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India showing steady progress in reducing child deaths amid slowing global gains: report

GS 1: Society

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

An estimated 4.9 million children died before their fifth birthday in 2024 worldwide, including 2.3 million newborns, according to the latest estimates released by a UN report on child mortality. The report, released on Wednesday, said that most of these deaths were preventable with proven, low-cost interventions, and access to quality healthcare.

The report titled "Levels and Trends in Child Mortality" added that under-five deaths globally have fallen by more than half since 2000. However, since 2015, this pace has slowed by more than 60%.

However, India is among the countries demonstrating steady progress in reducing child

mortality through sustained public health efforts. The latest United Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UNIGME) Report, 2025 states that the status of neonatal mortality rate reduction in India has shown progress.

The Union Health Ministry added that India, over the past two decades, has played a pivotal role in reducing child mortality in the South Asia region.

The Ministry, in its release, said that the Neonatal Mortality Rate (NMR) recorded a decline since 1990. In 1990, India had an NMR of 57 per 1,000 live births, which fell to 17 in 2024.

Also, the Under-5 Mortality Rate (U5MR) witnessed a sharp fall – in 1990, the U5MR stood at 127 per 1,000 live births,



Under-5 deaths dropped from 127 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 27 in 2024.

while in 2024, it declined to 27.

"This sharp reduction is due to targeted public health interventions, improved institutional delivery systems, and expanded immunisation coverage," the Ministry said.

The UN report found that an estimated 2.1 million children, adolescents,

and youth – in the age group of 5-24 – died in 2024. Infectious diseases and injuries remain leading causes among younger children, while self-harm is the leading cause among girls aged 15 to 19, and road traffic injuries among boys.

"This year's report for the first time estimates deaths directly caused by severe acute malnutrition. It found more than 1,00,000 children aged 1-59 months – or 5% – died from it in 2024. The toll is far greater when indirect effects are considered, as malnutrition weakens children's immunity and increases their risk of dying from common childhood diseases," the report by the UNIGME states.

Mortality data also frequently fail to capture severe acute malnutrition as an underlying cause of

death, suggesting the burden is likely substantially underestimated. Some of the countries with the highest numbers of direct deaths from severe acute malnutrition include Pakistan, Somalia, and Sudan.

Newborn deaths account for nearly half of all under-five deaths. Leading causes of newborn deaths were complications from preterm birth (36%), and complications during labour and delivery (21%).

Beyond the first month, infectious diseases, including malaria, diarrhoea, and pneumonia were major killers. Malaria remained the single largest killer in this age group (17%), with most deaths occurring in endemic areas of sub-Saharan Africa.

In 2024, sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 58% of all under-five deaths.

19Mar. India showing steady progress in reducing child deaths amid slowing global gains: report

धीरे होते वैश्विक प्रगति के बीच भारत बच्चों की मौतें कम करने में लगातार प्रगति दिखा रहा है: रिपोर्ट

- An estimated **4.9 million children** died before their **fifth birthday** in 2024 worldwide, including **2.3 million newborns**, according to the latest estimates released by a **UN report on child mortality**.
अनुमानित **4.9 मिलियन बच्चे** 2024 में अपनी **पाँचवीं सालगिरह** से पहले मर गए, जिनमें **2.3 मिलियन नवजात** शामिल हैं, यह आंकड़े **संयुक्त राष्ट्र की रिपोर्ट** के अनुसार हैं जो **बाल मृत्यु दर** पर आधारित है।
- The report, released on Wednesday, said that most of these deaths were **preventable** with proven, **low-cost interventions**, and access to **quality healthcare**.
रिपोर्ट, जो बुधवार को जारी हुई, में कहा गया कि इन मौतों में से अधिकांश **रोकथाम योग्य** थीं, प्रमाणित **कम लागत वाले हस्तक्षेप** और **गुणवत्तापूर्ण स्वास्थ्य देखभाल** की पहुँच के साथ।
- The report titled "**Levels and Trends in Child Mortality**" added that **under-five deaths globally** have fallen by more than half since 2000.
"**Levels and Trends in Child Mortality**" शीर्षक वाली रिपोर्ट में यह भी कहा गया कि 2000 से वैश्विक स्तर पर **पाँच साल से कम उम्र के बच्चों की मौतों** में आधे से अधिक की कमी आई है।
- However, since 2015, this pace has slowed by more than 60%.
हालाँकि, 2015 के बाद से, यह गति 60% से अधिक धीमी हो गई है।
- However, **India** is among the countries demonstrating steady progress in reducing **child mortality** through sustained **public health efforts**.
हालाँकि, **भारत** उन देशों में शामिल है जो लगातार **सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य प्रयासों** के माध्यम से **बाल मृत्यु दर** कम करने में प्रगति दिखा रहे हैं।
- The latest **United Nations Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (UNIGME) Report, 2025** states that the status of **neonatal mortality rate reduction** in India has shown progress.
हाल की **संयुक्त राष्ट्र अंतर-संस्थागत बाल मृत्यु अनुमान समूह (UNIGME) रिपोर्ट, 2025** में कहा गया कि **भारत में नवजात मृत्यु दर में कमी** के मामले में प्रगति दिखाई दे रही है।



- The **Union Health Ministry** added that India, over the past two decades, has played a pivotal role in reducing **child mortality** in the **South Asia region**.
केंद्रीय स्वास्थ्य मंत्रालय ने कहा कि भारत ने पिछले दो दशकों में दक्षिण एशिया क्षेत्र में बाल मृत्यु दर कम करने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई है।
- The Ministry, in its release, said that the **Neonatal Mortality Rate (NMR)** recorded a decline since 1990.
मंत्रालय ने अपनी रिलीज़ में कहा कि **नवजात मृत्यु दर (NMR)** 1990 से घट रही है।
- In 1990, India had an **NMR of 57 per 1,000 live births**, which fell to 17 in 2024.
1990 में, भारत की **NMR 1,000 जीवित जन्मों पर 57** थी, जो 2024 में घटकर 17 हो गई।
- Also, the **Under-5 Mortality Rate (U5MR)** witnessed a sharp fall — in 1990, the **U5MR** stood at 127 per 1,000 live births, while in 2024, it declined to 27.
साथ ही, **पाँच साल से कम उम्र के बच्चों की मृत्यु दर (U5MR)** में तेज़ गिरावट देखी गई — 1990 में **U5MR 1,000 जीवित जन्मों पर 127** थी, जबकि 2024 में यह घटकर 27 हो गई।
- “This sharp reduction is due to targeted **public health interventions**, improved **institutional delivery systems**, and expanded **immunisation coverage**,” the Ministry said.
मंत्रालय ने कहा, “यह तेज़ गिरावट लक्षित **सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य हस्तक्षेपों**, बेहतर **संगठित प्रसव प्रणाली**, और विस्तारित **टीकाकरण कवरेज** के कारण है।”
- The **UN report** found that an estimated **2.1 million children, adolescents, and youth** — in the age group of 5-24 — died in 2024.
संयुक्त राष्ट्र रिपोर्ट में पाया गया कि अनुमानित **2.1 मिलियन बच्चे, किशोर और युवा** — उम्र 5-24 वर्ष के बीच — 2024 में मर गए।
- **Infectious diseases** and **injuries** remain leading causes among younger children, while **self-harm** is the leading cause among girls aged 15 to 19, and **road traffic injuries** among boys.
संचारी रोग और **चोटें** छोटे बच्चों में प्रमुख कारण बने हुए हैं, जबकि **आत्महत्या** 15-19 वर्ष की लड़कियों में प्रमुख कारण है, और **सड़क यातायात चोटें** लड़कों में प्रमुख कारण हैं।
- “This year’s report for the first time estimates deaths directly caused by **severe acute malnutrition**.
“इस वर्ष की रिपोर्ट पहली बार **गंभीर तीव्र कुपोषण** से सीधे हुई मौतों का अनुमान लगाती है।
- It found more than **100,000 children aged 1-59 months** — or 5% — died from it in 2024.
इसमें पाया गया कि **1-59 महीनों के 100,000 से अधिक बच्चे** — या 5% — 2024 में इसकी वजह से मरे।
- The toll is far greater when indirect effects are considered, as **malnutrition** weakens children’s **immunity** and increases their risk of dying from common **childhood diseases**, the report by the **UNIGME** states.
जब अप्रत्यक्ष प्रभावों पर विचार किया जाता है, तो यह संख्या कहीं अधिक होती है, क्योंकि **कुपोषण** बच्चों की **प्रतिरक्षा** को कमजोर करता है और उन्हें सामान्य **बचपन की बीमारियों** से मरने का खतरा बढ़ाता है, **UNIGME** की रिपोर्ट में कहा गया है।
- Mortality data also frequently fail to capture **severe acute malnutrition** as an underlying cause of death, suggesting the burden is likely substantially underestimated.
मृत्यु डेटा अक्सर **गंभीर तीव्र कुपोषण** को मृत्यु के मूल कारण के रूप में पकड़ने में विफल रहते हैं, जिससे संकेत मिलता है कि यह बोझ संभवतः काफी कम आंका गया है।
- Some of the countries with the highest numbers of direct deaths from **severe acute malnutrition** include **Pakistan, Somalia, and Sudan**.
कुछ देश जिनमें **गंभीर तीव्र कुपोषण** से प्रत्यक्ष मौतों की संख्या सबसे अधिक है उनमें **पाकिस्तान, सोमालिया, और सूडान** शामिल हैं।
- **Newborn deaths** account for nearly half of all **under-five deaths**.
नवजात मृत्यु सभी **पाँच साल से कम उम्र की मौतों** का लगभग आधा हिस्सा हैं।
- Leading causes of newborn deaths were complications from **preterm birth (36%)**, and complications during **labour and delivery (21%)**.
नवजात मृत्यु के प्रमुख कारण थे **असामयिक जन्म (36%)** से जटिलताएँ, और **प्रसव और वितरण (21%)** के दौरान जटिलताएँ।



India's future demographic challenges

GS I: Society

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A new report by the International Institute of Migration and Development and the Population Foundation of India titled 'Unravelling India's Demographic Future: Population Projections for States and Union Territories, 2021-2051', underscores the demographic risks that are beginning to surface nationwide. India's population is projected to increase from 1,355.8 million in 2021 to 1,590.1 million in 2051, with an average annual increase of 0.5%, suggesting a prolonged period of slower population expansion. These figures fall below earlier estimates, strengthening the case that India is unlikely to face the threat of population explosion that once dominated political and academic debates. These projections point to a turning point, where India is poised to move beyond a youth-led, fast-expanding population into an era of a more urban, steadily ageing, and balanced demographic structure.

A problem for schools

The projections point out that the pre-primary school-going population (0-4 years) is expected to dwindle from 113.5 million in 2021 to 8.6 million by the middle of this century. Since most regions in the country are now close to universal primary school enrolments, the demand for new schooling facilities could ease out, especially in the government sector. A sustained drop in fertility could leave the country with an escalating number of 'uneconomic schools' (schools with lesser enrolment rates that cannot justify their economic costs), raising the threat of teachers losing their jobs, a trend that the State of Kerala has seen play out for more than three decades.

Evidence from different parts of the country suggests that declining fertility rates have already started influencing schooling requirements, with classrooms adjusting to smaller cohorts. Data from the Unified District



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The growing elderly population is set to exert increasing pressure on healthcare and social security, thereby putting a strain on the state's finances

Information System for Education and the Ministry of Education highlights a significant reduction in the number of government schools over the last decade, with schools dropping from 11.07 lakh in 2014-15 to 10.18 lakh in 2023-24, amounting to a reduction of close to 90,000 schools across the country. This decline has been accompanied by a sharp increase in private schools; their numbers grew from 2.88 lakh to 3.31 lakh over the same period, an increase of 43,000 schools.

While falling birth rates have led to a reduction in enrolments and closure of government schools, smaller families and improved capacity to afford education have propelled the demand for private schools. Many parents choose private schools in the hope of giving their wards the education they never had in life, nudged by social pressure and a common perception that government schools generally fall short on quality compared to private schools.

Greying population

As the demographic dividend largely depends on the working age population (15-59), a relatively higher proportion of this specific group can lead to faster economic growth, a dynamic evident in the development phases of several countries, including China, Japan, and South Korea. India has one of the world's largest workforces, rising from 833.8 million (65.2%) in 2021 to a projected peak level of 1,009.0 million (65.5%) in 2041, before declining to 998.1 million (62.8%) by 2051. There is an impending concern that the demographic dividend window will close after 2041, highlighting the urgency of leveraging it before its contribution to economic growth starts to diminish. Nevertheless, close to six out of every 10 persons in the country are expected to be part of the workforce by 2051, which is an encouraging sign.

However, India's population is ageing. In 2021, India's elderly

population (60+) stood at 130.5 million or 9.62% of the population. By 2051, this number is projected to touch 325.3 million (20.5%), highlighting that there will be a profound increment in the ageing population. The median age, a measure that splits the population evenly by age, is projected to climb from 28 years in 2021 to 40 by 2051, signalling India's shift towards a more advanced stage of demographic transition. The growing elderly population is set to exert increasing pressure on healthcare and social security, thereby putting a strain on the state's finances.

Policy signals

The declining child population is expected to offer a better teacher-pupil ratio and expand infrastructural facilities in schools. Further, declining birth rates reduce demand for maternity care, allowing the healthcare system to rationalise the use of resources and offer better quality care. Though fertility levels have been falling, continued investments are required for family planning and to prevent unintended pregnancies, as well as reduce infertility and ensure the reproductive rights of women.

India needs to overhaul its education and skill development system to cope with modern-day challenges. It should also equip the younger generation to seize new opportunities before our demographic leverage disappears in the coming decades. The decline in the working-age population can be offset by bringing in more women to formal work (gender dividend) and by expanding access to better-quality employment. With the rapid growth of the elderly population, India's financial and healthcare systems, especially geriatric care, must be redesigned to support the growing needs of elderly citizens. At the same time, this creates a strong potential for a thriving silver economy, and could help in unlocking a second demographic dividend in the future.

19Mar. India's future demographic challenges भारत की भविष्य की जनसांख्यिकीय चुनौतियाँ

- A new report by the **International Institute of Migration and Development and the Population Foundation of India** titled 'Unravelling India's Demographic Future: Population Projections for States and Union Territories, 2021-2051', underscores the demographic risks that are beginning to surface nationwide.
अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रवासन और विकास संस्थान और भारत जनसंख्या फाउंडेशन की नई रिपोर्ट 'Unravelling



India's Demographic Future: Population Projections for States and Union Territories, 2021-2051' देशभर में उभरते **जनसांख्यिकीय जोखिमों** को रेखांकित करती है।

- India's population is projected to increase from **1,355.8 million in 2021 to 1,590.1 million in 2051**, with an average annual increase of **0.5%**, suggesting a prolonged period of slower population expansion.

भारत की जनसंख्या 2021 में 1,355.8 मिलियन से बढ़कर 2051 में 1,590.1 मिलियन होने का अनुमान है, जिसमें औसत वार्षिक वृद्धि 0.5% होगी, जो धीमी जनसंख्या वृद्धि की लंबी अवधि को दर्शाता है।

- These figures fall below earlier estimates, strengthening the case that India is unlikely to face the threat of population explosion.
ये आंकड़े पहले के अनुमानों से कम हैं, जिससे यह स्पष्ट होता है कि भारत को जनसंख्या विस्फोट का खतरा नहीं है।

- These projections point to a turning point, where India is poised to move beyond a **youth-led, fast-expanding population** into an era of a more **urban, steadily ageing, and balanced demographic structure**.

ये अनुमान एक बदलाव की ओर संकेत करते हैं, जहां भारत युवा आधारित तेज जनसंख्या वृद्धि से आगे बढ़कर अधिक शहरी, वृद्ध होती और संतुलित जनसंख्या संरचना की ओर बढ़ रहा है।

A problem for schools विद्यालयों के लिए समस्या

- The projections point out that the **pre-primary school-going population (0-4 years)** is expected to dwindle from **113.5 million in 2021 to 8.6 million** by the middle of this century.
अनुमानों के अनुसार **प्री-प्राइमरी आयु वर्ग (0-4 वर्ष)** की जनसंख्या 2021 में 113.5 मिलियन से घटकर इस सदी के मध्य तक 8.6 मिलियन रह जाएगी।
- Since most regions are now close to **universal primary school enrolments**, the demand for new schooling facilities could ease out.
चूंकि अधिकांश क्षेत्रों में **प्राथमिक विद्यालयों में लगभग सार्वभौमिक नामांकन** है, इसलिए नए विद्यालयों की मांग कम हो सकती है।
- A sustained drop in fertility could lead to an increase in '**uneconomic schools**', raising the threat of **teachers losing their jobs**.
प्रजनन दर में लगातार गिरावट से **अलाभकारी विद्यालयों** की संख्या बढ़ सकती है, जिससे **शिक्षकों की नौकरियां जाने** का खतरा बढ़ेगा।
- This trend has been observed in **Kerala for more than three decades**.
यह प्रवृत्ति **केरल में तीन दशकों से अधिक समय से देखी जा रही है**।
- Evidence from different parts of the country suggests that declining fertility rates have already started influencing schooling requirements.
देश के विभिन्न हिस्सों से मिले प्रमाण बताते हैं कि घटती प्रजनन दर ने शिक्षा की आवश्यकताओं को प्रभावित करना शुरू कर दिया है।
- Classrooms are adjusting to **smaller cohorts**.
कक्षाएं **छोटे समूहों** के अनुसार समायोजित हो रही हैं।
- Data from the **Unified District Information System for Education and the Ministry of Education** highlights a reduction in government schools.
एकीकृत जिला शिक्षा सूचना प्रणाली और शिक्षा मंत्रालय के आंकड़े सरकारी विद्यालयों में कमी दिखाते हैं।
- The number of government schools dropped from **11.07 lakh in 2014-15 to 10.18 lakh in 2023-24**, a reduction of **90,000 schools**.
सरकारी विद्यालयों की संख्या 2014-15 में 11.07 लाख से घटकर 2023-24 में 10.18 लाख हो गई, यानी **90,000 विद्यालयों की कमी**।
- At the same time, private schools increased from **2.88 lakh to 3.31 lakh**, an increase of **43,000 schools**.
इसी अवधि में निजी विद्यालयों की संख्या **2.88 लाख से बढ़कर 3.31 लाख** हो गई, यानी **43,000 विद्यालयों की वृद्धि**।
- **Falling birth rates have led to reduced enrolments and closure of government schools**.
जन्म दर में गिरावट से नामांकन कम हुआ और सरकारी विद्यालय बंद हुए।



- Smaller families and improved capacity to afford education have increased demand for **private schools**.
छोटे परिवार और शिक्षा वहन करने की क्षमता बढ़ने से **निजी विद्यालयों** की मांग बढ़ी है।
- **Many parents choose private schools due to social pressure and perception of better quality**.
कई अभिभावक **सामाजिक दबाव और बेहतर गुणवत्ता की धारणा** के कारण निजी विद्यालय चुनते हैं।

Greying population वृद्ध होती जनसंख्या

- As the demographic dividend largely depends on the **working age population (15-59)**, a relatively higher proportion of this specific group can lead to faster economic growth, a dynamic evident in the development phases of several countries, including **China, Japan, and South Korea**.
जनसांख्यिकीय लाभांश मुख्यतः **कार्यशील आयु वर्ग (15-59)** पर निर्भर करता है, इस समूह का अधिक अनुपात तेज आर्थिक वृद्धि ला सकता है, जैसा कि **चीन, जापान और दक्षिण कोरिया** के विकास में देखा गया।
- India has one of the world's largest workforces, rising from **833.8 million (65.2%) in 2021** to a projected peak level of **1,009.0 million (65.5%) in 2041**, before declining to **998.1 million (62.8%) by 2051**.
भारत के पास विश्व की सबसे बड़ी कार्यशक्ति में से एक है, जो **2021 में 833.8 मिलियन (65.2%)** से बढ़कर **2041 में 1,009.0 मिलियन (65.5%)** के उच्चतम स्तर तक पहुंचेगी, फिर **2051 तक 998.1 मिलियन (62.8%)** हो जाएगी।
- There is an impending concern that the **demographic dividend window will close after 2041**, highlighting the urgency of leveraging it before its contribution to economic growth starts to diminish.
यह चिंता है कि **जनसांख्यिकीय लाभांश की अवधि 2041 के बाद समाप्त हो जाएगी**, इसलिए इसका लाभ समय रहते उठाना आवश्यक है।
- Nevertheless, close to **six out of every 10 persons** in the country are expected to be part of the workforce by **2051**, which is an encouraging sign.
फिर भी **2051 तक हर 10 में से लगभग 6 लोग** कार्यबल का हिस्सा होंगे, जो सकारात्मक संकेत है।
- However, India's population is ageing.
हालांकि भारत की जनसंख्या वृद्ध हो रही है।
- In **2021**, India's elderly population (**60+**) stood at **130.5 million (9.62%)**.
2021 में भारत की वृद्ध जनसंख्या (60 वर्ष से अधिक) 130.5 मिलियन (9.62%) थी।
- By **2051**, this number is projected to touch **325.3 million (20.5%)**, highlighting a significant increase.
2051 तक यह संख्या 325.3 मिलियन (20.5%) हो जाएगी, जो बड़ी वृद्धि दर्शाती है।
- The **median age** is projected to climb from **28 years in 2021 to 40 by 2051**, signalling demographic transition.
माध्य आयु 2021 में 28 वर्ष से बढ़कर 2051 तक 40 वर्ष हो जाएगी, जो जनसांख्यिकीय परिवर्तन का संकेत है।
- The growing elderly population will exert pressure on **healthcare and social security**, putting strain on state finances.
बढ़ती वृद्ध जनसंख्या **स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं और सामाजिक सुरक्षा** पर दबाव डालेगी, जिससे सरकारी वित्त पर बोझ पड़ेगा।

Policy signals नीतिगत संकेत

- The declining child population is expected to offer a better **teacher-pupil ratio** and expand infrastructural facilities.
घटती बाल जनसंख्या से **शिक्षक-छात्र अनुपात** बेहतर होगा और आधारभूत ढांचे का विस्तार होगा।
- Declining birth rates reduce demand for **maternity care**, allowing better use of healthcare resources.
जन्म दर में कमी से **मातृत्व देखभाल** की मांग घटेगी, जिससे संसाधनों का बेहतर उपयोग संभव होगा।



- Continued investments are required for **family planning**, preventing unintended pregnancies, reducing infertility, and ensuring reproductive rights of women.
परिवार नियोजन, अनचाहे गर्भधारण की रोकथाम, बांझपन में कमी और महिलाओं के प्रजनन अधिकार सुनिश्चित करने के लिए निवेश आवश्यक है।
- India needs to overhaul its **education and skill development system** to meet modern challenges.
भारत को आधुनिक चुनौतियों के लिए अपनी **शिक्षा और कौशल विकास प्रणाली** में सुधार करना होगा।
- The younger generation must be equipped to seize opportunities before demographic advantage declines.
युवा पीढ़ी को अवसरों का लाभ उठाने के लिए तैयार करना आवश्यक है, इससे पहले कि जनसांख्यिकीय लाभ कम हो जाए।
- The decline in working-age population can be set by increasing **women participation in formal work (gender dividend)** and better employment access.
कार्यशील आयु वर्ग में कमी को **महिलाओं की भागीदारी बढ़ाकर (लैंगिक लाभांश)** और बेहतर रोजगार से संतुलित किया जा सकता है।
- With rapid growth of elderly population, **financial and healthcare systems**, especially **geriatric care**, must be redesigned.
वृद्ध जनसंख्या की तेज वृद्धि के साथ **वित्तीय और स्वास्थ्य प्रणाली**, विशेषकर **वृद्ध देखभाल**, को पुनर्गठित करना होगा।
- At the same time, this creates potential for a **silver economy** and a possible **second demographic dividend**.
साथ ही यह **सिल्वर अर्थव्यवस्था** और संभावित **दूसरे जनसांख्यिकीय लाभांश** के अवसर भी पैदा करता है।

PATRIOTIC IAS



What is new in transgender rights Bill?

How is the government proposing to alter the definition of transgender person? What is the right to self-perceived gender identity? What does the new Bill propose on gender certification and SRS? Why are transgender communities opposing the amendments?

ISS I. Society

EXPLAINER

Abhinav Lakshman

The story so far:

Twelve years after the Supreme Court recognised the transgender identity and held that "self-determination of gender is an integral part of personal autonomy and self-expression", falling within the realm of personal liberty guaranteed by the Constitution of India, the Union government on March 13 introduced a Bill in the Lok Sabha to take away transgender people's "right to self-perceived gender identity" and redefine a "transgender person" by proposing amendments to the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019. Transgender community leaders, activists, and people across the country reacted with shock, arguing that the amendments go against the fundamental principles underlying their long struggle for recognition.

What are the changes being brought about?

The key changes being proposed have to do with the definition of a "transgender person" and the expansion of the section on offences against transgender people and punishments for them.

In the amendment Bill, the Centre has called for the omission of sub-section (2) of Section 4 of the Act, which says: "A person recognised as transgender under sub-section (1) shall have a right to self-perceived gender identity."

In addition to this, a new definition of 'transgender person' is proposed. It describes them as people "having such socio-cultural identities as kinner, hijra, aravani, and jogta, or eunuch", people with intersex variations, and people who have "congenital variations" in "male or female development" in their "primary sexual characteristics, external genitalia, chromosomal patterns, gonadal development, endogenous hormone production or response or such other medical conditions".

The definition also includes any person or child who has been "compelled to assume, adopt, or outwardly present a transgender identity, by mutilation, emasculation, castration, amputation, or any surgical, chemical, or hormonal procedure or otherwise". However, it adds that this definition shall not include "persons with different sexual orientations and self-perceived sexual identities".

Compared to this definition, the Act currently defines transgender person as someone "whose gender does not match with the gender assigned at birth and includes trans men and trans women (whether or not such person has undergone Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS) or hormone therapy or laser therapy or such other therapy), person with intersex variations, genderqueer and person having such socio-cultural identities as kinner, hijra, aravani and jogta."

Further, a specific definition for "people with intersex variations" has also been proposed to be omitted.

Apart from these, the Bill suggests introducing the terminology for "authority", defining it as "a medical board, headed by a Chief Medical Officer or a Deputy Chief Medical Officer, as may be appointed by the Central government, State government or Union territory Administration".

Another key amendment is on the issuance of transgender certificates. While the law currently mandates the District Magistrate to issue a certificate based on a self-declared affidavit and without



Activists and members of the community during a demonstration against the Bill on Wednesday. AFP

physical or medical examination, the proposed amendment requires the District Magistrate to "examine the recommendation of the authority", and decide, if deemed necessary or desirable, and after consulting other medical experts, before issuing the certificate.

A new section has also been proposed, which confers the right of transgender people to have their first names changed in birth certificates and other identification documents, with the caveat that the person should be a "transgender person" under the revised definition.

The Bill also mandates that individuals apply for a revised gender certificate after undergoing SRS, as opposed to the current law, which leaves this to the individual.

Additionally, medical institutions performing SRS would be required to furnish details of such procedures to the District Magistrate.

The Bill also significantly expands provisions relating to offences and penalties, introducing graded punishments, including rigorous imprisonment up to life and fines of up to ₹5 lakh, for crimes against transgender persons and children.

However, it remains to be seen what further changes could come through in the form of Rules, if this amendment Bill is passed by Parliament.

How did the amendment Bill come about?

Union Social Justice Minister Virendra Kumar introduced the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026, in Lok Sabha on March 13. Days earlier, media reports cited that the Union Cabinet had approved amendments to the 2019 Act, though details were not disclosed. It remains unclear how long the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and the Centre had been preparing these changes.

Transgender activists, including Tamil Nadu-based Grace Banu, who had been central to the drafting of the 2019 Act, told *The Hindu* that the amendments seem to have been brought in without consultation with the community. Several leaders and members have described their initial reaction as one of "shock", calling the changes "sudden".

Interestingly, just hours before the Bill was introduced, the Ministry had posted on X, promoting the 2019 version of the Act and advertising the fact that this Act allowed the right to self-perceived gender identity as a key feature.

A few days back, on March 4, the Ministry had posted, "The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, safeguards the rights and dignity of transgender persons."

In February, the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) informed the Supreme Court that it had developed teacher training modules to build sensitivity towards transgender issues.

It substantiated this by saying that the 2024 module specifically spoke of the difference between gender and sexuality and discussed the idea that sex identity ascribed at birth may be at odds with a person's perceived sex identity at a later stage. The NCERT added that it had been conducting capacity building and training programmes based on similar modules till as late as November 2025, with more planned this year.

Why is there a concern?

A primary concern raised by the transgender community is the omission of the right to self-perceived gender identity, followed by the new definition, which appears to contradict the principles laid down in the landmark 2014 NALSA judgment recognising the right to self-determination of gender.

Ms. Banu said, "there is an issue that the government seems to be including only those in the definition of transgender who may have been accommodated in Hindutva's history and is using terms that indicate Hindutva's accommodation of transgender identity like 'hijra, kinner, aravani', etc." And there seems to be some sort of refusal to use respectful terms that have evolved for transgender people in other parts of the country, like in Tamil Nadu, where there is now a vocabulary of *thirunagai* and *thirunambi*."

Dr. Aqsa Shaikh has raised the issue of transgender people across the country having to now deal with the existential question of whether they continue to remain transgender as per the proposed new definition, while another Delhi-based transwoman spoke of concerns that this might create divides within the community about who has legitimacy to use the transgender identity.

What does the NALSA judgment say? The landmark 2014 judgment in *National Legal Services Authority vs Union of India*, delivered by Justices K.S. Radhakrishnan and A.K. Sikri, remains central to India's understanding of gender identity. When the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019, was introduced, the Statement of Objects and Reasons in it noted that it flowed from this very judgment of the Supreme Court, adding that one of the principal goals of bringing this Bill was to "confer right upon transgender persons to be recognised as such, and a right to self-perceived gender identity". In the judgment that notably

recognised a third gender beyond male and female, and the fundamental right of persons to self-determination of gender identity, the court accepted the principle that the concepts of gender and sexuality are different and that gender identity is on a spectrum.

The court said, "Gender identity is one of the most fundamental aspects of life which refers to a person's intrinsic sense of being male, female or transgender or transsexual persons."

The judgment explained that "a person's sex is usually assigned at birth, but a relatively small group of persons may be born with bodies which incorporate both or certain aspects of both male and female physiology. At times, genital anatomy problems may arise in certain persons and their innate perception of themselves is not in conformity with the sex assigned to them at birth and may include pre and post-operative transsexual persons and also persons who do not choose to undergo or do not have access to operation and also includes persons who cannot undergo successful operations."

On sexual orientation, the court defined it as an individual's enduring emotional, romantic, or physical attraction to others.

Importantly, the court held that no person should be forced to undergo medical procedures – such as SRS, sterilisation, or hormone therapy – as a condition for legal recognition of their gender identity.

It concluded that self-determination of gender is integral to personal autonomy, dignity, and freedom under Article 21 of the Constitution.

Justice Sikri, in his judgment concurring with Justice Radhakrishnan, expanded on this, saying, "If democracy is based on the recognition of the individuality and dignity of man, as a fortiori we have to recognise the right of a human being to choose his sex/gender identity which is integral to his/her personality and is one of the most basic aspects of self-determination, dignity and freedom."

What is the government's reasoning? In the Statement of Objects and Reasons, the government said that since the 2019 Act was enacted, "certain doubts and difficulties" have arisen in implementing it with regard to the "definition of transgender persons and how the identification of such persons is to be done".

It noted that the existing definition of "transgender person" was "vague", arguing that this made it "impossible to identify the genuine oppressed persons to whom the benefits of the Act are intended to reach". It added that this existing definition renders several provisions "unworkable", further saying that this definition was "not compatible" with several statutory provisions enacted by both Parliament and State legislatures.

The government has argued that the intent of the legislative policy was always to "protect only those who face severe social exclusion due to biological reasons" for no fault or choice of their own. It went on to say that the purpose of the legislation was never to "protect each and every class of persons with various gender identities, self-perceived sex/gender identities or gender fluidities".

Noting these aspects, the government argued for a "precise" definition of transgender people, saying, "The protection and benefits that are provided under the Act are vast in nature, and therefore, care has to be taken that such identification cannot be extended on the basis of any acquirable characteristics or personal choice or claimed self-perceived identity of an individual."

THE GIST

The Amendment Bill proposes removing the 'right to self-perceived gender identity' and introducing a new definition of a 'transgender person', focusing on socio-cultural identities, intersex variations, and congenital conditions.

It introduces a medical board-led certification process, requires scrutiny by the District Magistrate, mandates a revised certificate after SRS, and expands provisions on offences and punishments.

Transgender activists argue the changes contradict the NALSA judgment on self-determination of gender, could exclude sections of the community, and have been brought without consultation.

19Mar. What is new in transgender rights Bill?
ट्रांसजेंडर अधिकार विधेयक में क्या नया है?

Transgender identity and proposed amendments
ट्रांसजेंडर पहचान और प्रस्तावित संशोधन



- Twelve years after the Supreme Court recognised the transgender identity and held that **“self-determination of gender is an integral part of personal autonomy and self-expression”**, falling within the realm of personal liberty guaranteed by the Constitution of India, the Union government on **March 13** introduced a Bill in the Lok Sabha to take away transgender people’s **“right to self-perceived gender identity”** and redefine a “transgender person” by proposing amendments to the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, **2019**.

बारह वर्ष बाद जब सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने ट्रांसजेंडर पहचान को मान्यता दी और कहा कि **“लिंग की आत्म-निर्धारण व्यक्तिगत स्वायत्तता और आत्म-अभिव्यक्ति का अभिन्न हिस्सा है”**, जो भारत के संविधान द्वारा प्रदत्त व्यक्तिगत स्वतंत्रता के दायरे में आता है, केंद्र सरकार ने **13 मार्च** को लोकसभा में एक विधेयक पेश किया ताकि ट्रांसजेंडर लोगों के **“स्वयं की लिंग पहचान के अधिकार”** को समाप्त किया जा सके और ट्रांसजेंडर व्यक्ति को पुनर्परिभाषित किया जा सके, जिसके लिए ट्रांसजेंडर व्यक्तियों (अधिकारों का संरक्षण) अधिनियम, **2019** में संशोधन प्रस्तावित किए गए।

- Transgender community leaders, activists, and people across the country reacted with shock, arguing that the amendments go against the fundamental principles underlying their long struggle for recognition.

देशभर में ट्रांसजेंडर समुदाय के नेता, कार्यकर्ता और लोग स्तब्ध रह गए और उन्होंने कहा कि ये संशोधन उनके लंबे संघर्ष के मूल सिद्धांतों के खिलाफ हैं।

What are the changes being brought about?

क्या बदलाव किए जा रहे हैं?

- The key changes being proposed have to do with the definition of a “transgender person” and the expansion of the section on offences against transgender people and punishments for them.

प्रस्तावित मुख्य बदलाव ट्रांसजेंडर व्यक्ति की परिभाषा और ट्रांसजेंडर लोगों के खिलाफ अपराधों और उनके लिए दंड से जुड़े प्रावधानों के विस्तार से संबंधित हैं।

- In the amendment Bill, the Centre has called for the omission of sub-section (2) of Section 4 of the Act, which says: **“A person recognised as transgender under sub-section (1) shall have a right to self-perceived gender identity.”**

संशोधन विधेयक में केंद्र ने अधिनियम की धारा 4 की उपधारा (2) को हटाने का प्रस्ताव किया है, जिसमें कहा गया है: **“उपधारा (1) के तहत ट्रांसजेंडर के रूप में मान्यता प्राप्त व्यक्ति को स्वयं की लिंग पहचान का अधिकार होगा।”**

- In addition to this, a new definition of ‘transgender person’ is proposed.

इसके अतिरिक्त, ट्रांसजेंडर व्यक्ति की एक नई परिभाषा प्रस्तावित की गई है।

- It describes them as people **“having such socio-cultural identities as kinner, hijra, aravani, and jogta, or eunuch”**, people with intersex variations, and people who have **“congenital variations”** in **“male or female development”** in their **“primary sexual characteristics, external genitalia, chromosomal patterns, gonadal development, endogenous hormone production or response or such other medical conditions”**.

इसमें उन्हें ऐसे लोगों के रूप में वर्णित किया गया है जिनकी **“सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक पहचान जैसे किन्नर, हिजड़ा, अरावानी और जोगता या नपुंसक”** हो, इंटरसेक्स भिन्नता वाले लोग, और वे लोग जिनमें **“जन्मजात भिन्नताएं”** हों **“पुरुष या महिला विकास”** में, उनके **“प्राथमिक यौन लक्षणों, बाह्य जननांगों, गुणसूत्र पैटर्न, गोनैडल विकास, अंतर्जात हार्मोन उत्पादन या प्रतिक्रिया या अन्य चिकित्सीय स्थितियों”** में।

- The definition also includes any person or child who has been **“compelled to assume, adopt, or outwardly present a transgender identity, by mutilation, emasculation, castration, amputation, or any surgical, chemical, or hormonal procedure or otherwise”**.

इस परिभाषा में ऐसे व्यक्ति या बच्चे भी शामिल हैं जिन्हें **“विकृति, नपुंसकता, बधियाकरण, अंग विच्छेदन या किसी शल्य, रासायनिक या हार्मोनल प्रक्रिया या अन्य तरीके से ट्रांसजेंडर पहचान अपनाने के लिए मजबूर किया गया हो”**।

- However, it adds that this definition shall not include **“persons with different sexual orientations and self-perceived sexual identities”**.

हालांकि इसमें यह भी जोड़ा गया है कि इस परिभाषा में **“भिन्न यौन अभिविन्यास और स्वयं की यौन पहचान वाले व्यक्ति शामिल नहीं होंगे”**।



- Compared to this definition, the Act currently defines transgender person as someone **“whose gender does not match with the gender assigned at birth and includes trans men and trans women (whether or not such person has undergone Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS) or hormone therapy or laser therapy or such other therapy), person with intersex variations, genderqueer and person having such socio-cultural identities as kinner, hijra, aravani and jogta.”**

इस परिभाषा की तुलना में वर्तमान अधिनियम ट्रांसजेंडर व्यक्ति को उस व्यक्ति के रूप में परिभाषित करता है **“जिसका लिंग जन्म के समय निर्धारित लिंग से मेल नहीं खाता और इसमें ट्रांस पुरुष और ट्रांस महिला (चाहे उस व्यक्ति ने लिंग परिवर्तन सर्जरी या हार्मोन थेरेपी या लेजर थेरेपी या अन्य कोई थेरेपी करवाई हो या नहीं), इंटरसेक्स व्यक्ति, जेंडरक्रियर और ऐसे लोग जिनकी सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक पहचान किन्नर, हिजड़ा, अरावानी और जोगता हो”** शामिल हैं।

Further amendments and procedural changes आगे के संशोधन और प्रक्रियात्मक परिवर्तन

- Further, a specific definition for **“people with intersex variations”** has also been proposed to be omitted.
इसके अलावा, **“इंटरसेक्स भिन्नताओं वाले लोगों”** के लिए एक विशेष परिभाषा को भी हटाने का प्रस्ताव किया गया है।
- Apart from these, the Bill suggests introducing the terminology for **“authority”**, defining it as **“a medical board, headed by a Chief Medical Officer or a Deputy Chief Medical Officer, as may be appointed by the Central government, State government or Union territory Administration”**.
इनके अलावा, विधेयक **“प्राधिकरण”** शब्दावली को शामिल करने का सुझाव देता है, जिसे **“एक चिकित्सा बोर्ड, जिसकी अध्यक्षता मुख्य चिकित्सा अधिकारी या उप मुख्य चिकित्सा अधिकारी करेंगे, जिन्हें केंद्र सरकार, राज्य सरकार या केंद्र शासित प्रदेश प्रशासन द्वारा नियुक्त किया जा सकता है”** के रूप में परिभाषित किया गया है।
- Another key amendment is on the issuance of **transgender certificates**.
एक अन्य प्रमुख संशोधन **ट्रांसजेंडर प्रमाणपत्र** जारी करने से संबंधित है।
- While the law currently mandates the **District Magistrate** to issue a certificate based on a **self-declared affidavit** and without **physical or medical examination**, the proposed amendment requires the District Magistrate to **“examine the recommendation of the authority”**, and decide, if deemed necessary or desirable, and after consulting other **medical experts**, before issuing the certificate.
जहाँ वर्तमान कानून **जिला मजिस्ट्रेट** को **स्वयं घोषित हलफनामे** के आधार पर और बिना किसी **शारीरिक या चिकित्सीय जांच** के प्रमाणपत्र जारी करने का निर्देश देता है, वहीं प्रस्तावित संशोधन जिला मजिस्ट्रेट को **“प्राधिकरण की सिफारिश की जांच करने”** और अन्य **चिकित्सा विशेषज्ञों** से परामर्श के बाद निर्णय लेने की आवश्यकता बताता है।
- A new section has also been proposed, which confers the right of transgender people to have their **•rst names changed in birth certificates and other identification documents**, with the caveat that the person should be a **“transgender person”** under the revised definition.
एक नई धारा भी प्रस्तावित की गई है, जो ट्रांसजेंडर लोगों को **जन्म प्रमाणपत्र और अन्य पहचान दस्तावेजों में अपना पहला नाम बदलने का अधिकार** देती है, इस शर्त के साथ कि व्यक्ति संशोधित परिभाषा के तहत **ट्रांसजेंडर व्यक्ति** होना चाहिए।
- The Bill also mandates that individuals apply for a **revised gender certificate after undergoing SRS**, as opposed to the current law, which leaves this to the individual.
विधेयक यह भी अनिवार्य करता है कि व्यक्ति **एसआरएस के बाद संशोधित लिंग प्रमाणपत्र के लिए आवेदन करें**, जबकि वर्तमान कानून इसे व्यक्ति के विवेक पर छोड़ता है।
- Additionally, medical institutions performing **SRS** would be required to furnish details of such procedures to the **District Magistrate**.
इसके अतिरिक्त, **एसआरएस** करने वाले चिकित्सा संस्थानों को ऐसी प्रक्रियाओं का विवरण **जिला मजिस्ट्रेट** को देना आवश्यक होगा।
- The Bill also significantly expands provisions relating to **offences and penalties**, introducing **graded punishments**, including **rigorous imprisonment up to life** and **•nes of up to ₹5 lakh**, for crimes against transgender persons and children.



विधेयक अपराधों और दंड से संबंधित प्रावधानों का विस्तार करता है, जिसमें क्रमिक दंड, आजीवन कठोर कारावास और ₹5 लाख तक का जुर्माना शामिल है।

- However, it remains to be seen what further changes could come through in the form of **Rules**, if this amendment Bill is passed by **Parliament**.
हालांकि, यह देखना बाकी है कि यदि यह संशोधन विधेयक संसद द्वारा पारित हो जाता है, तो नियमों के रूप में और क्या बदलाव आ सकते हैं।

How did the amendment Bill come about? संशोधन विधेयक कैसे आया?

- Union Social Justice Minister **Virendra Kumar** introduced the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, **2026**, in Lok Sabha on **March 13**.
केंद्रीय सामाजिक न्याय मंत्री **वीरेन्द्र कुमार** ने ट्रांसजेंडर व्यक्तियों (अधिकारों का संरक्षण) संशोधन विधेयक, **2026**, को **13 मार्च** को लोकसभा में प्रस्तुत किया।
- Days earlier, media reports cited that the **Union Cabinet** had approved amendments to the **2019 Act**, though details were not disclosed.
कुछ दिन पहले, मीडिया रिपोर्टों में बताया गया था कि **केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल** ने **2019 अधिनियम** में संशोधनों को मंजूरी दे दी है।
- It remains unclear how long the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment** and the Centre had been preparing these changes.
यह स्पष्ट नहीं है कि **सामाजिक न्याय और अधिकारिता मंत्रालय** और केंद्र इन परिवर्तनों की तैयारी कब से कर रहे थे।
- Transgender activists, including Tamil Nadu-based **Grace Banu**, who had been central to the drafting of the **2019 Act**, told The Hindu that the amendments seem to have been brought in without **consultation with the community**.
ट्रांसजेंडर कार्यकर्ताओं, जिनमें **ग्रेस बानू** शामिल हैं, ने बताया कि ये संशोधन **समुदाय से परामर्श के बिना** लाए गए प्रतीत होते हैं।
- Several leaders and members have described their initial reaction as one of “**shock**”, calling the changes “**sudden**”.
कई नेताओं और सदस्यों ने अपनी प्रतिक्रिया को “**आघात**” बताया और बदलावों को “**अचानक**” कहा।
- Interestingly, just hours before the Bill was introduced, the Ministry had posted on X, promoting the **2019 version of the Act** and highlighting the **right to self-perceived gender identity** as a key feature.
दिलचस्प बात यह है कि विधेयक पेश होने से कुछ घंटे पहले ही मंत्रालय ने **2019 अधिनियम** को बढ़ावा दिया और **स्वयं की लिंग पहचान के अधिकार** को प्रमुख विशेषता बताया।
- A few days back, on **March 4**, the Ministry had posted, “**The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, safeguards the rights and dignity of transgender persons.**”
कुछ दिन पहले, **4 मार्च** को मंत्रालय ने पोस्ट किया था, “**ट्रांसजेंडर व्यक्तियों (अधिकारों का संरक्षण) अधिनियम, 2019, ट्रांसजेंडर व्यक्तियों के अधिकारों और गरिमा की रक्षा करता है।**”
- In **February**, the **National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT)** informed the Supreme Court that it had developed **teacher training modules** to build sensitivity towards transgender issues.
फरवरी में, **राष्ट्रीय शैक्षिक अनुसंधान और प्रशिक्षण परिषद** ने सुप्रीम कोर्ट को बताया कि उसने ट्रांसजेंडर मुद्दों के प्रति संवेदनशीलता बढ़ाने के लिए **शिक्षक प्रशिक्षण मॉड्यूल** विकसित किए हैं।
- It substantiated this by saying that the **2024 module** specifically spoke of the **difference between gender and sexuality** and discussed the idea that **sex identity ascribed at birth may be at odds with a person's perceived sex identity at a later stage**.
इसने यह बताते हुए इसे पुष्ट किया कि **2024 मॉड्यूल** में विशेष रूप से **लिंग और यौनिकता के बीच अंतर** की बात की गई और यह विचार रखा गया कि **जन्म के समय निर्धारित लिंग पहचान बाद में व्यक्ति की अनुभूत लिंग पहचान से भिन्न हो सकती है**।
- The NCERT added that it had been conducting **capacity building and training programmes** based on similar modules till as late as **November 2025**, with more planned this year.
एनसीईआरटी ने यह भी कहा कि वह **क्षमता निर्माण और प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम** ऐसे ही मॉड्यूल के आधार पर **नवंबर 2025 तक** संचालित करता रहा है और इस वर्ष भी और कार्यक्रम प्रस्तावित हैं।



Why is there a concern? चिंता क्यों है?

- A primary concern raised by the transgender community is the omission of the **right to self-perceived gender identity**, followed by the new definition, which appears to contradict the principles laid down in the landmark **2014 NALSA judgment** recognising the **right to self-determination of gender**.
ट्रांसजेंडर समुदाय द्वारा उठाई गई मुख्य चिंता स्वयं की लिंग पहचान के अधिकार को हटाना है, और इसके बाद नई परिभाषा, जो ऐतिहासिक **2014 नालसा निर्णय** में स्थापित लिंग के आत्म-निर्धारण के अधिकार के सिद्धांतों के विपरीत प्रतीत होती है।
- Ms. **Banu** said, “there is an issue that the government seems to be including only those in the definition of transgender who may have been accommodated in **Hindutva’s history** and is using terms that indicate **Hindutva’s accommodation of transgender identity** like ‘**hijra, kinner, aravani,**’ etc.”
सुश्री **बानू** ने कहा, “एक समस्या यह है कि सरकार ट्रांसजेंडर की परिभाषा में केवल उन लोगों को शामिल करती दिख रही है जिन्हें **हिंदुत्व के इतिहास** में स्थान मिला है और ऐसे शब्दों का उपयोग कर रही है जो **हिंदुत्व द्वारा ट्रांसजेंडर पहचान को समायोजित करने का संकेत देते हैं जैसे ‘हिजड़ा, किन्नर, अरावानी’ आदि।**”
- And there seems to be some sort of refusal to use respectful terms that have evolved for transgender people in other parts of the country, like in Tamil Nadu, where there is now a vocabulary of **thirunagai and thirunambi**.
और ऐसा प्रतीत होता है कि देश के अन्य हिस्सों में विकसित सम्मानजनक शब्दों का उपयोग करने से भी इनकार किया जा रहा है, जैसे तमिलनाडु में अब **थिरुनगई और थिरुनम्बी** जैसी शब्दावली है।
- Dr. **Aqsa Shaikh** has raised the issue of transgender people across the country having to now deal with the existential question of whether they continue to remain transgender as per the proposed new definition, while another Delhi-based transwoman spoke of concerns that this might create divides within the community about who has legitimacy to use the transgender identity.
डॉ. **अक्सा शेख** ने यह मुद्दा उठाया कि देशभर के ट्रांसजेंडर लोगों को अब इस अस्तित्वगत प्रश्न से जूझना पड़ेगा कि क्या वे प्रस्तावित नई परिभाषा के अनुसार ट्रांसजेंडर बने रहेंगे, जबकि दिल्ली की एक ट्रांस महिला ने चिंता जताई कि इससे समुदाय में यह विभाजन पैदा हो सकता है कि ट्रांसजेंडर पहचान का उपयोग करने का अधिकार किसे है।

What does the NALSA judgment say? नालसा निर्णय क्या कहता है?

- The landmark **2014 judgment** in **National Legal Services Authority vs Union of India**, delivered by Justices **K.S. Radhakrishnan** and **A.K. Sikri**, remains central to India’s understanding of gender identity.
ऐतिहासिक **2014 निर्णय नेशनल लीगल सर्विसेज अथॉरिटी बनाम भारत संघ**, जिसे न्यायमूर्ति **के.एस. राधाकृष्णन** और **ए.के. सिकरी** ने दिया था, भारत में लिंग पहचान की समझ का केंद्र बना हुआ है।
- When the **Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019** was introduced, the **Statement of Objects and Reasons** in it noted that it flowed from this very judgment of the Supreme Court, adding that one of the principal goals of bringing this Bill was to “**confer right upon transgender persons to be recognised as such, and a right to self-perceived gender identity**”.
जब **ट्रांसजेंडर व्यक्तियों (अधिकारों का संरक्षण) विधेयक, 2019** पेश किया गया, तो उसके उद्देश्य और कारणों के विवरण में उल्लेख किया गया कि यह सुप्रीम कोर्ट के इसी निर्णय से उत्पन्न हुआ है और इसका एक प्रमुख उद्देश्य था “**ट्रांसजेंडर व्यक्तियों को मान्यता देने का अधिकार प्रदान करना और स्वयं की लिंग पहचान का अधिकार देना।**”

NALSA judgment and government reasoning नालसा निर्णय और सरकार का तर्क

- In the judgment that notably recognised a **third gender beyond male and female**, and the **fundamental right of persons to self-determination of gender identity**, the court accepted the principle that the concepts of **gender and sexuality are different** and that **gender**



identity is on a spectrum.

उस निर्णय में जिसने पुरुष और महिला से परे तीसरे लिंग को मान्यता दी और लिंग पहचान के आत्म-निर्धारण के मौलिक अधिकार को स्वीकार किया, न्यायालय ने यह सिद्धांत स्वीकार किया कि लिंग और यौनिकता अलग अवधारणाएँ हैं और लिंग पहचान एक स्पेक्ट्रम पर होती है।

- The court said, “Gender identity is one of the most fundamental aspects of life which refers to a person’s intrinsic sense of being male, female or transgender or transsexual persons.”

न्यायालय ने कहा, “लिंग पहचान जीवन के सबसे मौलिक पहलुओं में से एक है जो किसी व्यक्ति के पुरुष, महिला या ट्रांसजेंडर होने की आंतरिक भावना को दर्शाती है।”

- The judgment explained that “a person’s sex is usually assigned at birth”, but a relatively small group of persons may be born with bodies which incorporate both or certain aspects of both male and female physiology.

निर्णय में बताया गया कि “किसी व्यक्ति का लिंग आमतौर पर जन्म के समय निर्धारित किया जाता है”, लेकिन कुछ लोग ऐसे होते हैं जिनके शरीर में पुरुष और महिला दोनों की शारीरिक विशेषताएँ होती हैं।

- At times, genital anatomy problems may arise in certain persons and their innate perception of themselves is not in conformity with the sex assigned to them at birth and may include pre and post-operative transsexual persons and also persons who do not choose to undergo or do not have access to operation and also includes persons who cannot undergo successful operations.

कभी-कभी कुछ व्यक्तियों में जननांग संरचना से जुड़ी समस्याएँ होती हैं और उनकी आंतरिक पहचान जन्म के समय निर्धारित लिंग से मेल नहीं खाती, इसमें सर्जरी से पहले और बाद के ट्रांससेक्सुअल व्यक्ति और वे लोग भी शामिल हैं जो सर्जरी नहीं कराते या जिनके पास इसकी सुविधा नहीं होती।

- On sexual orientation, the court defined it as an individual’s enduring emotional, romantic, or physical attraction to others.

यौन अभिविन्यास के संदर्भ में न्यायालय ने इसे किसी व्यक्ति का दूसरों के प्रति स्थायी भावनात्मक, रोमांटिक या शारीरिक आकर्षण बताया।

- Importantly, the court held that no person should be forced to undergo medical procedures — such as SRS, sterilisation, or hormone therapy — as a condition for legal recognition of their gender identity.

महत्वपूर्ण रूप से, न्यायालय ने कहा कि किसी व्यक्ति को लिंग पहचान की कानूनी मान्यता के लिए एसआरएस, नसबंदी या हार्मोन थेरेपी जैसी चिकित्सा प्रक्रियाओं के लिए मजबूर नहीं किया जा सकता।

- It concluded that self-determination of gender is integral to personal autonomy, dignity, and freedom under Article 21 of the Constitution.

इसने निष्कर्ष निकाला कि लिंग का आत्म-निर्धारण संविधान के अनुच्छेद 21 के तहत व्यक्तिगत स्वायत्तता, गरिमा और स्वतंत्रता का अभिन्न हिस्सा है।

- Justice A.K. Sikri, in his judgment concurring with Justice K.S. Radhakrishnan, expanded on this, saying, “If democracy is based on the recognition of the individuality and dignity of man, as a fortiori we have to recognise the right of a human being to choose his sex/gender identity which is integral to his/her personality and is one of the most basic aspects of self-determination, dignity and freedom.”

न्यायमूर्ति ए.के. सिकरी, जिन्होंने न्यायमूर्ति के.एस. राधाकृष्णन के साथ सहमति जताई, ने कहा, “यदि लोकतंत्र व्यक्ति की गरिमा और व्यक्तित्व की मान्यता पर आधारित है, तो हमें यह भी स्वीकार करना होगा कि व्यक्ति को अपने लिंग की पहचान चुनने का अधिकार है, जो उसकी पहचान और आत्मनिर्धारण, गरिमा और स्वतंत्रता का मूल तत्व है।”

What is the government’s reasoning?

सरकार का तर्क क्या है?

- In the Statement of Objects and Reasons, the government said that since the 2019 Act was enacted, “certain doubts and difficulties” have arisen in implementing it with regard to the definition of transgender persons and how the identification of such persons is to be done”.

उद्देश्य और कारणों के विवरण में सरकार ने कहा कि 2019 अधिनियम लागू होने के बाद इसके क्रियान्वयन में “कुछ संदेह और कठिनाइयाँ” सामने आई हैं, विशेषकर “ट्रांसजेंडर व्यक्तियों की परिभाषा और उनकी पहचान कैसे की जाए” को लेकर।



- It noted that the existing definition of “transgender person” was “vague”, arguing that this made it “impossible to identify the genuine oppressed persons” to whom the benefits of the Act are intended to reach.
सरकार ने कहा कि वर्तमान “ट्रांसजेंडर व्यक्ति” की परिभाषा “अस्पष्ट” है, जिससे “वास्तविक रूप से उत्पीड़ित व्यक्तियों की पहचान करना असंभव हो जाता है”।
- It added that this existing definition renders several provisions “unworkable”, further saying that this definition was “not compatible” with several statutory provisions enacted by both Parliament and State legislatures.
इसने यह भी कहा कि यह परिभाषा कई प्रावधानों को “अव्यवहार्य” बना देती है और यह “अन्य विधायी प्रावधानों के अनुरूप नहीं” है।
- The government has argued that the intent of the legislative policy was always to “protect only those who face severe social exclusion due to biological reasons” for no fault or choice of their own.
सरकार ने तर्क दिया कि नीति का उद्देश्य हमेशा “उन लोगों की रक्षा करना था जो जैविक कारणों से गंभीर सामाजिक बहिष्कार का सामना करते हैं”।
- It went on to say that the purpose of the legislation was never to “protect each and every class of persons with various gender identities, self-perceived sex/gender identities or gender identities”.
सरकार ने आगे कहा कि इस कानून का उद्देश्य कभी भी “हर प्रकार की लिंग पहचान या स्वयं की लिंग पहचान रखने वाले सभी वर्गों की रक्षा करना” नहीं था।
- Noting these aspects, the government argued for a “precise” definition of transgender people, saying, “The protection and benefits that are provided under the Act are vast in nature, and therefore, care has to be taken that such identification cannot be extended on the basis of any acquirable characteristics or personal choice or claimed self-perceived identity of an individual.”
इन बिंदुओं को ध्यान में रखते हुए सरकार ने ट्रांसजेंडर की “सटीक परिभाषा” की वकालत की और कहा, “अधिनियम के तहत दिए गए संरक्षण और लाभ व्यापक हैं, इसलिए यह सुनिश्चित करना होगा कि पहचान किसी प्राप्त विशेषता, व्यक्तिगत चयन या स्वयं की घोषित पहचान के आधार पर न हो।”

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| 19Mar | SC asks Bengal if ED should ‘merely watch’ as CM disrupts I-PAC search सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने बंगाल से पूछा कि क्या ED को सिर्फ ‘देखना’ चाहिए जब CM I-PAC की तलाशी में बाधा डालती है |
| 19Mar | Speaker irked by Minister’s absence in Question Hour स्पीकर ने प्रश्नकाल में मंत्री की अनुपस्थिति पर नाराज़गी जताई |
| 19Mar | NCERT book ban, a chapter on judicial transparency एनसीईआरटी पुस्तक प्रतिबंध, न्यायिक पारदर्शिता पर एक अध्याय |
| 19Mar | India’s national symbols under scrutiny over use, meaning, and law भारत के राष्ट्रीय प्रतीक उपयोग, अर्थ और कानून को लेकर जांच के दायरे में |



Gujarat government tables Uniform Civil Code Bill in Assembly

19Mar. Gujarat government tables Uniform Civil Code Bill in Assembly
गुजरात सरकार ने विधानसभा में यूनिफॉर्म सिविल कोड बिल पेश किया

GS II: Polity
The Hindu Bureau

AHMEDABAD

The Gujarat government on Wednesday tabled the 'Gujarat Uniform Civil Code, 2026' Bill in the State Assembly which seeks to regulate laws related to marriage, divorce, succession and live-in relationships irrespective of religion, caste, creed, or gender.

The Bill was tabled by Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi a day after a State-appointed panel submitted its final report on implementation of a Uniform Civil Code in the State to Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel.

The bill is expected to be taken up for discussion and approval on March 25, the

last day of the Budget Session.

However, the Bill document, uploaded on the official website of the Assembly, states that it will not apply to members of Scheduled Tribes and certain groups whose customary rights are protected under the Constitution.

Bomb threat

Meanwhile, a bomb threat email sent to the Assembly on Wednesday morning prompted authorities to evacuate the complex and launch a massive security sweep, just minutes before the Budget Session proceedings were set to begin. The police said no suspicious objects had been found during search.

the Budget Session.

बिल की चर्चा और मंजूरी के लिए 25 मार्च को, बजट सत्र के आखिरी दिन, विचार किए जाने की संभावना है।

- However, the Bill document, uploaded on the official website of the Assembly, states that it will not apply to members of **Scheduled Tribes** and certain groups whose **customary rights** are protected under the Constitution.

हालांकि, विधानसभा की आधिकारिक वेबसाइट पर अपलोड किए गए बिल दस्तावेज़ में कहा गया है कि यह अनुसूचित जनजातियों के सदस्यों और कुछ समूहों पर लागू नहीं होगा जिनके रिवाज़ी अधिकार संविधान के तहत संरक्षित हैं।

Bomb threat बम धमकी

- Meanwhile, a **bomb threat email** sent to the Assembly on Wednesday morning prompted authorities to **evacuate the complex** and launch a **massive security sweep**, just minutes before the Budget Session proceedings were set to begin.
इस बीच, बुधवार सुबह विधानसभा को भेजे गए **बम धमकी ईमेल** ने अधिकारियों को **संपूर्ण परिसर खाली करने** और **भारी सुरक्षा जांच** शुरू करने के लिए मजबूर कर दिया, बजट सत्र की कार्यवाही शुरू होने से सिर्फ कुछ मिनट पहले।
- The police said no suspicious objects had been found during the search.
पुलिस ने कहा कि जांच के दौरान कोई संदिग्ध वस्तु नहीं पाई गई।



LS extends term of panel examining simultaneous polls

GS II: Polity

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The term of the Joint Parliamentary Committee examining the Bills seeking to introduce simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies was extended once again on Wednesday.

The Lok Sabha extended the tenure of the panel, headed by senior BJP MP P.P. Chaudhary, till the last week of the Monsoon Session. The term of the panel had been extended earlier in the Winter Session. The extension, moved by Mr. Chaudhary, was adopted by a voice vote.

The simultaneous polls Bills – The Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill, 2024, and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024, were introduced on December 17, 2024 in the Lok Sabha and sent for Parliamentary scrutiny. The 39-member multi-party panel has so far held 17 meetings.

Former Chief Justices B.R. Gavai, Sanjiv Khanna, D.Y. Chandrachud, U.U. La-

lit, and J.S. Khehar; senior lawyer-MPs Kapil Sibal and Abhishek Singhvi; senior leaders Ghulam Nabi Azad and M. Veerappa Moily; former IMF First Deputy Managing Director Gita Gopinath; and Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council (EAC-PM) member Sanjeev Sanyal, among others, have appeared before the panel.

Reduction of personnel
The EAC-PM released a working paper titled "Estimating Reduction in Polling Personnel Deployment Under Simultaneous Elections" by Mr. Sanyal and EAC-PM Joint Director Satvik Dev, who argued that "One Nation, One Election" may reduce polling personnel deployment by 28%.

The working paper also argued that simultaneous polls could save around 1.4 crore personnel-days of polling officials over a five-year election cycle, taking into account that two days each were required for their training and deployment.

- The 39-member multi-party panel has so far held 17 meetings. 39-सदस्यीय बहु-पार्टी पैनल ने अब तक 17 बैठकें की हैं।
- Former Chief Justices B.R. Gavai, Sanjiv Khanna, D.Y. Chandrachud, U.U. Lalit, and J.S. Khehar; senior lawyer-MPs Kapil Sibal and Abhishek Singhvi; senior leaders Ghulam Nabi Azad and M. Veerappa Moily; former IMF First Deputy Managing Director Gita Gopinath; and Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council (EAC-PM) member Sanjeev Sanyal, among others, have appeared before the panel. पूर्व मुख्य न्यायाधीश बी.आर. गवाई, संजीव खन्ना, डी.वाई. चंद्रचूड़, यू.यू. ललित और जे.एस. खेहर; वरिष्ठ वकील-सांसद कपिल सिब्बल और अभिषेक सिंहवी; वरिष्ठ नेता गुलाम नबी आज़ाद और एम. वीरप्पा मोइली; पूर्व आईएमएफ के प्रथम उप प्रबंध निदेशक गीता गोपीनाथ; और प्रधानमंत्री के आर्थिक सलाहकार परिषद (EAC-PM) सदस्य संजीव सान्याल, आदि पैनल के सामने उपस्थित हुए हैं।

Reduction of personnel कर्मचारियों में कमी

- The EAC-PM released a working paper titled "Estimating Reduction in Polling Personnel Deployment Under Simultaneous Elections" by Mr. Sanyal and EAC-PM Joint Director

19Mar. LS extends term of panel examining simultaneous polls संसद ने समानांतर चुनावों की जांच कर रहे पैनल की अवधि बढ़ाई

• The term of the Joint Parliamentary Committee examining the Bills seeking to introduce simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies was extended once again on Wednesday.

समानांतर चुनावों को लोकसभा और राज्य विधानसभाओं में लागू करने वाले बिलों की जांच कर रहे संयुक्त संसदीय समिति की अवधि बुधवार को एक बार फिर बढ़ा दी गई।

• The Lok Sabha extended the tenure of the panel, headed by senior BJP MP P.P. Chaudhary, till the last week of the Monsoon Session.

लोकसभा ने वरिष्ठ बीजेपी सांसद पी.पी. चौधरी की अध्यक्षता वाले पैनल की अवधि मानसून सत्र के अंतिम सप्ताह तक बढ़ा दी।

• The term of the panel had been extended earlier in the Winter Session.

पैनल की अवधि पहले सर्दियों के सत्र में बढ़ाई जा चुकी थी।

• The extension, moved by Mr. Chaudhary, was adopted by a voice vote.

यह विस्तार, श्री चौधरी द्वारा प्रस्तावित, वॉइस वोट से अपनाया गया।

• The simultaneous polls Bills — The Constitution (129th Amendment) Bill, 2024, and the Union Territories Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024, were introduced on December 17, 2024 in the Lok Sabha and sent for Parliamentary scrutiny.

समानांतर चुनाव बिल — संविधान (129वां संशोधन) बिल, 2024, और केंद्र शासित प्रदेश कानून (संशोधन) बिल, 2024, को 17 दिसंबर, 2024 को लोकसभा में पेश किया गया और संसदीय समीक्षा के लिए भेजा गया।



Satvik Dev, who argued that **“One Nation, One Election”** may reduce polling personnel deployment by 28%.

EAC-PM ने एक कार्यपत्र जारी किया, जिसका शीर्षक था “समानांतर चुनावों के तहत मतदान कर्मचारियों की तैनाती में कमी का अनुमान”, श्री साम्याल और **EAC-PM संयुक्त निदेशक सात्विक देव** द्वारा, जिन्होंने कहा कि **“वन नेशन, वन इलेक्शन”** से मतदान कर्मचारियों की तैनाती में 28% कमी आ सकती है।

- The working paper also argued that simultaneous polls could save around **1.4 crore personnel-days** of polling officials over a five-year election cycle, taking into account that two days each were required for their **training and deployment**.

कार्यपत्र में यह भी तर्क दिया गया कि समानांतर चुनावों से पांच साल के चुनाव चक्र में मतदान अधिकारियों के लगभग **1.4 करोड़ कर्मी-दिन** बचाए जा सकते हैं, यह मानते हुए कि उनके **प्रशिक्षण और तैनाती** के लिए प्रत्येक को दो दिन की आवश्यकता होती है।

SC asks Bengal if ED should ‘merely watch’ as CM disrupts I-PAC search

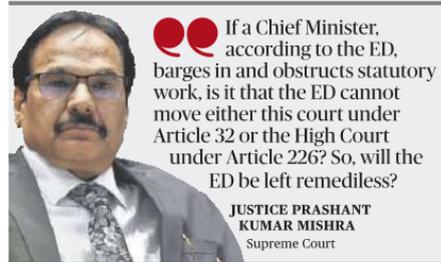
The State government argues that the **ED is not a ‘person’ under Article 32** and said that allowing its plea would undermine federalism; the top court questioned the situation saying the **law cannot allow a vacuum to exist without any remedy**

GS II: Polity

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court asked the West Bengal government on Wednesday if the Directorate of Enforcement (ED) was expected to merely “look and watch” when Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee “barged” in and obstructed ongoing search at the offices of the political consultancy firm I-PAC at Kolkata in January.

The remark from Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra, heading a Bench, was in response to the poll-bound State’s submissions that the ED was neither a “body corporate” nor a “legal or natural person” to approach the apex court under Article 32 of the Constitution claiming violation of its “fundamental rights”. West Bengal, represented by senior advocate Shyam Divan, raised preliminary objections to the maintainability of the ED’s writ petition filed under Article 32,



seeking a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe against Ms. Banerjee and the senior police officers who accompanied her.

“If a Chief Minister, according to the ED, barges in and obstructs statutory work, is it that the ED cannot move either this court under Article 32 or the High Court under Article 226. So, will the ED be left remediless?” Justice Mishra addressed the State government.

“If a Chief Minister, according to the ED, barges in and obstructs statutory work, is it that the ED cannot move either this court under Article 32 or the High Court under Article 226? So, will the ED be left remediless?”

JUSTICE PRASHANT KUMAR MISHRA
Supreme Court

The Bench asked what would be the situation if other Chief Ministers, taking a cue from Ms. Banerjee, started emulating her. “The law has to evolve according to new situations. There cannot be a vacuum. It cannot be that there is no remedy in law to a situation,” Justice Mishra observed.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, for the ED, interjected to point out that the “Chief Minister, who is the head of the government in the State, hindered a lawful ongoing investigation being conducted in the

larger public interest”. The ED has maintained that the raids were part of an investigation into a ₹2,742-crore coal smuggling case.

“There is no question of the civil liberty or rights of the ED which is being trampled upon here. If the ED had a complaint, the Union government can invoke the **original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court under Article 131** of the Constitution and approach the Supreme Court directly,” Mr. Divan said.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Ms. Banerjee, said **an officer of the ED did not have a “fundamental right” to investigate. The power is drawn from the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.**

‘ED as a front’

Mr. Sibal argued that the Centre cannot sue using Article 32 by using the ED as a front. Article 32 was only available to individuals wishing to approach the top court against en-

croachments by the state and its agencies on her civil rights.

If Central agencies, government departments and one or other instrumentalities of the state were allowed to approach the court under Article 32, they would start filing petitions against each other and private citizens.

“The principle of federalism, a basic feature of the Constitution, would be in tatters. States are not mere appendages to the Centre. Courts must be on guard against the conscious whittling down of power of the States by the Centre,” Mr. Divan submitted.

“If Parliament wants to confer an agency the power to sue, it would confer the power specifically. Investigation agencies are not ‘body corporates’ with a power to sue,” Mr. Divan said, requesting the apex court to refer the case to a Constitution Bench.

The court scheduled the next hearing on March 24.

19Mar. SC asks Bengal if ED should ‘merely watch’ as CM disrupts I-PAC search

सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने बंगाल से पूछा कि क्या ED को सिर्फ ‘देखना’ चाहिए जब CM I-PAC की तलाशी में बाधा डालती है

- The State government argues that the **ED is not a “person” under Article 32** and said that allowing its plea would undermine **federalism**; the top court questioned the situation saying the law cannot allow a vacuum to exist without any remedy.
राज्य सरकार का तर्क है कि **ED अनुच्छेद 32** के तहत “व्यक्ति” नहीं है और कहा कि उसकी याचिका को



अनुमति देने से **संघवाद** कमजोर होगा; शीर्ष अदालत ने इस स्थिति पर सवाल उठाया और कहा कि कानून ऐसा शून्य नहीं होने दे सकता जिसमें कोई उपाय न हो।

- The **Supreme Court** asked the West Bengal government on Wednesday if the **Directorate of Enforcement (ED)** was expected to merely “look and watch” when **Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee** “barged” in and obstructed ongoing search at the offices of the political consultancy firm **I-PAC** at Kolkata in January.

सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने बुधवार को पश्चिम बंगाल सरकार से पूछा कि क्या **नियंत्रण निदेशालय (ED)** को केवल “देखने और देखने” की उम्मीद की जानी चाहिए थी जब **मुख्यमंत्री ममता बनर्जी** जनवरी में कोलकाता में राजनीतिक परामर्श कंपनी **I-PAC** के कार्यालयों में चल रही तलाशी में “हस्तक्षेप” कर रही थीं।

- The remark from **Justice Prashant Kumar Mishra**, heading a Bench, was in response to the poll-bound State’s submissions that the **ED** was neither a “body corporate” nor a “legal or natural person” to approach the apex court under **Article 32** of the Constitution claiming violation of its “fundamental rights”.

न्यायमूर्ति प्रशांत कुमार मिश्रा की टिप्पणी, जो एक बेंच की अध्यक्षता कर रहे थे, मतदान-संबंधी राज्य की प्रस्तुतियों के जवाब में थी कि **ED** न तो “कॉर्पोरेट संस्था” है और न ही “कानूनी या प्राकृतिक व्यक्ति” है जो संविधान के **अनुच्छेद 32** के तहत अपनी “मौलिक अधिकारों” के उल्लंघन का दावा करते हुए शीर्ष अदालत से संपर्क कर सके।

- West Bengal, represented by senior advocate **Shyam Divan**, raised preliminary objections to the maintainability of the **ED’s writ petition** filed under **Article 32**, seeking a **Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)** probe against Ms. Banerjee and the senior police officers who accompanied her.

पश्चिम बंगाल, वरिष्ठ अधिवक्ता **श्याम दिवान** द्वारा प्रतिनिधित्व किया गया, ने **ED की रिट याचिका** की स्वीकार्यता पर प्रारंभिक आपत्ति उठाई, जिसे **अनुच्छेद 32** के तहत दायर किया गया था, जिसमें **केंद्रीय जांच ब्यूरो (CBI)** से श्रीमती बनर्जी और उनके साथ गए वरिष्ठ पुलिस अधिकारियों की जांच करने का अनुरोध किया गया था।

- “If a **Chief Minister**, according to the ED, barges in and obstructs statutory work, is it that the ED cannot move either this court under **Article 32** or the **High Court** under **Article 226**. So, will the ED be left remediless? This (Ms. Banerjee’s alleged actions) is an unusual situation, an unhappy situation. This has not happened before,” **Justice Mishra** addressed the State government.

“अगर **मुख्यमंत्री**, ED के अनुसार, हस्तक्षेप करते हैं और वैधानिक कार्य में बाधा डालते हैं, तो क्या ED इस अदालत के पास **अनुच्छेद 32** के तहत या **उच्च न्यायालय** के पास **अनुच्छेद 226** के तहत नहीं जा सकता। तो, क्या ED के पास कोई उपाय नहीं रहेगा? यह (श्रीमती बनर्जी की कथित कार्रवाई) असामान्य स्थिति है, एक अप्रिय स्थिति है। ऐसा पहले नहीं हुआ है,” **न्यायमूर्ति मिश्रा** ने राज्य सरकार को संबोधित किया।

- The Bench asked what would be the situation if other **Chief Ministers**, taking a cue from Ms. Banerjee, started emulating her.

बेंच ने पूछा कि अगर अन्य **मुख्यमंत्री**, श्रीमती बनर्जी से प्रेरणा लेकर, उनकी नकल करना शुरू कर दें तो स्थिति क्या होगी।

- “The law has to evolve according to new situations. There cannot be a vacuum. It cannot be that there is no remedy in law to a situation,” **Justice Mishra** observed.

“कानून को नई परिस्थितियों के अनुसार विकसित होना चाहिए। कोई शून्यता नहीं हो सकती। यह नहीं हो सकता कि किसी स्थिति के लिए कानून में कोई उपाय न हो,” **न्यायमूर्ति मिश्रा** ने कहा।

- **Solicitor General Tushar Mehta**, for the **ED**, interjected to point out that the “Chief Minister, who is the head of the government in the State, hindered a lawful ongoing investigation being conducted in the larger public interest”.

सॉलिसिटर जनरल तुषार मेहता, ED के लिए, ने हस्तक्षेप किया और कहा कि “मुख्यमंत्री, जो राज्य में सरकार का प्रमुख है, ने व्यापक सार्वजनिक हित में चल रही कानूनी जांच में बाधा डाली।”

- The ED has maintained that the raids were part of an investigation into a **₹2,742-crore coal smuggling case**.

ED ने कहा कि छापे **₹2,742 करोड़ कोयला तस्करी मामले** की जांच का हिस्सा थे।

- “There is no question of the civil liberty or rights of the ED which is being trampled upon here. If the ED had a complaint, the **Union government** can invoke the original jurisdiction of the Supreme Court under **Article 131** of the Constitution and approach the Supreme Court directly,” Mr. Divan said.

“यहां ED के नागरिक स्वतंत्रता या अधिकारों के उल्लंघन का सवाल नहीं है। अगर ED के पास कोई शिकायत



होती, तो केंद्र सरकार संविधान के अनुच्छेद 131 के तहत सुप्रीम कोर्ट के मूल क्षेत्राधिकार का प्रयोग कर सकती थी और सीधे सुप्रीम कोर्ट से संपर्क कर सकती थी,” श्री दिवान ने कहा।

- Senior advocate **Kapil Sibal**, appearing for Ms. Banerjee, said an officer of the **ED** did not have a “fundamental right” to investigate. The power is drawn from the **Prevention of Money Laundering Act**.
वरिष्ठ अधिवक्ता **कपिल सिब्बल**, जो श्रीमती बनर्जी के लिए पेश हुए, ने कहा कि **ED** का कोई अधिकारी जांच करने का “मौलिक अधिकार” नहीं रखता। यह शक्ति **मनी लॉन्ड्रिंग रोकथाम अधिनियम** से आती है।
- **‘ED as a front’**
‘ED को मुखौटा बनाना’
- Mr. Sibal argued that the **Centre** cannot sue using **Article 32** by using the **ED** as a front. श्री सिब्बल ने तर्क दिया कि केंद्र **ED** को मुखौटा बनाकर **अनुच्छेद 32** का उपयोग करके मुकदमा नहीं कर सकता।
- Article 32 was only available to individuals wishing to approach the top court against encroachments by the state and its agencies on her **civil rights**.
अनुच्छेद 32 केवल उन व्यक्तियों के लिए उपलब्ध था जो राज्य और उसकी एजेंसियों द्वारा उनके **नागरिक अधिकारों** पर अतिक्रमण के खिलाफ शीर्ष अदालत तक पहुंचना चाहते थे।
- If Central agencies, government departments and one or other instrumentalities of the state were allowed to approach the court under **Article 32**, they would start filing petitions against each other and private citizens.
अगर केंद्रीय एजेंसियों, सरकारी विभागों और राज्य की किसी अन्य संस्थाओं को **अनुच्छेद 32** के तहत अदालत तक पहुंचने की अनुमति दी जाती, तो वे एक-दूसरे और निजी नागरिकों के खिलाफ याचिकाएँ दायर करना शुरू कर देते।
- “The principle of **federalism**, a basic feature of the Constitution, would be in tatters. States are not mere appendages to the Centre. Courts must be on guard against the conscious whittling down of power of the States by the Centre,” Mr. Divan submitted.
“**संघवाद** का सिद्धांत, जो संविधान की एक मूल विशेषता है, तबाह हो जाएगा। राज्य केवल केंद्र के परिशिष्ट नहीं हैं। अदालतों को केंद्र द्वारा राज्यों की शक्ति को जानबूझकर कम करने के खिलाफ सतर्क रहना चाहिए,” श्री दिवान ने प्रस्तुत किया।
- “If Parliament wants to confer an agency the power to sue, it would confer the power specifically. Investigation agencies are not ‘body corporates’ with a power to sue,” Mr. Divan said, requesting the apex court to refer the case to a **Constitution Bench**.
“अगर संसद किसी एजेंसी को मुकदमा करने की शक्ति देना चाहती है, तो यह शक्ति विशेष रूप से दी जाएगी। जांच एजेंसियां मुकदमा करने वाली ‘कॉर्पोरेट संस्था’ नहीं हैं,” श्री दिवान ने कहा और शीर्ष अदालत से अनुरोध किया कि मामले को **संविधान बेंच** को भेजा जाए।
- The court scheduled the next hearing on **March 24**.
अदालत ने अगली सुनवाई **24 मार्च** को निर्धारित की।



Speaker irked by Minister's absence in Question Hour

GS II: Polity
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Wednesday expressed displeasure over the absence of a senior Minister during the Question Hour when questions about his Ministry were being asked.

Though the Speaker did not name anyone, the question was regarding the Postal Department which comes under Communication Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia.

"Where has the Minister gone," Mr. Birla asked when the question was being fielded by Minister of State for Communication Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani.

When the Minister of State replied that the senior Minister had gone for an "important meeting", Mr. Birla said, "The Question Hour is important, not meeting."

Earlier, the Lok Sabha Speaker had urged members not to speak among themselves when the House takes up obituary references.

19Mar. Speaker irked by Minister's absence in Question Hour स्पीकर ने प्रश्नकाल में मंत्री की अनुपस्थिति पर नाराज़गी जताई

• Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Wednesday expressed displeasure over the absence of a senior Minister during the Question Hour when questions about his Ministry were being asked.

लोकसभा स्पीकर ओम बिर्ला ने बुधवार को प्रश्नकाल के दौरान जब उनके मंत्रालय से संबंधित सवाल पूछे जा रहे थे, एक वरिष्ठ मंत्री की अनुपस्थिति पर नाराज़गी जताई।

• Though the Speaker did not name anyone, the question was regarding the Postal Department which comes under Communication Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia.

हालांकि स्पीकर ने किसी का नाम नहीं लिया, सवाल डाक विभाग के बारे में था, जो संचार मंत्री ज्योतिरादित्य सिंधिया के अधीन आता है।

• "Where has the Minister gone," Mr. Birla asked when the question was being fielded by Minister of State for Communication Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani.

"मंत्री कहां गए हैं," श्री बिर्ला ने पूछा जब सवाल राज्य मंत्री संचार चंद्र शेखर पेम्मासानी द्वारा प्रस्तुत किया जा रहा था।

• When the Minister of State replied that the senior Minister had gone for an "important meeting", Mr. Birla said, "The Question Hour is important, not the meeting."

जब राज्य मंत्री ने जवाब दिया कि वरिष्ठ मंत्री "महत्वपूर्ण बैठक" में गए थे, श्री बिर्ला ने कहा, "प्रश्नकाल महत्वपूर्ण है, बैठक नहीं।"

• Earlier, the Lok Sabha Speaker had urged members not to speak among themselves when the House takes up obituary references.

पहले, लोकसभा स्पीकर ने सदस्यों से अनुरोध किया था कि जब सदन श्रद्धांजलि सन्दर्भ लेता है तो वे आपस में बात न करें।



NCERT book ban, a chapter on judicial transparency

UPSC II: Polity

Max Boot, former Features Editor of *The Wall Street Journal*, authored the seminal study on the United States judiciary, 'Out of Order: Arrogance, Corruption, and Incompetence on the Bench' (1998). Robert H. Bork, former Solicitor General of the United States, wrote the foreword to it with a striking conclusion — "Our Courts are behaving badly and the public, to the degree it can be brought to understand that, will exert force for reform, a reform that must be structural as well as intellectual and moral."

He observed that the book's subtitle sums up a system in distress. The book underscores the critical role that the media and citizens must play while dealing with the judicial institution in a democracy.

In February this year, the Supreme Court of India, faulting what it felt as selective reference to corruption within the judiciary, directed "a complete blanket ban" on a Class eight social science textbook published by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). The three-judge Bench, presided over by the Chief Justice of India, further alluded to "an underlying agenda to undermine the institutional authority and demean the dignity of the judiciary".

The Court subsequently ordered that the persons responsible for preparing the passages should be 'disassociated' from future projects by governments and public universities. The Court thus instantly punished them, without due process or hearing. The prohibition by the Court is problematic as it sends critical signals about the shape of India's democracy today.

What appears to have annoyed the Bench were the passages in the book on judicial delay and corruption in judiciary. As per the news report cited by the Court, the textbook has data on the approximate number of pending cases in Indian courts. It refers to the Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct, which prescribe values for judicial life. It also discusses the in-house procedures evolved by the Supreme Court and the constitutional mechanism for the removal of errant judges.

An undermining of freedom

By itself, a book ban is the most egregious form of censorship. Such a move directly impacts the right to freedom of speech under Article 19, a solemn promise in the Constitution. This right could be restricted only by a law made by the



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The top court's ban on an NCERT textbook exposes gaps in judicial accountability and public trust

state on grounds expressly provided under Article 19(2), such as "the sovereignty and integrity of India, the security of the state, friendly relations with foreign states, public order, decency or morality, or in relation to contempt of court, defamation, or incitement to an offence". There is no law made by the state to justify the ban on the book in question. Judicial orders or judgments do not come under the realm of "law" made by the state, as understood in the context of Article 19 (*Nareesh Shridhar Mirajkar vs State of Maharashtra*, 1966).

For an act to amount to contempt of court, there must be material that scandalises the authority of the court or prejudices or interferes with judicial proceedings or the administration of justice, as defined under Section 2(c) of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971. Whether mere references to corruption in the judiciary and case backlogs meet this high threshold for criminal contempt was a question that, unfortunately, did not form part of the Court's deliberations. What was also not examined was whether the statements were too general in nature to suggest any malicious intent to scandalise the Court.

Further, and importantly, going by the scheme of judicial review, courts must put to constitutional scrutiny the law passed by Parliament often violating fundamental rights. When the courts take on the task of book banning, citizens are left without remedy, as constitutional courts are the last resort to safeguard fundamental rights.

Global efforts

In advanced democracies, the credibility of the court is a matter of concern, primarily for the court itself. Transparency International has conducted a number of surveys that show that there is a prevailing notion about judicial corruption. Judiciaries across the world have made efforts to address this problem. **In Kenya, the reforms led by Chief Justice Willy Mutunga, between 2011 and 2013, are an illustrative example.** During this period, institutions such as judicial ombudspersons, court users' committees, and performance management committees were established.

By 2013, public trust in Kenya in the judiciary had risen to 61%, compared to 27% in 2009. The reforms continued even thereafter. This happened only by acknowledging the issues and trying to address them, rather than suppressing critical voices.

In India, the courts including the top court have acknowledged the menace of delay and corruption. Judges have repeatedly warned about the 'bad apples' within the system. The very existence of the in-house Procedure indicates the possibility that a minuscule number of judges may breach their oath.

In *K. Veeraswami vs Union Of India And Others* (1991), the Court categorically held that judges of the High Courts and the Supreme Court fall within the definition of "public servant" for the purposes of prosecution under the Prevention of Corruption Act, while also cautioning against the potential for misuse of this provision by the executive. The Court also said: "We consider that the society's demand for honesty in a judge is exacting and absolute. The standards of judicial behaviour, both on and off the Bench, are normally extremely high. For a judge to deviate from such standards of honesty and impartiality is to betray the trust reposed on him. No excuse or no legal relativity can condone such betrayal. From the standpoint of justice, the size of the bribe or scope of corruption cannot be the scale for measuring a judge's dishonour. A single dishonest judge not only dishonours himself and disgraces his office but jeopardises the integrity of the entire judicial system."

The need for introspection

Therefore, the need to eradicate corruption and delay is also in the best interest of the judiciary. In the interim order directing the book ban, the Court also pointed out that the "book also chooses not to delve into any of the transformative initiatives and measures pioneered by this Court towards overhauling legal aid mechanisms and streamlining the ease of access to justice". Not addressing all counterarguments might render an opinion potentially incomplete. Yet, that is no reason for banning the view expressed. If the exercise of free speech is required to follow a particular form, the right itself becomes illusory. During judicial deliberations, nobody pointed out that the judiciary, like other organs of the state, must be open to dissent and reform.

The first step in fighting systemic problems such as corruption — whether in the executive or the judiciary — is acknowledging it. After all, it is imperative to curb all kinds of corruption and that civil society is educated about the institutional challenges. A court that continuously reforms itself is the bedrock of any democracy.

19Mar. NCERT book ban, a chapter on judicial transparency

एनसीईआरटी पुस्तक प्रतिबंध, न्यायिक पारदर्शिता पर एक अध्याय

NCERT book ban and judicial transparency

एनसीईआरटी पुस्तक प्रतिबंध और न्यायिक पारदर्शिता

- Max Boot, former Features Editor of *The Wall Street Journal*, authored the seminal study on the United States judiciary, 'Out of Order: Arrogance, Corruption, and Incompetence on the Bench' (1998). मैक्स बूट, द वॉल स्ट्रीट जर्नल के पूर्व फीचर्स एडिटर, ने संयुक्त राज्य न्यायपालिका पर महत्वपूर्ण अध्ययन 'Out of Order: Arrogance, Corruption, and Incompetence on the Bench' (1998) लिखा।
- Robert H. Bork, former Solicitor General of the United States, wrote the foreword with the conclusion — "Our Courts are behaving badly... reform must be structural, intellectual and moral." रॉबर्ट एच. बॉर्क, संयुक्त राज्य के पूर्व सॉलिसिटर जनरल, ने प्रस्तावना में लिखा — "हमारी अदालतें गलत व्यवहार कर रही हैं... सुधार संरचनात्मक, बौद्धिक और नैतिक होना चाहिए।"
- He observed that the book's subtitle sums up a system in distress. उन्होंने कहा कि पुस्तक का उपशीर्षक एक संकटग्रस्त प्रणाली को दर्शाता है।
- The book underscores the role of media and citizens in a democracy. यह पुस्तक लोकतंत्र में मीडिया और नागरिकों की भूमिका को रेखांकित करती है।
- In February, the Supreme Court of India ordered a "complete blanket ban" on a Class eight NCERT textbook. फरवरी में भारत के सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने कक्षा आठ की एनसीईआरटी पुस्तक पर पूर्ण प्रतिबंध लगाया।
- The Court cited selective reference to corruption in judiciary. अदालत ने न्यायपालिका में भ्रष्टाचार के चयनात्मक उल्लेख का हवाला दिया।



- The Bench referred to an “**underlying agenda**” to undermine the judiciary’s dignity. पीठ ने न्यायपालिका की गरिमा को कम करने के छिपे हुए उद्देश्य की बात कही।
- The Court ordered that authors be **disassociated from future projects**. अदालत ने लेखकों को भविष्य की परियोजनाओं से अलग करने का आदेश दिया।
- This was done **without due process or hearing**. यह बिना उचित प्रक्रिया और सुनवाई के किया गया।
- The prohibition sends signals about the **state of democracy in India**. यह प्रतिबंध भारत में लोकतंत्र की स्थिति पर संकेत देता है।
- The Bench objected to passages on **judicial delay and corruption**. पीठ ने न्यायिक देरी और भ्रष्टाचार पर लिखे अंशों पर आपत्ति जताई।
- The textbook included data on **pending cases in courts**. पुस्तक में लंबित मामलों का डेटा शामिल था।
- It referred to the **Bangalore Principles of Judicial Conduct**. इसमें न्यायिक आचरण के बैंगलोर सिद्धांत का उल्लेख था।
- It discussed **in-house procedures and removal of judges**. इसमें आंतरिक प्रक्रियाओं और न्यायाधीशों को हटाने की व्यवस्था पर चर्चा थी।

An undermining of freedom स्वतंत्रता का हनन

- A **book ban** is the most egregious form of **ensorship**. पुस्तक प्रतिबंध सबसे गंभीर प्रकार की सेंसरशिप है।
- It impacts **freedom of speech under Article 19**. यह अनुच्छेद 19 के तहत अभिव्यक्ति की स्वतंत्रता को प्रभावित करता है।
- This right can be restricted only by a **law made by the state**. इस अधिकार को केवल राज्य द्वारा बनाए गए कानून से ही सीमित किया जा सकता है।
- Restrictions include **sovereignty, security, public order, morality, defamation**. प्रतिबंधों में संप्रभुता, सुरक्षा, सार्वजनिक व्यवस्था, नैतिकता, मानहानि शामिल हैं।
- There is **no law** to justify this ban. इस प्रतिबंध को उचित ठहराने के लिए कोई कानून नहीं है।
- **Judicial orders are not considered ‘law’ under Article 19**. न्यायिक आदेश अनुच्छेद 19 के तहत ‘कानून’ नहीं माने जाते।
- This was established in **Naresh Shridhar Mirajkar vs State of Maharashtra (1966)**. यह बात नरेश श्रीधर मिराजकर बनाम महाराष्ट्र राज्य (1966) में स्थापित की गई थी।
- **For an act to amount to contempt of court, there must be material that scandalises the authority of the court or interferes with judicial proceedings, as per Section 2(c) of the Contempt of Courts Act, 1971.** किसी कार्य को न्यायालय अवमानना माना जाने के लिए ऐसा सामग्री होना चाहिए जो न्यायालय की गरिमा को ठेस पहुँचाए या न्यायिक कार्यवाही में हस्तक्षेप करे, जैसा कि न्यायालय अवमानना अधिनियम 1971 की धारा 2(c) में बताया गया है।
- Whether references to **corruption in judiciary and case backlogs** meet this threshold was not examined by the Court. क्या न्यायपालिका में भ्रष्टाचार और लंबित मामलों के उल्लेख इस मानदंड को पूरा करते हैं, इसका परीक्षण अदालत ने नहीं किया।
- It was also not examined whether the statements were too **general in nature** to indicate malicious intent. यह भी नहीं देखा गया कि ये कथन सामान्य प्रकृति के थे या नहीं, जिससे दुर्भावनापूर्ण इरादा सिद्ध हो सके।
- Courts must subject laws passed by Parliament to **constitutional scrutiny**. अदालतों को संसद द्वारा बनाए गए कानूनों की संवैधानिक जांच करनी चाहिए।
- When courts take on **book banning**, citizens are left without remedy. जब अदालतें पुस्तक प्रतिबंध करती हैं, तब नागरिकों के पास कोई उपाय नहीं बचता।
- Constitutional courts are the **last resort to safeguard fundamental rights**. संवैधानिक न्यायालय मौलिक अधिकारों की रक्षा का अंतिम उपाय हैं।



Global e•orts वैश्विक प्रयास

- In advanced democracies, the credibility of courts is a concern for the **courts themselves**.
उन्नत लोकतंत्रों में न्यायालयों की विश्वसनीयता की चिंता **स्वयं न्यायालयों को होती है**।
- **Transparency International** surveys show a perception of **judicial corruption**.
ट्रांसपैरेंसी इंटरनेशनल के सर्वेक्षण न्यायिक **भ्रष्टाचार की धारणा** को दर्शाते हैं।
- Judiciaries worldwide have taken steps to address this issue.
दुनिया भर की न्यायपालिकाओं ने इस समस्या को दूर करने के प्रयास किए हैं।
- In **Kenya**, reforms led by **Chief Justice Willy Mutunga (2011–2013)** are an example.
केन्या में **मुख्य न्यायाधीश विली मुतुंगा (2011–2013)** द्वारा किए गए सुधार एक उदाहरण हैं।
- Institutions like **judicial ombudspersons and court users' committees** were established.
न्यायिक लोकपाल और न्यायालय उपयोगकर्ता समितियाँ स्थापित की गईं।
- By **2013**, public trust in judiciary rose to **61% from 27% in 2009**.
2013 तक न्यायपालिका में जन विश्वास **2009 के 27% से बढ़कर 61%** हो गया।
- Reforms succeeded by **acknowledging problems**, not suppressing criticism.
सुधार **समस्याओं को स्वीकार करने** से सफल हुए, आलोचना दबाने से नहीं।
- In India, courts have acknowledged **delay and corruption**.
भारत में अदालतों ने **देरी और भ्रष्टाचार** को स्वीकार किया है।
- Judges have warned about **'bad apples' in the system**.
न्यायाधीशों ने प्रणाली में **खराब तत्वों** के बारे में चेतावनी दी है।
- The **in-house procedure** indicates that some judges may breach their oath.
आंतरिक प्रक्रिया यह दर्शाती है कि कुछ न्यायाधीश अपने शपथ का उल्लंघन कर सकते हैं।
- In **K. Veeraswami vs Union Of India And Others (1991)**, the Court held that judges of High Courts and the Supreme Court fall within the definition of **"public servant" under the Prevention of Corruption Act**.
K. Veeraswami बनाम भारत संघ (1991) में न्यायालय ने कहा कि उच्च न्यायालय और सर्वोच्च न्यायालय के न्यायाधीश **भ्रष्टाचार निवारण अधिनियम के तहत लोक सेवक** की परिभाषा में आते हैं।
- The Court cautioned against **misuse of this provision by the executive**.
अदालत ने इस प्रावधान के **कार्यपालिका द्वारा दुरुपयोग** के प्रति चेतावनी दी।
- The Court emphasised that society's demand for **honesty in a judge is exacting and absolute**.
अदालत ने कहा कि समाज की न्यायाधीश से **ईमानदारी की अपेक्षा पूर्ण और कठोर** होती है।
- The standards of judicial behaviour are **extremely high**.
न्यायिक आचरण के मानक **बहुत उच्च** होते हैं।
- Deviation from honesty and impartiality is a **betrayal of trust**.
ईमानदारी और निष्पक्षता से विचलन **विश्वासघात** है।
- No excuse can condone such **betrayal**.
ऐसे **विश्वासघात** को कोई बहाना उचित नहीं ठहरा सकता।
- The size of the bribe cannot measure a judge's **dishonour**.
रिश्वत का आकार न्यायाधीश के **असम्मान** को नहीं माप सकता।
- A single dishonest judge can **jeopardise the integrity of the entire judicial system**.
एक बेईमान न्यायाधीश पूरे **न्यायिक तंत्र की अखंडता को खतरे में डाल सकता है**।

The need for introspection आत्ममंथन की आवश्यकता

- Eradicating **corruption and delay** is in the best interest of the judiciary.
भ्रष्टाचार और देरी को समाप्त करना न्यायपालिका के हित में है।
- The Court noted that the book did not discuss **transformative initiatives and legal aid reforms**.
अदालत ने कहा कि पुस्तक में **परिवर्तनकारी पहल और कानूनी सहायता सुधार** पर चर्चा नहीं की गई।
- Not addressing all counterarguments may make an opinion **incomplete**.
सभी तर्कों को शामिल न करने से विचार **अपूर्ण** हो सकता है।



- However, this is not a reason for **banning the view expressed**.
लेकिन यह **व्यक्त विचार को प्रतिबंधित करने** का कारण नहीं है।
- If free speech must follow a prescribed form, the right becomes **illusory**.
यदि अभिव्यक्ति को निर्धारित रूप में सीमित किया जाए तो यह अधिकार **निरर्थक** हो जाता है।
- The judiciary must remain **open to dissent and reform**.
न्यायपालिका को **असहमति और सुधार के लिए खुला** रहना चाहिए।
- The first step to fight systemic corruption is **acknowledging it**.
प्रणालीगत भ्रष्टाचार से लड़ने का पहला कदम **उसे स्वीकार करना** है।
- Civil society must be educated about **institutional challenges**.
नागरिक समाज को **संस्थागत चुनौतियों** के बारे में जागरूक करना आवश्यक है।
- A judiciary that continuously reforms itself is the **bedrock of democracy**.
जो न्यायपालिका लगातार सुधार करती है वही **लोकतंत्र की आधारशिला** है।

India's national symbols under scrutiny over use, meaning, and law

A complaint against Hardik Pandya draws attention to the rules governing the national flag and the history embedded in it; as debates over *Vande Mataram* resurface, the discussion shows how national symbols evoke emotional responses while being shaped by law and historical tension

GS II Polity

Ziya Us Salam

Last week, a Pune-based lawyer filed a complaint against cricketer Hardik Pandya for allegedly insulting the national flag during celebrations following India's victory in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in Ahmedabad. According to the complaint, Pandya, who had the flag draped around his body, engaged in objectionable acts in the stadium.

The episode has once again drawn attention to the rules governing the use of the national flag and to the history and symbolism embedded in it.

Evolution of the tricolour

Recent books help us understand the story of the national flag. In *A Flag to Live and Die For – A Short History of India's Tricolour* (Aleph), diplomat and columnist Navtej Sarna traces the evolution of the flag across decades.

The national tricolour was not chosen on a whim. It evolved through several stages, dating back to 1907, when an early version was presented to Surendranath Banerjee, former Congress president, by Bhupendranath Dutt, the younger brother of Swami Vivekananda. Called the Calcutta Flag, it was designed by Sachindra Prasad Bose and Sukumar Mitra. "The design of the flag was inspired by the flag of the French Revolution. The flag had three horizontal stripes of red, yellow and green with eight half-open

lotuses," writes Sarna.

Around the same time, Swami Vivekananda's disciple, Sister Nivedita, conceived a flag featuring the *vajra*, or thunderbolt. Sister Nivedita was a participant in the Swadeshi movement and the flag used religious and spiritual symbols to strike a chord with the masses.

The early decades of the 20th century saw more experimentation with the idea of the national flag. Many leaders of the freedom movement believed that Independence was around the corner and that a national flag could stir emotions in support of its attainment. Bhikaji Cama, a prominent figure in the Independence movement, unfurled a modified version of the Calcutta Flag in Stuttgart in 1907, thereby becoming the first Indian to hoist the Indian flag on foreign soil.

A new version of the flag emerged during Annie Besant's Home Rule movement. In 1917, she hoisted a flag with nine horizontal stripes – five red and four green – in Coimbatore. The effort was supported by several nationalist leaders.

In 1916, Pingali Venkayya, a freedom fighter, published his book *A National Flag for India*, outlining his ideas for a national emblem. Five years later, Mahatma Gandhi asked him to design a flag with the *charkha*, the spinning wheel that had become a powerful symbol of self-reliance. The tricolour as we recognise it today emerged through these iterations. During the Quit India Movement in 1942, the flag was to be

hoisted by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. However, his arrest by the British meant that Aruna Asaf Ali performed the honours in Bombay.

However, as musician and writer T.M. Krishna notes in *We the People of India: Decoding a Nation's Symbols* (Context, Westland), it was not until 2004, in *Union of India v. Naveen Jindal*, that an Indian citizen's fundamental right to fly the national flag was formally recognised. However, there are detailed rules on how the national flag should be displayed, handled, and used, set out in the Flag Code of India, 2002. Insults to the flag are punishable under the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971, which prohibits burning, trampling, or improper display.

Explaining the power of a symbol, while speaking at The Hindu Lit for Life, Krishna said, "(When) you walk on the street, see a temple and you do a *namaskaram*, you respond to a symbol... Just recently, I was seeing the flag out of my hotel room in Hyderabad, and it was gorgeously fluttering, and it did something to me. Is it memory? Is it indoctrination? So, you're responding at an emotional level. The thing about symbolism is it's often an emotional activity."

Debating the national song

While the flag has recently taken centre stage, so has another national symbol, the national song. *Vande Mataram* has been a

subject of debate in Parliament in recent times.

Krishna writes about the difference between the national anthem and the national song. "*Vande Mataram* was a cry for freedom against the tyranny of the British in Bengal... Historian Sabyasachi Bhattacharya dates the song to between 1872 and 1875... The first two stanzas were penned during this period. The rest seems to have been written later when Bankim wrote his novel *Anandmath*..."

The debate over *Vande Mataram* involved Rabindranath Tagore, who wrote to Subhas Chandra Bose in 1937, saying, "It is so evident that *Bande Mataram* is in praise of Goddess Durga...no Muslim will accept the ten-headed idol of goddess Durga as a symbol of their country."

This tension helped pave the way for *Jana Gana Mana*, described by Krishna as "a poetic mural that required meditation." He writes, "Long before the constitutional acceptance, Subhas Chandra Bose had named *Jana Gana Mana* the national anthem...Once *Jana Gana Mana* was designated as the national anthem, it transformed into a multi-layered, harmony-laden musical composition."

In the light of these debates, Krishna asks, "Should we treat *Vande Mataram* as one song? An idea worth exploring." His open-ended conclusion gives a certain immediacy in the light of the decision of the Union government in February, making it mandatory to sing the entire song in official functions and schools.

19Mar. India's national symbols under scrutiny over use, meaning, and law भारत के राष्ट्रीय प्रतीक उपयोग, अर्थ और कानून को लेकर जांच के दायरे में

- Last week, a **Pune-based lawyer** led a complaint against **cricketer Hardik Pandya** for allegedly insulting the **national team** during celebrations following India's victory in the **ICC Men's T20 World Cup** in Ahmedabad.
पिछले सप्ताह, एक **पुणे स्थित वकील** ने **क्रिकेटर हार्दिक पांड्या** के खिलाफ **राष्ट्रीय ध्वज** का अपमान करने के आरोप में शिकायत दर्ज कराई, जो अहमदाबाद में **आईसीसी पुरुष टी20 विश्व कप** में भारत की जीत के बाद जश्न के दौरान हुआ।
- According to the complaint, Pandya, who had the bag draped around his body, engaged in **objectionable acts** in the stadium.





शिकायत के अनुसार, पांड्या ने ध्वज को अपने शरीर पर लपेट रखा था और स्टेडियम में आपत्तिजनक कृत्य किए।

- The episode has once again drawn attention to the **rules governing the use of the national age and to the history and symbolism** embedded in it.
इस घटना ने एक बार फिर **राष्ट्रीय ध्वज के उपयोग से जुड़े नियमों** और उसमें निहित **इतिहास और प्रतीकवाद** की ओर ध्यान आकर्षित किया है।

Evolution of the tricolour तिरंगे का विकास

- Recent books help us understand the story of the **national age**.
हाल की पुस्तकों से **राष्ट्रीय ध्वज** की कहानी समझने में मदद मिलती है।
- In **A Flag to Live and Die For — A Short History of India's Tricolour (Aleph)**, diplomat and columnist **Navtej Sarna** traces the evolution of the • ag across decades.
ए फ्लैग टू लिव एंड डाई फॉर — ए शॉर्ट हिस्ट्री ऑफ इंडियाज़ ट्राइकलर (अलेफ) में राजनयिक और स्तंभकार **नवतेज सरना** ने ध्वज के विकास को दशकों में प्रस्तुत किया है।
- The **national tricolour** was not chosen on a whim.
राष्ट्रीय तिरंगा अचानक नहीं चुना गया था।
- It evolved through several stages, dating back to **1907**, when an early version was presented to **Surendranath Banerjee** by **Bhupendranath Dutt**, the younger brother of **Swami Vivekananda**.
यह कई चरणों से विकसित हुआ, जिसकी शुरुआत **1907** से होती है, जब एक प्रारंभिक रूप **सुरेन्द्रनाथ बनर्जी** को **भूपेन्द्रनाथ दत्त** द्वारा प्रस्तुत किया गया, जो **स्वामी विवेकानंद** के छोटे भाई थे।
- Called the **Calcutta Flag**, it was designed by **Sachindra Prasad Bose** and **Sukumar Mitra**.
इसे **कलकत्ता ध्वज** कहा गया और इसे **सचिन्द्र प्रसाद बोस** और **सुकुमार मित्रा** ने डिजाइन किया था।
- "The design of the • ag was inspired by the • ag of the **French Revolution**. The • ag had three horizontal stripes of **red, yellow and green** with **eight half-open lotuses**," writes Sarna.
सरना लिखते हैं कि ध्वज का डिजाइन **फ्रांसीसी क्रांति के ध्वज** से प्रेरित था, जिसमें **लाल, पीला और हरा** रंग की तीन क्षैतिज धारियाँ और **आठ आधे खुले कमल** थे।
- Around the same time, **Sister Nivedita**, a disciple of **Swami Vivekananda**, conceived a • ag featuring the **vajra (thunderbolt)**.
उसी समय, **सिस्टर निवेदिता**, जो **स्वामी विवेकानंद** की शिष्या थीं, ने **वज्र** वाला ध्वज तैयार किया।
- Sister Nivedita was a participant in the **Swadeshi movement** and the • ag used **religious and spiritual symbols** to strike a chord with the masses.
सिस्टर निवेदिता **स्वदेशी आंदोलन** की सहभागी थीं और इस ध्वज में **धार्मिक और आध्यात्मिक प्रतीकों** का उपयोग किया गया था।
- The early decades of the **20th century** saw more experimentation with the idea of the national • ag.
20वीं सदी के शुरुआती दशकों में राष्ट्रीय ध्वज के विचार पर और प्रयोग हुए।
- Many leaders of the **freedom movement** believed that **Independence was around the corner** and that a national • ag could stir emotions in support of its attainment.
स्वतंत्रता आंदोलन के कई नेताओं का मानना था कि **स्वतंत्रता निकट है** और एक राष्ट्रीय ध्वज इसके समर्थन में भावनाएँ उत्पन्न कर सकता है।
- Bhikaji Cama**, a prominent • gure in the Independence movement, unfurled a modi• ed version of the **Calcutta Flag** in **Stuttgart** in **1907**, thereby becoming the • rst Indian to hoist the **Indian • ag on foreign soil**.
भीकाजी कामा, जो स्वतंत्रता आंदोलन की प्रमुख हस्ती थीं, ने **1907 में स्टुटगार्ट** में **कलकत्ता ध्वज** का संशोधित रूप फहराया और इस प्रकार **विदेशी भूमि पर भारतीय ध्वज फहराने वाली पहली भारतीय** बनीं।
- A new version of the • ag emerged during **Annie Besant's Home Rule movement**.
एनी बेसेंट के होम रूल आंदोलन के दौरान ध्वज का एक नया रूप सामने आया।
- In **1917**, she hoisted a • ag with **nine horizontal stripes — • ve red and four green — in Coimbatore**.
1917 में उन्होंने कोयंबटूर में नौ क्षैतिज धारियों — पाँच लाल और चार हरी — वाला ध्वज फहराया।



- The e• ort was supported by several **nationalist leaders**.
इस प्रयास को कई **राष्ट्रवादी नेताओं** का समर्थन मिला।
- In **1916, Pingali Venkayya**, a freedom • ghter, published his book **A National Flag for India**, outlining his ideas for a national emblem.
1916 में पिंगली वेकैया, जो एक स्वतंत्रता सेनानी थे, ने अपनी पुस्तक **ए नेशनल फ्लैग फॉर इंडिया** प्रकाशित की।
- Five years later, **Mahatma Gandhi** asked him to design a • ag with the **charkha**, the spinning wheel that had become a powerful symbol of **self-reliance**.
पाँच वर्ष बाद **महात्मा गांधी** ने उनसे **चरखा** वाला ध्वज बनाने को कहा, जो **आत्मनिर्भरता** का प्रतीक बन चुका था।
- The **tricolour as we recognise it today** emerged through these iterations.
आज जिस **तिरंगे** को हम पहचानते हैं, वह इन परिवर्तनों के माध्यम से विकसित हुआ।
- During the **Quit India Movement in 1942**, the • ag was to be hoisted by **Maulana Abul Kalam Azad**.
1942 के भारत छोड़ो आंदोलन के दौरान ध्वज को **मौलाना अबुल कलाम आजाद** द्वारा फहराया जाना था।
- However, his arrest by the British meant that **Aruna Asaf Ali** p
हालांकि, ब्रिटिश द्वारा उनकी गिरफ्तारी के कारण **अरुणा आसफ अली** प
- However, as musician and writer **T.M. Krishna** notes in **We the People of India: Decoding a Nation's Symbols (Context, Westland)**, it was not until **2004**, in **Union of India v. Naveen Jindal**, that an Indian citizen's **fundamental right to • y the national • ag** was formally recognised.
हालांकि, संगीतकार और लेखक **टी.एम. कृष्णा** अपनी पुस्तक **वी द पीपल ऑफ इंडिया: डिकोडिंग अ नेशन'स सिम्बॉल्स** में बताते हैं कि **2004 में यूनियन ऑफ इंडिया बनाम नवीन जिंदल** मामले में ही भारतीय नागरिक के **राष्ट्रीय ध्वज फहराने के मौलिक अधिकार** को औपचारिक रूप से मान्यता मिली।
- However, there are detailed rules on how the national • ag should be displayed, handled, and used, set out in the **Flag Code of India, 2002**.
हालांकि, राष्ट्रीय ध्वज को कैसे प्रदर्शित, संभाला और उपयोग किया जाए, इसके विस्तृत नियम **भारत का ध्वज संहिता, 2002** में दिए गए हैं।
- Insults to the • ag are punishable under the **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971**, which prohibits **burning, trampling, or improper display**.
ध्वज का अपमान **राष्ट्रीय सम्मान अपमान निवारण अधिनियम, 1971** के तहत दंडनीय है, जिसमें **जलाना, रौंदना या अनुचित प्रदर्शन** प्रतिबंधित है।
- Explaining the power of a symbol, while speaking at **The Hindu Lit for Life**, Krishna said, **“(When) you walk on the street, see a temple and you do a namaskaram, you respond to a symbol...”**
प्रतीक की शक्ति को समझाते हुए, **द हिंदू लिट फॉर लाइफ** में कृष्णा ने कहा, **“जब आप सड़क पर चलते हैं, मंदिर देखते हैं और नमस्कार करते हैं, तो आप एक प्रतीक के प्रति प्रतिक्रिया दे रहे होते हैं...”**
- “Just recently, I was seeing the • ag out of my hotel room in Hyderabad, and it was gorgeously □ uttering, and it did something to me. Is it memory? Is it indoctrination? So, you're responding at an emotional level. The thing about symbolism is it's often an emotional activity.”
“हाल ही में मैं हैदराबाद में अपने होटल के कमरे से ध्वज देख रहा था, वह सुंदरता से लहरा रहा था और उसने मुझ पर प्रभाव डाला। क्या यह स्मृति है? क्या यह संस्कार है? आप भावनात्मक स्तर पर प्रतिक्रिया देते हैं। प्रतीकवाद अक्सर एक भावनात्मक गतिविधि होता है।”

Debating the national song राष्ट्रीय गीत पर बहस

- While the • ag has recently taken centre stage, so has another national symbol, the **national song**.
हाल ही में जहां ध्वज चर्चा में रहा है, वहीं एक अन्य राष्ट्रीय प्रतीक **राष्ट्रीय गीत** भी केंद्र में रहा है।
- Vande Mataram** has been a subject of debate in **Parliament** in recent times.
वंदे मातरम् हाल के समय में **संसद** में बहस का विषय रहा है।
- Krishna writes about the di• erence between the **national anthem** and the **national song**.
कृष्णा ने **राष्ट्रीय गान** और **राष्ट्रीय गीत** के बीच अंतर पर लिखा है।



- “Vande Mataram was a cry for freedom against the tyranny of the British in Bengal...”
“वंदे मातरम् बंगाल में ब्रिटिश अत्याचार के खिलाफ स्वतंत्रता की पुकार था...”
- Historian **Sabyasachi Bhattacharya** dates the song to between **1872 and 1875**.
इतिहासकार **सब्यसाची भट्टाचार्य** इस गीत को **1872 से 1875** के बीच का मानते हैं।
- The first two stanzas were penned during this period, while the rest seems to have been written later when **Bankim** wrote his novel **Anandmath**.
पहले दो पद इसी अवधि में लिखे गए, जबकि शेष भाग बाद में **बंकिम** द्वारा **आनंदमठ** लिखते समय जोड़े गए।
- The debate over **Vande Mataram** involved **Rabindranath Tagore**, who wrote to **Subhas Chandra Bose** in 1937, saying, “It is so evident that **Bande Mataram** is in praise of **Goddess Durga...no Muslim will accept the ten-headed idol of goddess Durga as a symbol of their country.**”
वंदे मातरम् पर बहस में **रवीन्द्रनाथ टैगोर** शामिल थे, जिन्होंने 1937 में **सुभाष चंद्र बोस** को लिखा, “यह स्पष्ट है कि वंदे मातरम् देवी दुर्गा की स्तुति है...कोई मुसलमान देवी दुर्गा की मूर्ति को अपने देश का प्रतीक नहीं मानेगा।”
- This tension helped pave the way for **Jana Gana Mana**, described by Krishna as “a poetic mural that required meditation.”
इस तनाव ने **जन गण मन** के लिए मार्ग प्रशस्त किया, जिसे कृष्णा ने “एक काव्यात्मक चित्र जो ध्यान की मांग करता है” बताया।
- He writes, “Long before the constitutional acceptance, **Subhas Chandra Bose** had named **Jana Gana Mana** the national anthem....Once **Jana Gana Mana** was designated as the national anthem, it transformed into a multi-layered, harmony-laden musical composition.”
वे लिखते हैं, “संवैधानिक मान्यता से बहुत पहले **सुभाष चंद्र बोस** ने **जन गण मन** को राष्ट्रीय गान कहा था...एक बार इसे राष्ट्रीय गान घोषित कर दिया गया, यह एक बहुस्तरीय और सामंजस्यपूर्ण संगीत रचना बन गया।”
- In the light of these debates, Krishna asks, “Should we treat **Vande Mataram** as one song? **An idea worth exploring.**”
इन बहसों के संदर्भ में कृष्णा पूछते हैं, “क्या हमें वंदे मातरम् को एक ही गीत मानना चाहिए? यह विचार खोजने योग्य है।”
- His open-ended conclusion gives a certain immediacy in the light of the decision of the **Union government in February**, making it **mandatory to sing the entire song in official functions and schools**.
उनका निष्कर्ष **फरवरी में केंद्र सरकार के निर्णय** के संदर्भ में महत्वपूर्ण हो जाता है, जिसमें **सरकारी कार्यक्रमों और स्कूलों में पूरे गीत को गाना अनिवार्य** किया गया है।

GS Paper II: International Relations

TOPICS COVERED

19 March 2026

19Mar No end to suffering
पीड़ा का कोई अंत नहीं



THE HINDU

GS II: IR

No end to suffering

India must enlist more support against Pakistan's bombing of Afghanistan

As the U.S.-Israel war against Iran rages, India's western frontiers have flared up, intensified by recent clashes between Pakistan and Afghanistan forces on the Durand Line. On Tuesday, Pakistani airstrikes tragically killed at least 400 Afghans at a drug treatment and rehabilitation centre. Pakistan, which has accused the Taliban administration of harbouring the **Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan (TTP)** and supporting its terror attacks on Pakistan, denied Afghanistan's accusations, claiming that its strikes had only targeted "military installations". Despite the denial, it is clear from visuals that the Omid Rehabilitation Facility in Kabul was destroyed. In an extremely strong statement, India condemned what it called Pakistan's "cowardly" targeting of a hospital, rejecting its denial as a cover-up for a "massacre", and called for an international inquiry. The Pakistan-Afghanistan conflict, which has been simmering for over a year, escalated in February when the Pakistan Air Force struck Taliban bases in Kabul, Kandahar, and Paktia in what it called Operation Ghazab Lil Haq (Righteous Fury). Tensions have also risen after TTP attacks killed 11 soldiers and a child in Bajaur and 32 people in an Islamabad mosque following a suicide bombing. Pakistan has also been angered by closer India-Afghanistan ties and New Delhi's hosting of Taliban ministers, accusing the Taliban of turning Afghanistan into an "Indian colony" – a turnaround from its support in 2021, for the Taliban's rise to power in Kabul. Apart from its continued tensions and hatred of India, and now Afghanistan, Pakistan possibly benefits from the global focus on the U.S.-Israel war with Iran. The U.S.'s actions here and its statement expressing support for Pakistan's "right to defend itself against Taliban attacks", has also imbued Pakistan's generals with a sense of impunity to strike targets in Afghanistan at will.

New Delhi could be permitted some sense of 'payback' as Islamabad's fight against cross-border terrorism from Afghanistan mirrors India's problems with Pakistan. The constraints on Pakistan's military in a two-front situation with India and Afghanistan, compounded by a transnational war on the third front, may also be the source of some relief for India. With no dialogue with Pakistan, and the limited dialogue with a Taliban regime it deals with but does not formally recognise, India's diplomatic role in the conflict is limited. However, it must enlist other SCO members that have been concerned over the outbreak of an "open war" between Pakistan and Afghanistan, to intervene. The region is already suffering from trade, energy and travel restrictions as a result of the West Asia war, to risk more volatility and loss of lives, particularly in Afghanistan, where the vulnerable, especially women, have suffered the most.

Operation Ghazab Lil Haq.

संघर्ष फरवरी में बढ़ा जब पाकिस्तान वायुसेना ने काबुल, कंधार और पक्तिया में हमले किए।

- Tensions rose after **TTP attacks** killed 11 soldiers and a child in Bajaur and 32 people in Islamabad mosque. तनाव तब बढ़ा जब टीटीपी हमलों में बाजौर में 11 सैनिक और एक बच्चा तथा इस्लामाबाद में 32 लोग मारे गए।
- Pakistan objected to closer **India-Afghanistan ties** and hosting of Taliban ministers by New Delhi. पाकिस्तान ने भारत-अफगानिस्तान संबंधों और तालिबान मंत्रियों की मेजबानी पर आपत्ति जताई।
- It accused Afghanistan of becoming an "Indian colony". उसने अफगानिस्तान को भारतीय उपनिवेश बनने का आरोप लगाया।
- Pakistan had earlier supported the Taliban's rise in 2021. पाकिस्तान ने पहले 2021 में तालिबान के सत्ता में आने का समर्थन किया था।
- Pakistan may be benefiting from global focus on the **U.S.-Israel war with Iran**. पाकिस्तान को अमेरिका-इज़राइल और ईरान युद्ध से वैश्विक ध्यान भटकने का लाभ मिल सकता है।
- The **U.S. supported Pakistan's "right to defend itself"**, giving it a sense of impunity. अमेरिका ने पाकिस्तान के आत्मरक्षा के अधिकार का समर्थन किया, जिससे उसे छूट का एहसास मिला।

19Mar. No end to suffering

पीड़ा का कोई अंत नहीं

India must enlist more support against Pakistan's bombing of Afghanistan

भारत को अफगानिस्तान पर पाकिस्तान की बमबारी के खिलाफ अधिक समर्थन जुटाना चाहिए

As the **U.S.-Israel war against Iran** rages, India's western frontiers have flared up, intensified by recent clashes between **Pakistan and Afghanistan forces on the Durand Line**.

जैसे अमेरिका-इज़राइल का ईरान के खिलाफ युद्ध जारी है, भारत की पश्चिमी सीमाएं भी भड़क उठी हैं, जो पाकिस्तान और अफगानिस्तान की सेनाओं के बीच झड़पों के कारण और बढ़ गई हैं।

On Tuesday, **Pakistani airstrikes** tragically killed at least **400 Afghans** at a drug treatment and rehabilitation centre.

मंगलवार को पाकिस्तानी हवाई हमलों में एक नशा उपचार और पुनर्वास केंद्र में कम से कम 400 अफगानों की मृत्यु हुई।

Pakistan accused the **Taliban administration** of harbouring **Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan (TTP)** and supporting terror attacks.

पाकिस्तान ने तालिबान प्रशासन पर तहरीक-ए-तालिबान पाकिस्तान को शरण देने का आरोप लगाया।

Pakistan denied Afghanistan's accusations, claiming strikes targeted only **military installations**.

पाकिस्तान ने आरोपों से इनकार करते हुए कहा कि हमले केवल सैन्य ठिकानों पर थे।

However, visuals showed **destruction of the Omid Rehabilitation Facility in Kabul**.

लेकिन दृश्य प्रमाणों में काबुल स्थित ओमिद पुनर्वास केंद्र के नष्ट होने की पुष्टि हुई।

India condemned Pakistan's action as "**cowardly**" targeting of a hospital.

भारत ने इसे अस्पताल पर कायराना हमला बताया।

India rejected Pakistan's denial as a **cover-up for a massacre** and called for an **international inquiry**.

भारत ने इसे नरसंहार छुपाने का प्रयास बताया और अंतरराष्ट्रीय जांच की मांग की।

The conflict escalated in **February** when Pakistan Air Force struck Taliban bases in **Kabul, Kandahar and Paktia** under



- **Implications for India**
भारत के लिए प्रभाव
- India may see some 'payback' as Pakistan faces cross-border terrorism from Afghanistan. भारत इसे कुछ हद तक प्रतिशोध की स्थिति के रूप में देख सकता है।
- **Pakistan faces a two-front challenge with India and Afghanistan.** पाकिस्तान को दो मोर्चों पर चुनौती का सामना करना पड़ रहा है।
- A possible **third front of transnational conflict** adds pressure. एक तीसरे अंतरराष्ट्रीय मोर्चे का दबाव भी है।
- India currently has **no dialogue with Pakistan** and limited engagement with the Taliban. भारत का पाकिस्तान से कोई संवाद नहीं है और तालिबान से सीमित बातचीत है।
- India does not formally **recognise the Taliban regime.** भारत तालिबान शासन को औपचारिक मान्यता नहीं देता।
- Thus, India's diplomatic role remains **limited.** इसलिए भारत की कूटनीतिक भूमिका सीमित है।
- India should involve **SCO members** concerned about an "open war". भारत को एससीओ देशों को शामिल करना चाहिए।
- The region is already affected by **trade, energy and travel restrictions** due to West Asia war. यह क्षेत्र पहले ही व्यापार, ऊर्जा और यात्रा प्रतिबंधों से प्रभावित है।
- Further escalation may cause **more instability and loss of lives.** आगे बढ़ने से अस्थिरता और जानमाल का नुकसान बढ़ सकता है।
- Afghanistan's vulnerable population, especially **women**, has suffered the most. अफगानिस्तान की कमजोर आबादी, खासकर महिलाएं, सबसे अधिक प्रभावित हुई हैं।

GS Paper III: Economy,

TOPICS COVERED

19 March 2026

| | |
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| 19Mar | Lok Sabha applies 'guillotine' to pass Demands for Grants of ₹53 lakh cr. for various Ministries लोकसभा ने विभिन्न मंत्रालयों के ₹53 लाख करोड़ के अनुदान की मांग पारित करने के लिए 'गिलोटीन' लागू की |
| 19Mar | The opportunity in Cameroon to rebalance the WTO कैमरून में WTO को पुनर्संतुलित करने का अवसर |
| 19Mar | Cabinet okays ₹33,660-cr. BHAVYA plan for 100 industrial parks by '32 कैबिनेट ने 100 औद्योगिक पार्कों के लिए ₹33,660 करोड़ की BHAVYA योजना को मंजूरी दी |
| 19Mar | CCI gets ₹1,719 crore to pay support price CCI को समर्थन मूल्य भुगतान के लिए ₹1,719 करोड़ मिले |



Lok Sabha applies 'guillotine' to pass Demands for Grants of ₹53 lakh cr. for various Ministries

GS II: Economy
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha passed the Demands for Grants of various Ministries for 2026-27 on Wednesday. The House approved an expenditure of over ₹53 lakh crore by applying the guillotine, passing the Demands for Grants for various Ministries without a discussion. Earlier, it had discussed Demands for Grants for two Ministries — Agriculture and Railways.

Replying to the debate on agriculture, Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said the Centre is committed to transform society and shaping the future of the nation. He said the Opposition presented half-truths in the name of farmers' welfare but did nothing to address the issues of farmers when it was in power.

He said during the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government, out of 140 major irrigation pro-



Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan speaks in the Lok Sabha during the second part of the Budget session of Parliament. PTI

jects, 99 remained stalled.

"The [Narendra] Modi government brought these projects under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana and placed them on priority, significantly accelerating their implementation. As a result, work is moving rapidly to ensure irrigation coverage for nearly 2.7 million hectares of additional agricultural land," he said.

Congress MP Amrinder Singh Raja Warring sought compensation for kin of farmers who had died during protests

Maintaining that the new Pesticide and Seed Bills will soon be implemented, he said they were aimed at guaranteeing

quality seeds, standard and reliable fertilizers, as well as safe and effective pesticides for farmers.

He said Mr. Modi has been consistently maintaining that excessive use of chemical fertilizers was damaging soil health and may threaten agricultural productivity for future generations.

Natural farming

He added that under the Natural Farming Mission, the government has decided to hold awareness outreach to one crore farmers, training for 18 lakh farmers and gradual expansion of natural farming across 75 lakh hectares of land.

Earlier, initiating the debate for the Agriculture Ministry, Congress MP Amrinder Singh Raja Warring said 750 farmers died in Punjab during the agitation against the now-repealed farm laws and sought compensation for their families.

He said minimum support price (MSP) should be

a legal right and urged the Centre to announce a ₹50,000 crore special package for "distressed" farmers of Punjab, whose crops as well as farmland were damaged in heavy rains and floods.

Mr. Warring also suggested a ₹5,000 incentive per farmer to curb stubble burning.

The Samajwadi Party's Nareish Chandra Uttam Patel opposed imports of soybean, dairy products and fodder, warning of harm to farmers, and sought an increase in Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana cover to ₹10 lakh.

Trinamool Congress's Pratima Mondal criticised the government's handling of farm distress and flagged lack of accountability in protest-related deaths. BJP member Konda Vishweshwar Reddy called for higher MSP for pulses to benefit Telangana farmers, while crediting the government for low inflation and improved purchasing power.

19Mar. Lok Sabha applies 'guillotine' to pass Demands for Grants of ₹53 lakh cr. for various Ministries

लोकसभा ने विभिन्न मंत्रालयों के ₹53 लाख करोड़ के अनुदान की मांग पारित करने के लिए 'गिलोटीन' लागू की

- The Lok Sabha passed the Demands for Grants of various Ministries for 2026-27 on Wednesday.
लोकसभा ने बुधवार को 2026-27 के लिए विभिन्न मंत्रालयों की अनुदान की मांग पारित की।
- The House approved an expenditure of over ₹53 lakh crore by applying the guillotine, passing the Demands for Grants for various Ministries without a discussion.
सदन ने गिलोटीन लागू करके, विभिन्न मंत्रालयों के लिए अनुदान की मांग बिना चर्चा के पारित करते हुए ₹53 लाख करोड़ से अधिक के व्यय को मंजूरी दी।
- Earlier, it had discussed Demands for Grants for two Ministries — Agriculture and Railways.
पहले, इसने दो मंत्रालयों — कृषि और रेलवे के लिए अनुदान की मांग पर चर्चा की थी।
- Replying to the debate on agriculture, Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said the Centre is committed to transforming society and shaping the future of the nation.
कृषि पर बहस का जवाब देते हुए, कृषि मंत्री शिवराज सिंह चौहान ने कहा कि केंद्र समाज को बदलने और राष्ट्र का भविष्य आकार देने के लिए प्रतिबद्ध है।
- He said the Opposition presented half-truths in the name of farmers' welfare but did nothing to address the issues of farmers when it was in power.
उन्होंने कहा कि विपक्ष ने किसानों की भलाई के नाम पर आधा सच प्रस्तुत किया लेकिन सत्ता में होने पर किसानों की समस्याओं को हल करने के लिए कुछ नहीं किया।
- He said during the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government, out of 140 major irrigation projects, 99 remained stalled.
उन्होंने कहा कि संयुक्त प्रगतिशील गठबंधन (UPA) सरकार के दौरान, 140 प्रमुख सिंचाई परियोजनाओं में से 99 रुकी हुई थीं।
- "The [Narendra] Modi government brought these projects under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana and placed them on priority, significantly accelerating their implementation.



As a result, work is moving rapidly to ensure irrigation coverage for nearly **2.7 million hectares** of additional agricultural land," he said.

“[नरेंद्र] मोदी सरकार ने इन परियोजनाओं को **प्रधान मंत्री कृषि सिंचाई योजना** के तहत लाया और उन्हें प्राथमिकता दी, जिससे इनके कार्यान्वयन में महत्वपूर्ण तेजी आई। परिणामस्वरूप, लगभग **27 लाख हेक्टेयर** अतिरिक्त कृषि भूमि के लिए सिंचाई कवरेज सुनिश्चित करने के लिए काम तेजी से चल रहा है,” उन्होंने कहा।

- Maintaining that the new **Pesticide and Seed Bills** will soon be implemented, he said they were aimed at guaranteeing **quality seeds, standard and reliable fertilizers, as well as safe and effective pesticides** for farmers.

नए **कीटनाशक और बीज बिल** जल्द ही लागू किए जाएंगे, यह कहते हुए उन्होंने कहा कि इसका उद्देश्य किसानों के लिए **गुणवत्तापूर्ण बीज, मानक और भरोसेमंद उर्वरक, और सुरक्षित व प्रभावी कीटनाशक** सुनिश्चित करना है।

- He said Mr. Modi has been consistently maintaining that excessive use of **chemical fertilizers** was damaging **soil health** and may threaten **agricultural productivity** for future generations.

उन्होंने कहा कि श्री मोदी लगातार यह मान रहे हैं कि **रासायनिक उर्वरकों** का अत्यधिक उपयोग **मृदा स्वास्थ्य** को नुकसान पहुंचा रहा है और भविष्य की पीढ़ियों के लिए **कृषि उत्पादन** को खतरे में डाल सकता है।

Natural farming प्राकृतिक खेती

- He added that under the **Natural Farming Mission**, the government has decided to hold **awareness outreach** to **one crore farmers**, **training for 18 lakh farmers** and gradual expansion of **natural farming** across **75 lakh hectares** of land.
उन्होंने जोड़ा कि **प्राकृतिक खेती मिशन** के तहत, सरकार ने **एक करोड़ किसानों** के लिए **जागरूकता अभियान**, **18 लाख किसानों** के लिए **प्रशिक्षण** और **75 लाख हेक्टेयर** भूमि में **प्राकृतिक खेती** के क्रमिक विस्तार का निर्णय लिया है।
- Earlier, initiating the debate for the **Agriculture Ministry**, **Congress MP Amrinder Singh Raja Warring** said **750 farmers died in Punjab** during the agitation against the now-repealed farm laws and sought **compensation** for their families.
पहले, **कृषि मंत्रालय** के लिए बहस की शुरुआत करते हुए, **कांग्रेस सांसद अमरिंदर सिंह राजा वारिंग** ने कहा कि **अब रद्द किए गए कृषि कानूनों के खिलाफ आंदोलन के दौरान पंजाब में 750 किसान मारे गए** और उनके परिवारों के लिए **मुआवजा** मांगा।
- He said **minimum support price (MSP)** should be a **legal right** and urged the Centre to announce a **₹50,000 crore special package** for “**distressed**” farmers of Punjab, whose crops as well as farmland were damaged in heavy rains and floods.
उन्होंने कहा कि **न्यूनतम समर्थन मूल्य (MSP)** एक **कानूनी अधिकार** होना चाहिए और केंद्र से आग्रह किया कि पंजाब के “**पीड़ित**” किसानों के लिए **₹50,000 करोड़ का विशेष पैकेज** घोषित किया जाए, जिनकी फसल और farmland भारी बारिश और बाढ़ में क्षतिग्रस्त हुई।
- Mr. Warring also suggested a **₹5,000 incentive per farmer** to curb **stubble burning**.
श्री वारिंग ने **पराती जलाने** को रोकने के लिए प्रति किसान **₹5,000 प्रोत्साहन** देने का सुझाव भी दिया।
- The **Samajwadi Party's Naresh Chandra Uttam Patel** opposed imports of **soybean, dairy products and fodder**, warning of harm to farmers, and sought an increase in **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana** cover to **₹10 lakh**.
सपा के नरेश चंद्र उत्तम पटेल ने **सोयाबीन, डेयरी उत्पाद और चारा** के आयात का विरोध किया, किसानों को होने वाले नुकसान की चेतावनी दी और **प्रधान मंत्री फसल बीमा योजना** की कवरेज बढ़ाकर **₹10 लाख** करने का आग्रह किया।
- **Trinamool Congress's Pratima Mondal** criticised the government's handling of **farm distress** and flagged lack of **accountability** in **protest-related deaths**.
त्रिनमूल कांग्रेस की प्रतिमा मंडल ने सरकार के **कृषि संकट** प्रबंधन की आलोचना की और **प्रदर्शन-संबंधी मौतों** में **जवाबदेही** की कमी को उजागर किया।
- **BJP member Konda Vishweshwar Reddy** called for higher **MSP for pulses** to benefit **Telangana farmers**, while crediting the government for **low inflation** and improved **purchasing power**.
बीजेपी सदस्य कोंडा विश्वेश्वर रेड्डी ने **दलहनों के लिए MSP बढ़ाने** की मांग की ताकि **तेलंगाना के किसानों** को लाभ मिले, और सरकार को **कम मुद्रास्फीति** और बेहतर **खरीद शक्ति** के लिए श्रेय दिया।



The opportunity in Cameroon to rebalance the WTO

GS III: Economy

MOB

Today, trade is no longer just about economics. It is increasingly used as a geopolitical tool. Tariffs are imposed as pressure tactics, and economic dependence is sometimes used strategically. In this context, the World Trade Organization (WTO)'s Ministerial Conference (MC14), to be held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, Africa (March 26-29, 2026), comes at an important moment. The real issue is not whether the WTO needs reform, but whether it can adapt fast enough to stay relevant in a world moving toward more transactional and power-based trade relations.

WTO in turmoil

The WTO is facing its biggest crisis since its founding in 1995. Its dispute settlement system is still effectively paralysed because the Appellate Body appointments have been stalled for years. This weakens trust in the system, since rules matter only when they can be enforced. At the same time, WTO negotiations have struggled to keep pace with major shifts in global trade. Digital commerce is growing rapidly and now forms a large part of cross-border economic activity. Yet, WTO rules have not evolved at the same pace.

Decision-making has also become slow and difficult. With 166 members at very different levels of development, consensus is hard to reach and cumbersome. As a result, many negotiations produce limited outcomes and long-pending issues remain unresolved.

Meanwhile, geopolitical tensions and the growing use of tariffs as political tools have distorted markets. However, these problems should not be mistaken for irrelevance. Most global trade still operates under WTO rules. If enforceable multilateral rules weaken, global trade would become unpredictable and unstable. Smaller and poorer countries would suffer the most, because they rely on common rules to protect themselves from pressure by stronger economies.

The WTO's challenges are also part of a wider shift in the global order. The Munich Security



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The World Trade Organization's Ministerial Conference must ensure that trade is governed by rules rather than coercion

Report 2026 describes this as a move toward "wrecking-ball politics", where countries prefer disruption and short-term deals instead of gradual institutional reform. In trade, this is visible in the rise of unilateral tariffs, economic coercion and bilateral deals that bypass multilateral commitments. If this continues, rule-based trade could be replaced by ad hoc arrangements shaped mainly by power rather than shared principles.

Global production has changed

Against this backdrop, the MC14 offers a chance not just to fix technical problems but to also restore balance between predictability and fairness. The original balance of rights and obligations in the WTO no longer reflects today's reality. Emerging economies now export advanced and technology-intensive products, climate-related trade measures are expanding, and digital networks are reshaping how global production works.

Rules designed for a late 20th century trading system cannot fully govern a 21st century one.

Reform must start with restoring credibility to enforcement. Without a functioning dispute settlement system, commitments lose their value. Members need to rebuild a binding, trusted mechanism rather than relying mainly on temporary alternatives that lack universal acceptance. A robust dispute-resolution system helps remove politics from conflicts and keeps confidence in multilateral rules.

At the same time, predictability must go hand in hand with fairness. Long-standing disputes over agricultural subsidies, market distortions and unequal openness need transparent solutions. Many developing countries argue that while WTO rules ensure the rule of law, they do not always deliver the rule of justice. In other words, rules may be legally correct but still produce outcomes that feel unequal or developmentally unfair.

Reform should, therefore, improve transparency on subsidies, create credible

responses to distortive practices, and revisit special and differential treatment so that it remains meaningful in today's economic conditions.

Institutional adaptability is also important. The WTO's structures were designed for a smaller and less complex membership, which contributes to today's deadlock. Some countries are moving ahead in smaller groups on issues such as e-commerce, investment facilitation, and services. These efforts can help progress, but they must remain transparent, inclusive and connected to the wider WTO framework. Flexibility should help the system move forward, not divide it. If such initiatives remain open to all members and eventually become part of common WTO rules, they can support reform instead of fragmentation.

Ultimately, WTO reform is not only technical but also normative. The Munich Security Report warns that a world shaped mainly by transactional deals would favour the powerful and leave weaker countries vulnerable.

The choice is clear

The WTO's value lies in preventing exactly this outcome by ensuring that trade is governed by rules rather than coercion. In an era of strategic competition, rules do not weaken sovereignty; they protect countries from economic domination.

The choice before the MC14 is crystal clear. Members can undertake serious reform, preserving the WTO's stabilising core while updating its rules, procedures and developmental balance, or allow the system to drift further into fragmentation. Achieving reform will require political will and shared responsibility.

Rebalancing the WTO is ultimately about securing a workable framework for cooperation in a world where economic interdependence is still unavoidable. If the MC14 seizes this opportunity, it can show that meaningful reform remains the most credible path to sustaining global trade governance.

19Mar. The opportunity in Cameroon to rebalance the WTO

कैमरून में WTO को पुनर्संतुलित करने का अवसर

- Today, trade is no longer just about **economics**. It is increasingly used as a **geopolitical tool**. आज व्यापार केवल **अर्थव्यवस्था** तक सीमित नहीं है बल्कि यह एक **भूराजनीतिक उपकरण** बन गया है।
- Tariffs are imposed as **pressure tactics**, and economic dependence is used strategically. शुल्क को **दबाव के साधन** के रूप में लगाया जाता है और आर्थिक निर्भरता का **राजनीतिक उपयोग** किया जाता है।
- The **WTO's Ministerial Conference (MC14)** will be held in **Yaoundé, Cameroon (March 26-29, 2026)**. विश्व व्यापार संगठन का **मंत्रीस्तरीय सम्मेलन (एमसी14)** याउंडे, कैमरून (26-29 मार्च 2026) में आयोजित होगा।
- The key issue is whether the WTO can **adapt fast enough** in a power-based trade world. मुख्य प्रश्न यह है कि क्या विश्व व्यापार संगठन **तेजी से अनुकूलन कर सकता है**।

WTO in turmoil

विश्व व्यापार संगठन संकट में

- The **WTO faces its biggest crisis since 1995**. विश्व व्यापार संगठन **1995** के बाद सबसे बड़े संकट का सामना कर रहा है।
- The **dispute settlement system is paralysed due to stalled Appellate Body appointments**. **विवाद निपटान प्रणाली अपील निकाय की नियुक्तियों** के रुकने से ठप है।
- This weakens **trust in the system**. इससे प्रणाली पर **विश्वास कम होता है**।
- WTO negotiations have failed to keep pace with **global trade changes**. विश्व व्यापार संगठन की वार्ताएं **वैश्विक व्यापार परिवर्तनों** के साथ तालमेल नहीं बैठा पाई हैं।
- **Digital commerce** is growing rapidly but rules have not evolved accordingly. **डिजिटल व्यापार** तेजी से बढ़ रहा है लेकिन नियम उसके अनुसार विकसित नहीं हुए हैं।



- **Decision-making is slow due to 166 members** with diverse development levels.
निर्णय प्रक्रिया **166 सदस्य देशों** के कारण धीमी हो गई है।
- **Consensus is difficult and cumbersome.**
सर्वसम्मति बनाना **कठिन और जटिल** हो गया है।
- Many negotiations produce **limited outcomes.**
कई वार्ताओं के परिणाम **सीमित** रहते हैं।
- Geopolitical tensions and tariffs have **distorted markets.**
भूराजनीतिक तनाव और शुल्क ने **बाजारों को विकृत** किया है।
- Despite problems, most trade still follows **WTO rules.**
समस्याओं के बावजूद अधिकांश व्यापार **विश्व व्यापार संगठन के नियमों** के अनुसार होता है।
- Weakening rules will make trade **unpredictable and unstable.**
नियम कमजोर होने से व्यापार **अनिश्चित और अस्थिर** हो जाएगा।
- Smaller countries depend on rules for **protection from stronger economies.**
छोटे देश **मजबूत अर्थव्यवस्थाओं से सुरक्षा** के लिए नियमों पर निर्भर हैं।
- The **Munich Security Report 2026 describes a shift to "wrecking-ball politics".**
म्यूनिख सुरक्षा रिपोर्ट **2026** इसे **विनाशकारी राजनीति** की ओर बदलाव बताती है।
- Countries prefer **short-term deals and disruption** over institutional reform.
देश **संस्थागत सुधार के बजाय अल्पकालिक समझौते और व्यवधान** को प्राथमिकता देते हैं।
- Trade shows rise of **unilateral tariffs and economic coercion.**
व्यापार में **एकतरफा शुल्क और आर्थिक दबाव** बढ़ रहा है।
- Bilateral deals are bypassing **multilateral commitments.**
द्विपक्षीय समझौते **बहुपक्षीय प्रतिबद्धताओं को दरकिनार** कर रहे हैं।
- Rule-based trade may be replaced by **power-based arrangements.**
नियम आधारित व्यापार की जगह **शक्ति आधारित व्यवस्था** ले सकती है।

Global production has changed वैश्विक उत्पादन में परिवर्तन हुआ है

- Against this backdrop, the **MC14 offers a chance not just to fix technical problems but to also restore balance between predictability and fairness.**
इस पृष्ठभूमि में **एमसी14** केवल तकनीकी समस्याओं को ठीक करने का ही नहीं बल्कि पूर्वानुमेयता और निष्पक्षता के बीच संतुलन बहाल करने का अवसर प्रदान करता है।
- The original balance of rights and obligations in the WTO no longer reflects today's reality.
विश्व व्यापार संगठन में **अधिकार और दायित्वों का मूल संतुलन अब आज की वास्तविकता को नहीं दर्शाता है।**
- Emerging economies now export **advanced and technology-intensive products, climate-related trade measures are expanding, and digital networks are reshaping how global production works.**
उभरती अर्थव्यवस्थाएँ अब **उन्नत और प्रौद्योगिकी आधारित उत्पादों का निर्यात करती हैं, जलवायु संबंधित व्यापार उपाय बढ़ रहे हैं, और डिजिटल नेटवर्क वैश्विक उत्पादन के तरीके को बदल रहे हैं।**
- **Rules designed for a late 20th century trading system cannot fully govern a 21st century one.**
20वीं सदी के उत्तरार्ध की व्यापार प्रणाली के लिए बनाए गए नियम 21वीं सदी की प्रणाली को पूरी तरह नियंत्रित नहीं कर सकते हैं।
- Reform must start with restoring **credibility to enforcement.**
सुधार की शुरुआत **प्रवर्तन की विश्वसनीयता बहाल करने से होनी चाहिए।**
- Without a functioning **dispute settlement system, commitments lose their value.**
कार्यशील **विवाद निपटान प्रणाली के बिना प्रतिबद्धताएँ अपना महत्व खो देती हैं।**
- Members need to rebuild a **binding, trusted mechanism rather than relying mainly on temporary alternatives that lack universal acceptance.**
सदस्यों को **सार्वभौमिक स्वीकृति के बिना अस्थायी विकल्पों पर निर्भर रहने के बजाय एक बाध्यकारी और विश्वसनीय व्यवस्था का पुनर्निर्माण करना होगा।**
- A robust **dispute-resolution system helps remove politics from conflicts and keeps confidence in multilateral rules.**



एक मजबूत विवाद समाधान प्रणाली विवादों से राजनीति को हटाने में मदद करती है और बहुपक्षीय नियमों में विश्वास बनाए रखती है।

- At the same time, **predictability must go hand in hand with fairness.**
साथ ही पूर्वानुमेयता को निष्पक्षता के साथ चलना चाहिए।
- Long-standing disputes over **agricultural subsidies, market distortions and unequal openness need transparent solutions.**
कृषि सब्सिडी, बाजार विकृति और असमान खुलापन से जुड़े लंबे समय से चले आ रहे विवादों को पारदर्शी समाधान की आवश्यकता है।
- Many developing countries argue that **while WTO rules ensure the rule of law, they do not always deliver the rule of justice.**
कई विकासशील देश तर्क देते हैं कि हालांकि विश्व व्यापार संगठन के नियम कानून के शासन को सुनिश्चित करते हैं, वे हमेशा न्याय के शासन को सुनिश्चित नहीं करते।
- In other words, **rules may be legally correct but still produce outcomes that feel unequal or developmentally unfair.**
दूसरे शब्दों में नियम कानूनी रूप से सही हो सकते हैं लेकिन फिर भी ऐसे परिणाम दे सकते हैं जो असमान या विकास की दृष्टि से अन्यायपूर्ण हों।
- **Reform should, therefore, improve transparency on subsidies, create credible responses to distortive practices, and revisit special and differential treatment so that it remains meaningful in today's economic conditions.**
इसलिए सुधार को सब्सिडी में पारदर्शिता बढ़ानी चाहिए, विकृत करने वाली नीतियों के लिए विश्वसनीय प्रतिक्रिया बनानी चाहिए, और विशेष एवं भिन्न व्यवहार की पुनः समीक्षा करनी चाहिए ताकि यह आज की आर्थिक परिस्थितियों में सार्थक बना रहे।
- Institutional adaptability is also important.
संस्थागत अनुकूलन भी महत्वपूर्ण है।
- The WTO's structures were designed for a **smaller and less complex membership, which contributes to today's deadlock.**
विश्व व्यापार संगठन की संरचनाएँ छोटी और कम जटिल सदस्यता के लिए बनाई गई थीं, जो आज के गतिरोध का कारण बनती हैं।
- Some countries are moving ahead in **smaller groups on issues such as e-commerce, investment facilitation, and services.**
कुछ देश ई-कॉमर्स, निवेश सुविधा और सेवाओं जैसे मुद्दों पर छोटे समूहों में आगे बढ़ रहे हैं।
- These efforts can help progress, **but they must remain transparent, inclusive and connected to the wider WTO framework.**
ये प्रयास प्रगति में मदद कर सकते हैं, लेकिन इन्हें पारदर्शी, समावेशी और व्यापक ढांचे से जुड़े रहना चाहिए।
- Flexibility should help the system move forward, **not divide it.**
लचीलापन प्रणाली को आगे बढ़ाने में मदद करे, उसे विभाजित न करे।
- If such initiatives remain open to all members and eventually become part of **common WTO rules, they can support reform instead of fragmentation.**
यदि ऐसे प्रयास सभी सदस्यों के लिए खुले रहें और अंततः सामान्य विश्व व्यापार संगठन नियमों का हिस्सा बन जाएँ, तो वे विभाजन के बजाय सुधार का समर्थन कर सकते हैं।
- Ultimately, WTO reform is not only **technical but also normative.**
अंततः विश्व व्यापार संगठन का सुधार केवल तकनीकी नहीं बल्कि मानक आधारित भी है।
- The Munich Security Report warns that **a world shaped mainly by transactional deals would favour the powerful and leave weaker countries vulnerable.**
म्यूनिख सुरक्षा रिपोर्ट चेतावनी देती है कि लेनदेन आधारित समझौतों से संचालित दुनिया शक्तिशाली देशों के पक्ष में होगी और कमजोर देशों को असुरक्षित छोड़ेगी।

The choice is clear
चयन स्पष्ट है

- The WTO's value lies in preventing exactly this outcome by ensuring that trade is governed by **rules rather than coercion.**
विश्व व्यापार संगठन का महत्व इसी परिणाम को रोकने में है यह सुनिश्चित करके कि व्यापार दबाव के बजाय नियमों द्वारा संचालित हो।



- In an era of **strategic competition**, rules do not weaken sovereignty; they protect countries from economic domination.
रणनीतिक प्रतिस्पर्धा के युग में नियम सार्वभौमिकता को कमजोर नहीं करते बल्कि देशों को आर्थिक प्रभुत्व से बचाते हैं।
- The choice before the MC14 is crystal clear.
एमसी14 के सामने विकल्प बिल्कुल स्पष्ट है।
- Members can undertake **serious reform**, preserving the WTO's stabilising core while updating its rules, procedures and developmental balance, or allow the system to drift further into fragmentation.
सदस्य गंभीर सुधार कर सकते हैं, विश्व व्यापार संगठन के स्थिरता प्रदान करने वाले मूल तत्व को बनाए रखते हुए इसके नियम, प्रक्रियाएँ और विकासात्मक संतुलन को अद्यतन कर सकते हैं, या प्रणाली को और अधिक विभाजन की ओर जाने दे सकते हैं।
- Achieving reform will require **political will and shared responsibility**.
सुधार प्राप्त करने के लिए राजनीतिक इच्छाशक्ति और साझा जिम्मेदारी आवश्यक होगी।
- Rebalancing the WTO is ultimately about securing a **workable framework for cooperation in a world where economic interdependence is still unavoidable**.
विश्व व्यापार संगठन का पुनर्संतुलन अंततः ऐसी दुनिया में सहयोग के लिए कार्यशील ढांचा सुनिश्चित करने के बारे में है जहाँ आर्थिक परस्पर निर्भरता अभी भी अपरिहार्य है।
- If the MC14 seizes this opportunity, it can show that meaningful reform remains the most credible path to sustaining global trade governance.
यदि एमसी14 इस अवसर का उपयोग करता है, तो यह दिखा सकता है कि सार्थक सुधार वैश्विक व्यापार शासन को बनाए रखने का सबसे विश्वसनीय मार्ग बना हुआ है।

Cabinet okays ₹33,660-cr. BHAVYA plan for 100 industrial parks by '32

GS III: Economy
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet approved the **Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojna (BHAVYA)**, with an allocation of ₹33,660 crore for the development of 100 'plug-and-play' industrial parks across the country.

The aim was to create 100 "future ready" industrial parks integrated with the PM GatiShakti to make use of the latter's multi-modal connectivity and last-mile access.

"These parks will set new benchmarks in industrial infrastructure, ensuring reliability, reducing in-



Manufacturing boost: KINFRA integrated industrial park in Kerala. K. K. MUSTAFAH. (FOR REPRESENTATIONAL PURPOSE ONLY)

efficiencies and enhancing productivity across sectors," the government said.

As per Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade Secretary Amardeep Singh Bhatia,

the scheme's duration would be for six years starting 2026-27. The first phase would see 50 parks being set up.

The minimum land need for the parks would

be 100 acre in most cases, and 25 acre for industrial parks in hilly or North Eastern States. The maximum size is 1,000 acre.

States, pvt. sector

While the Union government will provide up to ₹1 crore per acre, the scheme is meant to involve State governments as well as the private sector.

"At the heart of BHAVYA lies a strong push for deregulation and ease of doing business, with streamlined approvals, effective single-window systems, and investor-friendly reforms led by States," the government said.

19Mar. Cabinet okays ₹33,660-cr. BHAVYA plan for 100 industrial parks by '32
कैबिनेट ने 100 औद्योगिक पार्कों के लिए ₹33,660 करोड़ की BHAVYA योजना को मंजूरी दी

- The **Union Cabinet** approved the **Bharat Audyogik Vikas Yojna (BHAVYA)**, with an allocation of **₹33,660 crore** for the development of **100 'plug-and-play' industrial parks** across the country.



केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल ने भारत औद्योगिक विकास योजना (BHAVYA) को मंजूरी दी, जिसमें देशभर में 100 'प्लग-एंड-प्ले' औद्योगिक पार्कों के विकास के लिए ₹33,660 करोड़ का प्रावधान किया गया है।

- The aim was to create 100 "future ready" industrial parks integrated with the PM GatiShakti to make use of the latter's multimodal connectivity and last-mile access. इसका उद्देश्य 100 "भविष्य के लिए तैयार" औद्योगिक पार्कों का निर्माण करना है, जिन्हें PM गतिशक्ति के साथ जोड़ा जाएगा ताकि इसकी मल्टीमोडल कनेक्टिविटी और अंतिम मील कनेक्टिविटी का उपयोग किया जा सके।
- "These parks will set new benchmarks in industrial infrastructure, ensuring reliability, reducing inefficiencies and enhancing productivity across sectors," the government said. सरकार ने कहा, "ये पार्क औद्योगिक अवसंरचना में नए मानक स्थापित करेंगे, विश्वसनीयता सुनिश्चित करेंगे, अक्षमताओं को कम करेंगे और विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में उत्पादकता बढ़ाएंगे।"
- As per Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade Secretary Amardeep Singh Bhatia, the scheme's duration would be for six years starting 2026-27. उद्योग और आंतरिक व्यापार संवर्धन विभाग के सचिव अमरदीप सिंह भाटिया के अनुसार, इस योजना की अवधि 2026-27 से शुरू होकर छह वर्ष होगी।
- The first phase would see 50 parks being set up. पहले चरण में 50 पार्क स्थापित किए जाएंगे।
- The minimum land need for the parks would be 100 acre in most cases, and 25 acre for industrial parks in hilly or North Eastern States. अधिकांश मामलों में इन पार्कों के लिए न्यूनतम भूमि 100 एकड़ होगी, जबकि पहाड़ी या पूर्वोत्तर राज्यों में औद्योगिक पार्कों के लिए 25 एकड़ भूमि की आवश्यकता होगी।
- The maximum size is 1,000 acre. अधिकतम आकार 1,000 एकड़ होगा।
- While the Union government will provide up to ₹1 crore per acre, the scheme is meant to involve State governments as well as the private sector. जहां केंद्र सरकार प्रति एकड़ ₹1 करोड़ तक देगी, वहीं यह योजना राज्य सरकारों और निजी क्षेत्र की भागीदारी को भी शामिल करने के लिए बनाई गई है।
- "At the heart of BHAVYA lies a strong push for deregulation and ease of doing business, with streamlined approvals, effective single-window systems, and investor-friendly reforms led by States," the government said. सरकार ने कहा, "BHAVYA के केंद्र में नियमन में ढील और व्यवसाय करने में आसानी को बढ़ावा देना है, जिसमें सुव्यवस्थित अनुमोदन, प्रभावी सिंगल-विंडो सिस्टम, और राज्यों द्वारा संचालित निवेशक-अनुकूल सुधार शामिल हैं।"

CCI gets ₹1,719 crore to pay support price

GS III: Economy
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved a funding of ₹ 1,718.56 crore to the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) to meet the minimum support price (MSP) needs for the cotton season 2023-24. The Government said the move is aimed at providing direct price support to cotton farmers in India.

The Centre hoped this intervention would stabilise cotton prices, prevent distress sales, and ensure better returns to farmers.

The MSP per quintal of medium staple cotton was ₹6,620 and ₹7,020 for long



Such interventions play a crucial role in stabilising prices.

staple cotton, in the 2023-24 season. During that season, with an estimated 114.47 lakh hectares under cultivation and production pegged at 325.22 lakh bales, this accounted for nearly 25% of global cotton output, the release noted.

19Mar. CCI gets ₹1,719 crore to pay support price

CCI को समर्थन मूल्य भुगतान के लिए ₹1,719 करोड़ मिले

• The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved a funding of ₹1,718.56 crore to the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) to meet the minimum support price (MSP) needs for the cotton season 2023-24.

आर्थिक मामलों की मंत्रिमंडलीय समिति ने कॉटन कॉरपोरेशन ऑफ इंडिया (CCI) को ₹1,718.56 करोड़ की फंडिंग को मंजूरी दी है ताकि कपास सीजन 2023-24 के लिए न्यूनतम समर्थन मूल्य (MSP) की आवश्यकताओं को पूरा किया जा सके।

• The Government said the move is aimed at providing direct price support to cotton farmers in India.

सरकार ने कहा कि यह कदम भारत के कपास किसानों को प्रत्यक्ष मूल्य समर्थन प्रदान करने के उद्देश्य से उठाया गया है।



- The Centre hoped this intervention would stabilise **cotton prices**, prevent **distress sales**, and ensure **better returns** to farmers.
केंद्र को उम्मीद है कि यह हस्तक्षेप **कपास की कीमतों** को स्थिर करेगा, **संकट में बिक्री** को रोकेंगा और किसानों को **बेहतर लाभ** सुनिश्चित करेगा।
- The **MSP per quintal of medium staple cotton** was ₹6,620 and ₹7,020 for **long staple cotton**, in the **2023-24 season**.
मध्यम स्टेपल कपास के लिए **MSP प्रति किंटल ₹6,620** था और लंबे स्टेपल कपास के लिए **₹7,020**, **2023-24** सीजन में।
- During that season, with an estimated **114.47 lakh hectares** under cultivation and production pegged at **325.22 lakh bales**, this accounted for nearly **25% of global cotton output**, the release noted.
उस सीजन के दौरान, लगभग **114.47 लाख हेक्टेयर** क्षेत्र में खेती और **325.22 लाख गांठ** उत्पादन के साथ, यह वैश्विक कपास उत्पादन का लगभग **25%** था, विज्ञप्ति में कहा गया।

GS Paper III: S&T,

TOPICS COVERED

19 March 2026

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|-------|--|
| 19Mar | Amid LPG crisis, demand for rocket stoves surges among Kerala hotels एलपीजी संकट के बीच, केरल के होटलों में रॉकेट स्टोव की मांग बढ़ी |
| 19Mar | Large Hadron Collider discovers a new particle लार्ज हैड्रॉन कोलाइडर ने एक नए कण की खोज की |

Amid LPG crisis, demand for rocket stoves surges among Kerala hotels

GS III: S&T

Aathira Haridas
KOCHI

With LPG cylinder supplies running low due to the crisis in West Asia, many shopkeepers in Kerala are turning to **rocket stoves** as an alternative cooking method. As demand rises, some suppliers have stopped accepting new orders, while others, including restaurant owners, have begun making their own stoves.

The rising demand for rocket stoves is attributed to **their lower use of firewood compared with regular wood stoves**. "I placed an order for two rocket stoves earlier. With the cri-



New alternative: Rocket stove needs less firewood compared to regular wood stoves.

sis looming large, the stove is the only alternative," said Mohammed Razi P.Z., owner of a restaurant at Vennala.

Mohammed Sharooq, the all-India distributor of a Chennai-based stove manufacturing company, said he has stopped taking calls amid rising demand. "Every day, we get over 1,000 calls. Unfortunately, we are unable to accept any new orders as we want to fulfil existing ones," he said.

In the past four days, the company has received more than 2,000 orders, including 450 from Kerala. The price of the stoves varies by company and model. At the firm, **commercial models are priced between ₹17,500 and ₹3.5 lakh**, while domestic units range from ₹8,000 to ₹17,500.

With most companies freezing orders due to their inability to manufacture and deliver on time, some restaurateurs have begun making their own rocket stoves. "When we went to place an order, we were told there was a waiting period of over 40 days. So we made three such stoves and are using them," said Benny Nanatt, owner of an eatery in Palarivattom.

Aiju Thomas, managing partner of a firm in Piravom that manufactures the stoves, said: "If we earlier sold about 40 stoves a month, it is now 40 a day." The firm offers two variants priced at around ₹5,200 and ₹9,500.

19Mar. Amid LPG crisis, demand for rocket stoves surges among Kerala hotels एलपीजी संकट के बीच, केरल के होटलों में रॉकेट स्टोव की मांग बढ़ी

- With **LPG cylinder supplies running low** due to the crisis in **West Asia**, many shopkeepers in Kerala are turning to **rocket stoves** as an alternative cooking method.



पश्चिम एशिया के संकट के कारण **एलपीजी सिलेंडर की आपूर्ति कम होने** के साथ, केरल के कई दुकानदार **रॉकेट स्टोव** की ओर र alternative क विकल्प के रूप में मुड़ रहे हैं।

- As demand rises, some suppliers have stopped accepting new orders, while others, including **restaurant owners**, have begun making their own stoves.
जैसे-जैसे मांग बढ़ रही है, कुछ सप्लायर्स ने नए ऑर्डर लेना बंद कर दिया है, जबकि अन्य, जिनमें **रेस्टोरेंट मालिक** भी शामिल हैं, ने अपने खुद के स्टोव बनाना शुरू कर दिया है।
- The rising demand for **rocket stoves** is attributed to their **lower use of firewood** compared with regular wood stoves.
रॉकेट स्टोव की बढ़ती मांग को उनके **साधारण लकड़ी के स्टोव की तुलना में कम ईंधन उपयोग** के कारण माना जा रहा है।
- “I placed an order for two rocket stoves earlier. With the crisis looming large, the stove is the only alternative,” said **Mohammed Razi P.Z.**, owner of a restaurant at Vennala.
“मैंने पहले दो रॉकेट स्टोव का ऑर्डर दिया था। संकट बढ़ते देख, यह स्टोव ही एकमात्र विकल्प है,” कहा **मुहम्मद रज़ी पी.जेड.**, वेनला में एक रेस्टोरेंट के मालिक ने।
- **Mohammed Sharooq**, the all-India distributor of a Chennai-based stove manufacturing company, said he has stopped taking calls amid rising demand.
मुहम्मद शरूख, चेन्नई आधारित स्टोव निर्माण कंपनी के ऑल-इंडिया वितरक, ने कहा कि बढ़ती मांग के बीच उन्होंने कॉल लेना बंद कर दिया है।
- “Every day, we get over 1,000 calls. Unfortunately, we are unable to accept any new orders as we want to fulfill existing ones,” he said.
“हर दिन हमें 1,000 से अधिक कॉल आते हैं। दुर्भाग्यवश, हम नए ऑर्डर स्वीकार नहीं कर सकते क्योंकि हमें मौजूदा ऑर्डर पूरे करने हैं,” उन्होंने कहा।
- In the past four days, the company has received more than 2,000 orders, including 450 from Kerala.
पिछले चार दिनों में, कंपनी को 2,000 से अधिक ऑर्डर मिले हैं, जिनमें से 450 केरल से हैं।
- The price of the stoves varies by company and model.
स्टोव की कीमत कंपनी और मॉडल के अनुसार भिन्न होती है।
- At the firm, commercial models are priced between ₹17,500 and ₹3.5 lakh, while domestic units range from ₹8,000 to ₹17,500.
कंपनी में, **कमर्शियल मॉडल** की कीमत ₹17,500 से ₹3.5 लाख के बीच है, जबकि **घरेलू यूनिट** ₹8,000 से ₹17,500 के बीच है।
- With most companies freezing orders due to their inability to manufacture and deliver on time, some **restaurateurs** have begun making their own **rocket stoves**.
अधिकांश कंपनियों ने समय पर निर्माण और वितरण में असमर्थता के कारण ऑर्डर फ्रीज़ कर दिए हैं, इसलिए कुछ **रेस्टोरेंट मालिकों** ने अपने खुद के **रॉकेट स्टोव** बनाना शुरू कर दिया है।
- “When we went to place an order, we were told there was a waiting period of over 40 days. So we made three such stoves and are using them,” said **Benny Nanatt**, owner of an eatery in Palarivattom.
“जब हम ऑर्डर देने गए, हमें बताया गया कि **40 दिन से अधिक का वेटिंग पीरियड** है। इसलिए हमने तीन ऐसे स्टोव बनाए और उपयोग कर रहे हैं,” कहा **बेनी नानट्ट**, पालारीवट्टम में एक ईटरी के मालिक ने।
- **Aiju Thomas**, managing partner of a firm in Piravom that manufactures the stoves, said: “If we earlier sold about 40 stoves a month, it is now 40 a day.”
ऐजू थॉमस, पिरावम में स्टोव बनाने वाली कंपनी के प्रबंध भागीदार ने कहा: “अगर पहले हम महीने में लगभग 40 स्टोव बेचते थे, अब यह 40 स्टोव प्रतिदिन है।”
- The firm offers two variants priced at around ₹5,200 and ₹9,500.
कंपनी दो वेरिएंट पेश करती है, जिनकी कीमत लगभग ₹5,200 और ₹9,500 है।



Large Hadron Collider discovers a new particle

GS III: S&T
The Hindu Bureau

The Large Hadron Collider has discovered a new particle, the 80th identified so far by the world's most powerful particle smasher, Europe's CERN physics laboratory announced on Tuesday.

The new particle has been named "Xi-cc-plus". Scientists have expressed hope that the particle – which is similar to a proton but four times heavier – will reveal more about the strange behaviour of quantum mechanics.

All the matter around us, including the protons and neutrons that make up the nucleus of atoms, are made of baryons. These common particles are composed of three quarks, which are fundamental building blocks of matter.

Quarks come in six "flavours": up, down, charm, strange, top and bottom. Each has varying mass, electric charge and quantum properties. In theory, there could be many different types of baryons that mix these flavours. However, most are extremely difficult to observe.

To chase them down, the Large

The new particle has been named "Xi-cc-plus" and scientists hope that the particle – which is similar to a proton but four times heavier – will reveal more about quantum mechanics

- These common particles are composed of **three quarks**, which are fundamental building blocks of matter.
ये कण **तीन क्वार्क** से बने होते हैं, जो पदार्थ के मूल घटक हैं।
- Quarks come in six "flavours": **up, down, charm, strange, top and bottom**.
क्वार्क के छह प्रकार होते हैं: **अप, डाउन, चार्म, स्ट्रेज, टॉप और बॉटम**।
- Each has varying mass, electric charge and quantum properties.
इनके **द्रव्यमान, विद्युत आवेश और क्वांटम गुण** अलग-अलग होते हैं।
- In theory, there could be many different types of baryons that mix these flavours.
सिद्धांत रूप में कई प्रकार के बैरीऑन हो सकते हैं जो इन प्रकारों को मिलाते हैं।
- However, most are extremely difficult to observe.
लेकिन अधिकांश को देख पाना बहुत कठिन होता है।
- To chase them down, the **Large Hadron Collider** sends particles whizzing around an underground ring at phenomenal speeds until they smash into each other.
इन्हें खोजने के लिए **लार्ज हैड्रॉन कोलाइडर** कणों को भूमिगत रिंग में तेज गति से घुमाता है और टकराता है।
- This gives scientists a brief chance to measure how the more stable elements decay, then deduce the properties of the original particle.
इससे वैज्ञानिकों को कणों के विघटन को मापने और मूल कण के गुण जानने का अवसर मिलता है।
- The newly discovered **Xi-cc-plus** contains two "**charm**" quarks and one "**down**" quark.
नए **Xi-cc-plus** में दो **चार्म क्वार्क** और एक **डाउन क्वार्क** है।
- Normal protons have two "**up**" quarks and one "**down**" quark.
सामान्य प्रोटॉन में दो **अप क्वार्क** और एक **डाउन क्वार्क** होता है।

Hadron Collider sends particles whizzing around an underground ring at phenomenal speeds until they smash into each other. This gives scientists a brief chance to measure how the more stable elements decay, then deduce the properties of the original particle.

The newly discovered Xi-cc-plus contains two "charm" quarks and one "down" quark. Normal protons have two "up" quarks and one "down" quark. Because the new particle has two heavier "charm" quarks instead of "up" ones, it is much heavier.

Vincenzo Vagnoni, spokesman for the Large Hadron Collider beauty (LHCb) experiment, said it was "only the second time a baryon with two heavy quarks has been observed". It is also "the first new particle identified after the upgrades to the LHCb detector that were completed in 2023," he said in a statement.

"The result will help theorists test models of quantum chromodynamics, the theory of the strong force that binds quarks into not only conventional baryons and mesons but also more exotic hadrons such as tetraquarks and pentaquarks."

In 2017, the LHCb experiment announced that it had discovered a similar particle, made of two "charmed" quarks and one "up" quark. The new particle differs only in having a "down" quark in place of the "up" quark – a small change that has profound consequences.

Due to complex quantum effects, the new particle has a predicted lifetime up to six times shorter than its counterpart, making it far more tricky to spot, CERN said.

The collaboration observed the new baryon by analysing data from proton-proton collisions recorded during the third run of the LHC, achieving a statistical significance of 7 sigma, well above the 5 sigma threshold required to claim a discovery. CERN Director-General Mark Thomson called it "a fantastic example of how LHCb's unique capabilities play a vital role in the success of the LHC."

The Large Hadron Collider is a 27-km long proton-smashing ring running 100 metres below France and Switzerland. Famously, it proved the existence of the Higgs boson – known colloquially as the "God particle" – in 2012.

(With inputs from AFP)

19Mar. Large Hadron Collider discovers a new particle लार्ज हैड्रॉन कोलाइडर ने एक नए कण की खोज की

• The **Large Hadron Collider** has discovered a new particle, the **80th identified** so far by the world's most powerful particle smasher, Europe's **CERN physics laboratory** announced on Tuesday.

लार्ज हैड्रॉन कोलाइडर ने एक नया कण खोजा है, जो अब तक खोजा गया **80वां कण** है, यह घोषणा यूरोप की **सीईआरएन प्रयोगशाला** ने की।

• The new particle has been named "**Xi-cc-plus**".

इस नए कण का नाम "**Xi-cc-plus**" रखा गया है।

• Scientists have expressed hope that the particle — which is similar to a proton but **four times heavier** — will reveal more about the strange behaviour of **quantum mechanics**.

वैज्ञानिकों को उम्मीद है कि यह कण — जो प्रोटॉन जैसा है लेकिन **चार गुना भारी** है — **क्वांटम यांत्रिकी** के व्यवहार को समझने में मदद करेगा।

• All the matter around us, including the **protons and neutrons** that make up the nucleus of atoms, are made of **baryons**.

हमारे आसपास का सारा पदार्थ, जिसमें **प्रोटॉन और न्यूट्रॉन** शामिल हैं, **बैरीऑन** से बना है।



- Because the new particle has two heavier “charm” quarks, it is much heavier.
दो चार्म क्वार्क होने के कारण यह अधिक भारी है।
- Vincenzo Vagnoni, spokesman for the LHCb experiment, said it was “only the second time a baryon with two heavy quarks has been observed”.
विनचेंजो वाग्नोनी ने कहा कि यह दूसरी बार है जब दो भारी क्वार्क वाला बैरीऑन देखा गया है।
- It is also the first new particle identified after the 2023 upgrade of the detector.
यह 2023 के उन्नयन के बाद पहला नया कण है।
- The result will help test models of quantum chromodynamics, the theory of the strong force.
यह परिणाम क्वांटम क्रोमोडायनामिक्स और मजबूत बल के सिद्धांत की जांच में मदद करेगा।
- This force binds quarks into baryons, mesons, tetraquarks and pentaquarks.
यह बल क्वार्क को बैरीऑन, मेसॉन, टेट्राक्वार्क और पेंटाक्वार्क में बांधता है।
- In 2017, the LHCb experiment announced that it had discovered a similar particle, made of two “charmed” quarks and one “up” quark.
2017 में एक समान कण खोजा गया था जिसमें दो चार्म क्वार्क और एक अप क्वार्क था।
- The new particle differs only in having a “down” quark in place of the “up” quark — a small change that has profound consequences.
नया कण केवल अप क्वार्क की जगह डाउन क्वार्क होने से अलग है — यह छोटा बदलाव बड़े प्रभाव डालता है।
- Due to complex quantum effects, the new particle has a predicted lifetime up to six times shorter than its counterpart.
जटिल क्वांटम प्रभावों के कारण इसका जीवनकाल छह गुना कम है।
- This makes it far more tricky to spot.
इससे इसे पहचानना अधिक कठिन हो जाता है।
- The collaboration observed the new baryon by analysing data from proton-proton collisions during the third run of the LHC.
यह खोज प्रोटॉन-प्रोटॉन टक्करों के डेटा से की गई।
- It achieved a 7 sigma statistical significance, above the 5 sigma threshold.
इसने 7 सिग्मा का स्तर प्राप्त किया जो 5 सिग्मा से अधिक है।
- CERN Director-General Mark Thomson called it a “fantastic example”.
सीईआरएन के महानिदेशक मार्क थॉमसन ने इसे शानदार उदाहरण कहा।
- The Large Hadron Collider is a 27-km long ring located 100 metres below France and Switzerland.
लार्ज हैड्रॉन कोलाइडर एक 27 किलोमीटर लंबी रिंग है जो 100 मीटर नीचे स्थित है।
- It proved the existence of the Higgs boson (“God particle”) in 2012.
इसने 2012 में हिग्स बोसॉन (ईश्वर कण) के अस्तित्व को सिद्ध किया।

GS Paper III: Environment,

TOPICS COVERED

19 March 2026

19Mar

India's frogs find allies from citizen science to sanctuaries

भारत के मेंढकों को नागरिक विज्ञान से लेकर अभयारण्यों तक सहयोगी मिल रहे हैं



India's frogs find allies from citizen science to sanctuaries

India is home to over 450 amphibian species and roughly a quarter of them are categorised as 'threatened' and one-fifth as 'data deficient'; many species are threatened by climate change and habitat loss, but conservation programmes are turning the tide, and citizens can now join the effort

CS II: Environment

Karthikeyan Vasudevan

World Frog Day on March 20 celebrates the role of frogs, the world's most numerous amphibians. They live at the interface between freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems, eat insects and in turn get eaten by other vertebrates, and are thus crucial in converting insect biomass into vertebrate biomass.

Losing them can mean a boom in insects that prey on plants as well as a depleted food base for many terrestrial vertebrates, which in turn can irreparably damage both freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems. Unfortunately for the earth, since the 1980s, frog and other amphibian populations have been on the decline worldwide. In 2023, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)'s Global Amphibian Assessment Report said 37 species have become extinct and continue to decline, making them the most threatened vertebrate group.

The most prominent historical driver of amphibian decline has been chytridiomycosis, a fungal disease caused by *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* and *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* in frogs and salamanders, respectively. This disease affects their skin – an organ that protects them as well as allows respiration and exchange of ions to maintain electrolyte balance. In the last two decades, more than 60% of amphibians globally have been affected by it – although intensive monitoring and conservation efforts have reduced the extinction risk of 63 species, halving the impact.

Today, however, the most important drivers of extinction are climate change for 39% of species and habitat loss for 37%.

The Indian scene

India is home to more than 450 amphibian species, and roughly a quarter of them are categorised as 'threatened' and one-fifth as 'data deficient'. The burden of *B. dendrobatidis* and *B. salamandrivorans* fungi in India is substantial but it has not caused mass mortality the way it has for frogs in the Americas and Australia.

B. dendrobatidis and *B. salamandrivorans* both had their roots in Asia and spread worldwide through the trade on frog legs and salamanders as pets. In 1987, after Humayun Abdul Ali from Bombay Natural History Society published a scientific report highlighting their role in controlling agricultural pests, this trade was banned. However, by then, frog and salamander populations had been significantly affected as *B. dendrobatidis* had spread from Asia to Europe, the Americas, and Australia.

The situation in India itself is rather unique. Until 2015, scientists were unsure of the status of *B. dendrobatidis*; a diagnostic test emerged only in 2023.

That said, while scientists in the country have not documented mass die-offs, they also haven't found the status of amphibians to have improved in the last two decades. Since they lack long-term monitoring data for any species, it is difficult to pinpoint the causes.

In fact, India hosts a significant share of the world's 'data deficient' amphibian



A Malabar gliding frog seen in Amboli, Maharashtra. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

species. And of the 157 threatened species in India, only six are protected under the Wildlife Protection Act 1972.

Climate change in India also presents a serious challenge. One well-known consequence is the mismatch between seasons and the natural rhythms of plants and animals. So a false cue of an early monsoon followed by a prolonged dry period can result in catastrophic breeding outcomes. At the same time, thanks to the lack of long-term datasets on surface water availability and amphibian populations in the region, scientists are also unable to predict the effects of climate change on them.

A time to care

The monsoons arrive at India's shores predictably every year and are synonymous with the frogs' chorus, when the adult males call out for mates. The females mate with several males and deposit their eggs in the water. The intensity of breeding frenzy wanes rapidly thereafter, when some laggards and first-time breeders might take a shot at breeding. While not all adult amphibians successfully breed every year, the intensity enhances the population's chances of survival.

The breeding activity is focused on producing many tadpoles, which then engorge themselves on the luxuriant growth of algae in water bodies and grow quickly. They metamorphose into small frogs and hop on the land. In this phase, many lose out as they become

Climate change presents a serious challenge and a well-known consequence is the mismatch between seasons and the natural rhythms of plants and animals. A false cue of an early monsoon followed by a prolonged dry period can result in catastrophic breeding outcomes

prey to animals. Because of their short lifespan, the timing of their complex breeding behaviours with rain, and the availability of surface water in streams and puddles, is critical.

Other important conservation efforts include the creation of the salamander sanctuary in Jorepokhri in West Bengal in 1985 (although it does not support a breeding population at present), the University Grants Commission banning the dissection of frogs for educational purposes in 2011; and the ongoing conservation breeding programme for Himalayan salamanders at the Padmaja Naidu Zoo in Darjeeling.

Avenues to participate

There have also been more success stories. These include the Mapping Malabar Tree Toad Project, a citizen science project, coordinated by K.V. Gururaja in the Western Ghats; the Amphibian Recovery Project by S. Harikrishnan of the Wildlife Trust of India in Munnar, Kerala, with the Kanan Devan

Hills Plantations Company Pvt. Ltd.; and the Himalayan Salamander Conservation Project led by Barkha Subba, in which she has involved the locals in protecting habitats. The CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (where the authors are employed) has also been running a long-term programme to monitor stream frogs, in collaboration with the Maharashtra State Forest Department in Tillari Conservation Reserve.

The Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoo and the Nehru Zoological Park in Hyderabad also prominently display amphibians in their collection of animals and spread awareness to visitors. There is also a growing number of young professionals implementing conservation programmes.

For a nation that embodies its conservation values in its Constitution, citizens have many avenues to participate: for instance, one can take a few minutes of their time to record their calls or take photographs of both healthy and sick frogs following ethical guidelines and share them on citizen science portals like iNaturalist.

Such efforts will help us move beyond a few charismatic species such as tigers and pandas.

The monsoon will arrive in a few months and we should play our role in amphibian conservation.

(Karthikeyan Vasudevan is a Chief Scientist at the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad. He is a herpetologist who works on amphibian disease ecology. karthik.ccm@csir.res.in)

19Mar. India's frogs find allies from citizen science to sanctuaries
भारत के मेंढकों को नागरिक विज्ञान से लेकर अभयारण्यों तक सहयोगी मिल रहे हैं

World Frog Day
विश्व मेंढक दिवस

- **World Frog Day on March 20** celebrates the role of frogs, the **world's most numerous amphibians**.
20 मार्च को विश्व मेंढक दिवस मनाया जाता है, जो मेंढकों की भूमिका को दर्शाता है।



- They live at the interface between **freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems**.
ये मीठे पानी और स्थलीय पारिस्थितिक तंत्रों के बीच रहते हैं।
- They eat insects and are eaten by other vertebrates, converting **insect biomass into vertebrate biomass**.
ये कीड़ों को खाते हैं और अन्य कशेरुकों द्वारा खाए जाते हैं, जिससे कीट जैवभार कशेरुकी जैवभार में बदलता है।
- Losing frogs can lead to an increase in **plant-damaging insects** and reduced food for vertebrates.
मेंढकों के खत्म होने से फसलों को नुकसान पहुंचाने वाले कीट बढ़ सकते हैं और अन्य जीवों के लिए भोजन घट सकता है।
- This can damage both **freshwater and terrestrial ecosystems irreparably**.
इससे मीठे पानी और स्थलीय पारिस्थितिक तंत्रों को अपूरणीय क्षति हो सकती है।
- Since the **1980s**, frog and amphibian populations have been declining globally.
1980 के दशक से मेंढकों और उभयचरों की संख्या घट रही है।
- In **2023**, the **IUCN Global Amphibian Assessment** reported **37 species extinct**.
2023 में **IUCN रिपोर्ट** ने **37 प्रजातियों के विलुप्त** होने की बात कही।
- **Amphibians are now the most threatened vertebrate group**.
उभयचर अब सबसे अधिक संकटग्रस्त कशेरुकी समूह हैं।

Causes of decline

गिरावट के कारण

- The **major historical cause is chytridiomycosis**, a fungal disease.
मुख्य कारण **chytridiomycosis** नामक फंगल रोग है।
- It is caused by **Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis** and **Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans**.
यह **Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis** और **Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans** से होता है।
- The **disease affects the skin**, which is important for protection and respiration.
यह बीमारी त्वचा को प्रभावित करती है, जो सुरक्षा और श्वसन के लिए जरूरी है।
- **In the last two decades, more than 60% of amphibians** have been affected globally.
पिछले दो दशकों में **60% से अधिक उभयचर** प्रभावित हुए हैं।
- Conservation efforts have reduced extinction risk for **63 species**.
संरक्षण प्रयासों से **63 प्रजातियों** का खतरा कम हुआ है।
- Today, major drivers are **climate change (39%)** and **habitat loss (37%)**.
आज मुख्य कारण **जलवायु परिवर्तन (39%)** और **आवास हानि (37%)** हैं।

The Indian scene

भारतीय परिदृश्य

- **India has more than 450 amphibian species**.
भारत में **450 से अधिक उभयचर प्रजातियां** हैं।
- **About 25% are threatened and 20% are data deficient**.
लगभग **25% संकटग्रस्त** और **20% के पास पर्याप्त डेटा नहीं है**।
- The fungal disease burden is high but has not caused **mass mortality** like in Americas and Australia.
फंगल रोग का प्रभाव है लेकिन **बड़े पैमाने पर मृत्यु नहीं हुई** है।
- These fungi originated in **Asia** and spread globally through **trade**.
ये फंगस **एशिया से उत्पन्न** होकर व्यापार के जरिए फैले।
- Trade in frog legs and salamanders helped spread the disease worldwide.
मेंढकों और सलामैंडर के व्यापार से यह बीमारी फैली।
- In **1987**, a report by **Humayun Abdul Ali** led to a ban on this trade.
1987 में **Humayun Abdul Ali** की रिपोर्ट के बाद इस व्यापार पर प्रतिबंध लगा।
- However, by then the disease had spread to **Europe, Americas, and Australia**.
तब तक यह बीमारी **यूरोप, अमेरिका और ऑस्ट्रेलिया** तक फैल चुकी थी।



- In India, the status of the fungus was unclear until **2015**, and a test came in **2023**.
भारत में इसका पता **2015** तक स्पष्ट नहीं था और जांच **2023** में संभव हुई।
- No mass die-offs have been recorded, but populations have not improved in **two decades**.
कोई बड़ी मृत्यु नहीं दिखी, लेकिन **दो दशकों** में सुधार भी नहीं हुआ।
- Lack of **long-term monitoring data** makes it difficult to identify exact causes.
दीर्घकालिक डेटा की कमी से कारणों का पता लगाना कठिन है।
- India hosts a significant share of the world's '**data deficient**' **amphibian species**.
भारत में दुनिया की '**डेटा अपर्याप्त**' **उभयचर प्रजातियों** का बड़ा हिस्सा पाया जाता है।
- **Out of 157 threatened species, only 6 are protected under the Wildlife Protection Act 1972.**
157 संकटग्रस्त प्रजातियों में से केवल **6 को Wildlife Protection Act 1972** के तहत संरक्षण मिला है।
- **Climate change creates mismatch between seasons and biological rhythms** of species.
जलवायु परिवर्तन **मौसम और जैविक चक्रों** में असंतुलन पैदा करता है।
- **A false early monsoon followed by dry periods can cause catastrophic breeding failure.**
गलत समय पर आया **मानसून** और उसके बाद सूखा **प्रजनन को नुकसान** पहुंचाता है।
- Lack of **long-term datasets** on water availability and amphibians limits prediction.
दीर्घकालिक डेटा की कमी के कारण भविष्यवाणी करना कठिन है।
- Scientists cannot accurately assess **climate change impacts** on amphibians.
वैज्ञानिक **जलवायु परिवर्तन के प्रभावों** का सही आकलन नहीं कर पा रहे हैं।

A time to care संरक्षण का समय

- The **monsoon season** is linked with frogs' breeding calls.
मानसून ऋतु में मेंढकों की आवाज़ें प्रजनन का संकेत देती हैं।
- **Male frogs call for mates, and females mate with multiple males.**
नर मेंढक साथी को बुलाते हैं और मादा **कई नर के साथ प्रजनन** करती है।
- **Eggs are deposited in water bodies.**
अंडे **जल स्रोतों** में दिए जाते हैं।
- Breeding intensity declines after peak, with some **late breeders** participating.
प्रजनन की तीव्रता बाद में घटती है और कुछ **देरी से प्रजनन करने वाले** शामिल होते हैं।
- Not all adults breed every year, but high intensity improves **survival chances**.
हर वर्ष सभी प्रजनन नहीं करते, लेकिन अधिक तीव्रता **जीवित रहने की संभावना बढ़ाती है**।
- **Life cycle and survival challenges**
जीवन चक्र और चुनौतियाँ
- Breeding focuses on producing many **tadpoles**.
प्रजनन का उद्देश्य अधिक **टैडपोल** पैदा करना होता है।
- **Tadpoles feed on algae and grow rapidly.**
टैडपोल **शैवाल** खाकर तेजी से बढ़ते हैं।
- **They transform into froglets and move to land.**
वे **छोटे मेंढकों** में बदलकर भूमि पर आते हैं।
- **Many are lost as they become prey during this stage.**
इस चरण में कई **शिकार बन जाते हैं**।
- Due to short lifespan, timing of breeding with **rain and water availability** is crucial.
कम जीवनकाल के कारण **बारिश और पानी की उपलब्धता के साथ प्रजनन का समय** अत्यंत महत्वपूर्ण है।
- The creation of the **salamander sanctuary in Jorepokhri (West Bengal) in 1985** was an early effort.
1985 में पश्चिम बंगाल के Jorepokhri में सैलामैंडर अभयारण्य बनाया गया था।
- However, it does not support a **breeding population at present**.
हालांकि वर्तमान में यह **प्रजनन आबादी का समर्थन नहीं करता**।
- The **University Grants Commission (UGC) banned frog dissection in 2011** for education.
University Grants Commission (UGC) ने **2011 में मेंढकों के विच्छेदन पर प्रतिबंध** लगाया।
- There is an ongoing conservation breeding programme for Himalayan salamanders at **Padmaja Naidu Zoo, Darjeeling**.
Padmaja Naidu Zoo, Darjeeling में **हिमालयी सैलामैंडर के संरक्षण प्रजनन कार्यक्रम** चल रहा है।



Avenues to participate भागीदारी के अवसर

- Recent success stories include the **Mapping Malabar Tree Toad Project in the Western Ghats**.
हाल की सफलता में **Mapping Malabar Tree Toad Project (Western Ghats)** शामिल है।
- This is a **citizen science project** coordinated by **K.V. Gururaja**.
यह एक **सिटीजन साइंस प्रोजेक्ट** है जिसे **K.V. Gururaja** संचालित करते हैं।
- The **Amphibian Recovery Project in Munnar (Kerala)** is led by **S. Harikrishnan**.
Munnar (Kerala) में **Amphibian Recovery Project** का नेतृत्व **S. Harikrishnan** कर रहे हैं।
- It is supported by **Wildlife Trust of India** and **Kanan Devan Hills Plantations Company Pvt. Ltd.**.
यह **Wildlife Trust of India** और **Kanan Devan Hills Plantations Company Pvt. Ltd.** द्वारा समर्थित है।
- The **Himalayan Salamander Conservation Project** is led by **Barkha Subba** with local participation.
Himalayan Salamander Conservation Project का नेतृत्व **Barkha Subba** करती हैं।
- The **CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology** runs a long-term monitoring programme for **stream frogs**.
CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology **स्ट्रीम मेंढकों की निगरानी** करता है।
- This is in collaboration with the **Maharashtra State Forest Department at Tillari Conservation Reserve**.
यह **Maharashtra State Forest Department** के साथ **Tillari Conservation Reserve** में किया जा रहा है।
- The **Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoo** and **Nehru Zoological Park (Hyderabad)** display amphibians and spread awareness.
Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoo और **Nehru Zoological Park (Hyderabad)** जागरूकता फैलाते हैं।
- There is a growing number of **young professionals** involved in conservation programmes.
संरक्षण कार्यक्रमों में **युवा पेशेवरों की संख्या बढ़ रही है**।
- India's Constitution reflects strong **conservation values**.
भारत का संविधान **संरक्षण मूल्यों** को दर्शाता है।
- Citizens can record **frog calls or take photographs** and share them on platforms like **iNaturalist**.
नागरिक **मेंढकों की आवाज रिकॉर्ड** कर सकते हैं या फोटो लेकर **iNaturalist** पर साझा कर सकते हैं।
- These activities must follow **ethical guidelines**.
इन कार्यों में **नैतिक दिशा-निर्देशों का पालन** जरूरी है।
- Such efforts help shift focus beyond **charismatic species like tigers and pandas**.
इससे ध्यान **टाइगर और पांडा जैसे प्रसिद्ध जीवों** से आगे बढ़ेगा।
- With the **monsoon approaching**, there is a need to actively support **amphibian conservation**.
मानसून के आगमन के साथ **उभयचर संरक्षण में योगदान** देना जरूरी है।