and experience routine anomie. Much of this is reflected in their attitudes to politics and democracy. They are assertive but suffer from insecurity. The precarity of Gen Z gets reflected in its fragmented and fleeting involvement with democratic events and issues. It can assert ancient values because it demands confidence to claim one's own culture and reject radical transformation because it is clichéd.

Unpredictable impact

Finally, one unmistakable feature of Gen Z is the connect between its self-representation or identity and pronounced consumption patterns. Market is integral to its self-making and social imaginaries that challenge/disturb the ascriptive identities of caste and religion. With a greater reach of market, technology and education, Gen Z follows global fashion trends, technological innovations and looks for newer educational opportunities.

All of this makes Gen Z more secularised but inward-looking, and giving undue importance to personal choices. Possessing the latest iPhone is seen as a great equaliser, transcending the complex debates surrounding class inequality. Access to information is a greater source of dignity than the caste and religion one is born into.

However, engagement with fast-changing technologies and information may contribute to hyper-nationalism and the propagation of empty rhetoric of the glorious past. The rise of hyper-nationalism today is less concerned with the chauvinistic superiority that Tagore worried about and more focused on projecting ambitious claims about future possibilities. India might be a poor country yet has launched space missions; despite grave inequalities, it also maintains a notable presence in Silicon Valley. Gen Z will continue to disappoint us with responses we expect, yet surprise us with responses we have not yet thought about.

With its digital activism and episodic protests, this generation is emerging as a renewed source of hope in an authoritarian world

21F. Gen Z and the dynamics of democratic engagement
जेन Z और लोकतांत्रिक सहभागिता की गतिशीलता

- Democracies across the globe have been witnessing **backsliding** and **counter-narratives** have not been too successful in arresting the **malaise**. In this context, **Generation Z, or Gen Z (those born roughly between 1997 and 2012)**, has emerged as a renewed source of **hope** at a time when many people had begun to resign themselves to **authoritarian regimes** and their **unresponsive governance**.
  दुनिया भर में लोकतंत्रों में **पतन** देखा जा रहा है और **वैकल्पिक कथाएँ** इस **समस्या** को रोकने में बहुत सफल नहीं रही हैं। इस संदर्भ में **जनरेशन Z या Gen Z (लगभग 1997 से 2012 के बीच जन्मे लोग)** एक नए **आशा** के स्रोत के रूप में उभरे हैं, उस समय जब कई लोग **सत्तावादी शासन** और उनकी **अप्रतिक्रियाशील शासन व्यवस्था** को स्वीकार करने लगे थे।

- In **Bangladesh (2024)** and **Nepal (2025)**, **Gen Z** has spearheaded **regime-challenging protests**, mobilising around issues of **corruption, transparency and institutional accountability**.
  बांग्लादेश (2024) और **नेपाल (2025)** में **Gen Z** ने **शासन को चुनौती देने वाले विरोध प्रदर्शनों** का नेतृत्व किया, जो **भ्रष्टाचार, पारदर्शिता और संस्थागत जवाबदेही** के मुद्दों पर केंद्रित थे।

- These sporadic protests proved to be more **effective** than the earlier round of such mass protests, examples being the **Occupy Wall Street in the United States (2011)**, the **Arab Spring (the early 2010s)**, and the **Brazilian Spring (2013)**.
  ये छिटपुट विरोध प्रदर्शन पहले के ऐसे जन आंदोलनों की तुलना में अधिक **प्रभावी** साबित हुए, जिनके उदाहरण

हैं **संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका में ऑक्युपाई वॉल स्ट्रीट (2011)**, **अरब स्प्रिंग (2010 के शुरुआती वर्ष)**, और **ब्राजीलियन स्प्रिंग (2013)**।

- Some of these protests hit the **headlines** but did not make **effective policy changes**, leave alone **regime change**. So, how do we make sense of such **sudden eruptions**?
  इनमें से कुछ विरोध प्रदर्शन **सुर्खियों** में आए लेकिन **प्रभावी नीतिगत बदलाव** नहीं ला सके, **शासन परिवर्तन** तो दूर की बात है। तो हम ऐसे **अचानक उभारों** को कैसे समझें?

- Every generation recalibrates **ethics, values and social practices** in a manner that is distinct from the previous generations. Therefore, it takes time to make sense of what the **new generations** think and say — the ingredients of old practices and imagination melt into a new recipe.
  हर पीढ़ी **नैतिकता, मूल्यों और सामाजिक व्यवहारों** को पिछली पीढ़ियों से अलग तरीके से पुनर्संतुलित करती है। इसलिए यह समझने में समय लगता है कि **नई पीढ़ियाँ** क्या सोचती और कहती हैं — पुराने व्यवहार और कल्पना के तत्व एक नई रेसिपी में बदल जाते हैं।

- To begin with, **Gen Z** is an uncanny combination of **radical individualism and social indifference**, but with **less prejudice and a less jaundiced view of the world**. It is too removed to be **myopic**, too nonchalant to be **emotional**, and too indifferent to be **prejudiced and discriminatory**.
  शुरुआत में, **Gen Z कट्टर व्यक्तिवाद और सामाजिक उदासीनता** का एक अनोखा संयोजन है, लेकिन इसमें **कम पूर्वग्रह और दुनिया के प्रति कम नकारात्मक दृष्टिकोण** है। यह **संकीर्ण दृष्टि** रखने के लिए बहुत अलग है, **भावनात्मक** होने के लिए बहुत उदासीन है, और **पूर्वग्रहपूर्ण तथा भेदभावपूर्ण** होने के लिए बहुत निष्पक्ष है।

- **Gen Z** seems to believe in a worldview that the **'personal is political'** but political is not **personal**. It is not involved in **worldly affairs** but that does not mean it lacks a **worldview**.
  Gen Z एक ऐसे विश्वदृष्टिकोण में विश्वास करती प्रतीत होती है कि **'व्यक्तिगत ही राजनीतिक है'** लेकिन **राजनीतिक व्यक्तिगत नहीं है**। यह **सांसारिक मामलों** में अधिक शामिल नहीं है, लेकिन इसका अर्थ यह नहीं कि इसमें **विश्वदृष्टिकोण** की कमी है।

- Being **political** seems to matter the most in its personal conduct and the way it is treated.
  इसके व्यक्तिगत आचरण और उसके साथ किए जाने वाले व्यवहार में **राजनीतिक होना** सबसे अधिक महत्वपूर्ण प्रतीत होता है।

- In essence, it operates primarily as **exemplars rather than as emissaries**.
  मूल रूप से, यह मुख्यतः **दूतों की बजाय उदाहरणों** के रूप में कार्य करता है।

- It believes in **living rather than making propositions** — and, therefore, not **ideologically motivated** — and in making **practical sense of the world**.
  यह **प्रस्ताव रखने की बजाय जीने** में विश्वास करता है — और इसलिए **विचारधारात्मक रूप से प्रेरित** नहीं है — तथा दुनिया को **व्यावहारिक रूप से समझने** में विश्वास करता है।

- It responds readily to **lived hierarchies** but that does not necessarily reflect a **structural understanding** of those hierarchies.
  यह **जीवित अनुभव की गई पदानुक्रमों** पर तुरंत प्रतिक्रिया देता है, लेकिन यह उन पदानुक्रमों की **संरचनात्मक समझ** को अनिवार्य रूप से नहीं दर्शाता।

- **Gen Z** avoids making **moral judgments** about the world.
  Gen Z दुनिया के बारे में **नैतिक निर्णय** लेने से बचती है।

- It also makes people within this generation more active in the **virtual world** than the real one.
  यह इस पीढ़ी के लोगों को वास्तविक दुनिया की तुलना में **आभासी दुनिया** में अधिक सक्रिय बनाता है।

- They find it more agreeable to work and express their views on **virtual platforms** than attend physical meets to interact.
  वे **आभासी मंचों** पर काम करना और अपने विचार व्यक्त करना अधिक सहज पाते हैं, बजाय शारीरिक बैठकों में भाग लेने के।

- This instinct to avoid thick **face-to-face interaction** has an impact on the nature of protest and in imagining **democratic futures**.
  प्रत्यक्ष आमने-सामने संवाद से बचने की यह प्रवृत्ति विरोध के स्वरूप और **लोकतांत्रिक भविष्य** की कल्पना पर प्रभाव डालती है।

- It is for this reason that **Gen Z** is more at home with **sporadic and episodic protests** than organised movements; their protests are **leaderless and without pronounced ideological frames**.
  इसी कारण **Gen Z** संगठित आंदोलनों की बजाय **छिटपुट और प्रकरणात्मक विरोध प्रदर्शनों** में अधिक सहज है; उनके विरोध **नेतृत्वविहीन और स्पष्ट विचारधारात्मक ढांचे के बिना** होते हैं।

A comparison of protests
विरोध प्रदर्शनों की तुलना

- The difference becomes clear when one compares the **farmers' movement (2020-24)** with the **Gen Z protests**.
  जब **किसान आंदोलन (2020-24)** की तुलना **Gen Z के विरोध प्रदर्शनों** से की जाती है तो अंतर स्पष्ट हो जाता है।

- The farmers were formally organised, had a **sustained leadership** and pronounced demands.
  किसान औपचारिक रूप से संगठित थे, उनके पास **स्थायी नेतृत्व** और स्पष्ट माँगें थीं।

- They could sustain a movement for years.
  वे वर्षों तक आंदोलन को बनाए रख सके।

- In comparison, **Gen Z protests** fizzle out and disappear without a trace but nevertheless leave a great impact behind.
  इसके विपरीत, **Gen Z के विरोध प्रदर्शन** मंद पड़ जाते हैं और बिना निशान के समाप्त हो जाते हैं, फिर भी वे गहरा प्रभाव छोड़ते हैं।

- **Gen Z** is the first **self-confident generation in post-independent India** but also the most **anxious** one.
  Gen Z स्वतंत्रता-उपरांत भारत की पहली आत्मविश्वासी पीढ़ी है, लेकिन साथ ही सबसे अधिक **चिंतित** भी है।

- Gen Z is a result of both sustained **social democratisation** and fast disappearing **economic opportunities**.
  Gen Z निरंतर **सामाजिक लोकतंत्रीकरण** और तेजी से घटती **आर्थिक अवसरों** का परिणाम है।

- Sustained democratisation has allowed **Gen Z** to be more open about 'self' introspection.
  निरंतर लोकतंत्रीकरण ने **Gen Z** को 'स्व' आत्मविश्लेषण के प्रति अधिक खुला बनाया है।

- The people of this generation are at ease with **counselling and therapy**; therefore, **mental health-related issues** are pronounced.
  इस पीढ़ी के लोग **काउंसलिंग और थेरेपी** के साथ सहज हैं; इसलिए **मानसिक स्वास्थ्य से जुड़े मुद्दे** अधिक स्पष्ट हैं।

- **Gen Z** is more conscious and wants to overcome the battles of **'mental despair'**.
  Gen Z अधिक सजग है और **'मानसिक निराशा'** की लड़ाइयों को पार करना चाहती है।

- **The New York Times** reported a sense of **"mental despair"** not only among unemployed youth but also among those employed, many of whom find their workplaces **toxic** and experience routine **anomie**.
  द न्यूयॉर्क टाइम्स ने **"मानसिक निराशा"** की भावना की रिपोर्ट दी, जो केवल बेरोजगार युवाओं में ही नहीं बल्कि रोजगार प्राप्त लोगों में भी पाई गई, जिनमें से कई अपने कार्यस्थलों को **विषाक्त** पाते हैं और नियमित **विमुखता** का अनुभव करते हैं।

- Finally, one unmistakable feature of **Gen Z** is the **connect between its self-representation or identity and pronounced consumption patterns**.
  अंततः, **Gen Z** की एक स्पष्ट विशेषता उसकी **स्व-प्रतिनिधित्व या पहचान और स्पष्ट उपभोग पैटर्न के बीच संबंध** है।

- **Market** is integral to its **self-making and social imaginaries** that challenge/disturb the **ascriptive identities of caste and religion**.
  बाजार उसकी **स्व-निर्माण और सामाजिक कल्पनाओं** का अभिन्न हिस्सा है जो **जाति और धर्म की आरोपित पहचान** को चुनौती देते/विचलित करते हैं।

- With a greater reach of **market, technology and education**, **Gen Z** follows **global fashion trends, technological innovations** and looks for **newer educational opportunities**.
  बाजार, तकनीक और शिक्षा की बढ़ती पहुँच के साथ **Gen Z वैश्विक फैशन रुझानों, तकनीकी नवाचारों** का अनुसरण करती है और **नई शैक्षिक अवसरों** की तलाश करती है।

- All of this makes **Gen Z** more **secularised** but **inward-looking**, and giving undue importance to **personal choices**.
  यह सब **Gen Z** को अधिक **धर्मनिरपेक्ष** लेकिन **अंतर्मुखी** बनाता है, और **व्यक्तिगत विकल्पों** को अत्यधिक महत्व देता है।

- Possessing the **latest iPhone** is seen as a **great equaliser**, transcending the complex debates surrounding **class inequality**.
  नवीनतम iPhone का होना एक **महान समताकारी** माना जाता है, जो **वर्ग असमानता** के जटिल विवादों से ऊपर उठ जाता है।

- **Access to information** is a greater source of **dignity** than the **caste and religion one is born into**.
  सूचना तक पहुँच व्यक्ति के लिए **गरिमा** का बड़ा स्रोत है, बजाय उस **जाति और धर्म** के जिसमें वह जन्म लेता है।

- However, engagement with fast-changing **technologies and information** may contribute to **hyper-nationalism** and the propagation of **empty rhetoric of the glorious past**.
  हालाँकि, तेजी से बदलती **तकनीक और सूचना** के साथ जुड़ाव **अतिराष्ट्रवाद** और **महिमामंडित अतीत की खोखली बयानबाजी** के प्रसार में योगदान दे सकता है।

- The rise of **hyper-nationalism** today is less concerned with the **chauvinistic superiority that Tagore worried about** and more focused on projecting **ambitious claims about future possibilities**.
  आज **अतिराष्ट्रवाद** का उदय **टैगोर द्वारा चिंतित अंधराष्ट्रवादी श्रेष्ठता** से कम जुड़ा है और **भविष्य की संभावनाओं के महत्वाकांक्षी दावों** को प्रस्तुत करने पर अधिक केंद्रित है।

- **India** might be a **poor country** yet has launched **space missions**; despite **grave inequalities**, it also maintains a **notable presence in Silicon Valley**.
  भारत एक **गरीब देश** हो सकता है, फिर भी उसने **अंतरिक्ष मिशन लॉन्च** किए हैं; **गंभीर असमानताओं** के बावजूद, वह **सिलिकॉन वैली में उल्लेखनीय उपस्थिति** बनाए रखता है।

- **Gen Z** will continue to **disappoint us with responses we expect**, yet **surprise us with responses we have not yet thought about**.
  Gen Z हमें **अपेक्षित प्रतिक्रियाओं से निराश** करती रहेगी, फिर भी **ऐसी प्रतिक्रियाओं से चकित करेगी जिनके बारे में हमने अभी सोचा भी नहीं है।**

Net FDI into India negative for fourth straight month

Reserve Bank of India data show gross foreign direct investment into India stood at a five-month high, but was overshadowed by outflows

GS III: Economy

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

Net foreign direct investment (FDI) remained negative for the fourth consecutive month in December 2025, coming in at -$1.6 billion, due to repatriation by foreign companies in India and outward investments by Indian companies exceeding the amount of direct investment entering the country, an analysis of the latest data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) show.

According to the RBI data, gross inflows of direct investment stood at a five-month high of $8.6 billion in December 2025, which was also 17.2% higher than in December 2024.

"Gross inward FDI remained robust in December, with Singapore, the Netherlands and Mauritius accounting for more than 80% of total inflows," the RBI noted in its monthly bulletin report. "The major recipient sectors were transport, manufacturing, computer services, and electricity and other energy generation, distribution and transmission."

However, while inflows witnessed relatively robust growth, outflows exceeded them. Repatriation and disinvestments by foreign companies operating in India increased to nearly $7.5

Red streak

Net FDI into India was negative for the fourth consecutive month in **Dec. 2025** due to record levels of repatriation by foreign companies in India

Source: RBI
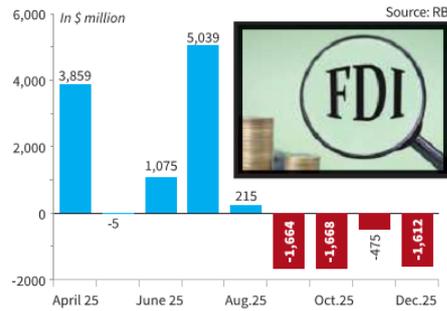
billion in December 2025, the highest since at least January 2021, the earlier period for which data is readily available.

Outward investments by Indian companies increased to $2.7 billion December, up 30.5% over December 2024 and 78% higher than in November 2025.

"For outward FDI, key destinations were Singapore, the U.S., the UAE, the U.K. and the Netherlands and the major sectors included financial, insurance and business services, and wholesale/retail trade, restaurants, and hotels," the report noted.

In earlier editions of the report, the RBI had said that uncertainty over the

India-U.S. trade agreement and the 50% tariffs had led to investor hesitation. The data for December 2025 comes before the announcement of the Interim Agreement with the U.S. and the Free Trade Agreement with the European Union, and so likely also reflects this sentiment.

In this edition, the RBI noted that the announcement of both deals had led to portfolio investors returning to India.

"Foreign portfolio investments (FPIs) staged a comeback in February with investor sentiments turning around following the India-EU free trade agreement and the interim India-U.S. trade deal," the report said.

- Reserve Bank of India data show gross foreign direct investment into India stood at a five-month high, but was overshadowed by outflows.
भारतीय रिज़र्व बैंक के आंकड़ों के अनुसार, भारत में सकल विदेशी प्रत्यक्ष निवेश (FDI) पांच महीने के उच्चतम स्तर पर था, लेकिन इसे निकासी प्रवाह ने प्रभावित किया।

- Net foreign direct investment (FDI) remained negative for the fourth consecutive month in December 2025, coming in at -$1.6 billion, due to repatriation by foreign companies in India and outward investments by Indian companies exceeding the amount of direct investment entering the country, an analysis of the latest data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) show.
शुद्ध विदेशी प्रत्यक्ष निवेश (FDI) दिसंबर 2025 में लगातार चौथे महीने नकारात्मक रहा, जो -$1.6 बिलियन पर आया, क्योंकि भारत में विदेशी कंपनियों द्वारा रिपैट्रिएशन और भारतीय कंपनियों की विदेशी निवेश निकासी सीधे देश में आने वाले निवेश से अधिक थी, यह विश्लेषण RBI के नवीनतम आंकड़ों से पता चलता है।

- According to the RBI data, **gross inflows of direct investment stood at a five-month high of $8.6 billion in December 2025, which was also 17.2% higher than in December 2024.**
RBI के आंकड़ों के अनुसार, दिसंबर 2025 में सकल प्रत्यक्ष निवेश का प्रवाह $8.6 बिलियन पर पांच महीने के उच्चतम स्तर पर था, जो दिसंबर 2024 की तुलना में 17.2% अधिक था।

- **"Gross inward FDI remained robust in December, with Singapore, the Netherlands and Mauritius accounting for more than 80% of total inflows,"** the RBI noted in its monthly bulletin report.
"दिसंबर में सकल इनवर्ड FDI मजबूत रहा, जिसमें सिंगापुर, नीदरलैंड्स और मॉरीशस ने कुल प्रवाह का 80% से अधिक हिस्सा दिया," RBI ने अपनी मासिक बुलेटिन रिपोर्ट में उल्लेख किया।

- "The major recipient sectors were transport, manufacturing, computer services, and electricity and other energy generation, distribution and transmission."
"मुख्य प्राप्तकर्ता क्षेत्र थे: परिवहन, विनिर्माण, कंप्यूटर सेवाएं, और बिजली तथा अन्य ऊर्जा उत्पादन, वितरण और संचरण।"

- **Outward investments by Indian companies increased to $2.7 billion December, up 30.5% over December 2024 and 78% higher than in November 2025.**
भारतीय कंपनियों द्वारा विदेशी निवेश दिसंबर में $2.7 बिलियन तक बढ़ गया, जो दिसंबर 2024 की तुलना में 30.5% अधिक और नवंबर 2025 की तुलना में 78% अधिक था।

- **"For outward FDI, key destinations were Singapore, the U.S., the UAE, the U.K. and the Netherlands and the major sectors included financial, insurance and business services, and wholesale/retail trade, restaurants, and hotels,"** the report noted.

"विदेशी FDI के लिए प्रमुख गंतव्य थे: सिंगापुर, अमेरिका, UAE, ब्रिटेन और नीदरलैंड्स, और मुख्य क्षेत्र थे: वित्तीय, बीमा और व्यावसायिक सेवाएं, थोक/खुदरा व्यापार, रेस्तरां और होटल," रिपोर्ट में कहा गया।

- In earlier editions of the report, the RBI had said that uncertainty over the India-U.S. trade agreement and the 50% tariffs had led to investor hesitation.

रिपोर्ट के पूर्व संस्करणों में, RBI ने कहा था कि भारत-अमेरिका व्यापार समझौते और 50% शुल्क के कारण निवेशकों में हिचकिचाहट आई थी।

- **"Foreign portfolio investments (FPIs)** staged a comeback in February with investor sentiments turning around following the India-EU free trade agreement and the interim India-U.S. trade deal," the report said.

"फरवरी में विदेशी पोर्टफोलियो निवेश (FPI) ने वापसी की, क्योंकि भारत-ईयू मुक्त व्यापार समझौते और अंतरिम भारत-अमेरिका व्यापार सौदे के बाद निवेशक भावना बदल गई, " रिपोर्ट में कहा गया।

Govt. announces 7 additional measures under Export Promotion Mission

GS III: Economy

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

MQB

The measures seek to enable exporters to access new markets. REUTERS

The Ministry of Commerce on Friday introduced seven additional measures under the Export Promotion Mission which is meant to strengthen micro, medium and small enterprises (MSMEs) to compete in global markets.

According to a statement from the Ministry, the interventions would seek to "address structural constraints faced by MSMEs including high cost of capital, limited access to diversified trade finance instruments, compliance burdens in international markets, logistics disadvantages, and barriers to market entry".

The measures seek to enable exporters to access new markets or those with higher element of risk, through varied risk-sharing mechanisms and credit instruments.

Aiming to provide credit assistance to e-commerce exporters, the provisions would offer structured credit facilities that would provide interest subvention and partial credit guarantees.

Among them, the direct e-commerce credit facility, meant to provide working capital as an avenue for risk mitigation, would provide support up to ₹50 lakh with 90% guarantee coverage. The overseas inventory credit facility would extend support of up to ₹5 crore with 75% guarantee coverage. For both, an interest subvention of 2.75% would be available. This is subject to entities not breaching the upper limit of ₹15 lakh per applicant in a year.

"These structured mechanisms aim to strengthen exporter confidence and liquidity flows," the Ministry explained.

Welcoming the move, the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) said this would "significantly ease working capital pressures". "Lower cost of finance and improved liquidity cycles will enable MSMEs to price competitively, accept larger orders and strengthen their credibility with overseas buyers. Shared-risk credit mechanisms are also expected to encourage first-time exporters and promote product and market diversification," the industry body observed.

To support exporters institute warehouse overseas and fulfilment infrastructure, the latest measures will provide up to 30% of the approved project cost.

21F. Govt. announces 7 additional measures under Export Promotion Mission
सरकार ने एक्सपोर्ट प्रमोशन मिशन के तहत 7 अतिरिक्त उपायों की घोषणा की

- The **Ministry of Commerce on Friday introduced seven additional measures under the Export Promotion Mission which is meant to strengthen micro, medium and small enterprises (MSMEs) to compete in global markets**.

वाणिज्य मंत्रालय ने शुक्रवार को एक्सपोर्ट प्रमोशन मिशन के तहत 7 अतिरिक्त उपाय पेश किए, जिनका उद्देश्य सूक्ष्म, लघु और मध्यम उद्यमों (MSMEs) को वैश्विक बाजार में प्रतिस्पर्धा करने के लिए मजबूत करना है।

- According to a statement from the Ministry, the interventions would seek to "address structural constraints faced by MSMEs including high cost of capital, limited access to diversified trade finance instruments, compliance burdens in international markets, logistics disadvantages, and barriers to market entry".

मंत्रालय के बयान के अनुसार, ये उपाय MSMEs को पेश आने वाली सांरचनात्मक बाधाओं को दूर करने का प्रयास करेंगे, जिनमें शामिल हैं: उच्च पूंजी लागत, विविध व्यापार वित्त उपकरणों तक सीमित पहुंच, अंतरराष्ट्रीय बाजारों में अनुपालन बोझ, लॉजिस्टिक नुकसान और बाजार में प्रवेश की बाधाएं।

- The measures seek to enable exporters to access new markets or those with higher element of risk, through varied risk-sharing mechanisms and credit instruments.

ये उपाय निर्यातकों को नए बाजारों या उच्च जोखिम वाले बाजारों तक पहुँचने में सक्षम बनाने का प्रयास करते हैं, विभिन्न जोखिम-साझाकरण तंत्र और क्रेडिट उपकरणों के माध्यम से।

- **Aiming to provide credit assistance to e-commerce exporters**, the **provisions would offer structured credit facilities that would provide interest subvention and partial credit guarantees**.

ई-कॉमर्स निर्यातकों को क्रेडिट सहायता प्रदान करने के उद्देश्य से, ये प्रावधान संरचित क्रेडिट सुविधाएं प्रदान करेंगे, जो ब्याज सबवेंशन और आंशिक क्रेडिट गारंटी देंगी।

- Among them, the **direct e-commerce credit facility, meant to provide working capital as an avenue for risk mitigation, would provide support up to ₹50 lakh with 90% guarantee coverage**.

  इनमें, डायरेक्ट ई-कॉमर्स क्रेडिट सुविधा, जो वर्किंग कैपिटल के रूप में जोखिम कम करने के लिए है, ₹50 लाख तक समर्थन प्रदान करेगी, जिसमें 90% गारंटी कवरेज होगा।

- The overseas inventory credit facility would extend support of up to ₹5 crore with 75% guarantee coverage.

  ओवरसीज इन्वेंट्री क्रेडिट सुविधा ₹5 करोड़ तक समर्थन प्रदान करेगी, जिसमें 75% गारंटी कवरेज होगा।

- For both, an interest subsidy of 2.75% would be available.

  दोनों के लिए, 2.75% का ब्याज सबवेंशन उपलब्ध होगा।

- This is subject to entities not breaching the upper limit of ₹15 lakh per applicant in a year.

  यह शर्त है कि कोई भी इकाई प्रति वर्ष प्रति आवेदक ₹15 लाख की अधिकतम सीमा को न पार करे।

- "These structured mechanisms aim to strengthen exporter confidence and liquidity flows," the Ministry explained.

  "ये संरचित तंत्र निर्यातक के आत्मविश्वास और तरलता प्रवाह को मजबूत करने का उद्देश्य रखते हैं," मंत्रालय ने समझाया।

- Welcoming the move, the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) said this would "significantly ease working capital pressures".

  इस कदम का स्वागत करते हुए, फेडरेशन ऑफ इंडियन एक्सपोर्ट ऑर्गनाइजेशंस (FIEO) ने कहा कि इससे वर्किंग कैपिटल दबाव काफी हद तक कम होगा।

- "Lower cost of finance and improved liquidity cycles will enable MSMEs to price competitively, accept larger orders and strengthen their credibility with overseas buyers. Shared-risk credit mechanisms are also expected to encourage first-time exporters and promote product and market diversification," the industry body observed.

  "निम्न वित्त लागत और बेहतर तरलता चक्र MSMEs को प्रतिस्पर्धी मूल्य निर्धारण, बड़े ऑर्डर स्वीकार करने और विदेशी खरीदारों के साथ अपनी विश्वसनीयता बढ़ाने में सक्षम बनाएंगे। साझा जोखिम क्रेडिट तंत्र नए निर्यातकों को प्रोत्साहित करने और उत्पाद व बाजार विविधीकरण को बढ़ावा देने की उम्मीद है," उद्योग संगठन ने कहा।

- To support exporters, institute warehouses overseas and fulfill infrastructure, the latest measures will provide up to 30% of the approved project cost.

  निर्यातकों को विदेश में गोदाम और पूर्ति बुनियादी ढांचे स्थापित करने के लिए समर्थन देने हेतु, नवीनतम उपाय अनुमोदित परियोजना लागत का 30% तक प्रदान करेंगे।

'EU, U.S. trade deals to boost economy; growth resilient'

21F. 'EU, U.S. trade deals to boost economy; growth resilient'

'ईयू, यू.एस. व्यापार समझौते अर्थव्यवस्था को बढ़ावा देंगे; वृद्धि स्थिर'

GS III: Economy

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

India's free trade deals with the European Union and the U.S. are likely to play a significant role for the economy in the coming years, as foreign portfolio investments and the rupee staged a comeback post the two announcements, the RBI's bulletin said.

An article published in the Reserve Bank's February bulletin also emphasised the domestic economy remained resilient, with quarterly results of listed private companies showing strengthening of aggregate sales growth.

Industrial activity remained strong, and the services sector sustained its healthy growth.

Industrial activity remained strong, as per RBI bulletin.

The Union Budget 2026-27 reaffirmed the government's commitment to fiscal consolidation without diluting the focus on long-term growth, with stepped-up allocation towards capital expenditure, said the article on the state of the economy.

- India's free trade deals with the European Union and the U.S. are likely to play a significant role for the economy in the coming years, as **foreign portfolio investments and the rupee staged a comeback post** the two announcements, the RBI's bulletin said.

  भारत के यूरोपीय संघ और यू.एस. के साथ मुक्त व्यापार समझौते आने वाले वर्षों में अर्थव्यवस्था के लिए महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा सकते हैं, क्योंकि दो घोषणाओं के बाद विदेशी पोर्टफोलियो निवेश और रुपये ने वापसी दर्ज की, आरबीआई के बुलेटिन ने कहा।

- Industrial activity remained strong, and the services sector sustained its healthy growth.

  औद्योगिक गतिविधि मजबूत बनी रही, और सेवाओं का क्षेत्र अपनी स्वस्थ वृद्धि को बनाए रखता है।

- The **Union Budget 2026-27 reaffirmed the government's commitment to fiscal consolidation without diluting the focus on long-term growth**, **with stepped-up**

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allocation towards capital expenditure, said the article on the state of the economy.

संघीय बजट 2026-27 ने सरकार की राजकोषीय समेकन के प्रति प्रतिबद्धता को दोहराया, बिना दीर्घकालिक वृद्धि पर ध्यान घटाए, पूंजीगत व्यय के लिए बढ़ी हुई आवंटन के साथ, लेख ने अर्थव्यवस्था की स्थिति पर कहा।

Core sector growth slows to 4% in Jan., casts shadow on IIP

GS III: Economy
Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Production growth of India's eight key infrastructure sectors slowed to a two-month low of 4% in January, as per official data.

It was 5.1% in January 2025 and 4.7% in December 2025. Crude oil and natural gas output recorded negative growth in January. Production of refinery products remained flat.

Production growth of coal and cement moderated to 3.1% and 10.7% during the month under review against 4.6% and 14.3%, respectively, in January 2025.

Coal, cement output growth moderated to 3.1% and 10.7%.

However, fertilizer, steel and electricity output recorded a positive growth during the month.

During the April-January of this fiscal, growth of core sector industries was down to 2.8%, compared

with 4.5% a year earlier.

Aditi Nayar, chief economist, ICRA Ltd. said the slowdown was broad-based with as many as seven of the eight sectors seeing a deterioration in YoY growth performance.

"Given the trends in core output, IIP (Index of Industrial Production) growth is likely to slow down in January, although we expect the growth in the non-core part of the IIP to continue to outperform core industries' output, as was the trend in Q3 FY2026.." Consequently, ICRA expects IIP growth to ease to 5.5% in January from 7.8% in December.

21F. Core sector growth slows to 4% in Jan., casts shadow on IIP

कोर सेक्टर की वृद्धि जनवरी में 4% तक धीमी, IIP पर असर

- Production growth of India's eight key infrastructure sectors slowed to **a two-month low of 4%** in January, as per official data.

भारत के आठ प्रमुख इन्फ्रास्ट्रक्चर सेक्टरों की उत्पादन वृद्धि जनवरी में दो महीने के निचले स्तर 4% पर धीमी हो गई, आधिकारिक आंकड़ों के अनुसार।

- It was 5.1% in January 2025 and 4.7% in December 2025.

यह जनवरी 2025 में 5.1% और दिसंबर 2025 में 4.7% था।

- Crude oil and natural gas output recorded negative growth in January.

कच्चे तेल और प्राकृतिक गैस का उत्पादन जनवरी में नकारात्मक वृद्धि दर्ज की।

- Production of **refinery products** remained flat.

रिफाइनरी उत्पादों का उत्पादन स्थिर रहा।

- Production growth of **coal and cement** moderated to 3.1% and 10.7% during the month under review against 4.6% and 14.3%, respectively, in January 2025.

कोयला और सीमेंट का उत्पादन इस महीने 3.1% और 10.7% तक सीमित रहा, जबकि जनवरी 2025 में क्रमशः 4.6% और 14.3% था।

- However, **fertilizer, steel and electricity** output recorded a positive growth during the month.

हालांकि, उर्वरक, इस्पात और बिजली का उत्पादन इस महीने सकारात्मक वृद्धि दर्ज की।

- During the April-January of this fiscal, **growth of core sector industries was down to 2.8%, compared with 4.5% a year earlier**.

इस वित्तीय वर्ष के अप्रैल-जनवरी के दौरान, कोर सेक्टर उद्योगों की वृद्धि 2.8% तक गिर गई, जबकि एक साल पहले 4.5% थी।

- "Given the trends in core output, IIP (Index of Industrial Production) growth is likely to slow down in January, although we expect the growth in the **non-core part of the IIP to continue to outperform core industries' output**, as was the trend in Q3 FY2026.."

"कोर उत्पादन के रुझानों को देखते हुए, IIP (औद्योगिक उत्पादन सूचकांक) की वृद्धि जनवरी में धीमी होने की संभावना है, हालांकि हम उम्मीद करते हैं कि IIP के गैर-कोर हिस्से की वृद्धि कोर उद्योगों के उत्पादन की तुलना में बेहतर बनी रहेगी, जैसा कि Q3 FY2026 में रुझान था।"

GS Paper III: **S&T,**	
TOPICS COVERED	**21 February 2026**
21F	**AI can help India achieve Visit Bharat goal, but poses high risk to jobs: IMF chief** **AI भारत को Viksit Bharat लक्ष्य हासिल करने में मदद कर सकता है, लेकिन नौकरियों के लिए उच्च जोखिम पैदा करता है: IMF प्रमुख**
21F	**New IIT-M technique to accurately measure blood clotting time will help implant makers** **नई IIT-M तकनीक जो रक्त के थक्के बनने का समय सही ढंग से मापेगी, इम्प्लांट निर्माता की मदद**

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AI can help India achieve Viksit Bharat goal, but poses high risk to jobs: IMF chief

GS III: S&T | **PCS**

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva on Friday said artificial intelligence could lift global growth by 0.8% and help India achieve the Viksit Bharat goal, but poses significant risk of displacement of jobs and financial stability.

While being optimistic about the technology, Ms. Georgieva cautioned against "sugarcoating" the impact of AI and called for striking a balance between building and managing AI as a "force for good, or a force for evil".

"AI can lift up global growth by almost a percentage point. We say 0.8%. It would mean that the world would grow faster than it did before the COVID pandemic. And that is fantastic for creating more opportunities, more jobs. This is the magnitude that we see for India, and it would mean that India's Viksit Bharat is achievable," Ms. Georgieva said at the AI Im-

Kristalina Georgieva

pact Summit in New Delhi. She said AI creates potential for countries that go fast on digital infrastructure, skills, and adoption of AI, and countries must embrace the opportunities, while being mindful of the risks.

Three major risks

"I am very optimistic about AI. I'm also not naive, it brings significant risks," she said while listing out three major risks from AI.

First, it brings the risk of making countries and the world less fair as some countries will have the technology and others would not, and the other is the risk of financial stabili-

ty, wherein AI could get loose and create havoc on financial markets.

Also, it brings the risk of displacement of jobs with no good thinking about how to help people find their place in the new AI economy.

"We calculated this risk as very high. We actually see the impact of AI on the labour market like a tsunami hitting it. Globally, 40% of jobs will be affected by AI, some enhanced, others eliminated. In emerging markets 40%, but in advance economies, 60%. And that is happening over a relatively short period of time," Ms. Georgieva said.

She said the IMF will continue to work with countries to understand what is happening in AI and then how to project it for policies for the future.

An IMF research on how AI is affecting the labour market showed that in United States, one in 10 jobs already requires additional skills and for those who have the skills, the job pays better.

21F. AI can help India achieve Visit Bharat goal, but poses high risk to jobs: IMF chief

AI भारत को Viksit Bharat लक्ष्य हासिल करने में मदद कर सकता है, लेकिन नौकरियों के लिए उच्च जोखिम पैदा करता है: IMF प्रमुख

- **IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva** on Friday said artificial intelligence could lift global growth by 0.8% and help India achieve the Viksit Bharat goal, but poses significant risk of displacement of jobs and financial stability.
  IMF के प्रबंध निदेशक क्रिस्टलीना जॉर्जिएवा ने शुक्रवार को कहा कि **कृत्रिम बुद्धिमत्ता (AI)** वैश्विक विकास को **0.8% तक बढ़ा सकती है** और भारत को **Viksit Bharat लक्ष्य** हासिल करने में मदद कर सकती है, लेकिन यह **नौकरियों के विस्थापन** और **वित्तीय स्थिरता** के महत्वपूर्ण जोखिम पैदा करती है।

- While being optimistic about the technology, Ms. Georgieva cautioned against "sugarcoating" the impact of AI and called for striking a balance between building and managing AI as a "force for good, or a force for evil".
  AI के बारे में आशावादी रहते हुए, **जॉर्जिएवा** ने इसके प्रभाव को **सुगंधित रूप में पेश करने** से सावधान रहने की चेतावनी दी और **AI** को 'अच्छाई की ताकत या बुराई की ताकत' के रूप में **विकसित और प्रबंधित करने** के बीच संतुलन बनाने का आह्वान किया।

- "AI can lift up global growth by almost a percentage point. We say 0.8%.

- AI creates potential for countries that go fast on **digital infrastructure, skills, and adoption of AI, and countries must embrace the opportunities, while being mindful of the risks**.
  उन्होंने कहा कि **AI** उन देशों के लिए **संभावनाएं पैदा करती है** जो डिजिटल अवसंरचना, कौशल और **AI अपनाने** में तेज़ी से आगे बढ़ते हैं, और देशों को **अवसरों को अपनाना चाहिए**, जबकि **जोखिमों का ध्यान रखना चाहिए।**

Three major risks
तीन प्रमुख जोखिम

- "I am very optimistic about AI. I'm also not naive, it brings significant risks," she said while listing out three major risks from AI.
  "मैं **AI** के बारे में बहुत आशावादी हूँ। मैं **भोली नहीं हूँ**, यह महत्वपूर्ण जोखिम लाती है," उन्होंने कहा और **AI से तीन प्रमुख जोखिमों** को सूचीबद्ध किया।

- First, it brings the risk of making countries and the world less fair as some countries will have the technology and others would not, and the other is the risk of financial stability, wherein AI could get loose and create havoc on financial markets.
  पहला, यह **देशों और दुनिया को कम निष्पक्ष** बनाने का जोखिम लाता है क्योंकि कुछ देशों के पास यह

तकनीक होगी और कुछ के पास नहीं, और दूसरा है **वित्तीय स्थिरता का जोखिम**, जिसमें **AI नियंत्रण से बाहर होकर वित्तीय बाजारों में उथल-पुथल** पैदा कर सकती है।

- Also, it brings the risk of displacement of jobs with no good thinking about how to help people find their place in the new AI economy.

  इसके अलावा, यह **नौकरियों के विस्थापन का जोखिम** भी लाता है, और यह सोचने का अवसर नहीं देता कि **लोगों को नए AI अर्थव्यवस्था में उनकी जगह कैसे मिले।**

- "We calculated this risk as very high. We actually see the impact of AI on the labour market like a tsunami hitting it. Globally, 40% of jobs will be affected by AI, some enhanced, others eliminated. In emerging markets 40%, but in advanced economies, 60%. And that is happening over a relatively short period of time," Ms. Georgieva said.

  "हमने इस जोखिम को **बहुत उच्च** माना। हम वास्तव में **AI के श्रम बाजार पर प्रभाव** को **तूफान की तरह** देखते हैं। वैश्विक स्तर पर, **40% नौकरियों** पर **AI** का प्रभाव पड़ेगा, कुछ बढ़ाई जाएंगी, कुछ समाप्त होंगी। **उभरती बाजारों में 40%, उन्नत अर्थव्यवस्थाओं में 60%।** और यह अपेक्षाकृत **कम समय में** हो रहा है," जॉर्जिएवा ने कहा।

- An IMF research on how AI is affecting the labour market showed that in the United States, one in 10 jobs already requires additional skills and for those who have the skills, the job pays better.

  IMF के एक शोध में यह दिखाया गया कि **AI श्रम बाजार को कैसे प्रभावित कर रही है,** अमेरिका में **10 में से एक नौकरी** पहले ही **अतिरिक्त कौशल** मांगती है और जिनके पास यह कौशल है, उनके लिए **नौकरी बेहतर वेतन** देती है।

New IIT-M technique to accurately measure blood clotting time will help implant makers

GS III: S&T

Ramya Kannan
CHENNAI

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras have secured a patent for a technique that uses changes in reflected light on the surface of implants to detect blood clot formation.

While it will allow manufacturers to use this technique while researching the viability of materials to be used for implants, it also could also be used to test water purity, among other applications, the researchers claimed.
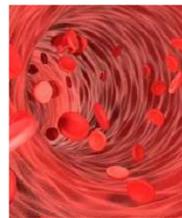
Improving clot testing

Haemocompatibility is the ability of a material or medical device to interface with blood without inducing adverse reactions, including clotting. It is an important parameter to be considered before developing any material to fashion a device – including stents, heart valves and catheters – that will come into contact with blood.

The haemocompatibility test also helps to plan for and titrate the dose of anticoagulation medicine to be given to a patient, post surgery. This is where IIT-M researchers have stepped in, to offer an optics-based solution to improve the accuracy of this test.

Subhashree Mishra, Govinda Chandra Behera, Vignesh Muthuvijayan, and Somnath Chanda Roy described the technique in an article published in the journal *Review of Scientific Instruments.*

"When blood comes into contact with a foreign material (as used in implants) it begins to clot. When we plan to build implants, we need to check how much time blood is taking to clot over the foreign device. Despite several technological advancements in biomedical devices, issues related to thrombosis remain a persistent challenge," explained Ms. Mishra, an IIT-M research scholar.

The two techniques in use today – the mechanical tilting method, and the free haemoglobin method – are not precise, she said.

"We set out to address the shortcomings of the conventional techniques to measure blood clotting," she added. Researchers used the optics to measure this blood clotting time.

"The surface of any implantable device will have a reflective surface. When blood touches this surface, and the blood clotting process begins, the surface becomes turbid, and the reflectivity of the surface will change. When it does, it will trigger a change in voltage in a connected, highly sensitive photodetector," Ms. Mishra said, adding that the time taken for this "voltage change" corresponds to clotting time. "The results, from our study, were accurate; and even milliseconds are counted," she added.

"We received the patent for this technique last year," IIT-M Physics professor Dr. Roy said. "We are at the initial stage of discussions with manufacturers. This will enable them to quantitatively screen materials for blood compatibility at the research stage. It can help them distinguish between materials that may be similar but behave very different during clot formation, and has the potential to significantly reduce clot-related risks for patients," he added.

Wider applications

The team is also looking at deploying the technique for other real-world applications, Dr. Roy said, primarily to gauge the purity of water. "With a substrate, and a few changes, it will be able to check even trace impurities in water. There will be clear industry uses for this also," he added.

This method is a optics-based solution to improve accuracy of haemocompatibility test.

21F. New IIT-M technique to accurately measure blood clotting time will help implant makers

नई IIT-M तकनीक जो रक्त के थक्के बनने का समय सही ढंग से मापेगी, इम्प्लांट निर्माता की मदद करेगी

- Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras have secured a patent for a technique that uses changes in reflected light on the surface of implants to detect blood clot formation.

  भारतीय प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान, मद्रास (IIT-M) के शोधकर्ताओं ने एक तकनीक के लिए पेटेंट प्राप्त किया है, जो इम्प्लांट्स की सतह पर परावर्तित प्रकाश में बदलाव का उपयोग करके रक्त थक्के बनने का पता लगाती है।

- While it will allow manufacturers to use this technique while researching the viability of materials to be used for implants, it also could also be used to test water purity, among other applications, the researchers claimed.

  शोधकर्ताओं का दावा है कि यह तकनीक निर्माताओं को इम्प्लांट में उपयोग किए जाने वाले सामग्री की उपयोगिता पर शोध करते समय मदद करेगी, और इसे अन्य अनुप्रयोगों में, जैसे पानी की शुद्धता की जांच के लिए भी इस्तेमाल किया जा सकता है।

Improving clot testing
थक्का परीक्षण में सुधार

- **Haemocompatibility is the ability of a material or medical device to interface with blood without inducing adverse reactions, including clotting**.
  Haemocompatibility किसी **सामग्री** या **चिकित्सीय उपकरण** की यह क्षमता है कि वह **रक्त के संपर्क में आए बिना प्रतिकूल प्रतिक्रियाएँ**, जैसे थक्का बनने, उत्पन्न किए बिना काम कर सके।**

- It is an important parameter to be considered before developing any material to fashion a device — including stents, heart valves and catheters — that will come into contact with blood.
  यह एक महत्वपूर्ण पैरामीटर है जिसे किसी भी **सामग्री को विकसित करने से पहले ध्यान में रखना चाहिए, जो **स्टेंट्स, हृदय वाल्व और कैथेटर** जैसे उपकरण बनाने में उपयोग होगी और **रक्त के संपर्क में आएगी।

- The haemocompatibility test also helps to plan for and titrate the dose of anticoagulation medicine to be given to a patient, post surgery.
  **Hemocompatibility परीक्षण **सर्जरी के बाद रोगी को दिए जाने वाले anticoagulation दवा की खुराक की योजना बनाने और समायोजित करने में भी मदद करता है।

- This is where IIT-M researchers have stepped in, to offer an optics-based solution to improve the accuracy of this test.
  यहीं IIT-M के शोधकर्ताओं ने कदम रखा, ताकि इस परीक्षण की सटीकता सुधारने के लिए ऑप्टिक्स-आधारित समाधान पेश किया जा सके।

- "When blood comes into contact with a foreign material (as used in implants) it begins to clot.
  "जब रक्त किसी विदेशी सामग्री (जैसा कि इम्प्लांट में उपयोग होता है) के संपर्क में आता है, तो वह थक्का बनने लगता है।

- Despite several technological advancements in biomedical devices, issues related to **thrombosis** remain a persistent challenge.
  "जैवचिकित्सीय उपकरणों में कई प्रौद्योगिकीगत उन्नतियों के बावजूद, थ्रॉम्बोसिस से संबंधित मुद्दे एक लगातार चुनौती बने हुए हैं," ।

- The two techniques in use today — the mechanical tilting method, and the free haemoglobin method — are not precise, she said.
  उन्होंने कहा कि आज उपयोग में आने वाली दो तकनीकें — mechanical tilting method और free haemoglobin method — सटीक नहीं हैं।