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PCS Special:	02 April
02A	Lt. Gen. Dhiraj Seth takes charge as Army Vice-Chief amid rejig लेफ्टिनेट जनरल धीरज सेठ ने पुनर्गठन के बीच सेना के उप प्रमुख का कार्यभार संभाला

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Lt. Gen. Dhiraj Seth takes charge as Army Vice-Chief amid rejig

PCS
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Lieutenant-General Dhiraj Seth on Wednesday assumed charge as the Vice-Chief of the Army Staff after the Indian Army announced a series of top-level appointments across key operational commands.

An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, Lieutenant-General Seth was commissioned to the Armoured Corps in December 1986. Over nearly four decades, he has built an operational profile across varied terrains and conflict environments, including counter-insurgency experience.

In other key changes, Lieutenant-General V.M.B.



Lieutenant-General Dhiraj Seth

Krishnan assumed charge as the GOC-in-C, Eastern Command, taking over from Lieutenant-General R.C. Tiwari, who superannuated on March 31. Lieutenant-General Pushpendra Pal Singh, who previously served as the Vice-Chief of the Army Staff, took over as the GOC-in-C, Western Command.

Tiwari, who superannuated on March 31.

अन्य महत्वपूर्ण बदलावों में, लेफ्टिनेंट जनरल वी.एम.बी. कृष्णन ने ईस्टर्न कमांड के GOC-in-C का पद संभाला, उन्होंने लेफ्टिनेंट जनरल आर.सी. तिवारी से कार्यभार लिया, जो 31 मार्च को सेवानिवृत्त हुए।

- Lieutenant-General Pushpendra Pal Singh, who previously served as the Vice-Chief of the Army Staff, took over as the GOC-in-C, Western Command.

लेफ्टिनेंट जनरल पुष्पेंद्र पाल सिंह, जो पहले आर्मी वाइस-चीफ थे, अब वेस्टर्न कमांड के GOC-in-C बने।

02A. Lt. Gen. Dhiraj Seth takes charge as Army Vice-Chief amid rejig

लेफ्टिनेंट जनरल धीरज सेठ ने पुनर्गठन के बीच सेना के उप प्रमुख का कार्यभार संभाला

- Lieutenant-General Dhiraj Seth on Wednesday assumed charge as the Vice-Chief of the Army Staff after the Indian Army announced a series of top-level appointments across key operational commands.

लेफ्टिनेंट जनरल धीरज सेठ ने बुधवार को आर्मी वाइस-चीफ का पदभार संभाला, जब भारतीय सेना ने प्रमुख संचालन कमानों में शीर्ष स्तर पर कई नियुक्तियों की घोषणा की।

- An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, Khadakwasla, Lieutenant-General Seth was commissioned to the Armoured Corps in December 1986. नेशनल डिफेंस अकादमी, खडकवासला के पूर्व छात्र, लेफ्टिनेंट जनरल सेठ को दिसंबर 1986 में आर्मर्ड कॉर्प्स में कमीशन मिला।

- Over nearly four decades, he has built an operational profile across varied terrains and conflict environments, including counterinsurgency experience. लगभग चार दशकों में उन्होंने विभिन्न भौगोलिक क्षेत्रों और संघर्ष स्थितियों में कार्य करते हुए, काउंटर-इंसर्जेंसी अनुभव सहित एक मजबूत प्रोफाइल बनाई।

- In other key changes, Lieutenant-General V.M.B. Krishnan assumed charge as the GOC-in-C, Eastern Command, taking over from Lieutenant-General R.C.

GS Paper 1: Society

TOPICS COVERED

02 April 2026

02A 55,000 households use portal for Census self-enumeration
55,000 परिवारों ने जनगणना स्व-गणना के लिए पोर्टल का उपयोग किया



55,000 households use portal for Census self-enumeration

The portal went live on Wednesday in eight States and Union Territories; the online details will be verified by enumerators during the door-to-door survey 15 days later, Union Home Ministry says

GS I: Society

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Around 55,000 households used the self-enumeration portal on the first day of the Population Census 2027 website that went live in eight States and Union Territories, the Union Home Ministry said on Wednesday. The online details will, however, be verified by enumerators during a door-to-door survey 15 days later.

Among the first to fill in the details of 33 questions being asked in the first phase - the House Listing Operations and Housing Census (HLO) - were President Droupadi Murmu, Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah.

In the first phase, self-enumeration began in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Goa, Karnataka, Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Odisha, Sikkim, New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) area and Delhi Cantonment Board areas of Delhi.

One mobile phone num-



First phase: Union Home Minister Amit Shah completes self-enumeration for Census 2027. PTI

ber can be used to register only one household.

The portal opens 15 days prior to the commencement of the HLO phase and in these eight States and U.T.s, the first phase will commence on April 16 and continue till May 15.

All other States will have to complete the first-phase enumeration by September 30, whereas in Ladakh and snow-bound areas of Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, both the phases are to be completed by Sep-

tember 30. The second phase of population enumeration - where each individual's information in the household, such as religion, caste etc. will be asked - is to be conducted in February 2027 for the remaining States.

"The self-enumeration exercise is a secure, web-based facility available in 16 regional languages. For the first time, respondents can fill in their details online at their convenience before the enumerator's visit. Enumerators will carry

out door-to-door visits in all allocated houselisting blocks as in previous Censuses, while Self-Enumeration serves as an additional facility. To participate in Self-Enumeration, respondents can log in to the portal se.census.gov.in using their mobile number and basic credentials. Upon successful submission, a unique Self-Enumeration ID (SE ID) is generated, which will be shared with the enumerator during the subsequent field visit for confirmation," the Ministry said.

In the first phase, comprehensive information on the condition of housing, household amenities and assets possessed will be collected. A total of 33 questions for Phase I have been notified in January 2026 to capture these critical indicators, which serve as the foundation for evidence-based planning, policy formulation, and targeted welfare interventions.

Data collected under the Census Act, 1948, are strictly confidential, the Ministry said.

02A. 55,000 households use portal for Census self-enumeration 55,000 परिवारों ने जनगणना स्व-गणना के लिए पोर्टल का उपयोग किया

- The portal went live on Wednesday in eight States and Union Territories; the online details will be verified by enumerators during the door-to-door survey 15 days later, Union Home Ministry says.
पोर्टल बुधवार को आठ राज्यों और केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों में लाइव हुआ; ऑनलाइन विवरण को 15 दिन बाद घर-घर सर्वेक्षण के दौरान एन्यूमेरेटर द्वारा सत्यापित किया जाएगा, गृह मंत्रालय ने कहा।
- Around 55,000 households used the self-enumeration portal on the first day of the Population Census 2027 website that went live in eight States and Union Territories, the Union Home Ministry said on Wednesday.
बुधवार को गृह मंत्रालय ने कहा कि जनगणना 2027 वेबसाइट के पहले दिन लगभग 55,000 परिवारों ने स्व-गणना पोर्टल का उपयोग किया, जो आठ राज्यों और केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों में लाइव हुआ।
- The online details will, however, be verified by enumerators during a door-to-door survey 15 days later.
हालांकि, ऑनलाइन विवरण को 15 दिन बाद घर-घर सर्वेक्षण के दौरान एन्यूमेरेटर द्वारा सत्यापित किया जाएगा।
- Among the first to fill in the details of 33 questions being asked in the first phase - the House Listing Operations and Housing Census (HLO) - were President Droupadi Murmu, Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah.
पहले चरण - हाउस लिस्टिंग ऑपरेशन्स और हाउसिंग जनगणना (HLO) - में पूछे जा रहे 33 प्रश्नों का



विवरण भरने वालों में राष्ट्रपति द्रौपदी मुर्मू, उपराष्ट्रपति सी.पी. राधाकृष्णन, प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी और गृह मंत्री अमित शाह शामिल थे।

- In the first phase, self-enumeration began in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Goa, Karnataka, Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Odisha, Sikkim, New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) area and Delhi Cantonment Board areas of Delhi.
पहले चरण में स्व-गणना अंडमान और निकोबार द्वीपसमूह, गोवा, कर्नाटक, लक्षद्वीप, मिजोरम, ओडिशा, सिक्किम, NDMC क्षेत्र और दिल्ली कैंटोनमेंट बोर्ड क्षेत्रों में शुरू हुई।
- One mobile phone number can be used to register only one household.
एक मोबाइल नंबर का उपयोग केवल एक परिवार के पंजीकरण के लिए किया जा सकता है।
- The portal opens 15 days prior to the commencement of the HLO phase and in these eight States and U.T.s, the first phase will commence on April 16 and continue till May 15.
पोर्टल HLO चरण शुरू होने से 15 दिन पहले खुलता है और इन आठ राज्यों/केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों में पहला चरण 16 अप्रैल से 15 मई तक चलेगा।
- All other States will have to complete the first-phase enumeration by September 30, whereas in Ladakh and snow-bound areas of Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, both the phases are to be completed by September 30.
अन्य सभी राज्यों को पहला चरण 30 सितंबर तक पूरा करना होगा, जबकि लद्दाख और जम्मू-कश्मीर, उत्तराखंड, हिमाचल प्रदेश के बर्फीले क्षेत्रों में दोनों चरण 30 सितंबर तक पूरे किए जाएंगे।
- The second phase of population enumeration – where each individual's information in the household, such as religion, caste etc. will be asked – is to be conducted in February 2027 for the remaining States.
जनसंख्या गणना का दूसरा चरण, जिसमें प्रत्येक व्यक्ति की जानकारी जैसे धर्म, जाति आदि पूछी जाएगी, शेष राज्यों में फरवरी 2027 में किया जाएगा।
- “The self-enumeration exercise is a secure, web-based facility available in 16 regional languages.
“स्व-गणना प्रक्रिया एक सुरक्षित वेब-आधारित सुविधा है, जो 16 क्षेत्रीय भाषाओं में उपलब्ध है।
- For the first time, respondents can fill in their details online at their convenience before the enumerator's visit.
पहली बार, उत्तरदाता एन्यूमेरेटर के आने से पहले अपनी सुविधा अनुसार ऑनलाइन विवरण भर सकते हैं।
- Enumerators will carry out door-to-door visits in all allocated houselisting blocks as in previous Censuses, while Self-Enumeration serves as an additional facility.
एन्यूमेरेटर पहले की जनगणनाओं की तरह सभी निर्धारित हाउस लिस्टिंग ब्लॉक्स में घर-घर जाकर सर्वेक्षण करेंगे, जबकि स्व-गणना एक अतिरिक्त सुविधा है।
- To participate in Self-Enumeration, respondents can log in to the portal se.census.gov.in using their mobile number and basic credentials.
स्व-गणना में भाग लेने के लिए उत्तरदाता मोबाइल नंबर और बेसिक क्रेडेंशियल्स का उपयोग कर पोर्टल पर लॉगिन कर सकते हैं।
- Upon successful submission, a unique Self-Enumeration ID (SE ID) is generated, which will be shared with the enumerator during the subsequent field visit for confirmation,” the Ministry said.
सफल सबमिशन के बाद एक यूनिक SE ID जनरेट होती है, जिसे बाद में फील्ड विजिट के दौरान एन्यूमेरेटर के साथ साझा किया जाएगा, मंत्रालय ने कहा।
- In the first phase, comprehensive information on the condition of housing, household amenities and assets possessed will be collected.
पहले चरण में आवास की स्थिति, घरेलू सुविधाएं और संपत्तियों की व्यापक जानकारी एकत्र की जाएगी।
- A total of 33 questions for Phase I have been notified in January 2026 to capture these critical indicators, which serve as the foundation for evidence-based planning, policy formulation, and targeted welfare interventions.
जनवरी 2026 में पहले चरण के लिए 33 प्रश्न अधिसूचित किए गए, जो नीति निर्माण, साक्ष्य-आधारित योजना और लक्षित कल्याण योजनाओं की नींव हैं।
- Data collected under the Census Act, 1948, are strictly confidential, the Ministry said.
मंत्रालय ने कहा कि जनगणना अधिनियम, 1948 के तहत एकत्र किया गया डेटा पूरी तरह गोपनीय होता है।



GS Paper II: Polity,

TOPICS COVERED

02 April 2026

02A	PM chairs Cabinet panel meeting over West Asia conflict प्रधानमंत्री ने पश्चिम एशिया संघर्ष पर कैबिनेट समिति की बैठक की अध्यक्षता की
02A	In Bodoland, fight for peace, identity 'unites' political rivals BPF and UPPL बोडोलैंड में शांति और पहचान की लड़ाई 'राजनीतिक प्रतिद्वंद्वी' BPF और UPPL को जोड़ती है

PM chairs Cabinet panel meeting over West Asia conflict

GS II: Polity

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday chaired a special meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) to review measures taken by various Ministries regarding the ongoing conflict in West Asia and to also discuss further initiatives to be taken.

This was the second special CCS meeting on the matter, the first having been held on March 22.

"The Cabinet Secretary briefed about the action taken to ensure supply of petroleum products, particularly LNG/LPG, and sufficient power availability," the government said in a release. "Sources are being diversified for procurement of LPG with new inflows from different countries," it said.

Widening PNG network
The Cabinet Secretary informed Mr. Modi that Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) is being sourced from different countries and that LPG prices for domestic consumers have remained the same as before the crisis. He also spoke about the

Modi discusses availability of fertilizers, LPG, LNG and other petroleum products

various initiatives taken to expand the number of Piped Natural Gas (PNG) connections in the country.

"The Prime Minister assessed the availability of critical needs for the common man," the release added. "He discussed availability of fertilizers in the country and steps being taken to ensure their availability in the Kharif and Rabi seasons. He said all efforts must be made to safeguard the citizens from the impact of this conflict. The Prime Minister also emphasised smooth flow of authentic information to the public to prevent misinformation and rumour mongering," the release said.

According to the release, Mr. Modi directed all departments concerned to take all possible measures to "ameliorate the problems of citizens and sectors" affected by the ongoing global situation.

Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) is being sourced from different countries and that LPG prices for domestic consumers have remained the same as before the crisis.

कैबिनेट सचिव ने श्री मोदी को बताया कि LNG विभिन्न देशों से प्राप्त किया जा रहा है और घरेलू उपभोक्ताओं के लिए LPG की कीमतें पहले जैसी ही बनी हुई हैं।

- He also spoke about the various initiatives taken to expand the number of Piped Natural Gas (PNG) connections in the country.
उन्होंने देश में पाइपड नेचुरल गैस (PNG) कनेक्शनों की संख्या बढ़ाने के लिए उठाए गए विभिन्न कदमों के बारे में भी बताया।
- "The Prime Minister assessed the availability of critical needs for the common man," the release added.
बयान में कहा गया कि प्रधानमंत्री ने आम जनता की जरूरी जरूरतों की उपलब्धता का आकलन किया।

02A. PM chairs Cabinet panel meeting over West Asia conflict

प्रधानमंत्री ने पश्चिम एशिया संघर्ष पर कैबिनेट समिति की बैठक की अध्यक्षता की

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday chaired a special meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) to review measures taken by various Ministries regarding the ongoing conflict in West Asia and to also discuss further initiatives to be taken.

प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने बुधवार को कैबिनेट कमेटी ऑन सिक्योरिटी (CCS) की विशेष बैठक की अध्यक्षता की, जिसमें पश्चिम एशिया में चल रहे संघर्ष के संबंध में विभिन्न मंत्रालयों द्वारा उठाए गए कदमों की समीक्षा की गई और आगे की पहलों पर चर्चा की गई।

- This was the second special CCS meeting on the matter, the first having been held on March 22.

यह इस मुद्दे पर दूसरी CCS बैठक थी, पहली बैठक 22 मार्च को हुई थी।

- "The Cabinet Secretary briefed about the action taken to ensure supply of petroleum products, particularly LNG/LPG, and sufficient power availability," the government said in a release.

सरकार ने बयान में कहा कि कैबिनेट सचिव ने पेट्रोलियम उत्पादों, विशेष रूप से LNG/LPG की आपूर्ति सुनिश्चित करने और पर्याप्त बिजली उपलब्धता के लिए उठाए गए कदमों की जानकारी दी।

- "Sources are being diversified for procurement of LPG with new inflows from different countries," it said.
बयान में कहा गया कि LPG की आपूर्ति के लिए विभिन्न देशों से नए स्रोतों के माध्यम से विविधीकरण किया जा रहा है।

Widening PNG network PNG नेटवर्क का विस्तार

- The Cabinet Secretary informed Mr. Modi that



- “He discussed availability of fertilizers in the country and steps being taken to ensure their availability in the Kharif and Rabi seasons.
उन्होंने देश में उर्वरकों की उपलब्धता और खरीफ तथा रबी सीजन में उनकी उपलब्धता सुनिश्चित करने के लिए उठाए जा रहे कदमों पर चर्चा की।
- He said all efforts must be made to safeguard the citizens from the impact of this conflict.
उन्होंने कहा कि नागरिकों को इस संघर्ष के प्रभाव से बचाने के लिए सभी प्रयास किए जाने चाहिए।
- The Prime Minister also emphasised smooth flow of authentic information to the public to prevent misinformation and rumour mongering,” the release said.
बयान में कहा गया कि प्रधानमंत्री ने सही जानकारी के सुचारू प्रवाह पर जोर दिया ताकि भ्रामक जानकारी और अफवाहों को रोका जा सके।
- According to the release, Mr. Modi directed all departments concerned to take all possible measures to “ameliorate the problems of citizens and sectors” affected by the ongoing global situation.
बयान के अनुसार, श्री मोदी ने सभी संबंधित विभागों को निर्देश दिया कि वे वर्तमान वैश्विक स्थिति से प्रभावित नागरिकों और क्षेत्रों की समस्याओं को कम करने के लिए सभी संभव उपाय करें।

In Bodoland, fight for peace, identity ‘unites’ political rivals BPF and UPPL

In the Bodoland Territorial Region, BPF in alliance with the BJP is taking on the UPPL, which till a few months ago was with the saffron party; while the UPPL blames the BPF for communal tension in the region, both concur on the need to protect the Bodo identity and need to build lasting peace

GS II: Polity

IN FOCUS

Abhinav Lakshman
KOKRAJHAR

As the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party fuels the rhetoric of protecting indigenous identities in the run-up to the Assembly election in Assam, an effort is underway to preserve the Bodo regional identity in the north-western part of the State, which is driving the electoral campaign in the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR).

Here, issues being raised include the need to protect the Bodo identity, increased autonomy for the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), youth welfare, and lasting peace. The BJP finds itself in the middle of a delicate balancing act given the history of its alliances and conflicts with key regional powers – the Bodo People’s Front (BPF) and the United People’s Party Liberal (UPPL) – as recently as the 2025 BTC elections.

On Tuesday, hundreds marked the birth anniversary of Bodofo Upendra Nath Brahma, known as the father of the Bodo movement, in Dotma, his birthplace. The UPPL candidate for the Dotma con-

stituency, Raju Jumar Narzary, paid his respects before addressing voters.

Even as Mr. Narzary spoke of “increased communal tension” after the BPF’s victory in the BTC elections months ago, and the need to fight for more administrative powers for the Council, about 500 metres away, at the BPF’s office, campaign workers spoke of their focus on bringing the region’s communities together and ensuring peace under the NDA’s banner.

Direct fight

Across the 15 Assembly constituencies in the BTR, the BPF, which has allied with the BJP in this election, is contesting 11 seats, while the BJP is contesting four. The UPPL, which is going solo, is contesting all 15 seats, with a direct contest expected with its regional rival BPF on 11, and contests with the BJP on the other four.

The Congress has put up candidates for 13 seats, one seat each is being contested by its ally Rajjor Dal (Manas) and the Trinamool Congress (Goreswar), with some seats even seeing the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha entering the race.

Just months ago, the BJP and the UPPL had parted ways ahead of the 2025



Key fight: The BJP and the UPPL had parted ways ahead of the 2025 BTC election, which saw the BPF, in control of the council from 2005-2020, come back to power in the Sixth Schedule region. FILE PHOTO

BTC election, which saw the BPF, in control of the council from 2005 to 2020, come back to power in the Sixth Schedule region. As a result, the chief of the BPF, Hangrama Mohilary, was elected head of the BTC, displacing Pramod Boro, leader of the UPPL.

Mr. Boro was elected as the BTC chief in 2020 after forming a post-poll alliance with the BJP. Following his loss in the BTC elections, Mr. Boro was earlier this year elected unopposed to one of Assam’s Rajya Sabha seats, even as he has now chosen to contest this Assembly election from the Tamulpur constituency.

In this constituency (reserved for STs), Mr. Boro will face not just the BJP’s candidate, Biswajit Daimary, but also the Congress’s Rafel Daimary. Just before severing ties with the BJP, Mr. Boro had been driving for increased autonomy of the BTC region, holding meetings with Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi to pass the 125th Constitution Amendment enabling more autonomy.

In the BTR, the contest appears to be a head-to-head fight between the BPF and the UPPL, even as Bodo outfits such as the All Bodo Students’ Union (AB-

SU), which kick-started the movement for an autonomous Bodo region, has made public calls for the two parties to unite.

Call for autonomy

However, the campaigns of both parties in the region are focused on fighting for increased autonomy both in the Assam Assembly and in Parliament, lasting peace, and the rivalry between the two for control over BTC politics. The UPPL is blaming the BPF’s return to the BTC for issues such as communal violence that was seen in Karigaon in January and an alleged rise in gambling, and

consumption of drugs and alcohol among the youth. The BPF’s campaign is focused on highlighting its support from the NDA, which, it argues, will help ensure peace and stability in the region.

Another significant issue that both campaigns are confronting is the Assam Cabinet’s decision last November to add six communities to the State’s ST list, which had sparked widespread protests across the Bodoland region, led by the ABSU.

The ABSU’s president-in-charge, Kwrwmdao Wary, said, “There is fear that the propositions being discussed for the addition of six new communities will alter the nature of the Bodoland region. In addition to the Bodo tribal communities, there are other communities living here peacefully also. And we want the welfare of all of these communities. But it has to be understood that this Bodoland region is a result of the Bodo people’s struggles, and the proposed ST calculations risk altering that.”

But even as Mr. Wary insisted that the ABSU cannot publicly speak about the ongoing election campaign, the outfit has traditionally been associated with the UPPL.

02A. In Bodoland, fight for peace, identity ‘unites’ political rivals BPF and UPPL

बोडोलैंड में शांति और पहचान की लड़ाई ‘राजनीतिक प्रतिद्वंद्वी’ BPF और UPPL को जोड़ती है

- In the Bodoland Territorial Region, BPF in alliance with the BJP is taking on the UPPL, which till a few months ago was with the saffron party; while the UPPL blames the BPF for communal tension in the region, both concur on the need to protect the Bodo identity and



need to build lasting peace.

बोडोलैंड टेरिटरियल रीजन (BTR) में **BPF, BJP** के साथ गठबंधन में, **UPPL** के खिलाफ चुनाव लड़ रही है, जो कुछ महीने पहले तक भाजपा के साथ थी; जबकि UPPL क्षेत्र में **सांप्रदायिक तनाव** के लिए BPF को जिम्मेदार ठहराती है, दोनों **बोडो पहचान की रक्षा और स्थायी शांति** की आवश्यकता पर सहमत हैं।

- As the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party fuels the rhetoric of protecting indigenous identities in the run-up to the Assembly election in Assam, an effort is underway to preserve the Bodo regional identity in the north-western part of the State, which is driving the electoral campaign in the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR).

जैसे-जैसे **भारतीय जनता पार्टी** असम विधानसभा चुनाव से पहले **स्वदेशी पहचान की रक्षा** का मुद्दा उठा रही है, राज्य के उत्तर-पश्चिमी हिस्से में **बोडो क्षेत्रीय पहचान को संरक्षित करने** का प्रयास जारी है, जो BTR में चुनावी अभियान को प्रभावित कर रहा है।

- Issues being raised include the need to protect the Bodo identity, increased autonomy for the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), youth welfare, and lasting peace.

यहां उठाए जा रहे मुद्दों में **बोडो पहचान की रक्षा, BTC को अधिक स्वायत्तता, युवा कल्याण और स्थायी शांति** शामिल हैं।

- The BJP finds itself in the middle of a delicate balancing act given the history of its alliances and conflicts with key regional powers — the Bodo People's Front (BPF) and the United People's Party Liberal (UPPL) — as recently as the 2025 BTC elections.

BJP खुद को एक **संतुलन की स्थिति** में पाती है, क्योंकि हाल ही में **2025 BTC चुनावों** में उसके **BPF और UPPL** के साथ गठबंधन और संघर्ष का इतिहास रहा है।

- On Tuesday, hundreds marked the birth anniversary of Bodofa Upendra Nath Brahma, known as the father of the Bodo movement, in Dogma, his birthplace.

मंगलवार को सैकड़ों लोगों ने **बोडो आंदोलन के जनक बोडोफा उपेंद्र नाथ ब्रह्मा** की जयंती उनके जन्मस्थान **डोटमा** में मनाई।

- The UPPL candidate for the Dorma constituency, Raju Jumar Narzary, paid his respects before addressing voters.

UPPL उम्मीदवार राजू जुमार नरजारी ने डोटमा सीट पर मतदाताओं को संबोधित करने से पहले श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित की।

- Even as Mr. Narzary spoke of "increased communal tension" after the BPF's victory in the BTC elections months ago, and the need to fight for more administrative powers for the Council, about 500 metres away, at the BPF's office, campaign workers spoke of their focus on bringing the region's communities together and ensuring peace under the NDA's banner.

जहां श्री नरजारी ने **BTC चुनावों में BPF की जीत के बाद बढ़ते सांप्रदायिक तनाव** और परिषद के लिए अधिक प्रशासनिक शक्तियों की बात की, वहीं लगभग **500 मीटर दूर BPF कार्यालय** में कार्यकर्ताओं ने **NDA के तहत शांति और एकता** पर जोर दिया।

Direct fight सीधी लड़ाई

- Across the 15 Assembly constituencies in the BTR, the BPF, which has allied with the BJP in this election, is contesting 11 seats, while the BJP is contesting four.

BTR की **15 विधानसभा सीटों** में, **BPF (BJP के साथ)** 11 सीटों पर और **BJP 4 सीटों पर** चुनाव लड़ रही है।

- The UPPL, which is going solo, is contesting all 15 seats, with a direct contest with its regional rival BPF on 11, and contests with the BJP on the other four.

UPPL अकेले सभी **15 सीटों पर चुनाव लड़ रही है**, जिसमें 11 सीटों पर **BPF से सीधा मुकाबला** और 4 पर **BJP से मुकाबला** है।

- The Congress has put up candidates for 13 seats, one seat each is being contested by its ally Rajior Dal (Manas) and the Trinamool Congress (Goreswar), with some seats even seeing the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha entering the race.

कांग्रेस ने 13 सीटों पर उम्मीदवार उतारे हैं, जबकि **रायजोर दल (मानस)** और **तृणमूल कांग्रेस (गोरेश्वर)** एक-एक सीट पर चुनाव लड़ रहे हैं, और कुछ सीटों पर **झारखंड मुक्ति मोर्चा** भी मैदान में है।

- Just months ago, the BJP and the UPPL had parted ways ahead of the 2025 BTC election, which saw the BPF, in control of the council from 2005 to 2020, come back to power in the Sixth Schedule region.



कुछ महीने पहले ही **BJP और UPPL अलग हुए**, और 2025 BTC चुनाव में **2005-2020 तक सत्ता में रही BPF** फिर से सत्ता में आई।

- As a result, the chief of the BPF, Hangrama Mohilary, was elected head of the BTC, dislodging Pramod Boro, leader of the UPPL.
इससे **हग्रामा मोहिलारी (BPF प्रमुख)** BTC के प्रमुख बने और **प्रमोद बोरो (UPPL)** को हटा दिया।
- Mr. Boro was elected as the BTC chief in 2020 after forming a post-poll alliance with the BJP. श्री बोरो **2020 में BJP के साथ गठबंधन** के बाद BTC प्रमुख बने थे।
- Following his loss in the BTC elections, Mr. Boro was earlier this year elected unopposed to one of Assam's Rajya Sabha seats, even as he has now chosen to contest this Assembly election from the Tamulpur constituency.
BTC चुनाव हारने के बाद श्री बोरो इस वर्ष **राज्यसभा के लिए निर्विरोध चुने गए**, और अब **तमुलपुर सीट** से विधानसभा चुनाव लड़ रहे हैं।
- In this constituency (reserved for STs), Mr. Boro will face not just the BJP's candidate, Biswajit Daimary, but also the Congress's Rafel Daimary.
इस **ST आरक्षित सीट** पर श्री बोरो का मुकाबला **BJP के बिस्वजीत दैमारी** और **कांग्रेस के राफेल दैमारी** से होगा।
- Just before severing ties with the BJP, Mr. Boro had been driving for increased autonomy of the BTC region, holding meetings with Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi to pass the 125th Constitution Amendment enabling more autonomy.
BJP से अलग होने से पहले श्री बोरो **BTC को अधिक स्वायत्तता** देने के लिए प्रयास कर रहे थे और इसके लिए उन्होंने **अमित शाह** से बैठक की थी, जिसमें **125वां संविधान संशोधन** शामिल था।
- In the BTR, the contest appears to be a head-to-head fight between the BPF and the UPPL, even as Bodo outfits such as the All Bodo Students' Union (ABSU), which kick-started the movement for an autonomous Bodo region, has made public calls for the two parties to unite.
BTR में मुकाबला **BPF और UPPL के बीच सीधा** दिख रहा है, जबकि **ABSU** जैसे संगठन दोनों को **एकजुट होने** की अपील कर रहे हैं।

Call for autonomy स्वायत्तता की मांग

- However, the campaigns of both parties in the region are focused on fighting for increased autonomy both in the Assam Assembly and in Parliament, lasting peace, and the rivalry between the two for control over BTC politics.
दोनों दलों के अभियान **अधिक स्वायत्तता, स्थायी शांति और BTC राजनीति में वर्चस्व** पर केंद्रित हैं।
- The UPPL is blaming the BPF's return to the BTC for issues such as communal violence that was seen in Karigaon in January and an alleged rise in gambling, and consumption of drugs and alcohol among the youth.
UPPL, BPF की वापसी को **करीगांव में सांप्रदायिक हिंसा**, और युवाओं में **जुआ, नशा और शराब की बढ़ती प्रवृत्ति** के लिए जिम्मेदार ठहरा रही है।
- The BPF's campaign is focused on highlighting its support from the NDA, which, it argues, will help ensure peace and stability in the region.
BPF अपने **NDA समर्थन** को उजागर कर रही है, जिससे वह **शांति और स्थिरता** सुनिश्चित करने का दावा करती है।
- Another significant issue that both campaigns are confronting is the Assam Cabinet's decision last November to add six communities to the State's ST list, which had sparked widespread protests across the Bodoland region, led by the ABSU.
एक अन्य प्रमुख मुद्दा **असम कैबिनेट का छह समुदायों को ST सूची में शामिल करने का निर्णय** है, जिससे **ABSU के नेतृत्व में व्यापक विरोध** हुआ।
- The ABSU's president-in-charge, Kwrwmdao Wary, said, "There is fear that the propositions being discussed for the addition of six new communities will alter the nature of the Bodoland region.
ABSU के कार्यवाहक अध्यक्ष करमदाओ वारी ने कहा, "डर है कि छह नए समुदायों को जोड़ने से **बोडोलैंड की प्रकृति बदल जाएगी।**"
- In addition to the Bodo tribal communities, there are other communities living here peacefully also.
बोडो जनजातीय समुदायों के अलावा यहां अन्य समुदाय भी **शांति से रह रहे हैं।**



- And we want the welfare of all of these communities.
और हम इन सभी समुदायों के कल्याण चाहते हैं।
- But it has to be understood that this Bodoland region is a result of the Bodo people's struggles, and the proposed ST calculations risk altering that."
लेकिन यह समझना होगा कि यह क्षेत्र बोडो लोगों के संघर्ष का परिणाम है, और प्रस्तावित ST बदलाव इसे प्रभावित कर सकते हैं।"
- But even as Mr. Wary insisted that the ABSU cannot publicly speak about the ongoing election campaign, the outfit has traditionally been associated with the UPPL.
हालांकि श्री वारी ने कहा कि ABSU चुनाव पर सार्वजनिक रूप से नहीं बोलेगा, लेकिन संगठन परंपरागत रूप से UPPL से जुड़ा रहा है।

GS Paper II: International Relations

TOPICS COVERED

02 April 2026

02A	Putin likely to participate in BRICS summit in Delhi, says Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister पुतिन के दिल्ली में BRICS शिखर सम्मेलन में भाग लेने की संभावना, रूस के उप विदेश मंत्री ने कहा
02A	As American bombs fall on Iran, South American nations brace for impact ईरान पर अमेरिकी बमबारी के बीच दक्षिण अमेरिकी देश प्रभाव के लिए तैयार

Putin likely to participate in BRICS summit in Delhi, says Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister

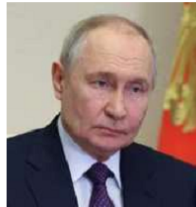
GS II: IR

Meera Srinivasan
COLOMBO

Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to participate in the BRICS summit scheduled in September in India, Deputy Foreign Minister Rudenko Andrey Yurevich said in Colombo on Wednesday, adding that Moscow would support New Delhi's efforts to forge a consensus among members. Further, Russia will honour all existing contracts on oil, he said, following Russia's decision to ban export of gasoline with effect from April 1, owing to price fluctuations.

"My President has an invitation from Prime Minister Modi to come to New Delhi, and for the time be-

ing, we don't see any problems which would prevent him from doing so," he said, while commending India, as BRICS chair, for "doing its best to streamline differences". "We need to see what will happen by the time of the summit itself. But so far, we consider this invitation with seriousness," Mr. Rudenko said, citing the "volatile situation" in West Asia. He was addressing the media in an interaction organised by the Colombo-based think tank Pathfinder Foundation. Mr. Rudenko's official visit comes barely a week after Russian Deputy Minister for Energy Roman Marshavin was in Sri Lanka, pledging Moscow's support to Colombo



Vladimir Putin

to cope with the energy crisis stemming from the conflict in West Asia.

Commenting on the challenges in building consensus within the 10-nation grouping – which also includes Iran and the United Arab Emirates – the visiting Russian official described BRICS as an entity that brings together coun-

tries with different policies and national priorities. "And while they chose to join it, they want these priorities coordinated in a more systematic way to better protect their interests worldwide. But their national policies sometimes differ radically," he said.

'Growing wedge'

Further, terming the grouping "quite a flexible organisation" that allows each member state to retain "its own voice", he added that building consensus is difficult when members are "on different sides of the frontline". "One of the great consequences of the conflict is the growing wedge bet-

ween Iran and its Arab neighbours," he said. Last month, India sent invitations to all member states for the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in May and the 18th BRICS Summit scheduled to be held in New Delhi in September.

Meanwhile, Russia will implement all past contracts on oil exports, he said, when asked about the impact of Moscow's decision to ban gasoline exports. "To tell you frankly, Russia's natural resources are not also unlimited...but we will do our best," he said, adding that the sooner the conflict in West Asia ends, "the better for everyone". India's Russian oil imports soared to a nine-month high in March 2026.

02A. Putin likely to participate in BRICS summit in Delhi, says Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister

पुतिन के दिल्ली में BRICS शिखर सम्मेलन में भाग लेने की संभावना, रूस के उप विदेश मंत्री ने कहा

- Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to participate in the BRICS summit scheduled in September in India, Deputy Foreign Minister Rudenko Andrey Yurevich said in Colombo on Wednesday, adding that Moscow would support New Delhi's efforts to forge a consensus among members.



रूस के राष्ट्रपति व्लादिमीर पुतिन के सितंबर में भारत में होने वाले BRICS शिखर सम्मेलन में भाग लेने की संभावना है, यह बात उप विदेश मंत्री रुडेको एंड्रे यूरीविच ने कोलंबो में कही, और कहा कि **मॉस्को नई दिल्ली के प्रयासों का समर्थन करेगा।**

- Further, Russia will honour all existing contracts on oil, he said, following Russia's decision to ban export of gasoline with effect from April 1, owing to price fluctuations.
उन्होंने कहा कि **रूस सभी मौजूदा तेल अनुबंधों का पालन करेगा**, यह निर्णय 1 अप्रैल से गैसोलीन निर्यात पर प्रतिबंध के बाद लिया गया, जो **कीमतों में उतार-चढ़ाव** के कारण हुआ।
- "My President has an invitation from Prime Minister Modi to come to New Delhi, and for the time being, we don't see any problems which would prevent him from doing so," he said, while commending India, as BRICS chair, for "doing its best to streamline differences".
उन्होंने कहा, "मेरे राष्ट्रपति को **प्रधानमंत्री मोदी** से नई दिल्ली आने का निमंत्रण मिला है, और फिलहाल ऐसा कोई कारण नहीं दिखता जो उन्हें रोक सके," और भारत की **BRICS अध्यक्षता** की सराहना की।
- "We need to see what will happen by the time of the summit itself."
उन्होंने कहा, "हमें देखना होगा कि **शिखर सम्मेलन तक क्या स्थिति रहती है।**
- But so far, we consider this invitation with seriousness," Mr. Rudenko said, citing the "volatile situation" in West Asia.
लेकिन अभी तक हम इस निमंत्रण को **गंभीरता से ले रहे हैं**," उन्होंने **पश्चिम एशिया की अस्थिर स्थिति** का हवाला देते हुए कहा।
- He was addressing the media in an interaction organised by the Colombo-based think tank Pathfinder Foundation.
वे **कोलंबो स्थित थिंक टैंक Pathfinder Foundation** द्वारा आयोजित कार्यक्रम में मीडिया से बात कर रहे थे।
- Mr. Rudenko's official visit comes barely a week after Russian Deputy Minister for Energy Roman Marshavin was in Sri Lanka, pledging Moscow's support to Colombo to cope with the energy crisis stemming from the conflict in West Asia.
रुडेको की यह यात्रा **ऊर्जा उप मंत्री रोमन मार्शाविन** की श्रीलंका यात्रा के एक सप्ताह बाद हुई, जहां उन्होंने **ऊर्जा संकट से निपटने में मदद** का आश्वासन दिया था।
- Commenting on the challenges in building consensus within the 10-nation grouping — which also includes Iran and the United Arab Emirates — the visiting Russian official described BRICS as an entity that brings together countries with different policies and national priorities.
10 देशों के समूह BRICS में सहमति बनाने की चुनौतियों पर बोलते हुए, जिसमें **ईरान और UAE** भी शामिल हैं, उन्होंने कहा कि यह विभिन्न **नीतियों और प्राथमिकताओं वाले देशों का समूह** है।
- "And while they chose to join it, they want these priorities coordinated in a more systematic way to better protect their interests worldwide."
उन्होंने कहा, "हालांकि देश इसमें शामिल हुए हैं, वे चाहते हैं कि उनकी **प्राथमिकताओं का बेहतर समन्वय** हो ताकि उनके हित सुरक्षित रहें।
- But their national policies sometimes differ radically," he said.
लेकिन उनकी **राष्ट्रीय नीतियां कई बार काफी अलग होती हैं**," उन्होंने कहा।

'Growing wedge' 'बढ़ती खाई'

- Further, terming the grouping "quite a flexible organisation" that allows each member state to retain "its own voice", he added that building consensus is difficult when members are "on different sides of the frontline".
उन्होंने BRICS को **लचीला संगठन** बताते हुए कहा कि हर देश अपनी **स्वतंत्र आवाज** रखता है, लेकिन जब सदस्य **अलग-अलग पक्षों में होते हैं**, तो सहमति बनाना कठिन होता है।
- "One of the great consequences of the conflict is the growing wedge between Iran and its Arab neighbours," he said.
उन्होंने कहा, "संघर्ष का एक बड़ा परिणाम **ईरान और उसके अरब पड़ोसियों के बीच बढ़ती खाई** है।"
- Last month, India sent invitations to all member states for the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in May and the 18th BRICS Summit scheduled to be held in New Delhi in September.
पिछले महीने **भारत ने सभी सदस्य देशों को मई में विदेश मंत्रियों की बैठक और सितंबर में 18वें BRICS शिखर सम्मेलन** के लिए निमंत्रण भेजा।



- Meanwhile, Russia will implement all past contracts on oil exports, he said, when asked about the impact of Moscow's decision to ban gasoline exports.
उन्होंने कहा कि **रूस तेल निर्यात के सभी पुराने अनुबंध लागू करेगा**, जब उनसे गैसोलीन निर्यात प्रतिबंध के प्रभाव के बारे में पूछा गया।
- "To tell you frankly, Russia's natural resources are not also unlimited...but we will do our best," he said, adding that the sooner the conflict in West Asia ends, "the better for everyone".
उन्होंने कहा, "ईमानदारी से कहें तो रूस के **प्राकृतिक संसाधन असीमित नहीं हैं**, लेकिन हम पूरी कोशिश करेंगे," और कहा कि **पश्चिम एशिया संघर्ष जितनी जल्दी खत्म हो, उतना बेहतर।**
- India's Russian oil imports overall soared to a nine-month high in March 2026.
मार्च 2026 में भारत का रूसी तेल आयात नौ महीने के उच्च स्तर पर पहुंच गया।

As American bombs fall on Iran, South American nations brace for impact

NEWS ANALYSIS

Shobhan Saxena
SAO PAULO

American bombs are tearing apart buildings and lives in Iran, but the shockwaves of those attacks are being felt in parts of Latin America as they trigger old memories and new fears. Even as U.S. President Donald Trump blows hot and cold on Iran, he has begun to speak of Cuba with growing frequency and menace. "I built this great Army. I said, 'You will never need to use it.' But sometimes you have to use it. And Cuba is next, by the way," Mr. Trump told a meeting of investors on March 27 in Miami — a city known for its Cuban com-

munity and their opposition towards Havana. "But pretend I didn't say that," added Mr. Trump as he heaped praise on himself for the military campaigns against Iran and Venezuela to a raucous crowd. The kidnapping of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro still hangs over Latin America as countries fear getting sucked into Mr. Trump's so-called war on narco-terrorism. Air strikes are already being conducted on the Ecuador-Colombia border as Ecuadorian military carries out a joint operation with American forces. Called "Operation Total Extinction", the campaign is officially "setting the pace for regional, deterrence-focused operations against cartel infrastructure

throughout Latin America", but poor farmers accuse the government of targeting their land and livestock. The country's right-wing President Daniel Noboa has declared an "internal armed conflict" — in line with Mr. Trump's rhetoric.

Before Mr. Trump sent his forces to Venezuela, Washington had branded certain criminal groups as terrorist organisations and named Mr. Maduro as their head. A similar script now appears to be written for other countries. The New York Times reported last week that the U.S. is "considering classifying Brazil's two criminal factions — Prímario Comando da Capital (PCC) and Comando Vermelho (CV) — as terrorist groups".



Donald Trump stands with the region's pro-Washington leaders at the "Shield of the Americas" Summit in Miami on March 7, 2026.

Generally, groups placed on the American list of terrorist organisations face financial sanctions, but in Venezuela's case, it was used for a military attack. The possibility is causing unease in Brazil. Brazilian Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira recently told his U.S. counterpart, Mar-

co Rubio, that Brasilia opposes classifying PCC and CV as terrorist organisations.

In the case of Colombia, the situation is serious. President Gustavo Petro is reportedly being investigated by U.S. prosecutors to find out if he "met with drug traffickers and solicit-

ed donations for his 2022 presidential campaign". Mr. Petro has blamed the country's right-wing Opposition for fabricating the story ahead of the presidential elections in May.

As both Colombia and Brazil go to elections this year, their leaders are speaking up against the danger. At last week's Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States in Bogota, President Lula da Silva of Brazil criticised the growing U.S. "colonialist policies towards" Latin America.

As leaders like Mr. Petro and Lula challenge Mr. Trump, his administration appears to be trying to isolate them. On March 7, Mr. Trump hosted the region's pro-Washington leaders for a conference — called the

"Shield of the Americas" — where they discussed how to "enlist and expand" partnerships for joint counter-drug operations in the region. At the meeting in Florida, which didn't include Brazil, Mexico, Chile, and Colombia, all run by leftist governments, Mr. Trump alleged that "drug cartels are running Mexico".

The meeting's tone, where only Americans spoke and everybody else listened, has set the alarm bells ringing in several countries. "Maduro's kidnapping was a warning. The war on Iran is another warning to us to fall in line. The Shield of the Americas meeting is a clear sign that the Americans want to go after the regions' natural resources, especially rare earths, and curb our rela-

tions with China," says a senior Brazilian official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Mr. Trump's close ties with Argentina's chain-saw-wielding President Javier Milei are well known. Now, the U.S. President appears to be widening his reach. His latest catch is Chile's new President, José Antonio Kast, who attended the Florida meeting even before being sworn in. Mr. Kast's inauguration on March 10 offered a glimpse of rising tensions. Lula, who was expected to attend, pulled out at the last minute after Mr. Kast invited Brazil's far-right politician Flávio Bolsonaro, a likely challenger to the President in October elections. (Shobhan Saxena is a Sao Paulo-based journalist)

02A. As American bombs fall on Iran, South American nations brace for impact ईरान पर अमेरिकी बमबारी के बीच दक्षिण अमेरिकी देश प्रभाव के लिए तैयार

- American bombs are tearing apart buildings and lives in Iran, but the shockwaves of those attacks are being felt in parts of Latin America as they trigger old memories and new fears.
अमेरिकी बम ईरान में इमारतों और जीवन को तबाह कर रहे हैं, लेकिन इन हमलों के झटके **लैटिन अमेरिका** के कुछ हिस्सों में भी महसूस किए जा रहे हैं, जिससे **पुरानी यादें और नए डर** उभर रहे हैं।
- Even as U.S. President Donald Trump blows hot and cold on Iran, he has begun to speak of Cuba with growing frequency and menace.
अमेरिकी राष्ट्रपति डोनाल्ड ट्रंप ईरान पर बदलते रुख के बीच अब **क्यूबा** के बारे में अधिक बार और **खतरे के संकेत** के साथ बोल रहे हैं।
- "I built this great Army.
उन्होंने कहा, "मैंने यह **महान सेना बनाई।**
- I said, 'You will never need to use it.'
मैंने कहा, "तुम्हें इसे कभी इस्तेमाल करने की जरूरत नहीं पड़ेगी।"
- But sometimes you have to use it.
लेकिन कभी-कभी **इसे इस्तेमाल करना पड़ता है।**
- And Cuba is next, by the way," Mr. Trump told a meeting of investors on March 27 in Miami — a city known for its Cuban community and their opposition towards Havana.
और **"क्यूबा अगला है,"** ट्रंप ने **27 मार्च को मियामी** में निवेशकों की बैठक में कहा — जो **क्यूबाई समुदाय** के लिए जाना जाता है।
- "But pretend I didn't say that," added Mr. Trump as he heaped praise on himself for the military campaigns against Iran and Venezuela to a raucous crowd.
"लेकिन मान लो मैंने यह नहीं कहा," उन्होंने कहा, और **ईरान व वेनेजुएला के खिलाफ अभियानों** की सराहना की।
- The kidnapping of Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro still hangs over Latin America as countries fear getting sucked into Mr. Trump's so-called war on narco-terrorism.
वेनेजुएला के राष्ट्रपति निकोलस माद्रुरो के अपहरण की घटना अभी भी **लैटिन अमेरिका** पर छाई हुई है, क्योंकि देश **नार्को-टेररिज्म के युद्ध** में फंसने से डर रहे हैं।



- Air strikes are already being conducted on the Ecuador-Colombia border as the Ecuadorian military carries out a joint operation with American forces.
इकाडोर-कोलंबिया सीमा पर पहले से हवाई हमले हो रहे हैं, जहां इकाडोर सेना अमेरिकी बलों के साथ संयुक्त अभियान चला रही है।
- Called “Operation Total Extermination”, the campaign is officially “setting the pace for regional, deterrence-focused operations against cartel infrastructure throughout Latin America”, but poor farmers accuse the government of targeting their land and livestock.
“ऑपरेशन टोटल एक्सटर्मिनेशन” नामक इस अभियान को आधिकारिक रूप से कार्टेल ढांचे के खिलाफ कार्रवाई बताया गया है, लेकिन गरीब किसान सरकार पर अपनी जमीन और पशुधन को निशाना बनाने का आरोप लगाते हैं।
- The country’s right-wing President Daniel Noboa has declared an “internal armed conflict” — in line with Mr. Trump’s rhetoric.
देश के राष्ट्रपति डैनियल नोबोआ ने “आंतरिक सशस्त्र संघर्ष” घोषित किया है, जो ट्रंप की नीति के अनुरूप है।
- Before Mr. Trump sent his forces to Venezuela, Washington had branded certain criminal groups as terrorist organisations and named Mr. Maduro as their head.
वेनेजुएला में सेना भेजने से पहले, अमेरिका ने कुछ आपराधिक समूहों को आतंकवादी संगठन घोषित किया और मादुरो को उनका प्रमुख बताया।
- A similar script now appears to be written for other countries.
अब यही रणनीति अन्य देशों के लिए भी अपनाई जा रही है।
- The New York Times reported last week that the U.S. is “considering classifying Brazil’s two criminal factions — Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC) and Comando Vermelho (CV) — as terrorist groups”.
न्यूयॉर्क टाइम्स के अनुसार, अमेरिका ब्राजील के PCC और CV समूहों को आतंकवादी घोषित करने पर विचार कर रहा है।
- Generally, groups placed on the American list of terrorist organisations face financial sanctions, but in Venezuela’s case, it was used for a military attack.
आमतौर पर ऐसे समूहों पर आर्थिक प्रतिबंध लगते हैं, लेकिन वेनेजुएला में इसका उपयोग सैन्य हमले के लिए किया गया।
- The possibility is causing unease in Brazil.
इस संभावना से ब्राजील में चिंता बढ़ रही है।
- Brazilian Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira recently told his U.S. counterpart that Brasília opposes classifying PCC and CV as terrorist organisations.
ब्राजील के विदेश मंत्री माउरो विएरा ने कहा कि ब्राजील इन समूहों को आतंकवादी घोषित करने का विरोध करता है।
- In the case of Colombia, the situation is serious.
कोलंबिया में स्थिति गंभीर है।
- President Gustavo Petro is reportedly being investigated by U.S. prosecutors to find out if he “met with drug traffickers and solicited donations for his 2022 presidential campaign”.
राष्ट्रपति गुस्तावो पेट्रो पर जांच चल रही है कि क्या उन्होंने ड्रग तस्करों से मुलाकात कर चुनाव के लिए धन मांगा।
- Mr. Petro has blamed the country’s right-wing Opposition for fabricating the story ahead of the presidential elections in May.
पेट्रो ने दक्षिणपंथी विपक्ष पर कहानी गढ़ने का आरोप लगाया।
- As both Colombia and Brazil go to elections this year, their leaders are speaking up against the danger.
इस वर्ष कोलंबिया और ब्राजील में चुनाव हैं और नेता खतरे के खिलाफ बोल रहे हैं।
- At last week’s Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States in Bogotá, President Lula da Silva of Brazil criticised the growing U.S. “colonialist policies towards” Latin America.
बोगोटा में CELAC शिखर सम्मेलन में लूला दा सिल्वा ने अमेरिका की औपनिवेशिक नीतियों की आलोचना की।
- As leaders like Mr. Petro and Lula challenge Mr. Trump, his administration appears to be trying to isolate them.



पेट्रो और लूला जैसे नेता ट्रंप को चुनौती दे रहे हैं, और ट्रंप प्रशासन उन्हें **अलग-थलग करने की कोशिश** कर रहा है।

- On March 7, Mr. Trump hosted the region's pro-Washington leaders for a conference — called the “Shield of the Americas” — where they discussed how to “enlist and expand” partnerships for joint counter-drug operations in the region.
7 मार्च को ट्रंप ने “Shield of the Americas” सम्मेलन आयोजित किया, जिसमें संयुक्त ड्रग विरोधी अभियान पर चर्चा हुई।
- At the meeting in Florida, which didn't include Brazil, Mexico, Chile, and Colombia, all run by leftist governments, Mr. Trump alleged that “drug cartels are running Mexico”.
फ्लोरिडा बैठक में **ब्राजील, मेक्सिको, चिली और कोलंबिया** शामिल नहीं थे, और ट्रंप ने कहा कि **मेक्सिको को ड्रग कार्टेल चला रहे हैं।**
- The meeting's tone, where only Americans spoke and everybody else listened, has set the alarm bells ringing in several countries.
बैठक का माहौल, जहाँ **अमेरिकी बोले और बाकी सुने**, कई देशों के लिए **चिंता का कारण** बना।
- “Maduro's kidnapping was a warning.
एक अधिकारी ने कहा, **“मादुरो का अपहरण चेतावनी था।**
- The war on Iran is another warning to us to fall in line.
ईरान पर युद्ध भी हमें **लाइन में आने की चेतावनी** है।
- The Shield of the Americas meeting is a clear sign that the Americans want to go after the regions' natural resources, especially rare earths, and curb our relations with China,” says a senior Brazilian official, speaking on condition of anonymity.
“यह बैठक दिखाती है कि अमेरिका **प्राकृतिक संसाधनों और चीन से संबंधों** को निशाना बनाना चाहता है,” एक ब्राजीलियाई अधिकारी ने कहा।
- Mr. Trump's close ties with Argentina's chainsaw-wielding President Javier Milei are well known.
ट्रंप के **अर्जेटीना के राष्ट्रपति जेवियर मिलेई** से घनिष्ठ संबंध हैं।
- Now, the U.S. President appears to be widening his reach.
अब ट्रंप अपना **प्रभाव क्षेत्र बढ़ा रहे हैं।**
- His latest catch is Chile's new President, José Antonio Kast, who attended the Florida meeting even before being sworn in.
उनका नया सहयोगी **चिली के राष्ट्रपति जोसे एंटोनियो कास्ट** हैं, जिन्होंने शपथ से पहले बैठक में भाग लिया।
- Mr. Kast's inauguration on March 10 offered a glimpse of rising tensions.
10 मार्च को शपथ ग्रहण के दौरान तनाव बढ़ने के संकेत मिले।
- Lula, who was expected to attend, pulled out at the last minute after Mr. Kast invited Brazil's far-right politician Flávio Bolsonaro, a likely challenger to the President in October elections.
लूला ने अंतिम समय में कार्यक्रम छोड़ दिया क्योंकि कास्ट ने **फ्लावियो बोल्सोनारो** को आमंत्रित किया था, जो चुनाव में चुनौती दे सकते हैं।

GS Paper III: Economy,

TOPICS COVERED

02 April 2026

02A	Entry tax hike: protests erupt at Himachal borders with Punjab and Haryana एंटी टैक्स वृद्धि: हिमाचल की सीमाओं पर पंजाब और हरियाणा के साथ विरोध प्रदर्शन
02A	LS passes Jan Vishwas Amendment Bill 2026 लोकसभा ने जन विश्वास संशोधन विधेयक 2026 पारित किया
02A	Why is India pushing piped gas now? भारत अभी पाइपड गैस (PNG) को क्यों बढ़ावा दे रहा है?
02A	NSE to introduce natural gas derivative contracts NSE प्राकृतिक गैस डेरिवेटिव कॉन्ट्रैक्ट शुरू करेगा
02A	SEZ export units can sell locally at lower tax rate SEZ निर्यात इकाइयाँ कम कर दर पर घरेलू बिक्री कर सकेंगी
02A	Centre extends RoDTEP scheme by six months



केंद्र ने RoDTEP योजना को छह महीने के लिए बढ़ाया

Entry tax hike: protests erupt at Himachal borders with Punjab and Haryana

Levy comes into effect, triggering traffic disruptions; police deployed at several locations; working to control situation, say authorities; Mann warns of reciprocal entry tax on H.P.-registered vehicles

GS III: Economy

Press Trust of India
SHIMLA/BILASPUR/UNA

Tension prevailed at Himachal Pradesh's borders with Punjab and Haryana on Wednesday after the revised entry tax for vehicles came into effect, triggering protests and traffic disruptions at multiple points.

Angry residents from Punjab staged a road blockade at the Garmoda toll on the Kirathpur-Nerchowk road in Bilaspur district in the morning, demanding exemption for vehicles registered in border districts.

They questioned the continuation of the entry tax despite Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu announcing a rollback.

"Himachal residents are our brothers and we have no fight with them, but Mr. Sukhu should clarify why a receipt of ₹100 is being given on entry since last night when the rollback was announced on entry tax on small passenger vehicles," a protester said.

"There cannot be two



We are saving their money, but they are imposing tax on our [Punjab] vehicles. We will watch for some time. Otherwise, we also know how to impose tax

BHAGWANT MANN
Punjab Chief Minister

taxes on a national highway. When we are paying toll tax, there is no point in an entry tax," he added.

The blockade was lifted after almost five hours and vehicular traffic resumed following assurance from officials that the issue will be taken up with higher authorities.

Mr. Sukhu had on Tuesday told the Assembly that a hike in entry tax on five-seater and 6-12 seater passenger vehicles will be rolled back, but later in the evening, a notification was issued that stated, "Keeping public convenience in mind, the government has reduced the toll tax rate for passenger vehicles from ₹130 to ₹100". On February

16, a notification was issued announcing that the tax for small passenger vehicles will be increased to ₹170 from ₹70. After a backlash, the tax was fixed at ₹130.

The Himachal government announced concessional passes to all residents living within 5 km of any toll barrier.

Protests were also witnessed at other State borders, and since Wednesday morning, massive traffic jams occurred at various entry points in Kalka-Pinjore, Madhawala-Barotiwala, Baddi, and Nalagarh.

The Ilaka Bachao Sangharsh Morcha staged a protest at the barrier set up in Mehtpur on the Hima-

chal-Punjab border. Traffic on the Dharamshala-Chandigarh highway was also disrupted. The route from Una and Nangal via Santoshgarh has been diverted, and traffic was also hit in Bathu-Bathri. The leaders at the sit-in said they will only heave a sigh of relief when these toll tax barriers are closed. "We will even join forces with the people of Punjab and Haryana to boycott the Himachal tourism season and appeal to them to visit other States instead of coming here," a leader said.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann criticised the Himachal Pradesh government and warned of reciprocal tax. Mr. Mann said his government shut toll plazas at several places in Punjab and the move stands to benefit H.P.-registered vehicles as well. "We are saving their money, but they are imposing tax on our [Punjab] vehicles. We will watch for some time. Otherwise, we also know how to impose tax," he said.

02A. Entry tax hike: protests erupt at Himachal borders with Punjab and Haryana

एंटी टैक्स वृद्धि: हिमाचल की सीमाओं पर पंजाब और हरियाणा के साथ विरोध प्रदर्शन

- Levy comes into effect, triggering traffic disruptions; police deployed at several locations; working to control the situation, say authorities; Mann warns of reciprocal entry tax on H.P.-registered vehicles.

लेवी लागू होने से ट्रैफिक बाधित हुआ; कई स्थानों पर पुलिस तैनात; स्थिति नियंत्रित करने के प्रयास जारी, अधिकारियों ने कहा; भगवंत मान ने पारस्परिक एंटी टैक्स की चेतावनी दी।

- Tension prevailed at Himachal Pradesh's borders with Punjab and Haryana on Wednesday after the revised entry tax for vehicles came into effect, triggering protests and traffic disruptions at multiple points.

बुधवार को हिमाचल प्रदेश की पंजाब और हरियाणा सीमाओं पर संशोधित एंटी टैक्स लागू होने के बाद तनाव फैल गया, जिससे कई स्थानों पर विरोध प्रदर्शन और ट्रैफिक बाधित हुआ।

- Angry residents from Punjab staged a road blockade at the Garmoda toll on the Kirathpur-Nerchowk road in Bilaspur district in the morning, demanding exemption for vehicles



registered in border districts.

पंजाब के नाराज निवासियों ने सुबह बिलासपुर जिले के किरतपुर-नेरचौक रोड पर गर्मोड़ा टोल पर सड़क जाम किया, सीमा जिलों के वाहनों के लिए छूट की मांग की।

- They questioned the continuation of the entry tax despite Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu announcing a rollback.
उन्होंने मुख्यमंत्री सुखविंदर सिंह सुक्खू द्वारा रोलबैक की घोषणा के बावजूद एंट्री टैक्स जारी रहने पर सवाल उठाया।
- “Himachal residents are our brothers and we have no fight with them, but Mr. Sukhu should clarify why a receipt of ₹100 is being given on entry since last night when the rollback was announced on entry tax on small passenger vehicles,” a protester said.
एक प्रदर्शनकारी ने कहा, “हिमाचल निवासी हमारे भाई हैं, हमारा उनसे कोई विवाद नहीं है, लेकिन ₹100 की रसीद क्यों दी जा रही है, जबकि छोटे वाहनों पर एंट्री टैक्स वापस लेने की घोषणा की गई थी।”
- “There cannot be two taxes on a national highway. When we are paying toll tax, there is no point in an entry tax,” he added.
उन्होंने कहा, “एक राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग पर दो टैक्स नहीं हो सकते। जब हम टोल टैक्स दे रहे हैं, तो एंट्री टैक्स का कोई औचित्य नहीं है।”
- The blockade was lifted after almost five hours and vehicular traffic resumed following assurance from officials that the issue will be taken up with higher authorities.
लगभग पांच घंटे बाद जाम हटाया गया और अधिकारियों के आश्वासन के बाद ट्रैफिक सामान्य हुआ कि मामला उच्च अधिकारियों के पास उठाया जाएगा।
- Mr. Sukhu had on Tuesday told the Assembly that a hike in entry tax on five-seater and 6-12 seater passenger vehicles will be rolled back, but later in the evening, a notification was issued that stated, “Keeping public convenience in mind, the government has reduced the toll tax rate for passenger vehicles from ₹130 to ₹100”.
मंगलवार को श्री सुक्खू ने विधानसभा में कहा था कि 5-सीटर और 6-12 सीटर वाहनों पर एंट्री टैक्स वृद्धि वापस ली जाएगी, लेकिन बाद में नोटिफिकेशन जारी कर कहा गया कि “जन सुविधा को ध्यान में रखते हुए टोल टैक्स ₹130 से घटाकर ₹100 किया गया है।”
- On February 16, a notification was issued announcing that the tax for small passenger vehicles will be increased to ₹170 from ₹70.
16 फरवरी को नोटिफिकेशन जारी कर छोटे वाहनों का टैक्स ₹70 से बढ़ाकर ₹170 करने की घोषणा की गई थी।
- After a backlash, the tax was fixed at ₹130.
विरोध के बाद टैक्स ₹130 तय किया गया।
- The Himachal government announced concessional passes to all residents living within 5 km of any toll barrier.
हिमाचल सरकार ने टोल बैरियर के 5 किमी के भीतर रहने वालों के लिए रियायती पास घोषित किए।
- Protests were also witnessed at other State borders, and since Wednesday morning, massive traffic jams occurred at various entry points in Kalka-Pinjore, Madhawala-Barotiwala, Baddi, and Nalagarh.
अन्य राज्य सीमाओं पर भी विरोध हुआ और बुधवार सुबह से कालका-पिंजौर, बद्दी, नालागढ़ आदि स्थानों पर भारी जाम लगा।
- The Ilaka Bachao Sangharsh Morcha staged a protest at the barrier set up in Mehtpur on the Himachal-Punjab border.
इलाका बचाओ संघर्ष मोर्चा ने मेहतपुर (हिमाचल-पंजाब सीमा) पर विरोध प्रदर्शन किया।
- Traffic on the Dharamshala-Chandigarh highway was also disrupted.
धर्मशाला-चंडीगढ़ हाईवे पर भी ट्रैफिक बाधित रहा।
- The route from Una and Nangal via Santoshgarh has been diverted, and traffic was also hit in Bathu-Bathri.
ऊना और नंगल से संतोषगढ़ मार्ग डायवर्ट किया गया और बाधू-बाथरी में भी ट्रैफिक प्रभावित हुआ।
- The leaders at the sit-in said they will only heave a sigh of relief when these toll tax barriers are closed.
धरने पर बैठे नेताओं ने कहा कि टोल बैरियर बंद होने पर ही उन्हें राहत मिलेगी।
- “We will even join forces with the people of Punjab and Haryana to boycott the Himachal tourism season and appeal to them to visit other States instead of coming here,” a leader said.



एक नेता ने कहा, “हम पंजाब और हरियाणा के लोगों के साथ मिलकर हिमाचल पर्यटन सीजन का बहिष्कार करेंगे और अन्य राज्यों में जाने की अपील करेंगे।”

- Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann criticised the Himachal Pradesh government and warned of reciprocal tax.
पंजाब के मुख्यमंत्री भगवंत मान ने हिमाचल सरकार की आलोचना की और पारस्परिक टैक्स की चेतावनी दी।
- Mr. Mann said his government shut toll plazas at several places in Punjab and the move stands to benefit H.P.-registered vehicles as well.
श्री मान ने कहा कि उनकी सरकार ने पंजाब में कई स्थानों पर टोल प्लाजा बंद किए, जिससे हिमाचल के वाहनों को भी लाभ मिल रहा है।
- “We are saving their money, but they are imposing tax on our [Punjab] vehicles. We will watch for some time. Otherwise, we also know how to impose tax,” he said.
उन्होंने कहा, “हम उनका पैसा बचा रहे हैं, लेकिन वे हमारे वाहनों पर टैक्स लगा रहे हैं। हम कुछ समय देखेंगे, नहीं तो हम भी टैक्स लगाना जानते हैं।”

LS passes Jan Vishwas Amendment Bill 2026

GS III: Economy
Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2026, by voice vote, aiming to decriminalise minor offences across various laws and further promote ease of doing business and living. The Bill proposes to amend 784 provisions of 79 Central Acts administered by 23 Ministries. It seeks to decriminalise 717 provisions and amend 67 provisions to facilitate ease of living.

It also seeks to rationalise more than 1,000 offences, removing outdated and redundant provisions, thereby improving the overall regulatory environment. Replying to the debate on the Bill, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said it will help people and MSMEs. Amendments moved by Congress member K. Kavya were rejected by voice vote.

02A. LS passes Jan Vishwas Amendment Bill 2026 लोकसभा ने जन विश्वास संशोधन विधेयक 2026 पारित किया

• The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, 2026, by voice vote, aiming to decriminalise minor offences across various laws and further promote ease of doing business and living.

लोकसभा ने बुधवार को जन विश्वास (प्रावधानों का संशोधन) विधेयक, 2026 को वॉयस वोट से पारित किया, जिसका उद्देश्य विभिन्न कानूनों में छोटे अपराधों को अपराधमुक्त करना और व्यवसाय व जीवन की सुगमता को बढ़ावा देना है।

• The Bill proposes to amend 784 provisions of 79 Central Acts administered by 23 Ministries.

यह विधेयक 23 मंत्रालयों द्वारा प्रशासित 79 केंद्रीय अधिनियमों के 784 प्रावधानों में संशोधन का प्रस्ताव करता है।

• It seeks to decriminalise 717 provisions and amend 67 provisions to facilitate ease of living.

यह 717 प्रावधानों को अपराधमुक्त करने और 67 प्रावधानों में संशोधन कर जीवन की सुगमता बढ़ाने का प्रयास करता है।

• It also seeks to rationalise more than 1,000 offences, removing outdated and redundant provisions, thereby improving the overall regulatory environment.

यह 1,000 से अधिक अपराधों का युक्तिकरण करने, पुराने और अप्रासंगिक प्रावधानों को हटाने और नियामक वातावरण सुधारने का लक्ष्य रखता है।

• Replying to the debate on the Bill, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said it will help people and MSMEs.

विधेयक पर बहस का जवाब देते हुए वाणिज्य और उद्योग मंत्री पीयूष गoyal ने कहा कि यह लोगों और MSMEs की मदद करेगा।

• Amendments moved by Congress member K. Kavya were rejected by voice vote.

कांग्रेस सदस्य के. काव्या द्वारा प्रस्तुत संशोधन वॉयस वोट से खारिज कर दिए गए।



Why is India pushing piped gas now?

Can PNG replace LPG for cooking? Why has LPG been preferred so far? How is LNG transported and used? What is holding back PNG expansion?
Can domestic production meet demand? Will PNG reduce LPG import dependence?

SS III: Economy

EXPLAINER

M. Kalyanaraman

The story so far:

India has a total of 33 crore LPG connections. Recently, Anjan Kumar Mishra, Secretary at the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board, said that domestic natural gas production alone could cater to 30 crore connections if all were to switch to piped natural gas (PNG).

What is the difference between LPG, LNG, PNG, and CNG?
LPG is a co-product of oil refining and natural gas processing. That is, its production depends on the processing of both crude oil and natural gas.

Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), as the name suggests, is natural gas that has been cooled to below -160 degrees Celsius to turn it into a liquid for shipping. Liquefaction reduces its volume by 1,000 times.

Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) is primarily used as a vehicular fuel. It involves compressing natural gas to a pressure of 200-250 kg/cm² (g) to reduce its volume and enable efficient distribution.

How are LPG and natural gas transported to the user?

Propane and butane gases are mixed, pressurised, and cooled to below 40 degrees Celsius, and then transported from the source to consuming countries via ships. LPG is bottled in cylinders and physically delivered to customers.

Piped natural gas is transported through pipelines. Before this, imported natural gas is liquefied and transported through LNG carriers. "LNG carriers use special cargo tanks and insulation systems designed for ultra-low temperatures," stated Mitsui O.S.K. Lines to *The Hindu*. "Put simply, the basic task is to move a very cold liquid onto the ship while preventing it from warming up too much."

At the destination, LNG is regasified and transported to the final consumer through pipes.

Last-mile delivery of LPG is easier through cylinders that are transported through trucks and tricycles than building an extensive pipeline network covering every household for natural gas. This has been a key reason why India adopted LPG for domestic cooking.

Why the push for piped gas against LPG now?

India's dependence on LPG imports is currently higher. For instance, in natural gas, India's one-year import was about 27 million tonnes of LNG last year, and production was roughly the same, according to government data. On the other hand, India – until recently – imported three-fifths of its LPG requirements, of which 90% was routed through the Strait of Hormuz, which has now been blocked due to the war in West Asia. Typical annual LPG consumption is 34 million tonnes, out of which 12 million tonnes are produced in India.

If gas is to be imported, LNG has many more sources across the world. In LPG, India was largely reliant on Saudi Arabia and Qatar and the supplies had to pass through the Strait to reach India.

"Globally large capacities of liquefaction plants for natural gas are coming online over the next few years, so availability should be healthy," said Prashant Vasishit, Senior Vice President of ICRA.

MCQ



A domestic LPG cylinder supplier carries cylinders for delivery in Bengaluru on March 30. J. ALLEN EGENUSE

Can natural gas replace LPG straight?
Natural gas is much lighter than LPG. But one kilogram of natural gas can deliver more energy than one kilogram of LPG. For cooking purposes, these differences are not significant, making PNG a drop-in replacement for LPG.

However, in industrial uses, the equipment may need to be tuned to a different setting or even altered. For instance, LPG is widely used by MSMEs for welding and cutting. Reports from the ground indicate that while the government is encouraging industrial users to switch, a lack of awareness and technical know-how may hamper adoption.

How is the government pushing for natural gas?

On March 26, *The Hindu* learnt from senior government officials that over the next two weeks, India could add another 15 lakh new PNG connections.

The official said that instituting last-mile connectivity amidst unfavourable city infrastructure in certain areas was among the major hurdles in expanding the piped gas network.

To speed it up, in a gazette notification, the Centre instituted provisions to help accelerate the uptake, which, among other things, included specific timelines for approving pipeline expansion in housing and non-housing areas.

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) told the Parliamentary Standing Committee, which is assessing its demand for grants for FY 2026-27, that it is targeting to have in place a pipeline network that would cover 12 crore PNG connections by 2034.

The committee, in an earlier report, had asked the Ministry to help City Gas Distribution (CGD) entities to overcome difficulties in pursuing expansion, such as in obtaining permissions, land, bidding criteria, and NOC requirements from local authorities.

Across towns and cities, such as in Maharashtra or Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu, where the GAIL pipeline runs

close, the government is now pushing for piping infrastructure for local distribution.

As of December, the government announced that India's gas pipeline network spans about 25,000 kilometres, with an additional 10,500 kilometres under construction. The government is also ensuring that PNG pricing remains competitive with LPG.

"PNG connections have now crossed 1.5 crore. A recent government gazette notification reinforces this direction, mandating that households cannot hold both LPG and PNG connections. As a result, roughly 6 million households will be required to surrender their LPG connection and transition fully to PNG within a three-month timeframe. This will bring total household PNG connections to 2 crore soon," said Manish Sejwal, Senior Vice President at Bystad Energy. "Since the 2020-21, the compounded annual growth rate in connections has been some 18%. A CAGR of 24% would be needed to reach 12 crore connections by 2034-35," he added.

What are the challenges?

The GAIL pipeline network is currently concentrated in western and northern India, with some coverage in Kerala and Bengaluru. The 10,000-kilometre-plus pipelines under construction cover tier-2 and tier-3 cities in parts of central and eastern India, as well as some parts of Tamil Nadu connecting to the Bengaluru leg, and one section going to the northeast. However, large regions in central, southern, and northeastern India remain uncovered. Further, the alignment of the gas pipeline network is more intended to serve industrial needs than households.

The government has aggressively given CGD licences that would cover more than 300 geographical areas covering households, small industries, hotels and restaurants. As of now, some 90 of them are still not connected to the main trunk pipeline. Last-mile connectivity remains an immediate challenge.

Even if projections of 12 crore PNG connections are met in another 10 years, LPG connections will still be more than 20 crore, leaving India requiring to import significant amounts of LPG.

A little less than 30% of natural gas use goes into making fertilizers, while power plants account for 13% and city gas distribution around 20%, said ICRA's Mr. Vasishit. Some 35% goes to sectors like refineries and industries.

A major diversion from these sectors such as power may be needed to cater to cooking gas demand. Mr. Vasishit said industrial consumers can cater to naphtha and furnace oil.

PNGRB secretary Mr. Mishra had said that as of now some 1.2 crore PNG connections consume three million metric standard cubic metres of gas every day.

To supply 13 crore connections, India will have to increase domestic production by at least one-third.

Industry observers say that an increase in domestic production from Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) fields is possible. Bystad Energy projects a 25% increase.

For instance, ONGC commenced production in the KG-DWN 98/2 Block in the KG basin in 2024. Peak production of the field is expected to be over 10 million metric standard cubic metres per day of gas, which would mean increasing today's overall gas production in India by 10%. Site officials expect the 98/2 block to increase ONGC gas output by 15% through more wells. Increasing imports through LNG may well be required if natural gas consumption is ramped up. India has some nine import terminals covering both coasts.

It will have to truly ramp up the pipeline network to leverage the imports. Further, India's LNG system is even more of a just-in-time system than LPG, with little long-term storage, unlike in Europe. Any disruption in imports will have an immediate impact on availability. (With inputs from Saptararno Ghosh and Appala Naidu)

THE GIST

India has 33 crore LPG connections, but domestic natural gas production could cater to 30 crore connections if households switch to piped natural gas (PNG).

LPG is delivered in cylinders, while natural gas is transported through pipelines or as LNG and regasified, with PNG emerging as a drop-in replacement for cooking.

The government is pushing PNG to reduce high LPG import dependence, but pipeline expansion, last-mile connectivity, and supply constraints remain key challenges.

02A. Why is India pushing piped gas now? भारत अभी पाइप्ड गैस (PNG) को क्यों बढ़ावा दे रहा है?

LPG, LNG, PNG, and CNG: Differences and Transport LPG, LNG, PNG और CNG: अंतर और परिवहन

- India has a total of **33 crore LPG connections**.
भारत में कुल **33 करोड़ LPG कनेक्शन** हैं।
- Recently, **Anjan Kumar Mishra, Secretary at the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board**, said that **domestic natural gas production alone could cater to 30 crore connections if all were to switch to PNG**.
हाल ही में **Anjan Kumar Mishra, Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board** के सचिव ने कहा कि यदि सभी **PNG** अपनाएं तो घरेलू गैस उत्पादन से **30 करोड़ कनेक्शन** संभव हैं।
- What is the difference between **LPG, LNG, PNG, and CNG**?
LPG, LNG, PNG और CNG में क्या अंतर है?



- **LPG is a co-product of oil refining and natural gas processing.**
LPG तेल रिफाइनिंग और प्राकृतिक गैस प्रोसेसिंग का सह-उत्पाद है।
- **That is, its production depends on the processing of both crude oil and natural gas.**
अर्थात इसका उत्पादन **crude oil** और **natural gas** दोनों पर निर्भर करता है।
- **Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)**, as the name suggests, is natural gas that has been cooled to below **-160°C** to turn it into a liquid for shipping.
LNG वह प्राकृतिक गैस है जिसे **-160°C** तक ठंडा करके तरल बनाया जाता है ताकि परिवहन किया जा सके।
- **Liquefaction reduces its volume by 1,000 times.**
इस प्रक्रिया से इसका आयतन **1000 गुना** कम हो जाता है।
- **Compressed Natural Gas (CNG)** is primarily used as a vehicular fuel.
CNG मुख्य रूप से वाहन ईंधन के रूप में उपयोग होती है।
- **It involves compressing natural gas to a pressure of 200-250 kg/cm² to reduce its volume and enable efficient distribution.**
इसे **200-250 kg/cm²** दबाव पर संपीड़ित किया जाता है ताकि आयतन कम हो और वितरण आसान हो।

How are LPG and natural gas transported to the user?

LPG और प्राकृतिक गैस उपभोक्ता तक कैसे पहुंचती है?

- **Propane and butane gases are mixed, pressurised, and cooled to below 40°C, and then transported from the source to consuming countries via ships.**
Propane और **butane** गैसों को मिलाकर, दबाव में और **40°C से कम** तापमान पर ठंडा कर जहाजों से भेजा जाता है।
- **LPG is bottled in cylinders and physically delivered to customers.**
LPG को सिलेंडरों में भरकर सीधे उपभोक्ताओं तक पहुंचाया जाता है।
- **Piped natural gas (PNG) is transported through pipelines.**
PNG पाइपलाइन के माध्यम से पहुंचाई जाती है।
- **Before this, imported natural gas is liquefied and transported through LNG carriers.**
इससे पहले, आयातित गैस को **LNG carriers** द्वारा तरल रूप में लाया जाता है।
- **"LNG carriers use special cargo tanks and insulation systems designed for ultra-low temperatures," stated Mitsui O.S.K. Lines.**
Mitsui O.S.K. Lines के अनुसार, LNG वाहक जहाजों में अत्यधिक कम तापमान के लिए विशेष टैंक और इन्सुलेशन होते हैं।
- **"Put simply, the basic task is to move a very cold liquid onto the ship while preventing it from warming up too much."**
सरल शब्दों में, बहुत ठंडे तरल को जहाज पर लाना और उसे गर्म होने से बचाना मुख्य कार्य है।
- **At the destination, LNG is regasified and transported to the final consumer through pipes.**
गंतव्य पर **LNG** को फिर से गैस में बदलकर पाइप से उपभोक्ता तक पहुंचाया जाता है।
- **Last-mile delivery of LPG is easier through cylinders that are transported through trucks and tricycles than building an extensive pipeline network covering every household for natural gas.**
LPG की अंतिम डिलीवरी सिलेंडरों के माध्यम से ट्रक और तिपहिया वाहनों से आसान होती है, जबकि **PNG** के लिए बड़े पाइपलाइन नेटवर्क की जरूरत होती है।
- **This has been a key reason why India adopted LPG for domestic cooking.**
इसी कारण भारत ने घरेलू खाना पकाने के लिए **LPG** को अपनाया।

Push for Piped Gas (PNG) over LPG

LPG के बजाय पाइपड गैस (PNG) को बढ़ावा क्यों

- **India's dependence on LPG imports is currently higher.**
भारत की **LPG आयात** पर निर्भरता वर्तमान में अधिक है।
- For instance, in natural gas, India's one-year import was about **27 million tonnes of LNG**, and production was roughly the same.
उदाहरण के लिए, प्राकृतिक गैस में भारत का आयात लगभग **27 मिलियन टन LNG** था और उत्पादन भी लगभग इतना ही था।



- On the other hand, India — until recently — imported **three-fifths of its LPG requirements, of which 90% was routed through the Strait of Hormuz**, which has now been blocked due to the war in **West Asia**.
दूसरी ओर, भारत अपनी LPG जरूरतों का लगभग **3/5 हिस्सा आयात** करता था, जिसमें से **90% Strait of Hormuz** से होकर आता था, जो अब **West Asia युद्ध** के कारण प्रभावित है।
- Typical annual LPG consumption is 34 million tonnes, out of which 12 million tonnes are produced in India.**
भारत की वार्षिक LPG खपत **34 मिलियन टन** है, जिसमें से **12 मिलियन टन** देश में उत्पादित होता है।
- If gas is to be imported, LNG has many more sources across the world.**
यदि गैस आयात करनी हो, तो **LNG** के स्रोत विश्वभर में अधिक हैं।
- In LPG, India was largely reliant on Saudi Arabia and Qatar and the supplies had to pass through the Strait to reach India.**
LPG में भारत मुख्यतः **Saudi Arabia और Qatar** पर निर्भर था और आपूर्ति को Strait से होकर आना पड़ता था।
- “Globally large capacities of liquefaction plants for natural gas are coming online over the next few years, so availability should be healthy,” said Prashant Vasisht.**
Prashant Vasisht के अनुसार, आने वाले वर्षों में प्राकृतिक गैस के बड़े **liquefaction plants** शुरू होंगे, जिससे उपलब्धता बेहतर होगी।

Can natural gas replace LPG straight?

क्या प्राकृतिक गैस सीधे LPG का स्थान ले सकती है?

- Natural gas is much lighter than LPG.**
प्राकृतिक गैस, LPG की तुलना में हल्की होती है।
- But one kilogram of natural gas can deliver more energy than one kilogram of LPG.**
लेकिन **1 kg natural gas** से **1 kg LPG** से अधिक ऊर्जा मिलती है।
- For cooking purposes, these differences are not significant, making **PNG a drop-in replacement** for LPG.
खाना पकाने के लिए यह अंतर महत्वपूर्ण नहीं है, इसलिए **PNG सीधे LPG का विकल्प** बन सकती है।
- However, in industrial uses, the equipment may need to be tuned to a different setting or even altered.
लेकिन औद्योगिक उपयोग में उपकरणों को बदलना या समायोजित करना पड़ सकता है।
- For instance, **LPG is widely used by MSMEs for welding and cutting.**
उदाहरण के लिए, **MSMEs** में वेल्डिंग और कटिंग के लिए LPG का उपयोग होता है।
- Reports indicate that while the government is encouraging industrial users to switch, a lack of awareness and technical know-how may hamper adoption.
रिपोर्ट बताती हैं कि सरकार प्रोत्साहित कर रही है, लेकिन **awareness और technical knowledge की कमी** अपनाने में बाधा बन सकती है।

How is the government pushing for natural gas?

सरकार प्राकृतिक गैस को कैसे बढ़ावा दे रही है?

- On **March 26**, it was learnt that India could add another **15 lakh new PNG connections** in the next two weeks.
26 मार्च को जानकारी मिली कि अगले दो हफ्तों में **15 लाख नए PNG कनेक्शन** जोड़े जा सकते हैं।
- The official said that instituting last-mile connectivity amidst unfavourable city infrastructure was a major hurdle.
अधिकारी ने कहा कि **last-mile connectivity** और शहरी ढांचे की समस्याएं बड़ी बाधा हैं।
- To speed it up, the Centre issued a **gazette notification** with provisions including timelines for pipeline approvals.
तेजी लाने के लिए केंद्र ने **gazette notification** जारी किया जिसमें पाइपलाइन स्वीकृति के समय-सीमा तय की गई।
- The **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG)** is targeting **12 crore PNG connections by 2034.**
MoPNG का लक्ष्य **2034 तक 12 करोड़ PNG कनेक्शन** है।



- The **Parliamentary Committee** asked to help **City Gas Distribution (CGD)** entities overcome issues like permissions, land, bidding, and **NOC**.
संसदीय समिति ने **CGD entities** की समस्याओं जैसे अनुमति, भूमि, बोली और **NOC** में मदद करने को कहा।
- Across towns and cities like **Maharashtra** and **Coimbatore**, where the **GAIL pipeline** runs, the government is pushing local piping infrastructure.
Maharashtra और **Coimbatore** जैसे क्षेत्रों में, जहां **GAIL pipeline** है, वहां स्थानीय पाइप नेटवर्क बढ़ाया जा रहा है।
- **As of December, India's gas pipeline network spans about 25,000 km, with another 10,500 km under construction.**
दिसंबर तक भारत का गैस पाइपलाइन नेटवर्क **25,000 किमी** है और **10,500 किमी** निर्माणाधीन है।
- The government is also ensuring that **PNG pricing remains competitive with LPG**.
सरकार यह भी सुनिश्चित कर रही है कि **PNG की कीमत LPG के मुकाबले प्रतिस्पर्धी** रहे।
- PNG connections have now crossed **1.5 crore**.
PNG कनेक्शन अब **1.5 करोड़** से अधिक हो चुके हैं।
- A recent government **gazette notification** mandates that households cannot hold both **LPG and PNG connections**.
हालिया सरकारी **gazette notification** के अनुसार, घरों में एक साथ **LPG और PNG** कनेक्शन नहीं रखे जा सकते।
- As a result, roughly **6 million households** will be required to surrender their LPG connection and transition fully to PNG within a **three-month timeframe**.
इसके परिणामस्वरूप लगभग **60 लाख परिवारों** को **3 महीने** के भीतर LPG छोड़कर PNG अपनाना होगा।
- This will bring total household PNG connections to **2 crore soon**.
इससे कुल PNG कनेक्शन जल्द ही **2 करोड़** हो जाएंगे।
- Since **2020-21**, the **CAGR** in connections has been about **18%**.
2020-21 से PNG कनेक्शन का **CAGR ~18%** रहा है।
- A **CAGR of 24%** would be needed to reach **12 crore connections by 2034-35**.
2034-35 तक 12 करोड़ कनेक्शन के लिए **24% CAGR** आवश्यक होगा।

What are the challenges? चुनौतियाँ क्या हैं?

- The **GAIL pipeline network** is currently concentrated in **western and northern India**, with some coverage in **Kerala and Bengaluru**.
GAIL pipeline network मुख्यतः **पश्चिमी और उत्तरी भारत** में केंद्रित है, कुछ कवरेज **केरल और बंगलुरु** में है।
- The **10,000+ km pipelines under construction** cover tier-2 and tier-3 cities in parts of central and eastern India and some parts of Tamil Nadu and northeast.
निर्माणाधीन **10,000+ किमी पाइपलाइन** मध्य, पूर्वी भारत, तमिलनाडु और पूर्वोत्तर के शहरों को कवर करती हैं।
- However, large regions in **central, southern, and northeastern India** remain uncovered.
फिर भी **मध्य, दक्षिणी और पूर्वोत्तर भारत** के बड़े क्षेत्र अभी भी कवर नहीं हैं।
- Further, the alignment of pipelines is more intended for **industrial needs** than households.
पाइपलाइन का उपयोग अधिकतर **औद्योगिक जरूरतों** के लिए किया गया है, न कि घरेलू उपयोग के लिए।
- The government has given **CGD licences** covering more than **300 geographical areas**.
सरकार ने **CGD licences** के माध्यम से **300+ क्षेत्रों** को कवर किया है।
- As of now, about **90 areas** are still not connected to the main trunk pipeline.
अभी भी लगभग **90 क्षेत्र** मुख्य पाइपलाइन से जुड़े नहीं हैं।

GS III: Economy

NSE to introduce natural gas derivative contracts

National Stock Exchange of India Ltd (NSE) has announced a collaboration with Indian Gas Exchange (IGX) to introduce exchange-traded derivatives based on natural gas traded and delivered on the IGX platform. This is towards strengthening India's domestic natural gas market with the aim to provide efficient risk management tools, NSE said, adding it will launch Indian natural gas derivative contracts based on IGX's benchmark Price Index GIXL.

02A.NSE to introduce natural gas derivative contracts

NSE प्राकृतिक गैस डेरिवेटिव कॉन्ट्रैक्ट शुरू करेगा



- **National Stock Exchange of India Ltd (NSE) has announced a collaboration with Indian Gas Exchange (IGX) to introduce exchange-traded derivatives based on natural gas traded and delivered on the IGX platform.**

नेशनल स्टॉक एक्सचेंज (NSE) ने इंडियन गैस एक्सचेंज (IGX) के साथ सहयोग की घोषणा की है, जिसके तहत IGX प्लेटफॉर्म पर ट्रेड और डिलीवर की जाने वाली प्राकृतिक गैस पर आधारित एक्सचेंज-ट्रेडेड डेरिवेटिव्स शुरू किए जाएंगे।

- This is towards strengthening India's domestic natural gas market with the aim to provide efficient risk management tools, NSE said, adding it will launch Indian natural gas derivative contracts based on IGX's benchmark Price Index GIXI.
NSE ने कहा कि इसका उद्देश्य भारत के घरेलू प्राकृतिक गैस बाजार को मजबूत करना और प्रभावी जोखिम प्रबंधन उपकरण प्रदान करना है, साथ ही यह IGX के बेंचमार्क प्राइस इंडेक्स GIXI पर आधारित प्राकृतिक गैस डेरिवेटिव कॉन्ट्रैक्ट लॉन्च करेगा।

DERIVATIVES

- It is a financial instrument set between two parties having no value of its own but deriving their value from an **underlying asset**. The underlying asset could be stock, bonds, currency, commodities, interest rates, etc.
- The various **derivative instruments** include-
 - **Future contracts**: they put an obligation on the party to buy or sell the asset at a **predetermined future date price and quantity**. Futures are used for hedging the price movement of the underlying asset.
 - **Options contract**: options are financial derivatives that **give the buyers/ sellers the right but not the obligation** to buy or sell the underlying asset at an agreed-upon price or date.
 - **Call option**: an option to buy is a call option where the holder has the right but not the obligation to buy the underlying asset at the decided price
 - **Put Option**: a put option gives the right but not the obligation to sell at the decided price
- If the option is exercisable on or before the expiry date it is called an **American option** and if it's exercisable only on the expiry date it is called a **European option**.
- The price at which the option is to be exercised is called the **strike price**.
 - Both futures and options contracts can be settled by delivery of the underlying asset or cash.

SEZ export units can sell locally at lower tax rate

GS III: Economy
The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Amid weakening external demand and constrained supply routes, the Centre allowed India's export-oriented units in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) to sell products in India at concessional tax rates. The move follows announcement in the Budget 2026.

Krishan Arora, Partner and Leader of Indirect Tax and India Investment Advisory, Grant Thornton Bharat said, "This policy change guarantees our cutting edge SEZ infrastructure does not lie idle as Indian exporters navigate the dual challenges of rising international tariff barriers, geopolitical uncertainties and supply chain disruptions in the face of the war, blocking much of the trade routes."

"At the same time, domestic industry benefits by exploiting available capacity of SEZ and shall have reduced reliance on imports, which are getting both delayed and expensive owing to the war."

02A. SEZ export units can sell locally at lower tax rate SEZ निर्यात इकाइयाँ कम कर दर पर घरेलू बिक्री कर सकेंगी

- Amid weakening external demand and constrained supply routes, the Centre allowed India's export-oriented units in **Special Economic Zones (SEZs)** to sell products in India at **concessional tax rates**.

कमजोर बाहरी मांग और सीमित आपूर्ति मार्गों के बीच, केंद्र सरकार ने SEZ की निर्यात-उन्मुख इकाइयों को भारत में रियायती कर दरों पर उत्पाद बेचने की अनुमति दी।

- The move follows an announcement in the Budget 2026.
यह कदम **बजट 2026** में की गई घोषणा के बाद उठाया गया है।
- Krishan Arora, Partner and Leader of Indirect Tax and India Investment Advisory, Grant Thornton Bharat said, "This policy change guarantees our cutting edge SEZ infrastructure does not lie idle as Indian exporters navigate the dual challenges of rising international tariff barriers, geopolitical uncertainties and supply chain disruptions in the face of the war, blocking much



of the trade routes.”

ग्रांट थॉर्नटन भारत के कृष्ण अरोड़ा ने कहा, “यह नीति परिवर्तन सुनिश्चित करता है कि भारत का उन्नत SEZ इंफ्रास्ट्रक्चर निष्क्रिय न रहे, जबकि निर्यातक अंतरराष्ट्रीय टैरिफ, भू-राजनीतिक अनिश्चितता और सप्लाई चेन बाधाओं का सामना कर रहे हैं।”

- “At the same time, domestic industry benefits by exploiting available capacity of SEZ and shall have reduced reliance on imports, which are getting both delayed and expensive owing to the war.”

उन्होंने कहा, “साथ ही, घरेलू उद्योग SEZ की उपलब्ध क्षमता का उपयोग कर लाभान्वित होगा और आयात पर निर्भरता कम होगी, जो युद्ध के कारण महंगे और विलंबित हो रहे हैं।”

GS III: Economy

Centre extends RoDTEP scheme by six months

The Directorate of Foreign Trade extended the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) scheme till September 30 for the benefit of exporters. In a notification, the DGFT said terms, rates and value caps applicable as on March 31, 2026 will continue till September end for all eligible exporters. The government had cut the rates for the scheme last month and restored them on March 23 for a week. Now, the scheme is extended for six months.

caps applicable as on March 31, 2026 will continue till September end for all eligible exporters.

एक अधिसूचना में DGFT ने कहा कि 31 मार्च 2026 तक लागू शर्तें, दरें और मूल्य सीमा सभी पात्र निर्यातकों के लिए सितंबर अंत तक जारी रहेंगी।

- The government had cut the rates for the scheme last month and restored them on March 23 for a week.
सरकार ने पिछले महीने इस योजना की दरें घटाई थीं और 23 मार्च को एक सप्ताह के लिए बहाल किया था।
- Now, the scheme is extended for six months.
अब इस योजना को छह महीने के लिए बढ़ा दिया गया है।

02A. Centre extends RoDTEP scheme by six months

केंद्र ने RoDTEP योजना को छह महीने के लिए बढ़ाया

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विदेश व्यापार महानिदेशालय (DGFT) ने RoDTEP योजना को 30 सितंबर तक बढ़ा दिया, ताकि निर्यातकों को लाभ मिल सके।

- In a notification, the DGFT said terms, rates and value

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GS Paper III: S&T,

TOPICS COVERED

02 April 2026

02A	Commercial LPG, jet fuel rates hiked amid war व्यावसायिक एलपीजी, जेट ईंधन दरों में युद्ध के बीच वृद्धि
02A	Early screen use stunts vital social growth of children, experts warn विशेषज्ञ चेतावनी देते हैं कि प्रारंभिक स्क्रीन उपयोग बच्चों के महत्वपूर्ण सामाजिक विकास को बाधित करता है
02A	Qdenga: a step forward against dengue, but not a silver bullet Qgenda: डेंगू के खिलाफ एक कदम आगे, लेकिन कोई जादुई समाधान नहीं
02A	NASA begins fuelling rocket for first lunar trip in 50 years NASA ने 50 वर्षों में पहली चंद्र यात्रा के लिए रॉकेट में ईंधन भरना शुरू किया



Commercial LPG, jet fuel rates hiked amid war

Major metro cities hit with a price hike of more than 10% for commercial cylinders; price of aviation turbine fuel more than doubled for international travel, prompting IndiGo to add a fuel surcharge of ₹10,000 on long-haul routes; however ATF rates for scheduled domestic carriers were hiked by less than 9%; there is no change for household LPG

GS III, S&T
Saptararno Ghosh
Jagrati Chandra
NEW DELHI

State-run oil marketing firms hiked the price of commercial liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders by more than 10% in major metro cities on Wednesday, while the price of aviation turbine fuel (ATF) was more than doubled for international air travel and chartered flights.

On the other hand, travellers flying within the country faced a smaller ATF rate increase of around 9%.

The Centre defended the hikes, noting that its oil marketing companies (OMCs) are bearing the brunt of the spike in global oil prices, absorbing losses of ₹380 per cylinder on average.

There has been a 44% spike in benchmark Saudi Contract prices between

March and April, as 20% to 30% of global LPG is stranded in the Strait of Hormuz amid the ongoing U.S.-Iran war in West Asia.

The Indian Oil Corporation set the new price of a 19 kg commercial cylinder in Delhi at ₹2,078.5, a hike of ₹195.5 from the ₹1,883 price set on March 7.

Similarly, Mumbai woke up to a ₹196 hike on each commercial cylinder, while a ₹203 price increase was seen in Chennai, and ₹218 hike in Kolkata. The effect of the hike is expected to be felt across the country. There has been no change to the prices of LPG cylinders meant for household use.

For domestic flights, the price of ATF in Delhi was increased by about 8.6% to ₹1,04,927 per kilolitre (kl), with a similar 8.6% in Mumbai.

For international flights by Indian airlines as well as chartered flights, the price

Fuels on fire

According to the government, the LPG hike has been necessitated by a 44% spike in benchmark Saudi Contract prices as 20-30% of global LPG remain stranded in the conflict-hit Strait of Hormuz

Commercial LPG prices hiked by **₹196-218** per cylinder across the country

IndiGo increases fuel surcharges up to ₹550 for domestic and to ₹10,000 for international flights

Aviation fuel prices more than doubled for international flights; up **8.6%** for domestic

Under-recoveries of oil marketing companies projected to cross **₹40,484 crore** by May-end

Commercial LPG consumption less than **10%** of total LPG consumption in India, says Centre

of ATF was more than doubled to a record ₹2.07 lakh per kilolitre.

Aviation major IndiGo, which currently holds two-thirds of the domestic aviation market, responded by hiking its fuel surcharge up to ₹50 for domestic flights and ₹10,000 for international flights.

'Partial increase'
The Ministry of Petroleum

and Natural Gas defended the hike in ATF prices, saying that it has passed on only a partial increase to the airlines, while its OMCs absorb the majority of the losses as global crude rates surge due to the U.S.-Israeli war against Iran.

In order to insulate the domestic travel costs from the substantial increase in international prices, PSU Oil Marketing Companies

Tehran denies Trump's claim of seeking ceasefire

CHENNAI
U.S. President Donald Trump said on Wednesday that Iran asked for a ceasefire and he would consider it once the Strait of Hormuz is open. Iran said it has not made any such proposal and will continue the war "until the aggressor is punished and compensation is paid". » PAGE 14

of the Ministry of Petroleum, in consultation with Ministry of Civil Aviation, have passed only a partial and staggered increase of 25% (only ₹15/litre) to the airlines," the Ministry said in a post on social media.

In other words, the government says it has passed on only a quarter of the actual impact if ATF prices were aligned with current international rates.

The Ministry noted that OMCs are bearing an average loss of ₹380 on the sale of every LPG cylinder, given current rates. "Cumulative losses by end-May will reach approximately ₹40,484 crore," the Ministry said in a social media post. There has been a 44% spike in benchmark Saudi Contract prices between March and April, as 20% to 30% of global LPG is stranded in the Strait of Hormuz.

Public-sector OMCs are also incurring losses of about ₹24.4 for every litre of petrol and ₹104.99 for every litre of diesel sold, as of today, the Ministry added.

'Staggered increase'
The ATF rate for scheduled domestic carriers has been increased by ₹21 per litre, whilst those for non-scheduled and international airlines are up more than ₹110 per litre, Ministry joint

secretary Sujata Sharma told journalists. She clarified that these are retail prices, not the base prices of the fuel.

Though the government referred to a "staggered increase" in ATF rates, Ms. Sharma could not offer any clarity on the timing of the next such hike. "When will it happen next, I cannot say now. The government will take a decision at the appropriate time," she said.

Commercial LPG rates, on the other hand, are deregulated, market-determined, and revised monthly. "Their consumption is less than 10% of the total LPG consumed in the country," the Petroleum Ministry said, noting that around 55,622 MT of commercial LPG has been lifted by States/UTs since March 14.

RELATED REPORT
» PAGE 12

02A. Commercial LPG, jet fuel rates hiked amid war व्यावसायिक एलपीजी, जेट ईंधन दरों में युद्ध के बीच वृद्धि

- Major metro cities hit with a price hike of more than 10% for commercial cylinders; price of aviation turbine fuel more than doubled for international travel, prompting IndiGo to add a fuel surcharge of ₹10,000 on long-haul routes; however ATF rates for scheduled domestic carriers were hiked by less than 9%; there is no change for household LPG.
प्रमुख महानगरों में व्यावसायिक सिलेंडरों की कीमतों में 10% से अधिक वृद्धि हुई; एविएशन टर्बाइन फ्यूल (ATF) की कीमत अंतरराष्ट्रीय यात्रा के लिए दोगुने से अधिक हो गई, जिससे IndiGo ने लंबी दूरी की उड़ानों पर ₹10,000 का फ्यूल सरचार्ज जोड़ा; हालांकि घरेलू उड़ानों के लिए ATF दरों में 9% से कम वृद्धि हुई; घरेलू LPG में कोई बदलाव नहीं हुआ।
- State-run oil marketing firms hiked the price of commercial liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders by more than 10% in major metro cities on Wednesday, while the price of aviation turbine fuel (ATF) was more than doubled for international air travel and chartered flights.
सरकारी तेल विपणन कंपनियों ने बुधवार को प्रमुख महानगरों में व्यावसायिक एलपीजी सिलेंडरों की कीमत में 10% से अधिक वृद्धि की, जबकि ATF की कीमत अंतरराष्ट्रीय हवाई यात्रा और चार्टर्ड उड़ानों के लिए दोगुनी से अधिक कर दी गई।

Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF)

- Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) is a specialized liquid fuel used in aircraft powered by gas turbine engines (jet engines and turboprops).
- It is a refined petroleum product, similar to kerosene but with higher purity and strict quality standards.
- ATF is essential for modern aviation, enabling high-speed, high-altitude flight.
- ATF mainly consists of hydrocarbons (C8 to C16 range).
- These include paraffins, naphthenes, and aromatics.



Key Properties

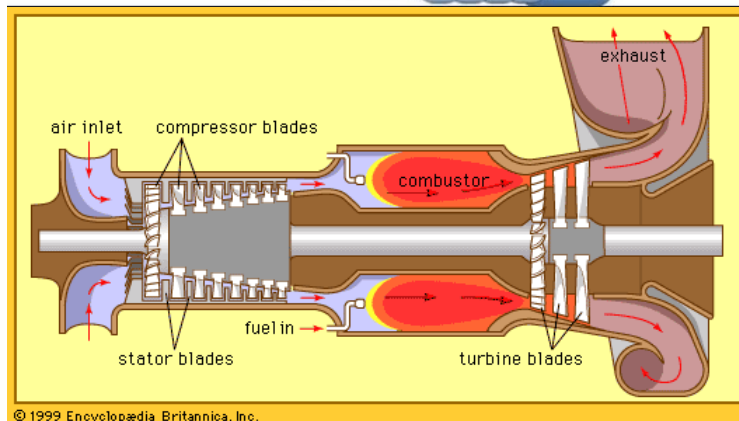
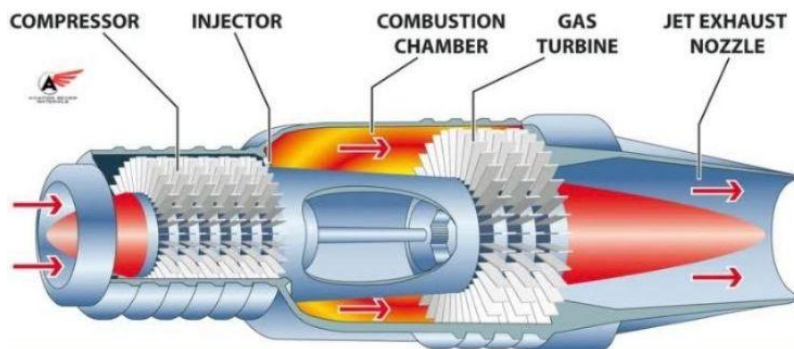
- **High Energy Density:** ~42–43 MJ/kg, ensuring efficient energy output
- **Low Freezing Point:** around -40°C to -47°C , prevents freezing at high altitudes
- **Low Viscosity:** allows smooth flow in fuel systems
- **High Flash Point:** $\sim 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ → safer than petrol

Types of ATF

- **Jet A:** Common in the United States
- **Jet A-1:** Most widely used globally (including India)
- **Jet B:** Used in extremely cold regions (higher volatility)

Working Principle in Jet Engines

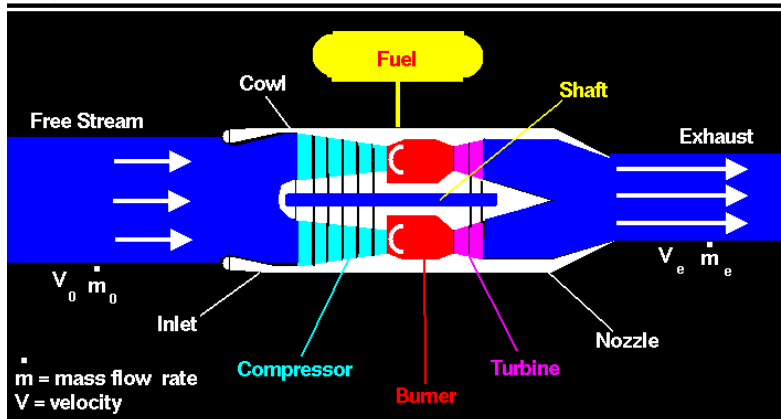
Combustion Process





Turbojet Thrust

Glenn
Research
Center



$$\text{Thrust} = F = \dot{m}_e V_e - \dot{m}_0 V_0$$

- Air enters the engine and gets **compressed**.
- ATF is **injected and mixed with compressed air**.
- The mixture is **ignited**, producing high-temperature gases.
- Expanding gases exit at high speed → **producing thrust (Newton's Third Law)**.

Scientific Concepts Involved

- **Combustion Reaction:** $\text{Hydrocarbon} + \text{Oxygen} \rightarrow \text{CO}_2 + \text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{Energy}$
- **Thermodynamics:** Conversion of chemical energy into mechanical energy
- **Fluid Dynamics:** High-speed exhaust generates thrust

Storage and Handling

Safety Requirements

- Stored in **special tanks** with anti-contamination systems
- Requires **strict filtration and quality checks**
- Additives used to prevent:
 - Ice formation
 - Static charge buildup
 - Corrosion



Early screen use stunts vital social growth of children, experts warn

Paediatricians and psychologists are increasingly concerned about how children may miss out on real-world interactions with people and objects if they're exposed to screens from an early age; this could affect their ability to develop healthy relationships with people around them as they grow older

Rohini Subrahmanyam
BENGALURU

Be it our phones, tablets or our laptops – everyday, we interact with various digital devices designed to make our lives easier. Especially since the pandemic, even children have been exposed to this electronic world at a very young age. Earlier, parents would use age-appropriate, brandish toys to distract crying children, now they tap down tantrums using YouTube videos.

"Vision is very, very powerful for the human experience," said Melissa Greenberg, a clinical psychologist at Princeton Psychological Centre in New Jersey. "So kids get really drawn into the visual stimulation. And then, throughout childhood, they just miss opportunities to interact with the world through their other senses."



Unhealthy exposure: Children, even adolescents, are likely to bear the brunt of increased screen usage in the form of poorer emotional regulation, detachment from reality, and a host of other mental health problems. SUSHI, KUKA/VEVOA

Paediatricians and psychologists are increasingly concerned about how children may miss out on real-world interactions with people and objects if they are exposed to screens from an early age. This could affect their ability to develop healthy relationships with people around them as they grow older. And not just very young children, even children's or adolescents' lives can bear the brunt of increased screen and social media usage in the form of poorer emotional regulation, detachment from reality, loss of focus, and a host of other mental health problems.

Dr. Greenberg also draws her insights from her personal life, with two children aged six and eight. Having raised them through the pandemic, she understands the perils of isolation and the importance of interacting with others. Many parents, including herself, were in a difficult situation because of the constant social distancing, so they may have handed tablets to children without thinking too deeply about it, she said.

"We are not in the pandemic anymore, but I think parents find themselves in these positions where they're exhausted or they're also dependent on screens," she explained. "And they need their kids to be entertained for a few minutes, and they just hand them something."

But unknowingly, they may end up opening their children's eyes to a whole other online world – without a clear picture of everything they might get access to and how it will shape them.

Grow up to feel uncomfortable
To build some safeguards after the pandemic, the American Academy of Paediatrics recommended that children below the age of two should have very limited screen time, unless it is for video calls. This is primarily because those early years are when children are still developing their senses. Overwhelming them with visual stimuli – even if unintentionally – can skew their sense of the world and affect their interactions with others. Hunching over phones can also affect children's posture.

"If you're looking at a screen, you are not doing all of the other things that babies should be doing, like crawling, touching, exploring the world around them," Dr. Greenberg said. "So I don't know that the screen itself is the problem; it is the opportunity cost of babies exploring their environments – that is how they learn about the world around them."

Some children experience the consequences of being absorbed in a digital screen later as well, as they get a bit older, enter adolescence or become teenagers. With more time online, some children grow up to feel uncomfortable with in-person interactions as well. One recent study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* on U.S. youth reported that teenagers spend an average of about 8.5 hours a day on screen-based entertainment.

"You go into a cafeteria in a school... 15 years ago it would have been chaotic and loud and everyone's playing and moving around. Now you walk in and everyone's like this," she said, mimicking being hunched over a phone. "They're all quiet."

Just like with toddlers, this could also lead to missed opportunities of meaningful social interactions with peers at a young age. Being unable to develop proper social skills could strain relationships with friends and family, with lifelong repercussions for mental health.

Drastring consequences
At times, the mental health issues can take a darker turn. Some children have unfettered access to phones even before they are eight years old, which, according to recent research, could lead to issues

such as hallucinations, feelings of aggression towards others, even diminished self-worth, and even suicidal thoughts as they grow older. The data, based on self-reported assessments from several thousands of people worldwide, suggest that for each year younger than 13 that children get their phones, the more their mental health issues increase as they enter adulthood.

An extreme case of phone addiction transpired recently in Ghazialab in Uttar Pradesh. Three minor sisters aged 12 to 16 years had dropped out of school in 2020 and were addicted to social media, cartoons, and TV shows on their parents' phones. When their parents restricted their phone use and threatened to get them married, the sisters killed themselves by jumping off their balcony in the early hours of February 4. In the note they left behind, the girls described how banning them from the online shows made them feel lonely. This is not an isolated incident; multiple instances of teens killing themselves when told to stay away from phones suggests an alarming rise in digital addiction.

The reason for such drastic consequences could be that children are being brought up by technology instead of human beings. Tara Thiagarajan, who led the research correlating age of phone access to mental health issues and is the founder of Sapient Labs, a non-profit organisation studying how the human mind is changing over time across the world, said.

"Take the case of a child at a table with their family in a restaurant. This situation has opportunities for simple social interactions. In a previous era, the child might have been reaching for things, trying things, and saying things to the others. Some people might reprimand; others might coo at the actions. Such interactions teach children how to reach other people's body language from a young age and how to conduct themselves in a group setting, including getting themselves heard, holding conversations, and managing conflicts."



Some children experience the consequences of being absorbed in a digital screen as they get a bit older. With more time online, some grow up to feel uncomfortable with in-person interactions. IFL PHOTO

Aspects like the tone of voice, facial expressions, body language, and other non-verbal cues may either be warped or absent altogether in digital exchanges, which can affect children's abilities to form lasting in-person relationships

Dr. Thiagarajan said growing up in a world dominated by online interactions prevents children from learning these social skills and interferes with their ability to develop a good intuition of other people's personalities.

Although engaging in video calls with other people is better than watching videos, one can end up missing larger environmental cues, per Dr. Greenberg. Some subtle cues can slide through unnoticed on a video call, like noticing someone's nervousness by how they are tapping their feet.

Aspects like the tone of voice, facial expressions, body language, and other non-verbal cues may either be warped or absent altogether in digital exchanges, which can affect children's abilities to form lasting in-person relationships.

"You're becoming adept at technology, but you can no longer manage in a human world," said Dr. Thiagarajan, of children growing up in a society undergoing rapid "technologisation".

"When most of what goes on in your mind is from the screen, you've lost, to a large degree, your awareness of the physical environment around you. That's what creates these feelings of detachment from reality, and also the hallucinations."

"It's not just about your children"
In another meta-analysis of 17 previously published studies, Michael Noel at the University of Queensland and his colleagues reported similar findings: that increased screen time leads to more socioemotional problems in children. Tracking nearly three lakh children over time, they found "screens and emotional

problems feed into each other like a vicious cycle," according to Dr. Noel. "Kids who spend more time on screens are more likely to develop anxiety, depression, aggression, and attention problems. But it works the other way too: children who are already struggling emotionally turn to screens to cope."

Because anxious children tend to use their phone more, Dr. Greenberg said that it is tricky to tease apart correlation from causation vis-à-vis screen use. But she noted that increased cell phone usage and social media exposure could exacerbate existing conditions. "Anecdotally speaking, everyone I work with feels better when they spend less time on their devices," she said.

To prevent children from getting addicted, parents should ensure that their children use phones for a limited time, based on what is recommended for their age group, according to Dr. Noel.

"Children who stayed within guidelines showed almost no increased risk. Guidelines recommend under an hour for preschoolers, under two hours for older kids," he said. "Problems appeared when children regularly exceeded these limits."

Even if parents limit screen use, Dr. Greenberg said that the question of whether children should have access to phones at night, or when they are alone in their rooms, should also be addressed.

"When a child is doing something privately on a device unsupervised, no matter how many parental controls you might set, they may access things that are really inappropriate," she said. "Because of the way that the algorithms work, you really never know what might pop up next on your children's feed."

Dr. Thiagarajan explained how the internet should have more water-tight gateways that prevent children from accessing dangerous content, which could include porn sites or violent videos.

Dr. Greenberg also emphasised how each child is different; some may be able to give up their screen time readily but some may be more drawn to the digital world, and thus could find it more difficult to limit their online activities. Her own children are like that, she admitted, and they are most likely in the majority.

"If you have a kid who has a harder time putting it away, that doesn't mean you should just let them continue to have it," she said. "It means you really need to work with them to figure out how to manage the impulses so that they develop good habits around putting it away."

Dr. Greenberg also pointed out that parents should be careful about their own screen use around their children: "They should be aware that their kids are always watching and learning from them and observing their habits, and that that's a really important factor in how you're managing screens with your kids," she said. "It's not just about your kids; it's also about you."

(Rohini Subrahmanyam is a freelance journalist in Bengaluru. Email: roh.sub@gnail.com)
Those in distress can dial Tele Manas helpline 1800-89-1416 for support.

02A. Early screen use stunts vital social growth of children, experts warn

विशेषज्ञ चेतावनी देते हैं कि प्रारंभिक स्क्रीन उपयोग बच्चों के महत्वपूर्ण सामाजिक विकास को बाधित करता है

• "So kids get really drawn into the visual stimulation. And then, throughout childhood, they just miss opportunities to interact with the world through their other senses."

"बच्चे दृश्य उत्तेजना की ओर आकर्षित हो जाते हैं और बचपन में वे अन्य इंद्रियों के माध्यम से दुनिया से जुड़ने के अवसर खो देते हैं।"

• Paediatricians and psychologists are increasingly concerned about how children may miss out on real-world interactions with people and objects if they are exposed to screens from an early age.

बाल रोग विशेषज्ञ और मनोवैज्ञानिक इस बात को लेकर चिंतित हैं कि यदि बच्चों को कम उम्र से स्क्रीन के संपर्क में रखा जाए तो वे वास्तविक दुनिया के संपर्क से वंचित रह सकते हैं।

• Overwhelming them with visual stimuli can skew their sense of the world and affect their interactions with others.

अत्यधिक दृश्य उत्तेजना उनके दुनिया की समझ और दूसरों से बातचीत को प्रभावित कर सकती है।

• "If you're looking at a screen, you are not doing things babies should be doing like crawling, touching, exploring the world," Dr. Greenberg said.

"यदि आप स्क्रीन देख रहे हैं, तो आप वे काम नहीं कर रहे हैं जो बच्चों को करने चाहिए जैसे रेंगना, छूना, खोज करना," उन्होंने कहा।

• "It is the opportunity cost of babies exploring their environments – that is how they learn."

"यह बच्चों के वातावरण को खोजने के अवसर की हानि है – और इसी तरह वे सीखते हैं।"

• Some children experience consequences later as they enter adolescence.

कुछ बच्चे बाद में किशोरावस्था में इसके प्रभाव

महसूस करते हैं।

- With more time online, some children feel uncomfortable with in-person interactions. अधिक समय ऑनलाइन बिताने से कुछ बच्चे सामने बातचीत में असहज हो जाते हैं।
- A study reported teenagers spend about 8.5 hours a day on screen-based entertainment. एक अध्ययन के अनुसार किशोर 8.5 घंटे प्रतिदिन स्क्रीन आधारित मनोरंजन पर बिताते हैं।
- You go into a cafeteria in a school... 15 years ago it would have been chaotic and loud and everyone's playing and moving around. Now you walk in and everyone's like this, she said, mimicking being hunched over a phone. They're all quiet.

आप एक स्कूल के कैफेटेरिया में जाते हैं... 15 साल पहले यह बहुत शोरगुल और हलचल भरा होता था और



सभी खेलते और घूमते रहते थे। अब जब आप जाते हैं तो सभी ऐसे होते हैं, उन्होंने फोन पर झुके होने का अभिनय करते हुए कहा। **सब शांत हैं।**

- **Aspects like the tone of voice, facial expressions, body language, and other non-verbal cues may either be warped or absent altogether in digital exchanges, which can affect children's abilities to form lasting inter-personal relationships.**

आवाज़ के स्वर, चेहरे के भाव, शारीरिक भाषा और अन्य गैर-मौखिक संकेत जैसे पहलू डिजिटल बातचीत में या तो विकृत हो जाते हैं या पूरी तरह गायब हो जाते हैं, जिससे बच्चों की स्थायी पारस्परिक संबंध बनाने की क्षमता प्रभावित हो सकती है।

- **“Kids who spend more time on screens are more likely to develop anxiety, depression, aggression, and attention problems.”**

“जो बच्चे अधिक समय स्क्रीन पर बिताते हैं, उनमें चिंता, अवसाद, आक्रामकता और ध्यान की समस्याएं विकसित होने की संभावना अधिक होती है।”

PATRIOTIC IAS



Qdenga: a step forward against dengue, but not a silver bullet

India's first dengue vaccine offers hope at reducing severe disease even as evolving viral patterns warrant cautious optimism; the vaccine is best understood as one that modifies the disease rather than blocks transmission, meaning outbreaks will not disappear

CS III: S&T
Vipin M. Vashishtha

India's long wait for a dengue vaccine may finally be coming to an end. Takeda's tetravalent dengue vaccine, TAK-003 (called 'Qdenga'), recently received clearance from the Subject Expert Committee (SEC) under the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) for use among individuals aged 4 to 60 years. This marks a significant milestone in the country's fight against a disease that causes millions of infections and thousands of hospitalisations every year, especially among children.

While India has not experienced a large nationwide dengue surge in the past year, the disease remains endemic, with substantial transmission and a long-term rising trend. For decades, dengue control in India relied almost entirely on vector control measures such as eliminating mosquito breeding sites, insecticide use, and public awareness campaigns. While essential, these strategies have had limited success in preventing recurring outbreaks. The arrival of a vaccine, therefore, represents a shift from a reactive to a more preventive approach.

TAK-003 comes with several advantages. It has been evaluated in large global trials involving more than 28,000 participants and has already been approved in more than 40 countries. Importantly, unlike an earlier dengue vaccine, it does not require pre-vaccination screening to determine prior dengue infection, making it simpler to use in real-world settings. The vaccine has also demonstrated good safety and, crucially, strong protection against severe dengue and hospitalisation – both outcomes that matter the most in clinical practice.

In a country like India, where healthcare systems are often stretched during dengue seasons, even a modest reduction in the number of severe cases could have a substantial impact. Fewer hospital admissions, reduced intensive

care burden, and lower mortality in children and adolescents would all represent meaningful gains.

Challenges and limitations

However, it is equally important to recognise what this vaccine can and cannot achieve. Dengue is caused by four closely related but distinct viruses, known as serotypes (DENV-1 to DENV-4). Immunity to one serotype does not guarantee protection against the others, and in some cases, can even predispose an individual to more severe disease upon subsequent infection. This makes developing a vaccine for dengue uniquely challenging: an effective vaccine must provide balanced protection against all four serotypes.

Herein lies a key limitation of TAK-003. While it performs very well against the DENV-2 serotype, since it was developed on the DENV-2 backbone, and reasonably well against DENV-1, its effectiveness against DENV-3 and DENV-4 appears to be lower – particularly in individuals who have not previously been infected with dengue.

This is not merely a theoretical concern. India's dengue epidemiology is evolving, with increasing reports of DENV-3 becoming more prominent in several regions.

Recent data from India also show that all four dengue serotypes continue to co-circulate, with DENV-2 still predominant in many regions but DENV-3 contributing a substantial and increasing proportion of cases.

For instance, surveillance from North and Western India has reported DENV-2 accounting for around 48-66% of cases, followed by DENV-3 at around 20-30%, with DENV-1 and DENV-4 contributing smaller shares.

If this trend continues, the overall effectiveness of the vaccine at a population level may be lower than expected. In simple terms, while vaccinated individuals are still likely to be

protected from severe disease, they may continue to experience dengue infections, especially during outbreaks dominated by DENV-3.

This distinction is crucial. TAK-003 is best understood as a vaccine that modifies the disease rather than as one that blocks transmission. In other words, it is likely to reduce the severity of illness rather than prevent infection altogether. As a result, dengue outbreaks will not disappear and public health measures such as vector control will remain indispensable.

Another important consideration is cost and access. Dengue vaccines are expected to be relatively expensive, and TAK-003 requires two doses administered three months apart. The expected price of TAK-003 in India is likely ₹3,000-6,000 per dose and ₹6,000-12,000 for the full course. While public programmes may offer the shots at lower prices, questions about affordability and compliance – particularly among lower-income and rural populations – remain unanswered. At least in the initial years, uptake is likely to be limited to the private sector or targeted programmes in areas with a high burden of dengue.

The SEC has appropriately mandated post-marketing safety and effectiveness studies in the Indian population. These will be critical to understand how the vaccine performs in real-world conditions, across different regions and serotype patterns.

Looking ahead, TAK-003 may be only the first step in India's dengue vaccine journey. A second generation of vaccines, based on a different scientific approach developed by the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH), is currently under evaluation.

Indian pipeline

India's dengue vaccine pipeline is advancing, with an indigenous candidate called 'DengiAll', developed by Panacea Biotech in collaboration with the Indian

Council of Medical Research, currently undergoing large phase III clinical trials.

A similar vaccine has already been approved in Brazil and it has shown strong protection against severe dengue. If the Indian candidate is also successful, it could be available around 2027. These vaccines aim to provide more balanced protection across all four serotypes and may offer the additional advantage of a single-dose regimen.

Early data from similar vaccines tested elsewhere are also promising, particularly in terms of protecting against severe dengue and broader serotype coverage. If these findings are confirmed in Indian trials, such vaccines could be better suited for large-scale public health deployment.

For policymakers, the challenge will be to balance urgency with prudence. There is a clear and immediate need to reduce the burden of severe dengue and TAK-003 is a valuable tool with which to achieve this. At the same time, the long-term strategy must remain flexible, allowing for the country to adopt better vaccines as the evidence evolves.

For clinicians, clear communication will be essential. Their own and their patients' expectations need to be realistic: the vaccine is not a cure-all but it is a meaningful step forward. Even if it does not eliminate dengue, it can save lives and reduce complications.

Ultimately, the introduction of a dengue vaccine in India should be seen not as the culmination of efforts but as the beginning of a new phase. Success will depend not only on the vaccine itself but also on how well it is integrated with surveillance, vector control, and future innovations.

In public health, progress often comes incrementally. TAK-003 may not be the final answer to dengue in India but it is undoubtedly an important start. (Vipin M. Vashishtha is director and paediatrician, Mangla Hospital and Research Centre, Bijnor)

02A. Qdenga: a step forward against dengue, but not a silver bullet

Qdenga: डेंगू के खिलाफ एक कदम आगे, लेकिन कोई जादुई समाधान नहीं

Dengue Vaccine in India (TAK-003 / Qdenga)

भारत में डेंगू वैक्सीन (TAK-003 / Qdenga)

- India's long wait for a dengue vaccine may finally be coming to an end. भारत का डेंगू वैक्सीन का लंबा इंतजार अब समाप्त होने की ओर है।
- Takeda's tetravalent dengue vaccine (TAK-003 / Qdenga) recently received clearance from the Subject Expert Committee (SEC) under the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) for individuals aged 4 to 60 years.** Takeda का tetravalent dengue vaccine (TAK-003 / Qdenga) को SEC (DCGI) से 4 से 60 वर्ष आयु वर्ग के लिए मंजूरी मिली है।
- This marks a significant milestone in the fight against dengue, which causes **millions of infections** and **thousands of hospitalisations** every year, especially among children. यह डेंगू के खिलाफ लड़ाई में एक महत्वपूर्ण उपलब्धि है, जो हर साल **लाखों संक्रमण** और **हजारों अस्पताल में भर्ती** का कारण बनता है।
- While India has not seen a large nationwide surge recently, dengue remains **endemic** with a long-term rising trend. हालांकि हाल में बड़ा प्रकोप नहीं हुआ, लेकिन डेंगू भारत में **endemic** बना हुआ है और बढ़ती प्रवृत्ति दिखाता है।



- For decades, dengue control relied on **vector control measures** such as eliminating mosquito breeding sites, insecticides, and awareness campaigns. दशकों से नियंत्रण **vector control** (मच्छर नियंत्रण), कीटनाशक और जागरूकता पर आधारित रहा है।
- These strategies have had **limited success** in preventing recurring outbreaks. इन उपायों की सफलता **सीमित** रही है।
- The arrival of a vaccine represents a shift from a **reactive** to a more **preventive approach**. वैक्सीन का आना **reactive से preventive approach** की ओर बदलाव है।
- TAK-003 has been evaluated in trials involving more than **28,000 participants** and approved in **40+ countries**. इस वैक्सीन का परीक्षण **28,000+ लोगों** पर हुआ और इसे **40+ देशों** में मंजूरी मिली है।
- Unlike earlier vaccines, it does not require **pre-vaccination screening**, making it easier to use. पहले की वैक्सीन के विपरीत इसमें **pre-vaccination screening** की आवश्यकता नहीं है।
- It shows good safety and strong protection against **severe dengue and hospitalisation**. यह **severe dengue** और **hospitalisation** से मजबूत सुरक्षा देता है।
- Even a modest reduction in severe cases can reduce **hospital burden, ICU pressure, and mortality**. गंभीर मामलों में कमी से **अस्पताल भार, ICU दबाव और मृत्यु दर** कम हो सकती है।

Challenges and limitations

चुनौतियाँ और सीमाएँ

- **Dengue is caused by four serotypes: DENV-1, DENV-2, DENV-3, DENV-4.** डेंगू चार प्रकार के वायरस से होता है: **DENV-1, DENV-2, DENV-3, DENV-4**।
- **Immunity to one serotype does not guarantee protection against others.** एक प्रकार से प्रतिरक्षा अन्य प्रकारों से सुरक्षा नहीं देती।
- In some cases, it can increase the risk of **severe disease** upon reinfection. कुछ मामलों में पुनः संक्रमण पर **गंभीर बीमारी** का खतरा बढ़ सकता है।
- **An effective vaccine must provide balanced protection against all four serotypes.** एक प्रभावी वैक्सीन को **चारों प्रकारों के खिलाफ संतुलित सुरक्षा** देनी चाहिए।
- **TAK-003 performs very well against DENV-2 and reasonably well against DENV-1.** TAK-003 **DENV-2** के खिलाफ बहुत प्रभावी और **DENV-1** के खिलाफ अच्छा है।
- However, its effectiveness against **DENV-3 and DENV-4** is lower, especially in those not previously infected. लेकिन **DENV-3 और DENV-4** के खिलाफ इसकी प्रभावशीलता कम है, खासकर बिना पूर्व संक्रमण वाले लोगों में।
- India's dengue epidemiology is evolving, with increasing prominence of **DENV-3**. भारत में डेंगू का स्वरूप बदल रहा है और **DENV-3** बढ़ रहा है।
- All four serotypes continue to **co-circulate** in India. भारत में चारों प्रकार एक साथ **co-circulate** कर रहे हैं।
- **DENV-2** remains dominant, but **DENV-3** is contributing a growing share. **DENV-2 प्रमुख** है, लेकिन **DENV-3** का योगदान बढ़ रहा है।
- Data shows **DENV-2: 48–66%, DENV-3: 20–30%**, with **DENV-1 and DENV-4** contributing smaller shares. डेटा के अनुसार **DENV-2: 48–66%, DENV-3: 20–30%**, जबकि **DENV-1 और DENV-4** कम योगदान देते हैं।
- If this trend continues, overall vaccine effectiveness at population level may be lower. यदि यह प्रवृत्ति जारी रही तो वैक्सीन की **कुल प्रभावशीलता** कम हो सकती है।
- **Vaccinated individuals may still get dengue infections, especially during DENV-3 dominated outbreaks.** टीकाकरण के बाद भी **DENV-3 प्रकोप** में संक्रमण हो सकता है, हालांकि गंभीरता कम रहेगी।
- **Nature, Cost and Future of Dengue Vaccine (TAK-003)**
डेंगू वैक्सीन (TAK-003) का स्वरूप, लागत और भविष्य
- This distinction is crucial. यह अंतर **महत्वपूर्ण** है।



- TAK-003 is best understood as a vaccine that modifies the disease rather than as one that blocks transmission.
TAK-003 को बीमारी को **कम गंभीर बनाने वाला** वैक्सीन समझना चाहिए, न कि संक्रमण रोकने वाला।
- It is likely to reduce the **severity of illness** rather than prevent infection altogether.
यह **बीमारी की गंभीरता कम** करेगा, न कि संक्रमण पूरी तरह रोकेगा।
- As a result, dengue outbreaks will not disappear and **vector control measures** will remain indispensable.
इसलिए डेंगू प्रकोप समाप्त नहीं होंगे और **vector control** आवश्यक रहेगा।
- Another important consideration is **cost and access**.
एक महत्वपूर्ण पहलू **लागत और पहुंच** है।
- TAK-003 requires two doses administered three months apart**.
TAK-003 के **2 डोज** होते हैं, जो **3 महीने के अंतराल** पर दिए जाते हैं।
- The expected price is **₹3,000–6,000 per dose and ₹6,000–12,000 total**.
कीमत **₹3,000–6,000 प्रति डोज** और कुल **₹6,000–12,000** हो सकती है।
- Affordability and compliance remain concerns, especially for low-income and rural populations**.
गरीब और ग्रामीण आबादी के लिए लागत और अनुपालन चुनौती बने रहेंगे।
- Initially, uptake may be limited to the **private sector** or targeted programmes in high-burden areas.
शुरुआत में उपयोग **private sector** या सीमित क्षेत्रों तक ही रह सकता है।
- The **SEC** has mandated **post-marketing safety and effectiveness studies** in India.
SEC ने **post-marketing studies** अनिवार्य किए हैं।
- These studies will assess real-world performance across regions and serotype patterns.
ये अध्ययन विभिन्न क्षेत्रों और **serotype patterns** में प्रदर्शन का मूल्यांकन करेंगे।
- Looking ahead, TAK-003 may be only the **first step**.
TAK-003 केवल पहला कदम हो सकता है।
- A second-generation vaccine based on a different approach by the **U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH)** is under evaluation.
NIH (USA) द्वारा विकसित नई वैक्सीन भी परीक्षण में है।

Indian pipeline भारतीय वैक्सीन पाइपलाइन

- India's indigenous vaccine '**DengiAll**', developed by **Panacea Biotec** with **ICMR**, is in **phase III trials**.
भारत की स्वदेशी वैक्सीन '**DengiAll**' (**Panacea Biotec + ICMR**) **phase III trials** में है।
- A similar vaccine has been approved in **Brazil** and shows strong protection against severe dengue.
इसी तरह की वैक्सीन **Brazil** में मंजूर है और गंभीर डेंगू से सुरक्षा देती है।
- If successful, the Indian vaccine may be available by 2027**.
यदि सफल रही तो यह वैक्सीन **2027** तक उपलब्ध हो सकती है।
- These vaccines aim to provide balanced protection across all four serotypes**.
इनका लक्ष्य **चारों serotypes** के खिलाफ **संतुलित सुरक्षा** देना है।
- They may also offer a **single-dose regimen** advantage.
इनमें **single-dose** का लाभ भी हो सकता है।
- Early data shows promise in **severe dengue protection and broader coverage**.
प्रारंभिक डेटा **गंभीर डेंगू से सुरक्षा** और व्यापक कवरेज दिखाता है।
- If confirmed, these vaccines may be better suited for **large-scale public health deployment**.
यदि पुष्टि हुई तो ये **बड़े स्तर पर उपयोग** के लिए बेहतर होंगी।
- For policymakers, the challenge is to balance **urgency and prudence**.
नीतिनिर्माताओं के लिए चुनौती **तत्कालता और सावधानी** के बीच संतुलन है।
- There is an urgent need to reduce **severe dengue burden**, and TAK-003 is a useful tool.
गंभीर डेंगू का बोझ कम करना जरूरी है और TAK-003 एक उपयोगी साधन है।
- At the same time, long-term strategy must remain **flexible**.
दीर्घकालिक रणनीति **लचीली** रहनी चाहिए।



- For clinicians, **clear communication** and realistic expectations are essential. चिकित्सकों के लिए स्पष्ट संवाद और यथार्थवादी अपेक्षाएँ जरूरी हैं।
- The vaccine is not a **cure-all** but a meaningful step forward. यह वैक्सीन पूर्ण समाधान नहीं, लेकिन महत्वपूर्ण प्रगति है।
- It can **save lives and reduce complications** even if it does not eliminate dengue. यह जीवन बचा सकती है और जटिलताएं कम कर सकती है।
- The introduction of the dengue vaccine marks the **beginning of a new phase**, not the end. डेंगू वैक्सीन की शुरुआत एक नई शुरुआत है, अंत नहीं।
- Success will depend on integration with **surveillance, vector control, and innovation**. सफलता निगरानी, मच्छर नियंत्रण और नवाचार के समन्वय पर निर्भर करेगी।
- Progress in public health is often **incremental**. जनस्वास्थ्य में प्रगति अक्सर क्रमिक होती है।
- TAK-003 is not the final answer but an **important start**. TAK-003 अंतिम समाधान नहीं, लेकिन एक महत्वपूर्ण शुरुआत है।

NASA begins fuelling rocket for first lunar trip in 50 years

CS III: S&T

Associated Press
CAPE CANAVERAL

NASA began fuelling its moon rocket on Wednesday for humanity's first lunar trip in more than half a century, aiming for an evening lift-off with four astronauts.

Tensions were high as hydrogen fuel started flowing into the rocket hours ahead of the planned launch. Dangerous hydrogen leaks erupted during a countdown test earlier this year, forcing a lengthy flight delay.

The launch team needs to load more than 2.6 million litres into the 32-story Space Launch System rocket on the pad before the Artemis II crew can board.

"It is time to fly," com-



People set cameras to photograph NASA's Artemis II lunar flyby mission ahead of its launch at the Kennedy Space Center. REUTERS

mander Reid Wiseman said on the eve of launch via X. Favourable weather was forecast.

Three Americans and one Canadian will fly around the moon without stopping or even orbiting — then head straight back for a Pacific splashdown. They

will set a new distance record for the farthest humans have travelled from Earth as they zoom some 6,400 km beyond the moon and then hang a U-turn.

Astronauts last flew to the moon during Apollo 17 in 1972.

02A. NASA begins fuelling rocket for first lunar trip in 50 years

NASA ने 50 वर्षों में पहली चंद्र यात्रा के लिए रॉकेट में ईंधन भरना शुरू किया

• NASA began fuelling its moon rocket on Wednesday for humanity's first lunar trip in more than half a century, aiming for an evening lift-off with four astronauts.

NASA ने बुधवार को अपने चंद्र रॉकेट में ईंधन भरना शुरू किया, जो 50 वर्षों से अधिक समय में पहली मानव चंद्र यात्रा के लिए है, जिसमें चार अंतरिक्ष यात्री शाम को प्रक्षेपण करेंगे।

• Tensions were high as hydrogen fuel started flowing into the rocket hours ahead of the planned launch.

निर्धारित प्रक्षेपण से कुछ घंटे पहले हाइड्रोजन ईंधन भरने के दौरान तनाव बना रहा।

• Dangerous hydrogen leaks erupted during a countdown test earlier this year, forcing a lengthy flight

delay.

इस वर्ष पहले काउंटडाउन परीक्षण के दौरान खतरनाक हाइड्रोजन रिसाव हुआ था, जिससे लंबी देरी हुई।

- The launch team needs to load more than 2.6 million litres into the 32-story Space Launch System rocket on the pad before the Artemis II crew can board.

लॉन्च टीम को Artemis II मिशन से पहले 32-मंजिला Space Launch System रॉकेट में 2.6 मिलियन लीटर से अधिक ईंधन भरना होगा।

- "It is time to fly," commander Reid Wiseman said on the eve of launch via X.

लॉन्च से पहले कमांडर रीड वाइसमैन ने कहा, "अब उड़ान का समय है।"

- Favourable weather was forecast.

मौसम अनुकूल रहने का अनुमान है।

- Three Americans and one Canadian will fly around the moon without stopping or even orbiting — then head straight back for a Pacific splashdown.

तीन अमेरिकी और एक कनाडाई अंतरिक्ष यात्री बिना रुके या परिक्रमा किए चंद्रमा के चारों ओर उड़ान भरेंगे और फिर सीधे प्रशांत महासागर में उतरेंगे।

- They will set a new distance record for the farthest humans have travelled from Earth as they zoom some 6,400 km beyond the moon and then hang a U-turn.

वे पृथ्वी से सबसे दूर जाने का नया रिकॉर्ड बनाएंगे, क्योंकि वे चंद्रमा से लगभग 6,400 किमी आगे जाकर वापस लौटेंगे।



- Astronauts last flew to the moon during Apollo 17 in 1972.
अंतरिक्ष यात्री अखिरी बार 1972 में Apollo 17 मिशन के दौरान चंद्रमा पर गए थे।

GS Paper III: Environment,

TOPICS COVERED

02 April 2026

02A Rare whales in the way of Trump's oil drilling plan
ट्रंप की तेल ड्रिलिंग योजना के रास्ते में दुर्लभ व्हेल

Rare whales in the way of Trump's oil drilling plan

GS III: Environment
Associated Press

One of the world's rarest whales lives in the Gulf of Mexico, where the Trump administration wants to expand oil and gas drilling that scientists fear could push the giant mammal to extinction.

Endangered Rice's whales live their entire lives in the gulf, where they are vulnerable to vessel strikes, noise pollution, oil spills, and climate change – all of which could increase with more drilling. Other animals, including threatened manatees and endangered sea turtles, also could be put at risk.

As the Iran war pushes energy prices sharply higher, U.S. Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth invoked national security in seeking an exemption from endangered

The Trump administration in the U.S. is pushing to expand oil drilling in an area where the Rice's whales spend their entire lives

species laws, which make it illegal to harm or kill species on a protected list. The seldom-used Endangered Species Committee granted that request on Tuesday.

Rice's whale is the only whale species that lives year-round in the Gulf of Mexico, where there are fewer than 100 left, per scientists.

Recognised as a distinct species in 2021, Rice's whale is usually found in a narrow area in the northeastern part of the water body.

They dive to the gulf floor for fatty fish, mainly silver-rag driftfish, during the day, then rest close to the surface at night. These dives are strenuous and their specific kind of food might also be affected by more drilling and other changes. Which means they are "quite living on the edge," Jeremy Kiszka, a biological sciences professor at Florida International University, said.

The whales are also susceptible to pollution, with a significant portion of an already small population believed to have been killed by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Many climate change impacts are "baked in," meaning they will persist even if fossil fuels were eliminated today, said Letise LaFeir, chief of conservation and stewardship at the New England Aquarium.

But the Trump administration proposal "is just compounding the immediate risks locally and the longer-term risks," she added. Although a government filing specifically mentions Rice's whales, other threatened and endangered animals also could be harmed by oil spills or other dangers, scientists said.

For example, hundreds of sea turtles, including endangered Kemp's Ridley and loggerheads, are rescued and rehabilitated every year before they are released into the Atlantic Ocean and swim for their nesting grounds in the Gulf, per Ms. LaFeir.

Before Tuesday, the committee had only issued exemptions twice. The first was for the construction of a dam on a section of the Platte River considered critical habitat for whooping cranes, though a negotiated settlement won significant protections that led to overall ecosystem improvements.

The second was for logging in northern spotted owl habitat, but the request was withdrawn after environmental groups sued, arguing that the committee's decision was political and violated legal procedures.

02A. Rare whales in the way of Trump's oil drilling plan ट्रंप की तेल ड्रिलिंग योजना के रास्ते में दुर्लभ व्हेल

- One of the world's rarest whales lives in the Gulf of Mexico, where the Trump administration wants to expand oil and gas drilling that scientists fear could push the giant mammal to extinction.

दुनिया की सबसे दुर्लभ व्हेल में से एक मैक्सिको की खाड़ी में रहती है, जहाँ ट्रंप प्रशासन तेल और गैस ड्रिलिंग का विस्तार करना चाहता है, जिससे वैज्ञानिकों को डर है कि यह विशाल स्तनधारी विलुप्त हो सकता है।

- Endangered Rice's whales live their entire lives in the gulf, where they are vulnerable to vessel strikes, noise pollution, oil spills, climate change.

संकटग्रस्त राइस व्हेल अपना पूरा जीवन खाड़ी में बिताती हैं, जहाँ वे जहाजों की टक्कर, ध्वनि प्रदूषण, तेल रिसाव और जलवायु परिवर्तन के प्रति संवेदनशील हैं।

- Other animals, including threatened manatees and endangered sea turtles, also could be put at risk.

अन्य जानवर जैसे संकटग्रस्त मानेटी और लुप्तप्राय समुद्री कछुए भी जोखिम में पड़ सकते हैं।

- As the Iran war pushes energy prices higher, U.S. Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth invoked national security to seek exemption from endangered species laws.

ईरान युद्ध के कारण ऊर्जा कीमतें बढ़ने पर अमेरिका के रक्षा सचिव पीट हेगसेथ ने राष्ट्रीय सुरक्षा का हवाला देते हुए संकटग्रस्त प्रजातियों के कानून से छूट मांगी।

- The Endangered Species Committee granted that request on Tuesday. संकटग्रस्त प्रजाति समिति ने मंगलवार को इस अनुरोध को मंजूरी दे दी।
- Rice's whale is the only whale species that lives year-round in the Gulf of Mexico, with fewer than 100 left.

राइस व्हेल एकमात्र ऐसी व्हेल प्रजाति है जो पूरे साल मैक्सिको की खाड़ी में रहती है, जिनकी संख्या 100 से भी कम है।



- Recognised as a distinct species in **2021**, Rice's whale is found in a **narrow area** in the **northeastern part**.
2021 में एक अलग प्रजाति के रूप में मान्यता प्राप्त, राइस व्हेल जल निकाय के उत्तर-पूर्वी हिस्से में पाई जाती हैं।
- They dive to the **gulf floor** for **fatty fish** (mainly **silver-rag drifffish**) and rest near the surface at night.
वे दिन में खाड़ी की गहराई में वसायुक्त मछलियों के लिए गोता लगाती हैं और रात में सतह के पास आराम करती हैं।
- These dives are **strenuous** and their food may be affected by **more drilling**.
ये गोते कठिन होते हैं और उनका भोजन अधिक ड्रिलिंग से प्रभावित हो सकता है।
- They are "**living on the edge**," said **Jeremy Kiszka**.
वे "खतरे के किनारे पर जी रही हैं," ऐसा जेरेमी किस्ज़का ने कहा।
- The whales are susceptible to **pollution**, with many killed in the **2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill**.
ये व्हेल प्रदूषण के प्रति संवेदनशील हैं और 2010 के तेल रिसाव में कई मारी गईं।
- Climate change impacts** are "**baked in**" and will persist.
जलवायु परिवर्तन के प्रभाव स्थायी हो चुके हैं और बने रहेंगे।
- The proposal is increasing **immediate risks** and **long-term risks**.
यह प्रस्ताव तत्काल और दीर्घकालिक जोखिमों को बढ़ा रहा है।
- Other **threatened and endangered animals** could also be harmed by **oil spills**.
अन्य संकटग्रस्त और लुप्तप्राय जानवर भी तेल रिसाव से प्रभावित हो सकते हैं।
- Hundreds of sea turtles** (including **Kemp's Ridley, loggerheads**) are rescued and released for **nesting**.
सैकड़ों समुद्री कछुए बचाए जाते हैं और प्रजनन के लिए छोड़े जाते हैं।
- Before Tuesday, the committee issued exemptions only **twice**.
मंगलवार से पहले समिति ने केवल दो बार छूट दी थी।
- First: **dam construction** on **Platte River** affecting **whooping cranes habitat**.
पहली छूट प्लैट नदी पर बांध निर्माण के लिए दी गई थी, जिससे व्होपिंग क्रेन के आवास पर असर पड़ा।
- Second: **logging** in **northern spotted owl habitat**, later withdrawn after **legal challenge**.
दूसरी छूट उत्तरी स्पॉटेड उल्लू के आवास में लकड़ी कटाई के लिए थी, जिसे कानूनी चुनौती के बाद वापस ले लिया गया।

GS Paper III: IS	
TOPICS COVERED	02 April 2026
02A	CAPF Bill passed by Rajya Sabha after Opposition walkout विपक्ष के वॉकआउट के बाद राज्यसभा ने CAPF विधेयक पारित किया
02A	'Navy was minutes away from hitting Pakistan during Operation Sindoor' 'ऑपरेशन सिंदूर के दौरान नौसेना पाकिस्तान पर हमला करने से कुछ मिनट दूर थी'
02A	NSE to introduce natural gas derivative contracts NSE प्राकृतिक गैस डेरिवेटिव कॉन्ट्रैक्ट शुरू करेगा



CAPF Bill passed by Rajya Sabha after Opposition walkout

GS III: Internal Security

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Central Armed Police Forces (General Administration) Bill, which was passed in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday, will further strengthen the security system of the country, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai said, while replying to the debate on the legislation.

The Opposition walked out after Mr. Rai's speech, alleging that the government had not addressed any concerns about the Bill raised by their MPs and senior officers of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF).

Mr. Rai maintained that the Bill was an important step in resolving several inconsistencies in CAPF service rules, cadre management, and appointment-related issues, among others, to boost the efficiency and morale of the forces.

"The Bill aims to create an umbrella structure for resolving several such anomalies and streamlining its structure for better coordination and implementation," Mr. Rai said, while maintaining that the Bill is

The Opposition says government has not addressed concerns raised by MPs of various parties

not against the federal structure.

Soon after Mr. Rai's speech, Opposition Leader Mallikarjun Kharge reiterated the demand that the Bill should be referred to a select committee of Parliament. He alleged that Mr. Rai had not addressed the core issues raised by the Opposition on the institutionalisation of deputation, adverse impact on morale and career progression, lack of consultation and representation, and lack of concern for judicial direction.

Nationalist Congress Party (Sharad Pawar) MP Fauzia Khan said the Bill was judicial invasion wearing the clothes of law.

"Imagine joining one of these forces as an Assistant Commandant, young, ready to serve, 16 years have passed, you have fought insurgents, you have earned your promotion, and yet you have not received it," Ms. Khan said.

committee of Parliament.

श्री राय के भाषण के तुरंत बाद विपक्ष के नेता मल्लिकार्जुन खड़गे ने विधेयक को संसदीय चयन समिति को भेजने की मांग दोहराई।

- He alleged that Mr. Rai had not addressed the core issues raised by the Opposition on the institutionalisation of deputation, adverse impact on morale and career progression, lack of consultation and representation, and lack of concern for judicial direction. उन्होंने आरोप लगाया कि श्री राय ने प्रतिनियुक्ति के संस्थानीकरण, मनोबल और करियर पर प्रभाव, परामर्श और प्रतिनिधित्व की कमी तथा न्यायिक निर्देशों की अनदेखी जैसे मुख्य मुद्दों पर ध्यान नहीं दिया।
- Nationalist Congress Party (Sharad Pawar) MP Fauzia Khan said the Bill was judicial invasion wearing the clothes of law.

02A. CAPF Bill passed by Rajya Sabha after Opposition walkout
विपक्ष के वॉकआउट के बाद राज्यसभा ने CAPF विधेयक पारित किया

• The Central Armed Police Forces (General Administration) Bill, which was passed in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday, will further strengthen the security system of the country, Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai said, while replying to the debate on the legislation.

केंद्रीय सशस्त्र पुलिस बल (सामान्य प्रशासन) विधेयक, जिसे बुधवार को राज्यसभा में पारित किया गया, देश की सुरक्षा व्यवस्था को और मजबूत करेगा, यह बात गृह राज्य मंत्री नित्यानंद राय ने विधेयक पर बहस के जवाब में कही।

• The Opposition walked out after Mr. Rai's speech, alleging that the government had not addressed any concerns about the Bill raised by their MPs and senior officers of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF).

विपक्ष ने श्री राय के भाषण के बाद वॉकआउट किया, आरोप लगाते हुए कि सरकार ने उनके सांसदों और CAPF के वरिष्ठ अधिकारियों द्वारा उठाई गई चिंताओं का समाधान नहीं किया।

• Mr. Rai maintained that the Bill was an important step in resolving several inconsistencies in CAPF service rules, cadre management, and appointment-related issues, among others, to boost the efficiency and morale of the forces.

श्री राय ने कहा कि यह विधेयक सेवा नियमों, कैडर प्रबंधन और नियुक्ति संबंधी समस्याओं सहित कई विसंगतियों को दूर करने का महत्वपूर्ण कदम है, जिससे बलों की दक्षता और मनोबल बढ़ेगा।

• "The Bill aims to create an umbrella structure for resolving several such anomalies and streamlining its structure for better coordination and implementation," Mr. Rai said, while maintaining that the Bill is not against the federal structure.

श्री राय ने कहा, "यह विधेयक ऐसी कई विसंगतियों को दूर करने और बेहतर समन्वय और कार्यान्वयन के लिए एक समग्र संरचना बनाने का लक्ष्य रखता है," और उन्होंने कहा कि यह विधेयक संघीय ढांचे के खिलाफ नहीं है।

• Soon after Mr. Rai's speech, Opposition Leader Mallikarjun Kharge reiterated the demand that the Bill should be referred to a select



राष्ट्रवादी कांग्रेस पार्टी (शरद पवार) की सांसद **फौजिया खान** ने कहा कि यह विधेयक **कानून के रूप में न्यायिक हस्तक्षेप** है।

- “Imagine joining one of these forces as an Assistant Commandant, young, ready to serve, 16 years have passed, you have fought insurgents, you have earned your promotion, and yet you have not received it,” Ms. Khan said.
सुश्री खान ने कहा, “कल्पना कीजिए कि आप **असिस्टेंट कमांडेंट** के रूप में शामिल होते हैं, 16 साल सेवा देते हैं, **विद्रोहियों से लड़ते हैं**, प्रमोशन के योग्य होते हैं, फिर भी आपको प्रमोशन नहीं मिलता।”

‘Navy was minutes away from hitting Pakistan during Operation Sindoor’

GS III: Internal Security

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

The Indian Navy was minutes away from striking Pakistan from the sea during Operation Sindoor, when Islamabad requested stoppage of kinetic actions, Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi said on Wednesday.

The Navy Chief was speaking at the naval investiture ceremony here, where he awarded Yudh Seva Medals to two top naval officers for their distinguished service during Operation Sindoor conducted last year after the Pahalgam terror attack.

Operation Sindoor demonstrated exemplary readiness and resolve of the Indian Navy, as its units undertook swift deployment



Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi during the Naval Investiture Ceremony in Mumbai. PT/DEFENCE PRO

and maintained a highly aggressive posture throughout the period, he said.

“It is not a hidden fact anymore that we were just minutes away from striking Pakistan from the sea, when they requested stoppage of kinetic actions,”

Admiral Tripathi said on the Navy's role in the operation.

Through swift and resolute actions during Operation Sindoor, the Indian Navy reinforced the nation's confidence and trust in its capabilities, he added.

“Besides Operation Sindoor and the relentless operational tempo through the year, we were also very proud to showcase the breadth and depth of our operational capabilities to the Prime Minister during a historic 17-hour overnight embarkation with the Indian Navy on the western seaboard,” said Admiral Tripathi.

Talking about the West Asia conflict, he said that ever since the war involving the U.S., Israel, and Iran broke out, more than 20 merchant vessels have been attacked in the region. “At a time when the global order is marked by increasing fragmentation and friction, the seas are no longer secondary theatres,” the Navy Chief added.

02A. ‘Navy was minutes away from hitting Pakistan during Operation Sindoor’ ‘ऑपरेशन सिंदूर के दौरान नौसेना पाकिस्तान पर हमला करने से कुछ मिनट दूर थी’

- The Indian Navy was minutes away from striking Pakistan from the sea during Operation Sindoor, when Islamabad requested a stoppage of kinetic actions, Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi said on Wednesday.
भारतीय नौसेना ऑपरेशन सिंदूर के दौरान समुद्र से **पाकिस्तान पर हमला करने से कुछ मिनट दूर थी**, जब **इस्लामाबाद ने सैन्य कार्रवाई रोकने का अनुरोध** किया, यह बात **नौसेना प्रमुख एडमिरल दिनेश के त्रिपाठी** ने बुधवार को कही।
- The Navy Chief was speaking at the naval investiture ceremony here, where he awarded Yudh Seva Medals to two top naval officers for their distinguished service during Operation Sindoor conducted last year after the Pahalgam terror attack.
नौसेना प्रमुख यहां **नौसेना सम्मान समारोह** में बोल रहे थे, जहां उन्होंने **पिछले वर्ष पहलगाम आतंकी हमले** के बाद किए गए **ऑपरेशन सिंदूर** में उत्कृष्ट सेवा के लिए दो अधिकारियों को **युद्ध सेवा मेडल** प्रदान किए।
- Operation Sindoor demonstrated exemplary readiness and resolve of the Indian Navy, as its units undertook swift deployment and maintained a highly aggressive posture throughout the period, he said.



उन्होंने कहा कि **ऑपरेशन सिंदूर** ने भारतीय नौसेना की **तत्परता और दृढ़ संकल्प** को प्रदर्शित किया, क्योंकि उसकी इकाइयों ने तेज तैनाती की और पूरे समय **आक्रामक रुख** बनाए रखा।

- "It is not a hidden fact anymore that we were just minutes away from striking Pakistan from the sea, when they requested a stoppage of kinetic actions," Admiral Tripathi said of the Navy's role in the operation.
एडमिरल त्रिपाठी ने कहा, "अब यह छिपा हुआ तथ्य नहीं है कि हम समुद्र से पाकिस्तान पर हमला करने से कुछ मिनट दूर थे, जब उन्होंने **सैन्य कार्रवाई रोकने का अनुरोध** किया।"
- Through swift and resolute actions during Operation Sindoor, the Indian Navy reinforced the nation's confidence and trust in its capabilities, he added.
उन्होंने कहा कि **ऑपरेशन सिंदूर** के दौरान तेज और दृढ़ कार्रवाई से भारतीय नौसेना ने देश के **विश्वास और भरोसे** को मजबूत किया।
- "Besides Operation Sindoor and the relentless operational tempo through the year, we were also very proud to showcase the breadth and depth of our operational capabilities to the Prime Minister during a historic 17-hour overnight embarkation with the Indian Navy on the western seaboard," said Admiral Tripathi.
एडमिरल त्रिपाठी ने कहा, "ऑपरेशन सिंदूर और पूरे वर्ष की **सतत संचालन गतिविधियों** के अलावा, हमें प्रधानमंत्री को **पश्चिमी तट पर 17 घंटे के ऐतिहासिक अभियान** के दौरान अपनी **संचालन क्षमताओं की व्यापकता और गहराई** दिखाने पर गर्व है।"
- Talking about the West Asia conflict, he said that ever since the war involving the U.S., Israel, and Iran broke out, more than 20 merchant vessels have been attacked in the region.
पश्चिम एशिया संघर्ष के बारे में बात करते हुए उन्होंने कहा कि **अमेरिका, इज़राइल और ईरान** के बीच युद्ध शुरू होने के बाद से क्षेत्र में **20 से अधिक व्यापारिक जहाजों पर हमला** हुआ है।
- "At a time when the global order is marked by increasing fragmentation and friction, the seas are no longer secondary theatres," the Navy Chief added.
उन्होंने कहा, "जब वैश्विक व्यवस्था में **विभाजन और तनाव बढ़ रहा है**, तब समुद्र अब **द्वितीयक क्षेत्र नहीं रह गए हैं।**"

NSCN-K seeks 'religious conversion', Arunachal govt. tells UAPA tribunal

CS III: Internal Security

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Arunachal Pradesh government told an Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) tribunal recently that the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang (NSCN-K), a banned outfit which seeks the merger of Naga-dominated areas in India and Myanmar, wants to "convert people to Christianity" in order to have a "homogenous society for a common cause".

A UAPA tribunal on March 19 upheld a Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) notification of September 22, 2025 to declare the NSCN-K an unlawful association under the UAPA, 1967 for another five years. The group was involved in the June 4, 2015 ambush of an Army convoy in Manipur in which 18 Army personnel were killed.

In its deposition, the Arunachal Pradesh government said other than the forceful conversion of lo-



Remains of an Army truck after an ambush by NSCN-K militants on a convoy in Manipur in 2015, killing 18 personnel. AFP

cals to Christianity, the group intends to "bring all the sub-tribes under one banner Tangsang-Naga" and "this is indicative of a deeper conspiracy to create homogenous demographic structure".

The outfit is active in the Tirap, Changlang and Longding (TCL) districts of Arunachal Pradesh. The State government did not depose on these lines before the tribunal that was set up in 2015, when the outfit was banned first.

It added that the group

indulges in unlawful interference in electoral process, drug trafficking and has established hideouts/camps in the three districts to attack/ambush security force personnel.

Named after its leader S.S. Khaplang, who died in Myanmar in 2017, the NSCN-K was formed in January 1990 after a split from the parent group, the National Socialist Council of Nagaland, in 1988. The latter is now known as the NSCN (Isak-Muivah) and has been in peace talks

with the government since 1997. The National Investigation Agency had declared a reward of ₹17 lakh for Khaplang's arrest for executing the ambush on the Army convoy. The NSCN-K was initially banned for five years in 2020, extended for another five years in 2025.

The Ministry informed the tribunal that in the past five years, NSCN-K factions were involved in 29 incidents of violence, in which 18 deaths and injuries to 16 security personnel and civilians occurred; 71 cases were registered with chargesheets filed in 56 cases and 35 cadres were prosecuted or convicted. Eighty-five cadres were arrested, 69 cadres surrendered and 51 other criminal activities, including kidnappings, were reported.

The Ministry submitted that the group reportedly has an approximate strength of 400-500 cadres in Myanmar, including 50-75 Indian Naga cadres.



02A. NSCN-K seeks 'religious conversion', Arunachal govt. tells UAPA tribunal NSCN-K 'धार्मिक परिवर्तन' चाहता है, अरुणाचल सरकार ने UAPA ट्रिब्यूनल को बताया

- The Arunachal Pradesh government told an Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) tribunal recently that the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Khaplang (NSCN-K), a banned outfit which seeks the merger of Naga-dominated areas in India and Myanmar, wants to "convert people to Christianity" in order to have a "homogenous society for a common cause".
अरुणाचल प्रदेश सरकार ने हाल ही में UAPA ट्रिब्यूनल को बताया कि नेशनल सोशलिस्ट काउंसिल ऑफ नागालैंड-खापलांग (NSCN-K), एक प्रतिबंधित संगठन, जो भारत और म्यांमार के नागा-बहुल क्षेत्रों के विलय की मांग करता है, "लोगों को ईसाई धर्म में परिवर्तित" करना चाहता है ताकि "समान समाज" बनाया जा सके।
- A UAPA tribunal on March 19 upheld a Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) notification of September 22, 2025 to declare the NSCN-K an unlawful association under the UAPA, 1967 for another five years.
UAPA ट्रिब्यूनल ने 19 मार्च को गृह मंत्रालय (MHA) की 22 सितंबर 2025 की अधिसूचना को बरकरार रखा, जिसमें NSCN-K को UAPA, 1967 के तहत अगले पांच वर्षों के लिए अवैध संगठन घोषित किया गया।
- The group was involved in the June 4, 2015 ambush of an Army convoy in Manipur in which 18 Army personnel were killed.
यह समूह 4 जून 2015 को मणिपुर में सेना के काफिले पर हमले में शामिल था, जिसमें 18 सैनिक मारे गए थे।
- In its deposition, the Arunachal Pradesh government said other than the forceful conversion of locals to Christianity, the group intends to "bring all the sub-tribes under one banner Tangsang-Naga" and "this is indicative of a deeper conspiracy to create homogenous demographic structure".
अपने बयान में, अरुणाचल सरकार ने कहा कि स्थानीय लोगों के बलपूर्वक धर्म परिवर्तन के अलावा, समूह सभी उप-जनजातियों को 'तांगसांग-नागा' के तहत लाने का प्रयास करता है और यह समान जनसांख्यिकीय संरचना बनाने की साजिश का संकेत है।

PATRIOTIC IAS